

CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL remote meeting held on Monday 18 May 2020 at 6.50 p.m.

PRESENT

Cllrs. K. Head (Chairman), C. Aslett, M. Best, R. Cottle, B. Hartshorn, R. Pailthorpe, J. Roberts, J. Roundell Greene, A. Stuart and D. Wakeman.

In Attendance

The Clerk P. Davidson, Deputy Clerk L. Gowers, 1 member of the press and 3 members of the public.

01 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

20/21

None.

02 WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

20/21

The Mayor welcomed Councillors, the press and the public to the first formal Council meeting to be held remotely.

03 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

20/21

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Monday 23 March 2020 be **APPROVED**.

04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

20/21

on items on the agenda

Cllrs. Cottle, Head and Stuart declared a personal interest in agenda item 11 (GRC management).

Cllr. Hartshorn declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (relating to planning application 20/10153/OUT).

Cllrs. Best and Stuart declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (relating to planning application 20/01041/LBC).

05 OPEN FORUM

20/21

The Clerk reported that one of the members of the public who were attending the meeting had submitted the comment that the Council's website needed to be amended to give better visibility of the fact that the Council was now holding meetings remotely. The Clerk added that the website had since been updated to properly reflect the current meeting arrangements.

06 TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

20/21

County

County Cllr. Best reported on the following:

- Coronavirus: the County Council remained focussed on fighting Coronavirus. Cases in Somerset had peaked on 17 April. As of the first week of May, there were 591 cases, with 120 deaths, of which 67 had been in hospital and 45 in care homes.
- Business grants: £110m of business grants had been approved, although there were still many businesses who had not applied. Cllr. Best emphasised that these were grants, not loans.
- Highways: due to the reduction in traffic, this had enabled Highways to make progress in undertaking highways maintenance work.
- Waste recycling: green waste collection had now re-started. Eleven waste recycling centres in Somerset were now open, with Crewkerne's due to open shortly. Cllr. Head asked for clarification on whether use of the Crewkerne recycling centre was now free. Cllr. Pailthorpe confirmed that this was indeed the case.
- Education: Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 were due to go back to school at the beginning of June. Years 10 and 11 would be covered through online tutorials. The implications for the 3-tier system in Crewkerne was under discussion.
- Nursery and childminding: expected to open as of 1 June, although this would be at the discretion of individual nurseries.

District

Cllr. Pailthorpe reported that Crewkerne's waste recycling centre was open, although there were access restrictions, details of which were contained on the Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) website. He asked the Clerk to add a link to the SWP website on the Town Council's website.

Cllr. Best added that the two CLR "key site" planning applications were to be reviewed at the forthcoming Area West Committee meeting.

07 **CLERKS PROGRESS REPORT**

20/21 To receive a report

Nothing to report.

08 **PLANNING**

20/21

- a) To consider the following applications requiring observations

20/01053/OUT: Land Rear Of 8 To 10 Market Street, Crewkerne, Somerset
Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 2 No. new build live/work units.
Defer until additional details requested by Highways are made available.

20/01084/HOU: 3 Sycamore Drive, Crewkerne TA18 7BT
Erection of a single storey flat roof garden room extension
No objections.

20/00856/FUL and 20/00857/LBC: 24 Abbey Street, Crewkerne TA18 7HY
Change of use from D1 primary school to C3 residential. Associated repair and renovation works and erection of an orangery to the rear elevation.
The application has been amended: Amendments to internal layouts and proposed erection of a timber orangery to the rear elevation.
No objections subject to comment by the conservation officer.

20/01237/PDE: 40 Langmead Square, Crewkerne TA18 8EB

Proposed rear extension (i) the projection of the rear extension beyond the rear wall is 5.3m (ii) the maximum height of the extension is 3.85m (iii) the height at the eaves of the extension is 2.6m.

No objections

20/01041/LBC: 37 Court Barton, Crewkerne TA18 7HP

Listed building consent for the installation of a new extract ventilation to kitchen and bathroom and breathable plaster isolation system to damp walls (varying heights).

