

CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an informal meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held remotely on Monday 26 July 2021 at 6.48 p.m.

PRESENT

Cllrs. R. Pailthorpe (Chairman), M. Best, T. Bond, R. Cottle, J. Roundell Greene (joined part-way through the meeting), A. Samuel, A. Stuart and D. Wakeman.

In Attendance

The Clerk P. Davidson and Deputy Clerk L. Gowers.

56 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

21/22

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Aslett (personal), Head (personal), Hodgson (work commitments) and Roberts (personal).

57 OPEN FORUM

21/22

No matters raised.

58 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

21/22

It was AGREED that the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 28 June 2021 be APPROVED.

59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

21/22

on items on the agenda

None.

60 TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

21/22

County

County Cllr. Best reported on the following:

- The Secretary of State had announced that One Somerset would be the unitary authority for Somerset, subject to Parliamentary approval, leading to elections of a shadow authority next May and the proper authority coming into effect in April 2023.

Cllr. Stuart asked whether there was scope for the Town Council to write to the Secretary of State, pointing out that polls in Somerset had established that the majority of Somerset residents were in favour of the Stronger Somerset proposal. Councillors discussed this point and it was agreed to lobby the Secretary of State. To this end, the Clerk was actioned to work with the Deputy Mayor to write a letter to the Secretary of State. Cllr. Bond pointed out that, as she supported the One Somerset proposal, then such a letter did not have the unanimous support of the Town Council.

- The Small Improvement Scheme (SIS) team were about to undertake a full assessment of the Maiden Beech crossroads.
- Following receipt of a number of complaints about the state of the hedges in the local area, Cllr. Best had discussed with Highways, who advised that the hedges were due to be cut by the end of the month.

District

Cllr. Best made a statement regarding the Kithill planning appeal and a statement made by him at an earlier meeting. Having spoken further with SSDC officers, he reported that the officer who had dealt with the appeal had since left SSDC's employment. Nevertheless, SSDC had no reason to doubt that this officer had not forwarded all required files to the Planning Inspector. Cllr. Best concluded by stating that the remaining details of the proposed development would be the subject of a Reserved Matters application, where there would be further opportunity to make representations when this came forward.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Best for his statement and added that, as a Town Council, this matter was now closed, until such time as a Reserved Matters planning application was submitted for this site, should that ever be the case.

61 **CLERKS PROGRESS REPORT**

21/22 To receive a report

The Clerk announced that, with his retirement due shortly, the Council had selected a successor, and he was pleased to announce that Katharine Sheehan would become the new Town Clerk. He added that Mrs Sheehan lived in the town and was the Clerk to three local parish councils, so was already familiar with the challenges facing the town. He and Mrs Sheehan would be working closely over the next couple of months to ensure a smooth handover.

62 **FINANCE**

21/22

- a) To approve the accounts for payment for July 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 26 July 2021, in the sum of £31,029.04 + VAT were APPROVED.

- b) To report the bank reconciliation for June 2021 has been completed

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Wakeman had verified the bank reconciliation for June 2021. It was noted that cash in hand as of 30 June 2021 was £316,320.15.

- c) To receive the first quarter income and expenditure financial report

The report was noted.

63 REFURBISHMENT OF SEVERALLS TENNIS COURTS
21/22 To consider the quotations received for the refurbishment of the Severalls tennis courts

The Clerk advised that quotations had not yet been obtained for the refurbishment of the courts. Given that the summer was now well advanced, it was agreed that quotations should continue to be sought for the refurbishment of the tennis courts, but with the objective of undertaking the work in the following spring.

64 SMALL GRANT APPLICATION
21/22 To consider the grant application received from the Crewkerne and District Homing Society

After discussion, it was AGREED to award a grant of £300 to the Crewkerne and District Homing Society.

65 AIR QUALITY MONITORING PROJECT
21/22 To note that SSDC MTIG have approved 50% grant funding for the air quality monitoring project and to approve the funding of the remaining 50%

It was noted that the SSDC Market Towns Investment Group (MTIG) had agreed to provide £2,700 of grant funding towards the air quality monitoring project, which represented 50% of the project costs. After discussion, it was AGREED to fund the remaining 50% through Town Council funding, funds to be taken from “New projects” Earmarked Reserves.

66 FACE-TO-FACE COUNCIL MEETINGS
21/22 To further consider whether face-to-face Council meetings should be resumed

Cllr. Stuart suggested that the Council purchase one or two CO2 monitors, as these give an indication of a room that is poorly ventilated. Councillors endorsed this proposal.

After further discussion, it was AGREED that face-to-face Council meetings would recommence in September, starting with the Planning & Highways and Amenities Committee meetings on 13 September. It was also agreed that the aim should be to continue to livestream meetings on YouTube and that, if Councillors were unable to attend in person, then they should be able to attend meetings via Zoom, although they would not be allowed to vote if they were not physically present at the meeting.

Cllr. Roundell Greene joined the meeting.

67 VEGETATION IMPINGING ON NORTH STREET
21/22 To further consider the issue of vegetation growing out into the highway of North Street

It was noted that Highways had written to the landowners asking them to cut back the vegetation. Cllr. Bond pointed out that owners would be unable to safely cut back the vegetation.

After discussion, Councillors agreed that the vegetation overhanging North Street was dangerous and needed to be cut back as a matter of urgency. It was therefore AGREED to engage a contractor to cut back the worst areas of vegetation overhanging North Street, subject to approval of the landowners.

68 **CLR STREET NAMES**

21/22 To agree the street names to be put forward to Taylor Wimpey for CLR

The Chairman noted that 17 prospective names for the CLR roads had been posted on the Council website and that there had not been any negative feedback to these. After discussion, it was AGREED to put the 17 names forward to Taylor Wimpey.

The Chairman thanked those members of the public who had contributed suggestions on street names.

69 **WEBSITE UPDATE**

21/22 To receive a report from Cllr. Roberts on the development of the website

Agenda item deferred.

70 **COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENT TO THE JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE**

21/22 To ratify the appointment of Cllr. Samuel as a member of the Crewkerne and West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee

It was AGREED to appoint Cllr. Samuel as a member of the Crewkerne and West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee.

71 **CORRESPONDENCE**

21/22 To consider correspondence received

The Clerk reported that a Freedom of Information (FOI) request had been received, relating to refurbishment costs for the GRC and the history behind the installation of water and gas supplies to the building. The Clerk added that he was in the process of compiling a response to the FOI request, which would be not only sent to the person who had submitted the FOI, but also published on the Council website.

72 **TO RECEIVE DRAFT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

21/22

a) Amenities Committee meeting held on 12 July 2021

Noted.

b) Planning and Highways Committee meeting held on 12 July 2021

Noted.

73 **TO RECEIVE MATTERS OF REPORT**

21/22

- Cllr. Bond reported that she had been contacted by a member of the public regarding the roll-out of 5G, which she had replied to. She asked whether a roll-out programme existed for 5G. Cllr. Best suggested that 5G roll-out would be initially to the larger towns only, and suggested that County or District might have information on a roll-out timetable.

74 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

21/22

Monday 26 July 2021 at 6.45 p.m.

Signed:

Dated:

tc26July2021

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 AND CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

75 STAFFING COMMITTEE MINUTES

21/22 To receive the minutes of the Staffing Committee meetings held on 12 July and 20 July 2021 and to approve the recommendations therein

The minutes of the Staffing Committee meetings held on 12 July and 20 July 2021 were noted and it was **AGREED to approve the recommendations contained therein.**

76 GRC HIRE CHARGES

21/22

It was noted that at least one prospective user of the GRC had asked for preferential rates for hiring the building. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that hire charges would be applied consistently to all users.

The Clerk reported that he was in the process of estimating the GRC’s running costs, which could serve as a basis for the setting of hire charges.

77 GRC BAR MANAGER ROLE

21/22

Cllr. Bond stated that she was totally against the Town Council running a bar at the GRC. In response, Cllr. Stuart pointed out that the success of the GRC was dependent upon having a functioning bar and therefore a bar manager.

After further discussion, it was **AGREED** to instruct the Staffing Committee to pursue the recruitment of a bar manager for the GRC.

The meeting closed at 8.02 p.m.

Signed:

Dated: