

Councillors are hereby summoned, and members of the public and press are invited, to attend a meeting of the **Amenities Committee** to be held on **Monday 10 March 2025**, following the meeting of the Planning & Highways Committee, and not commencing before 19.00, in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne for the purpose of transacting the business outlined on the agenda below.

Notes:

- **Members of the public can access the meeting which will be uploaded via the following link:**
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTA9K-7L4Onjcli2Gtz7tCg>.
- **Members of the public requiring assistance or reasonable adjustments to aid their attendance at council meetings are asked to contact the Council Offices in advance using the above contact details. Documents are available in large print by request.**
- **Assistive listening devices are available at public meetings – please see a member of staff prior to the start of the meeting.**
- **Recording of meetings is permitted under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014; please refer to the Council’s Policy on Audio/Visual Recording & Photography at Meetings ([Recording-Meetings-policy-Feb-2022.pdf \(crewkerne-tc.gov.uk\)](#)).**
- **Public participation is welcome during the allocated Public Open Forum session, please refer to Section 3 of the Council’s Standing Orders ([Standing-Orders-May-2024.pdf \(crewkerne-tc.gov.uk\)](#)).**

Katharine Sheehan FSLCC, Town Clerk (signed on original)
4 March 2025

Agenda

- 039/2425** **To receive and approve apologies for absence.**
a. To record members present:
Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires:
 - a record be kept of the members in attendance.
 - this record forms part of the minutes of the meeting.
 - Members who are unable attend a meeting should tender apologies in advance to the Town Clerk and the grounds for apologies tendered will also be recorded.b. To approve any apologies for absence:
Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires:
 - Members present to decide if the reason(s) for a member’s absence are acceptable.
- 040/2425** **To receive declarations of pecuniary or personal interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations.**
The Localism Act 2011 and the Council’s Code of Conduct requires:
 - Members to declare any interests not currently recorded in the Member’s Register of Interests or not notified to the Monitoring Officer of it.
 - Requests for Dispensations should be made in writing to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.
- 041/2425** **To approve the draft minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 13 January 2025.**
- 042/2425** **Public Open Forum:** Questions may be put to the Council in person during this public participation session of up to 15 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes per person. Issues notified to the Clerk a minimum of 3 working days before the meeting (i.e., by 5pm on the preceding Wednesday) will receive a response during this session. Issues
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raised in this session without prior notice may be referred to the Clerk to respond to within 10 working days or listed on a subsequent agenda. The Chair reserves the right to vary or extend these time limits.

- 043/2425** **Report from the Amenities Chair:** to note the updated progress matrix.
- 044/2425** **Land at Easthams Lane:** to receive a verbal update from Cllr. Best.
- 045/2425** **Happy Valley consultation:** to consider results of consultation on sandpit and determine a way forward.
- 046/2425** **To receive Matters of Report** (verbal reports for information only).
- 047/2425** **Next meeting:** Monday 12 May 2025, following the Planning and Highways Committee, Council Chamber, Town Hall.

Amenities Progress Report

March 2025

Town Hall / Victoria Hall	
Christmas Lighting Up	Condition of crib – needs review, will be assessed once down. Brace/collar for town tree – shims to be supplied to alter angle. New string of lights for Town Hall and new tree lights required. Lucombe Oak Lighting: pre-planning submitted.
Town Hall exterior doors, windows and interior window frames and sills.	Ops Manager to arrange survey and quote for stabilising wood.
Council Chamber	Quotes required for a push bar mechanism on Council Chamber fire exit door.
Drainage at side of Town Hall (water accumulating against side of building)	Drain is not in TH curtilage, reported to Highways again on 7.1.24 as flooding. Consider Perspex to protect building? Longer term solution required.
Town Hall/Vic Hall fire assembly point signage	Signage for apron ordered. A practice evacuation is due.
Town Hall fire risk assessment	Completed 05.09.24. Follow up actions mostly complete.
Parking bay lines are faded/gone	Complete, July 24. (Side bay outstanding, to ask contractor when next in the area).
EICR rectifications.	Completed 12.09.24. Contractor being chased re rectifications. May need to change contractor.
Smashed lights (VH)	Final one remains outstanding due to height.
Cracked slabs and steps at Town Hall	In 25/26 budget. Waiting for date from contractor.
Plinth	Inspected November 2024 – minor remedial works recommended and quotes being sought. Hoped that works can be arranged at same time slabs are repaired.
Banking Hub	Counter delivery arranged, additional sockets required. Staff induction arranged.
George Reynolds Centre (GRC)	
NB Where possible GRC works to go into 25/26 due to VAT threshold.	
Solar Panels	Budget issue but quotes required. On hold while GRC management changes.
Landlord's inspection - (From 27 th Jun 2023)	New landlord inspection to be arranged asap/
Lighting upgrade to LEDs	As the units fail, to replace with LEDs.
Assembly signage	Sign has been purchased – location TBD.