The Council to advise Planning of their concern over the effectiveness of the proposed changes but to defer to the views of the conservation officer.

b) Planning decisions from South Somerset District Council to note

20/00575/HOU: 6 Seaborough View, Crewkerne TA18 8JB

Replacement single storey side extension with porch & replacement boundary wall to rear garden

APPLICATION PERMITTED WITH CONDITIONS

20/00616/HOU: 41 Severalls Park Avenue, Crewkerne TA18 8DR

Demolition of existing garage and rear utility room and erection of two storey side and single storey rear extensions.

APPLICATION PERMITTED WITH CONDITIONS

20/00668/TCA: The Old Bakery, Bincombe Lane, Crewkerne TA18 7LY

Tree works within a designated conservation area.

APPLICATION PERMITTED

20/00189/HOU: 109 Park View, Crewkerne TA18 8JG

Two storey side extension to dwelling.

APPLICATION PERMITTED WITH CONDITIONS

20/00244/TCA: 2 Lyewater, Crewkerne TA18 8BB

Tree works within a designated conservation area.

APPLICATION PERMITTED

20/00109/HOU & 20/00110/LBC: 14 Church Street, Crewkerne TA18 7HU

Proposed single storey rear extension.

APPLICATION REFUSED

20/00822/HOU: 42 Park View Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 8JN

Removal of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension to form new garage and additional bedroom.

APPLICATION PERMITTED WITH CONDITIONS

c) Future Planning and Highways meetings: to consider whether Planning and Highways meetings should be resumed remotely, in order to ensure that comments are submitted within the SSDC deadlines

It was **AGREED** to resume **Planning & Highways Committee meetings in accordance with the already-agreed meetings timetable.**

FINANCE

- a) To approve the accounts for payment for March, April and May 2020 as listed

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Pailthorpe had verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and Risk Management.

Accounts for payment for March 2020, in the sum of £44,953.99 + VAT were APPROVED.

Accounts for payment for April 2020, in the sum of £62,121.48 + VAT were APPROVED.

Accounts for payment for May 2020, in the sum of £21,259.41 + VAT were APPROVED.

- b) To receive the fourth quarter summary of income and expenditure

The report was noted.

- c) To note the end-of-year balance of Earmarked Reserves

Noted.

- d) To report the bank reconciliation for April 2020 has been completed

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Pailthorpe had verified the bank reconciliation for April 2020. It was noted that cash in hand as of 30 April 2020 was £356,883.21.

GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE: CLOSURE OF CREWKERNE SPORTS & YOUTH ACTIVITIES LTD (CSYAL)

- a) To receive a report from Cllr. Best on the closing down of CSYAL

Cllr. Best reported that the winding up of CSYAL was still underway. He had visited the GRC a number of times and had the following progress to report:

- Jigsaw: the preschool group were currently using one room and were supervising 5 or 6 children. It was likely that there would be approximately 16 children attending as from the beginning of June. The group were doing their own cleaning and did not intend to be open during the school summer holidays.
- Electricity costs: the Clerk and Cllr. Best had been concerned that a factor in the high ongoing electricity costs for the GRC was the fact that the cellar was constantly running. Cllr. Best had therefore turned off the cooling system, with the kind assistance of Mr. Hall of Oscar's Wine Bar. In addition, the Clerk and Finance Officer were in the process of seeking an alternative energy supplier, in order to obtain a more favourable charging rate.
Cllr. Best suggested that future consideration should be given to the installation of solar panels on the roof of the GRC, as previously proposed.
- Stockholding: Cllr. Best had delivered the stock of chocolate bars and soft drinks which were approaching their 'use by' date to the Crewkerne Community Church, where they had been gratefully received.

- Water supply: the pipework to provide a direct supply of water to the GRC was now in place. However, the connection to this supply was awaiting Wessex Water.
- Building maintenance: Cllr. Best had inspected the building and noted the following areas which required maintenance action:
 - Window in main hall cracked.
 - Flooring in main entrance needs replacing.
 - Changing rooms infiltration of sewage under the floor. Requires investigation and repair action as necessary.
 - Storage compound outside the main entrance to be made secure. This had now been done.
 Cllr. Best emphasised that these maintenance tasks should be carried out before the building re-opened.
- Main hall: Cllr. Best commented on the fact that the main hall became excessively warm and stifling on sunny days. This lack of air conditioning had hindered CSYAL's ability to rent out the hall. He recommended that the Council consider the installation of an air conditioning system.

