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## Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 19:30 in Crediton Library, Belle Parade, Crediton.

**Present:** Cllrs Steve Huxtable, Guy Cochran, Jim Cairney, John Downes, Joyce Harris, Rachel Backhouse and Paul Perriman

**Apologies:** Cllrs Natalia Letch, Liz Brookes-Hocking, Giles Fawssett and Vix Frisby

**In Attendance:** Tim Bland, Events and Town Centre Officer  
3 members of the public

**Minute Taker:** Rachel Avery, Town Clerk

## MINUTES

### 2025/300 PRESENTATION FROM NORTH DEVON LINE RAIL PROMOTION GROUP

The meeting commenced with a presentation from the North Devon Line Rail Promotion Group. An overview of the group's objectives and recent activities, with the group having rebranded to focus more on passenger services and community engagement, moving away from rail heritage. They conducted a soft relaunch last November and have been increasing engagement with various parties, aiming to diversify their committee membership to include younger voices.

Several key issues, including the capacity constraints of the current two-carriage trains, the need for better connections at Exeter, and the importance of improving rural community access to rail services. The group has been involved in increasing service frequencies since 1997, but the infrastructure is now struggling to cope with demand. They are advocating for tweaks to the existing timetable, long-term investment in the line, and enhancements to resilience, such as addressing tree maintenance on embankments.

The presentation highlighted the significant growth in passenger numbers from Crediton, attributed partly to the Okehampton service. The group aims to work closely with the town council to identify resident needs and shape future investment. They are also looking to improve information reliability at stations and address parking capacity issues, particularly with new housing developments like Libbets Grange.

Questions from councillors focused on platform length restrictions, car parking expansion, the potential for electrification, and the feasibility of battery electric trains. It was explained that longer trains could be managed despite platform length issues, and the emphasis is currently on battery technology rather than full electrification. Car parking expansion is being explored, particularly at Eggesford, but detailed planning is required.

*gjf* *Cllr Cairney joined the meeting at 19.52*

The presentation concluded with a discussion on the realistic prospects of reinstating the railway line to Bideford, considering the high costs and flood resilience issues. The group is focused on achievable improvements with existing infrastructure while advocating for long-term investments. The council expressed appreciation for the presentation and agreed to stay in touch regarding future steps.

**2025/301**

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

A resident raised concerns about the town council's budget survey, comparing it to managed consultations seen in Budapest, which are designed to lead respondents to specific answers. The resident felt the survey framed the precept in a way that justified an increase rather than presenting neutral choices. The resident questioned who drafted and approved the survey and why other councillors were not involved in its oversight.

The Chair responded, stating that the survey questions were devised by the town clerk and the Chair to gauge public opinion. The Chair acknowledged the resident's concerns and promised to review the survey's wording to ensure it allows residents to express their opinions freely. The Chair confirmed that no other councillors were involved in drafting the survey.

Another resident questioned the minutes of the previous meeting, noting that Councillor Backhouse had raised concerns about the timeliness of minute preparation. The resident asked why the minutes were not ready for review as assured. The Chair did not provide a specific answer but promised to look into the matter.

The final question concerned the attendance of council staff at the meeting and whether it was on a paid or voluntary basis. The Chair promised to provide an answer.

**2025/302**

**APOLOGIES**

**Decision:** It was resolved to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs Letch, Brookes-Hocking, Fawsett and Frisby (personal). (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable) accepted by the council.

**2025/303**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

**2025/303.1**

**TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**  
There were no declarations of personal interest or disclosable pecuniary interests.

**2025/303.2**

**TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)**

No dispensation requests were received prior to the meeting.

**2025/304**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

There were no changes to the order of business.



**2025/305**

**CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**2025/306 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES**

Decision: It was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 04 November 2025, as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

**2025/307 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

No written reports from District and County Councillors had been received. The council decided to carry forward this item to the next meeting to allow for written reports to be submitted.

**2025/308 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

Hayward's Educational Foundation: Cllr Cairney advised that the foundation has appointed two new trustees.

Crediton United Charities: Cllr Harris attended meeting but could not report much due to confidentiality.

Devon Association of Local Councils: In Cllr Brookes-Hocking's absence, it was noted that there are regular meetings to discuss local government reorganisation.

Crediton Twinning Association: Cllr Huxtable advised that plans for 2026 are on hold due to upcoming elections in France.

Boniface Link Association: Cllrs Harris and Huxtable advised on recent activities including a croquet event and BBQ. The association is planning future events.

Sustainable Crediton: Cllr Backhouse advised that the group is actively supporting the Boniface Trail.

Boniface Trail Association: Cllr Cairney advised that a meeting with Devon County Council is scheduled to discuss feasibility and funding.

Crediton Chamber of Commerce: Cllr Cochran advised that funding has been received for a craft workshop and an interactive book on St Boniface. Discussions with traders regarding the Christmas lights will continue.

Okehampton Rail Forum: Cllr Cairney advised that the forum's success has led to the need for platform expansion due to increased passenger demand.

**2025/309 FINANCE**

**2025/309.1 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN 01 OCTOBER AND 31 OCTOBER 2025**

An outstanding action regarding Bang Bang Boxing was noted following the October meeting, with transactions related to this organisation being clarified.

Decision: It was resolved to approve transactions between 01 October and 31 October 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

**2025/309.2 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION TO 31 OCTOBER 2025**

Decision: It was resolved to approve the bank reconciliation to 31st August 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

**2025/309.3 TO NOTE BANK BALANCES TO 31 OCTOBER 2025**

Decision: The bank balances as of 31 October 2025 were noted.



**2025/309.4 TO NOTE YEAR TO DATE SPEND**

A request was made to alternate line colours in the spreadsheet to improve readability.

**Decision:** The year-to-date spend was **noted**.

**2025/309.5 TO NOTE EARMARKED RESERVES BALANCES**

**Decision:** The Earmarked Reserves balances were **noted**.

**2025/310 EAR MARKED RESERVES VIREMENTS**

**Decision:** The report regarding Ear Marked Reserves Virements was received and the recommendations therein were **approved**. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

**2025/311 CCLA TRANSFER**

**Decision:** It was **resolved to approve** the transfer of £100,000.00 from the Co-op account to the CCLA was approved.

**2025/312 POLICY REVIEW**

The following policies were reviewed:

Accessibility Statement:

The document had been updated to include the name at the top, the address for website access issues, and the date of the website review, which was 1st November, with a compliance rate of 71%. Further review of the website was required, particularly regarding PDFs, which are not easily read.

**Decision:** It was **resolved to approve** the Accessibility Statement. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

Privacy Notice:

The Privacy Notice changes were minimal, mainly the name and address at the top and an update to the notice date.

**Decision:** It was **resolved to approve** the Privacy Notice. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

Code of Conduct:

There were no amendments.

**Decision:** It was **resolved to approve** the Code of Conduct. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

Co-Option Policy:

Changes changes were minimal, mainly the name and address at the top and an update to the policy date.

**Decision:** It was **resolved to approve** the Co-Option Policy. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

Discretions Policy:

The Discretion Policy had a different formant (which was a policy proposed by Peninsula Pensions) but had no amendments to the content.

**Decision:** It was **resolved to approve** the Discretions Policy. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)



Investment Strategy:

The Investment Strategy had several changes, including the name and address at the top, indentation issues, and references to the Council Affairs Committee, which no longer exists. The strategy now states that the full council will determine the maximum periods and approve recommendations from the responsible finance officer. Ethical considerations were debated and agreed to be carefully worded in the investment criteria.

**Decision:** It was resolved to approve the Investment Strategy with the additional wording relating to ethical considerations. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

**2025/313 MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITY SAFETY**

The report regarding Mid Devon District Council's Community Safety provision was noted. The Town Clerk clarified the acronym PSPO, which stands for Public Space Protection Order. The report was noted, and the council expressed encouragement about the collaboration with MDDC. The provision aims to enhance community safety and the council looks forward to working together on this initiative.

**2025/314 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting will be Tuesday, 02 December 2025.

**2025/315 PART II**

**Decision:** It was resolved to approve the exclusion of the public and press were from the meeting under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

**2025/316 MANOR OFFICE**

The council received and noted the report regarding Manor Office.

**2025/317 REPORTS PACK**

Signed .....

Dated..... 8th Dec. 2025 /