Amenities Progress Report

Heating system 'zoning'	Needs plan to manage around users/seasons. Need to diarise key dates, ideally investigate better control technology in the future.
OHP Screen	Organise sign 'Please ensure screen is rolled up after use'.

Cemetery, Lodge and Chapel	
Chapel Alarm	Quotes being sought to take over contract from 1.4.25
Cedar	Beech replacement to be relocated.
Tomographic testing	Prioritise holm oaks – Agreed 8 priority trees including holm oaks to be tested. Booked for March 2025.
Exterior Windows	Repair to two front window frames now complete – repaint.
Gates and railings (JBC)	Gates complete. JBC to consider railings? High cost.
Pointing & Guttering	Agreed – awaiting date (spring 2025).
Paths (JBC)	New paths complete June 2024. Remaining paths upgrade underway. Trial sections in old section underway – agreed matting section to be extended in April and monitored over one cutting season.
Rear internal workshop chapel wall	Glass break to be installed once internal walls works complete.
Memorial inspection due (JBC)	One member of staff has completed training; inspection plan required by end of March at the latest.
Internal workshop chapel walls	Agreed and underway. Second lime plaster coat is drying out, skim will be required. Quotes for painting being sought.

Playgrounds / Allotments / Open Spaces etc	
Henhayes	Graffiti on some of the play equipment was removed by the Grounds Team– ONGOING AS IT APPEARS. Fence to Henhayes car park keeps getting broken due to people climbing it/cars bumping it – Grounds Team to monitor and repair as needed. Bike shelter – quotes being sought for replacement panels. Woodwork: bollards outstanding, rear Aquacentre fence outstanding for staining.
Happy Valley	Floodlights: fault fixed. Replacement LED quote has gone into budget, second quote will be required as above threshold. Possible question mark over future of sandpit – consultation results to go to March Amenities; possible further consultation on new equipment at Skate Jam.
Bincombe Allotments	Walls in poor condition – surveyor booked for March 2025.

Amenities Progress Report

Pithers Court	Clearance for allotments – works waiting for contractor to confirm.
St. Bart’s Churchyard	Grit bins installed. Church will provide design for improved signage. Overhanging tree will impede mower, planning consent has been sought. Paths treated by Grounds Team 7.1.25.
Ground to rear of Public Toilets	Crewkerne in Bloom proposal for rainwater harvesting at rear of toilets: kit has arrived and needs connecting.
Bincombe Beeches	Last memorial tree to be properly staked. Stakes are in, more ties required. Consultants starting work late November to produce updated management plan – in progress, draft expected. Reptiles translocation – no longer proceeding. Year 2 Ash Die Back works and other outstanding works in tree survey need scheduling – planning consent awaited.
Barn Street Recreation Ground	Additional trees agreed from Somerset Council’s tree fund – Deputy Clerk to action. Contractors quoting for watering, staking and planting. Due March 2025.
Tennis Courts - Severalls	Fencing around edge is loose. Ops Manager to seek quotes.
Land off Easthams Road	Transfer documents are ready. Clearance has been undertaken by TW. Some outstanding issues – Town Clerk to liaise.
Allotments	Inspections – concluded for 2024. Due summer 2025. Tap removal planned at Severalls.
Market Street bus shelter	With Highways – MB to chase.

Additional Items	
Fingerpost refurbishment	Funding awarded for Hewish Lane post. Scheduled imminently. Town Centre heritage fingerposts need realigning and painting.
Playground inspection reports follow up	ARC seeking quotes for rectification work following annual report. Second quote required. KH and MB would like to do one playground per year. Ops Manager to recirculate quotes.
Gutter Cleaning Clearance	Booked March 2025.
Gritting	Insurance advice on gritting CTC land: <i>Essentially it is a question of what is reasonable for an organisation with your responsibilities and resources – if manpower/budget was limitless I’m sure you would grit everything every day during the colder months!</i> <i>Seeing as resources are limited the best course of action would be to risk assess and identify the areas which present the largest risk and grit those as frequently as reasonably possible.</i>

Amenities Progress Report

	<p><i>This could be the areas with the highest footfall or if you have a set of steep steps where a slip could be more dangerous than a flat footpath then these should be prioritised.</i></p> <p><i>If you are being contracted to grit a third-party pathway you'll just need to also risk assess and ensure you have adequate resources to fulfil the requirements.</i></p> <p>High priority areas AGREED by MB: Front of Town Hall (ski slope), LIC steps, path at side of Town Hall, Lucombe Oak and Aquacentre paths, also cemetery where required.</p>
Town benches	Town centre benches need some attention/cleaning and clearance of surroundings in some cases – Ops Manager to discuss with Grounds Team. Falkland Square benches have been done. Next priority benches are those on the Chard Road, Hinton Road, and Mount Pleasant. Query over ownership of the bench at the bottom of Furland Road – Somerset Highways own this.
Town interpretation boards	Very out of date, need updating badly. First draft under review.
PAT Testing	Completed January 2025. Due Dec 25.
SID poles and additional SID.	Deputy Clerk has asked Somerset Council about getting additional poles on Ashlands Road and Kithill. Additional SID to be purchased in new financial year.
Legionella Risk Assessments	Town Hall/Band Hall/Toilets – several follow up recommendations including removal of deadlegs. GRC – calorifiers not reaching temp. Seeking quotes for these works. Issues with water temps in Vic Hall reported by CUDOS – Ops Manager to investigate.

Report date: 4.3.25

Report subject	Happy Valley: to receive results of the consultation on the future of the sandpit and determine a way forward.
Committee name	Amenities Committee.
Meeting date	10 th March 2025.
Report author	Katharine Sheehan FSLCC, Town Clerk.
Report contact details	townclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk .
Consultees	Public consultation has been undertaken.
Decision required?	Yes.

1. Purpose

1.1 To receive the results of a recent consultation about the future of the Happy Valley sandpit and determine a way forward.

2. Background information

2.1 In the recent town newsletter and on social media platforms the following article was published:

HAVE YOUR SAY

The Council is seeking your input on an important decision regarding the sandpit at Happy Valley. While it has been a popular feature for children over the years, we've received complaints about its cleanliness due to fouling by dogs or other animals. To address the issue, the Council is considering two possible solutions:

1. *Fencing off the sandpit. This would protect the area and ensure it remains safe for play. However, the cost of installing a fence would be significant.*
2. *This option would remove the sand entirely, replacing it with a safety surface to create a cleaner, more flexible space for the community to enjoy, with the possible addition of another piece of play equipment.*

2.2 Respondents were asked to email their comments to the Town Council.

3. Detailed Consideration

3.1 The sandpit at Happy Valley has been under consideration by the Happy Valley Working Group, which suggested that public opinion be formally sought.

3.2 There are a number of management considerations with the sandpit:

- The sand 'drifts' out of the pit, meaning that levels have to be topped up
- The sand hides sharp objects; broken glass has been found there on many occasions
- Animals use the sand as a litter tray
- The sand has to be replaced regularly due to animal fouling.

3.3 Results of the consultation:

TOTAL RESPONSES RECEIVED: 17

RESPONSES IN FAVOUR OF FENCING THE SANDPIT: 1

RESPONSES IN FAVOUR OF REMOVING SANDPIT AND ADDING A PIECE OF PLAY EQUIPMENT: 16

3.4 It has been suggested that the Town Clerk and Amenities team be tasked to identify a 'menu' of play equipment suitable for the area which would then be consulted upon, including an engagement exercise at the Skate Jam in August to obtain opinions of regular park users.

4. Financial implications

There is no money in either the current budget, nor the budget for 25/26. However, if Councillors decide to move forward with plans to remove the sand, and add safety surfacing and additional play equipment, this could become a budget consideration for the next budgeting cycle, which begins in the early autumn.

5. Equalities considerations

Accessible play equipment, consider whether any age group provision is particularly lacking.

6. Crime and Disorder considerations

The opinion of the Design Out Crime Officer be sought on any changes to the area.

7. Council Action Plan objectives supported

1.2.2 Improve Accessibility

1.2.3 Replace end of life play equipment

8. Recommendation

8.1. It is recommended that Council AGREES:

To proceed with the proposal to work towards removing the sandpit and replacing with appropriate play equipment and surfacing, and delegate arrangements to the Town Clerk to identify suitable equipment for further consultation.