Councillors thanked Cllr. Best for the work he had been undertaking.

- b) In accordance with the principles agreed at the Full Council meeting held on 23 March 2020 (to purchase the assets and stock from CSYAL and to provide a financial contribution to ensure that the closure of CSYAL could be executed with no outstanding debts), to ratify the decisions made by delegated authority to provide funding in the sum of £12,000 to CSYAL and to take over the remaining 9 months' worth of contract for BT Sport, at a cost of £1,260

It was **AGREED to ratify the decisions made by delegated authority to provide funding in the sum of £12,000 to CSYAL and to take over the remaining 9 months' worth of contract for BT Sport, at a cost of £1,260.**

- c) Further to the above, to authorise an additional payment to CSYAL (amount to be advised at the meeting), to allow final closure of the charity with no outstanding debt

Agenda item deferred.

11
20/21

GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE MANAGEMENT

- a) Noting that the Jigsaw preschool are required to remain open during the current pandemic to support the parents of key workers, to ratify the decision made under delegated authority to waive all fees relating to Jigsaw's use of the GRC whilst the pandemic obligates Jigsaw to remain open

It was **AGREED to ratify the decision made under delegated authority to waive all fees relating to Jigsaw's use of the GRC whilst the pandemic obligated Jigsaw to remain open.**

- b) To consider the process of establishing a fair rent to be levied on Jigsaw

The Deputy Clerk reported that she had spoken with two letting agents, for their consideration of a rentable value for the area of the GRC occupied by Jigsaw. Councillors asked the Deputy Clerk to obtain written statements from the agents. Cllr.

Hartshorn added that it would be useful to know whether the agents' views on rentable value included such items as utilities costs and insurance.

- c) To note that all three sports clubs have declared their interest in working with the Council to re-establish the running of the GRC

Noted.

- d) Electricity costs: to receive a report from the Clerk and Cllr. Best on electricity costs for the GRC

The Chairman pointed out that Cllr. Best had covered off this agenda item in his earlier GRC report (see minute 20/21 10a above).

- e) To agree the next steps regarding the future management of the GRC

It was agreed that a small working group should be formed to formulate a forward plan for the GRC. Cllrs. Aslett, Best, Cottle and Wakeman kindly volunteered to participate in this working group. The Clerk was asked to call the first meeting of the working group at the earliest opportunity.

12 CORONAVIRUS RECOVERY STRATEGY

- 20/21 To consider the implications for the Town Council of the Government's Coronavirus recovery strategy, as published in their "Plan to rebuild" document

The Clerk reported that, at the recent Staffing Committee meeting, Councillors had reviewed the Council's temporary staffing arrangements in the light of the Government's "Plan to rebuild" document and concluded that the present arrangements should remain in place for the time being.

Cllr. Stuart pointed out that a Coronavirus workplace risk assessment was required and asked that this be presented to Councillors urgently.

13 YOUTH SERVICE

- 20/21 To consider the draft programme of meetings

- a) To receive a report from Cllr. Pailthorpe on the ongoing activities of ALS to support young people during the current crisis

Cllr. Pailthorpe reported on the recent meeting of the Youth Steering Group. ALS were continuing to undertake outreach work and were engaging with a considerable number of young people. Cllr. Pailthorpe had suspended further meetings of the Steering Group until the status changed significantly.

- b) To formally ratify the decision made under delegated authority to fund ALS in the sum of £645 per month during the period when the normal youth service is suspended

It was **AGREED to ratify the decision made under delegated authority to fund ALS in the sum of £645 per month during the period when the normal youth service was suspended.**

14
20/21 **MARKET TOWNS INVESTMENT GROUP (MTIG) CAPITAL PRIORITY PROJECTS FUNDING**

To consider which projects the Town Council should focus on in terms of submitting applications for MTIG grant funding

After discussion, it was agreed that this agenda item should be brought back to the June Full Council meeting for consideration. In the meantime, Councillors would give thought to funding priorities.

