

CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL remote meeting held on Monday 25 January 2021 at 6.51 p.m.

PRESENT

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

In Attendance

The Clerk P. Davidson, Deputy Clerk L. Gowers and approximately 6 members of the public (via YouTube).

164 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

20/21

Apologies were received from Cllr. R. Pailthorpe (unwell).

165 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

20/21

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on **Monday 30 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 be APPROVED.**

166 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

20/21

on items on the agenda

Cllr. Aslett declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 7 (planning applications 20/02965/FUL and 20/02966/LBC).

Cllr. Head declared a personal interest in agenda item 8d (grant awards for 2121/22).

167 OPEN FORUM

20/21

No matters raised.

168 TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

20/21

County

County Cllr. Best reported that the proposed reorganisation of local schools was moving to the next stage of the consultation process, following the first stage of public consultation. Details of the next steps would be published very shortly on the Somerset County Council (SCC) website. Cllr. Best added that, as he was not a member of the Cabinet, he would not have a vote on this matter.

Councillors agreed that the Council should write again to SCC, expressing their concern at the proposed reorganisation. It was agreed that Councillors would study the details soon to be released on the SCC website and send their comments to the Clerk, who would then compile a draft letter for consideration at the February Full Council meeting.

District

Cllr. Best reported that over 140 SSDC members of staff were now working to support the covid vaccination teams. In Crewkerne, the Henhayes Centre was continuing to be used for vaccinations. As a result, there would unfortunately be a continuing impact on the Henhayes car park which was necessarily being prioritised for use by covid vaccination patients.

Cllr. Head asked whether arrangements had been made to keep the car park free from ice during cold weather. In response, Cllr. Best stated that SSDC had almost certainly made arrangements for the gritting of car parks as necessary. Nevertheless, the Deputy Clerk was asked to confirm that this was the case.

169 **CLERKS PROGRESS REPORT**

20/21 To receive a report

No matters to report.

170 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

20/21 To consider the following applications requiring observations before the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting

21/00049/FUL: The Workshops, Old Mill Lane, Crewkerne. Conversion of premises to 2 dwellings.

Councillors raised concerns that the premises appeared to still be in use by a local business. The Deputy Clerk was asked to highlight the Council's concern to SSDC Planning and request an extension of the timescale for consultation, to allow further investigations to take place on this matter.

Cllr. Aslett left the meeting prior to the following agenda item.

20/02965/FUL and 20/02966/LBC: 19-23 Kingfisher House, Market Square, Crewkerne
Amended plans have been submitted to alter the design of the proposed roof light plus alterations to the internal works.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

Cllr. Aslett re-joined the meeting.

171 **FINANCE**

20/21

- a) Donation to Crewkerne Community Church: to ratify the decision to make a donation of £1,000 to Crewkerne Community Church

It was **AGREED to ratify the decision to make a donation of £1,000 to Crewkerne Community Church.**

- b) To approve the accounts for payment for January 2021 as listed

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

Accounts for payment for January 2021, in the sum of £49,282.95 + VAT were APPROVED.

- c) To report the bank reconciliation for December 2020 has been completed

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Wakeman had verified the bank reconciliation for December 2020. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31 December 2020 was £304,494.69.

- d) To approve the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee for grant awards for 2021/22

It was **AGREED to approve the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee for grant awards for 2021/22.**

- e) To approve the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee for the setting of the budget for 2021/22

It was **AGREED to approve the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee for the setting of the budget for 2021/22.**

- f) To approve the overall Precept for 2021/22

It was **AGREED to set the precept for 2021/22 in the sum of £440,037, which represented a 4.5% increase in comparison with the previous year and which equated to a 5.6% increase in the equivalent Band D charge per household.**

Cllr. Best emphasised the need to explain to residents the background behind the need to increase the precept, which was largely driven by the planned major upgrade of the Falkland Square public toilets. The Clerk added that the forthcoming newsletter would contain the background to the setting of the budget.

172 **WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT**

20/21 To receive a progress report from Cllr. Roberts

Cllr. Roberts provided a verbal progress update on the development of the new website. She reported that website development was proceeding well. The working group had now met twice, with very useful ideas explored around branding, which the website developers had found most helpful.

Councillors thanked Cllr. Roberts for the excellent work that she was putting into this project.

173 **NEWSLETTER**

20/21 To agree the articles for the next issue of the newsletter

It was **AGREED to approve the proposed articles for the next issue of the newsletter, with the addition of the articles suggested in the meeting.**

174 **PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2021/22**

20/21 To consider the draft programme of meetings

It was **AGREED** to approve the draft programme of Council and Committee meetings for 2021/2022.

175 **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS**

20/21 To consider whether the meeting, which is currently scheduled to take place on 19 April 2021 in the Victoria Hall, should be deferred

Councillors recognised that, due to covid, it was most unlikely that it would be possible to hold the Annual Town Meeting of Electors in April in the Victoria Hall. It was therefore **AGREED that:**

- **The meeting should be rescheduled for September. Ideally this timescale would allow the meeting to go ahead in the Victoria Hall. However, it was agreed that, should covid restrictions still prevent this, then a remote meeting should be held, to avoid further postponing the meeting.**
- **Public opinion should be sought through the newsletter on the Councils' proposal to reschedule the meeting.**

176 **TO RECEIVE DRAFT COMMITTEE MINUTES AND WORKING GROUP MINUTES**

20/21

a) Joint Burial Committee meeting held on 1 December 2020

Noted.

b) Planning and Highways Committee meetings held on 14 December 2020 and 11 January 2021

Noted.

c) Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 11 January 2020

Noted.

d) Amenities Committee meeting held on 11 January 2020

Noted.

178 **TO RECEIVE ANY MATTERS OF REPORT**

20/21

Proposed orchard at the Barn Street recreation ground: Cllr. Roberts asked the status of the proposed orchard at the Barn Street recreation ground. In response, the Clerk reminded Councillors that the agreed next step was that a detailed plan should be drawn up of the proposed orchard, and the public invited to provide feedback on this plan by visiting the recreation ground. This had yet to be progressed because of other priorities.

Cllr. Head pointed out that, with the current covid restrictions in place, the Council should not be encouraging members of the public to visit the recreation ground.

The Deputy Clerk also pointed out that the best time for the planting of trees was soon coming to an end. Councillors acknowledged this point and it was agreed that any planting should be considered for the autumn.

The Deputy Clerk was asked to enquire with Mr Fox concerning the status of his application to the Woodland Trust for trees.

The Clerk was asked to add an article in the forthcoming newsletter to provide an update regarding the proposed orchard.

Gritting of Ashlands Road: Cllr. Head stated that she had noted a report on Facebook regarding an accident involving a milk lorry on Ashlands Road, which appeared to be the result of the road not being gritted, which was due to its B-road classification. She requested that the Council write to Highways to express its concern over the lack of gritting of Ashlands Road. In response, the Deputy Clerk reported that she had already written to Highways.

Councillor surgeries: Cllr. Aslett noted that, since the onset of the covid pandemic, Councillor surgeries and the “coffee with your Councillor” events had been cancelled. He suggested that there might be merit in re-introducing Councillor surgery sessions as zoom meetings, where one-to-one sessions could be managed by using the zoom “waiting room” facility.

Councillors agreed that this idea had merit and the Clerk was asked to add an article in the forthcoming newsletter, to elicit public opinion on this suggestion.

179
20/21

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Monday 22 February 2021 at 6.45 p.m.

Signed:

Dated:

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 MATTER

180
20/21

STAFFING COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 8 January 2021 and to consider the recommendations contained therein

The minutes were noted. It was **AGREED to approve the Staffing Committee’s recommendations as documented in the minutes.**

The meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

Signed:

Dated: