

## **CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL remote meeting held on Monday 29 June 2020 at 6.45 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, Finance Officer P. Hewitt (part-time attendance), M. Jay Operations Manager (part-time attendance), 1 member of the press and 10 members of the public.

### 27 **TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

20/21

None.

### 28 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

20/21

It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Monday 9 March, Monday 18 May and Monday 8 June 2020 be **APPROVED**.

### 29 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

20/21

on items on the agenda

Cllrs. Best and Head declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (fees and hire charges). Cllr. Hartshorn declared a personal interest in agenda item 7a (planning application 20/01053/OUT).

### 30 **OPEN FORUM**

20/21

A member of the public raised two points:

- She asked whether the Council would consider creating a pedestrian sub-committee to look at pedestrian-related issues around the town.
- Regarding the recent appeal decision relating to the Kithill housing development planning application, she asked whether the Council intended to raise an objection to the proposed closure of the footpath which runs across the field from Cathole Bridge Road.

A member of the public expressed a number of concerns regarding inconsistencies and anomalies regarding the planning inspector's visit to Crewkerne in relation to the Kithill housing development planning appeal.

### 31 **TO RECEIVE VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

20/21

#### County

County Cllr. Best noted that he had submitted his report prior to the meeting [the report is attached to the minutes].

## District

Nothing to report.

## 32 CLERKS PROGRESS REPORT

20/21 To receive a report

The Deputy Clerk reported that the Crewkerne District Rotary were struggling to find a suitable location for their annual Charter Fair and had requested the use of Henhayes car park. This request would be brought to the next Council meeting.

## 33 PLANNING

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

- **20/01053/OUT: Land rear of 8 to 10 Market Street, Crewkerne**  
Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 1No. dwelling. The description has been amended from “*Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 2 No. new build live/work units.*”  
**Council has previously expressed concerns regarding the lack of detail in the application relating to access and space for the parking area. These concerns still stand.**
- **18/01737/OUT: Land South of Kithill, Crewkerne**  
**To consider the appeal decision in respect of the above application.** Outline application for residential development of up to 150 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and associated works.

Cllr. Aslett stressed that the Town Council was extremely disappointed by the appeal decision. He pointed out that a challenge to this decision could only be made through the High Court and would have to challenge the legality of the appeal process. Given the potentially exorbitant costs of such a challenge, Cllr. Aslett recommended that expert legal advice be sought, which he estimated would cost between £1,000 and £3,000.

Cllr. Best stated that he was hugely disappointed in the appeal decision. He emphasised that SSDC had refused the application at the Area West Committee and it had also been turned down at the SSDC Regulation Committee. Given the irregularities in the inspector’s appeal process, he endorsed Cllr. Aslett’s recommendation of seeking specialist legal advice.

After discussion, it was **AGREED that specialist legal advice would be sought regarding the legality of the appeal process relating to application 18/01737/OUT, on the basis that costs would be in the range of £1,000 to £3,000.** It was further **AGREED that SSDC would be approached, to ensure a coordinated approach between the two Councils.**

## 34 FINANCE

20/21

- a) To approve the accounts for payment for June 2020

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

**Accounts for payment for June 2020, in the sum of £34,665.55 + VAT were APPROVED.**

- b) To report the bank reconciliation for May 2020 has been completed

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Cottle had verified the bank reconciliation for May 2020. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31 May 2020 was £333,685.08.

- c) Internal audit: to receive the second report from the Internal Auditor

The Internal Auditor's report was noted. Cllr. Hartshorn asked the status of the outstanding debts owed by SSDC. The Clerk reported that the debt relating to SSDC's rental of Town Hall space had now been cleared, leaving only the debt relating to the legal fees involved in the lifting of the Henhayes covenant. Cllr. Best added that he was continuing to chase SSDC on this outstanding debt.

- d) To formally approve the internally audited accounts for 2019/20

It was **AGREED** that the internally audited accounts for 2019/20 be formally approved.

- e) To approve the Annual Return year ending 31 March 2020

- 47) Section 1: to approve the Annual Governance Statement

The Annual Governance Statement was **APPROVED**.

- ii) Section 2: to approve the Accounting Statement

The Accounting Statement was **APPROVED**.

- iii) To receive the Internal Auditor's audit report

The report was noted.

- iv) To authorise the signatures of the Mayor and Clerk

It was **AGREED** to authorise the signatures of the Mayor and Clerk and the form was duly signed.

- 47) Risk register: to review the Financial Risk Register

After discussion, it was **AGREED** to approve the updated Financial Risk Register.

35  
20/21

### **GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE MAINTENANCE**

- a) Gas supply: to consider the quotation received for the installation of a separate gas supply to the GRC

After discussion, it was **AGREED to approve Wales & West Utilities to undertake the installation of a separate gas supply to the GRC in accordance with their quotation and at their quoted cost of £3,973.15 (+ VAT), funds to be drawn down from General Reserves.** It was noted that, being a gas installation, the Council were constrained to use this particular contractor and therefore that the usual requirement of the Financial Regulations to seek two quotations was not applicable.

- b) Air conditioning: to consider the quotations received for the installation of air conditioning in the GRC

Agenda item deferred.

36  
20/21

### **COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENTS**

- a) To consider the Covid-19 risk assessments and any associated method statements produced by the Operations Manager for the grounds staff operations, the Town Hall ground floor and the Falkland Square public toilets

It was noted that the risk assessments had only been received shortly before the meeting, which had not allowed Councillors adequate time to assess them. In view of this and recognising the need to review these risk assessments at the earliest opportunity, it was **AGREED to delegate to the Mayor, Cllr. Stuart and the Clerk to review the risk assessments and to take decisions accordingly.**

- b) Taking due account of the above assessments, to consider under what conditions the Town Hall ground floor is to be re-opened to the public and the ladies and gents public toilets are to be re-opened.

In accordance with the above agreement, this item was delegated to the Mayor, Cllr. Stuart and the Clerk for consideration.

37  
20/21

### **SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL (SSDC) "OPENING THE HIGH STREET SAFELY" INITIATIVE**

To consider how best to deploy the Covid-19 safety signage provided by SSDC

Cllr. Aslett suggested that, as most shops had already deployed covid signage, the use of additional signage in the town centre should be kept to a minimum. Cllr. Hartshorn concurred with the "fewer is better" view. After further discussion, it was agreed that the detailed deployment of the SSDC signage should be delegated to Cllr. Pailthorpe and the Deputy Clerk, who had undertaken the original survey.

Councillors then discussed the merits of introducing a temporary one-way system in Market Street. Cllr. Best reported that the initial tranche of covid-related Government funding allocated to Highways had quickly been spent, but there was due to be additional funding allocated. He had therefore asked Highways to cost up a one-way scheme for Market Street. After further discussion, it was agreed that the Council should request Highways to instigate a one-way system in Market Street for a trial period.

38 **FEES AND HIRE CHARGES**

20/21 To consider whether to waive the fees/hire charges for community groups for the current financial year

It was **AGREED to waive the fees/hire charges for community groups for the current financial year.**

39 **GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

20/21

- a) MTIG Capital Priority Projects funding: to consider which projects the Council should focus on in terms of submitting applications for MTIG grant funding.

Cllr. Best pointed out that, when discussed previously, refurbishment of the Falkland Square public toilets had been suggested as a priority for the MTIG funding, as the £20,000 available would substantially defray the overall cost of refurbishment. Cllr. Hartshorn reminded Councillors that he had circulated a list of potential projects which could be candidates for funding.

After further discussion, it was agreed that a small working group, consisting of Cllrs. Cottle, Hartshorn, Roberts and Wakeman, be asked to assess the funding options and to report back to Full Council with their recommendations.

- b) SSDC Community Grant funding: to consider an environmental project suitable for SSDC Community Grant funding support.

After discussion, it was agreed that the same working group of Councillors assigned to consider MTIG funding priorities, should also consider options for SSDC Community Grant funding.

40 **YOUTH SERVICE**

20/21 To receive a progress report from Cllr. Pailthorpe and the Deputy Clerk on the current youth service activities

Cllr. Pailthorpe reported on the outcome of a recent of the Youth Service Steering Group. ALS had increased their youth activities and, as a result, were incurring more costs. ALS's invoices were therefore likely to rise by between £300 and £400 per month.

The Deputy Clerk added that the SSDC Summer Playday events had been cancelled, although ALS were keen to organise some activities over the summer.

41 **TRANSFER OF LAND FROM SSDC OWNERSHIP TO THAT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

20/21

- a) Severalls War Memorial: to confirm that the Council wishes to proceed with a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) application, to transfer the Severalls War Memorial and associated oval area of land to the ownership of the Town Council

It was **AGREED that the Council should proceed with a CAT application, to transfer the Severalls War Memorial and associated oval area of land to the ownership of the Town Council.**

- b) Land immediately in front of the Town Hall: to consider further whether the Council wishes to submit a CAT application to SSDC, to take ownership of the paved area of land in front of the Town Hall and whether the application should also include the parking bays

After discussion, it was **AGREED that the Council should proceed with a CAT application to SSDC, to take ownership of the paved area of land in front of the Town Hall and that the application should also include the parking bays.**

42 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

- 20/21 To note the report compiled on behalf of SLCC/SALC and to consider whether the Council wishes to contribute in any way

The SLCC/SALC-sponsored report was noted. Cllr. Hartshorn expressed the view that he supported the principles put forward in the report. Cllr. Roundell Greene counselled caution, recommending that the Town Council avoid declaring a position until firm proposals were on the table from the leaders of the County and District Councils.

43 **NEWSLETTER**

- 20/21 To approve the articles for the next edition of the newsletter

It was **AGREED to approve the articles for inclusion in the next newsletter, with the minor amendments as discussed in the meeting.**

44 **OUTSIDE BODIES**

20/21

- a) Birds Almshouses: to note that Cllr. Roundell Greene is unable to continue as the representative for Birds Almshouses, and therefore to seek an alternative

Cllr. Wakeman kindly agreed to act as the representative for Birds Almshouses.

- b) Chubbs Almshouses: to note that a vacancy exists for a Town Councillor to represent the Chubbs Almshouses as a trustee and therefore to agree a nominee

Cllr. Pailthorpe kindly agreed to act as a representative for Chubbs Almshouses.

45 **CORRESPONDENCE**

20/21

- a) Request for mountain biking area: to consider a request for an area of land that could be set aside for mountain biking “dirt jumps”

The correspondence was noted. Cllr. Aslett pointed out that there had been an area of Bincombe Beeches that had been used for a number of years as a mountain biking area. Councillors noted this and suggested that the small working group set up to consider grant funding priorities [see 20/21 39 above] be asked to also consider this request.

- b) Community orchard: to consider the two letters of objection received regarding the planned community orchard at the Barn Street recreation ground

The correspondence was noted. It was agreed that the artist’s impression that

Cllr. Hartshorn had drawn up would be very useful in clarifying to residents and users that the proposed orchard would enhance the overall amenity of the Barn Street recreation ground.

- c) Additional benches: to consider a request received for additional benches at the Henhayes Recreation Ground

The correspondence was noted. Councillors agreed with the principle of placing additional benches around the perimeter of Henhayes. Cllr. Pailthorpe suggested that these should be memorial benches and that the public should be invited, through the newsletter, to place a memorial bench on Henhayes, of a design approved by the Council to ensure consistency.

46  
20/21

#### **TO RECEIVE DRAFT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- a) Joint Burial Committee meeting held on 2 June 2020

Noted.

- b) Planning and Highways Committee meeting held on 8 June 2020

Noted.

- c) George Reynolds Management working group meetings held on 27 May and 26 June 2020

Noted.

47  
20/21

#### **TO RECEIVE ANY MATTERS OF REPORT**

- Cllr. Best reported that the Small Improvement Scheme (SIS) for the Market Street/South Street junction had now progressed to the point where a drawing was available. Cllr. Best would table this drawing at the forthcoming Planning & Highways meeting.
- Cllr. Aslett reported on an issue where vehicles were causing damage to the pavement at Laburnum Crescent. He requested that the Deputy Clerk contact Highways about this issue.
- Cllr. Cottle noted that the Government were allowing playgrounds to be re-opened as of 4 July. The Clerk added that he had asked the Operations Manager to produce a covid risk assessment for the playgrounds. Cllrs. Head and Stuart asked that this risk assessment be made available well in advance of the playground opening date, to allow time to assess the document.
- Cllr. Aslett reported that he had visited the Barn Street recreation ground several times recently and was struck by how many people used the area to walk their dogs, despite the fact that dogs were not allowed on this recreation ground. He asked that this issue be brought as an agenda item at a future Council meeting.
- Cllr. Head reported that the Church Street flower bed wall had been damaged by a vehicle and asked the Deputy Clerk to report this to Highways.

20  
20/21

#### **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Monday 27 July 2020 at 6.45 p.m.

The meeting closed at 8.56 p.m.

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:** .....

tc29June2020