Cllrs. Best and Wakeman agreed to liaise with ABCD to establish whether they had any inputs to make.

15
20/21 **TREES**

To note that a local resident has obtained £1,000 of funding from the Woodland Trust to purchase trees and has kindly offered to donate the trees to the Council. To consider a proposal from Cllr. Hartshorn for the planting of these trees

Cllr. Hartshorn briefed Councillors on the proposal from Mr Fox, for the planting of trees in the Barn Street recreation ground. The proposed scheme created three distinct areas: native woodland trees, community orchard and wildflower area.

Councillors fully supported the proposal and expressed thanks to Mr Fox for his initiative in obtaining a very significant amount of grant funding on behalf of the local community.

Cllr. Head asked that this tree planting scheme be integrated with the wellness garden project proposed by the children of the Maiden Beech Academy. Cllr. Hartshorn responded by emphasising that the area of the Barn Street recreation ground was large and could easily accommodate both the tree planting and wellness garden projects.

It was **AGREED to fully support the tree planting scheme proposed by Mr Fox at the Barn Street recreation ground, provided this was integrated with the project to create a wellness garden area.**

16
20/21 **POSSIBLE TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL LAND**

- a) Severalls War Memorial and associated land: to consider the question received from SSDC, whether the Council would be interested in an asset transfer of some or all of the Severalls War Memorial land owned by SSDC

After discussion, it was **AGREED that the Council should respond to SSDC with the position that it was interested in acquiring ownership only of the war memorial itself and of the garden area adjacent to the memorial.**

- b) Land in front of the Town Hall: to consider whether the Council wishes to proceed with an application to SSDC to transfer the land in front of the Town Hall to the ownership of the Town Hall

Regarding the piece of land in front of the Town Hall, Cllr. Roundell Greene suggested that it was important to understand the maintenance costs incurred by SSDC over recent years, before considering whether to acquire this piece of land.

Cllr. Best pointed out that it was not clear whether the suggested transfer of ownership of land included the parking bays. He also pointed that, in considering taking on the ownership of the land, the Council needed to bear in mind that winter gritting of this area was current undertaken by SSDC. In addition, SSDC took down and replaced the signage for the annual fair.

Cllr. Hartshorn put forward the view that the Town Council should acquire both the “ski slope” land and the parking spaces and that ownership would allow opportunities to do more with this area of land.

It was agreed that this item would be brought back to Council for further consideration, once maintenance cost information had been obtained from SSDC.

17 **SUMMER FETE**

20/21 To consider whether the summer fete, which had been nominally planned to take place on 18 July, should be cancelled

It was **AGREED to cancel the summer fete for 2020.**

18 **TO RECEIVE DRAFT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

20/21

a) Planning and Highways Committee meeting held on 9 March 2020

Noted.

b) Amenities Committee meeting held on 9 March 2020

Noted.

19 **TO RECEIVE ANY MATTERS OF REPORT**

20/21

Aqua Centre: Cllr. Best reported that the Aqua Centre was closed because of the pandemic, with a skeleton staff retained and the remaining staff furloughed.

Abbey Street pavement: Cllr. Head reported that the long-awaited construction of the pavement area in Abbey Street was now complete.

Almshouses: Cllr. Roundell Greene advised that she was regrettably unable to continue as the nominated representative for the Chubbs Almshouses outside body. Cllr. Stuart added that there was a space for a Councillor trustee on the Chubbs Almshouses charity. The Clerk was asked to add Almshouses representation as an agenda for the next Council meeting.

20 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

20/21

Monday 29 June 2020 at 6.45 p.m.

Signed:

Dated:

tc18May2020

It was AGREED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it was advisable that the public and press be excluded and were instructed to withdraw.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION – STAFFING MATTERS

21 **STAFFING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF 24 FEBRUARY AND 14 MAY 2020**
20/21 For consideration

Minutes noted.

Councillors considered the proposed short-term contract of employment for Ms Wills in support of re-establishing operations at the GRC. In consideration of a contract start date, it was **AGREED that this would be 1 June 2020.**

The meeting closed at 8.52 p.m.

Signed:

Dated: