



Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Credition Town Council held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 19:30, in Credition Library, Belle Parade, Credition, EX17 2AA

Present: Cllrs Steve Huxtable, Guy Cochran, Giles Fawssett, Jim Cairney, John Downes, Joyce Harris, Liz Brookes-Hocking, Natalia Letch, Paul Perriman, Rachel Backhouse and Vix Frisby

In Attendance: 3 members of the public
1 member of the press

Minute Taker: Rachel Avery, Town Clerk

MINUTES

2025/001 ELECTION OF CHAIR/MAYOR FOR 2025/26

2025/001.1 RETIRING CHAIR/MAYOR WILL MAKE A SHORT SPEECH

The retiring Chair/Mayor, Cllr Cochran, delivered a speech reflecting on the past year's activities, including the Dokkum and Fulda visit for the Big Boniface Bash, the Credition Food Festival, and various VE 80 events. The Chair expressed gratitude to the officers and councillors for their involvement throughout the year.

2025/001.2 TO SEEK NOMINATIONS AND ELECT THE CHAIR/MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Decision: Steve Huxtable was elected as the Chair/Mayor for the year 2025/26. (Proposed by Cllr Cairney)

2025/001.3 NEW CHAIR/MAYOR TO SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Huxtable signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, officially taking the role of Chair/Mayor.

2025/002 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR/DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2025/26

2025/002.1 CHAIR/MAYOR WILL SEEK NOMINATIONS AND ELECT THE DEPUTY CHAIR/DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The election of the Deputy Chair/Deputy Mayor for the year 2024/25 followed. Three councillors expressed interest in the position: Councillors Fawssett, Cochran, and Backhouse. A discussion ensued about the possibility of sharing the role to gain experience, similar to a previous arrangement in 2023/24.

Decision: It was **resolved to approve** a tri-deputy mayor arrangement for the year 2025/26, with Cllrs Cochran, Backhouse and Fawssett undertaking a period of four months each. (Proposed by Cllr Downes)

2025/002.2 NEW DEPUTY CHAIR/DEPUTY MAYOR TO SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Cochran signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, officially taking the role of Deputy Chair/Deputy Mayor to September 2025.

2025/003 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public made the following comments:

- Concern regarding the reliability of live streaming council meetings, highlighting instances where the service had failed. The council acknowledged the issue, noting the challenges with internet connectivity and the dual function of transcribing and live feed, however there is no legal requirement for the town council to live stream meetings
- Concerns were raised about the current use of the High Street notice board being used solely for council notices rather than community postings. A response would be provided to the member of the public
- Concerns around the loyalty of double and triple hatted town councillors, and how members of the public may not wish to deal with the same personnel at each level of local authority
- Lack of responses to public questions being updated on the town council website.

2025/004 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2025/005 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

2025/006 ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes to the order of business.

2025/007 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

2025/008 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 March 2025, as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2025/009 TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Youth Sub Committee held on 15 October 2024. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Community Meeting held on 04 March 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting held on 11 March 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Community Meeting held on 01 April 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting held on 08 April 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2025/010 REPORTS

2025/010.1 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Reports were received from County and District Councillors. Councillor Downes reported on the substantial work done by the MDDC Policy Development Group for economy and assets, highlighting the benefits to Crediton from various funds and initiatives. He explained the process of obtaining and administering government funds and the challenges faced due to changing funding levels.

2025/010.2 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES REPRESENTATIVES

DALC: Councillor Brookes-Hocking provided insights into the ongoing discussions about Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the potential increased responsibilities for town councils. She emphasised the importance of town and parish councils in delivering services and the need for improved collaboration with higher authorities.

2025/011 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The discussion on the committee structure was initiated with a report from Cllr Huxtable, which was included in the meeting pack. The report proposed changes to the committee structure to enhance attendance and participation in meetings. The primary goal was to ensure that all town councillors are involved in the decision-making process, addressing concerns about councillors who do not participate in committees or attend events regularly.

The intention of the restructure was to move to full town council meetings held twice a month. The first meeting would focus on community-related and planning issues, while the second meeting would address finance, governance, and strategy. Additionally, a HR committee would be created to provide support for staffing matters. Committees for youth and grants would remain, but ultimate decision-making powers would stay with full council.

Cllr Backhouse raised concerns about the current system, highlighting the inefficiencies and lack of equal information among councillors. The proposal aimed to create a more streamlined and inclusive structure, with regular meetings and equal participation from all councillors.

Cllr Brookes-Hocking raised concerns around the loss of committees, stating that projects are progressed more quickly through this structure.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the recommendations in the report. (Proposed by Cllr Letch, Cllr Brookes-Hocking voted against)

2025/012 ELECTION OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES 2025/26

This agenda item was rendered irrelevant due to the changes in the committee structure agreed upon in agenda item 202/011. It was **agreed** to postpone the election of committees until the next meeting, allowing time to draft and approve the terms of reference for the new committees.

2025/013 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2025/26

It was **agreed** to postpone the election of committees and until the next meeting.

2025/014 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024/25

2025/014.1 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Decision: The Annual Internal Audit Report was **noted**.

2025/014.2 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (SECTION 1 OF THE ANNUAL RETURN)

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Annual Governance Statement (section 1 of the Annual Return. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/014.3 TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (SECTION 2 OF THE ANNUAL RETURN)

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Accountings Statements (section 2 of the Annual Return. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/014.4 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the annual financial statement for the year ended 31st March 2025. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/014.5 TO APPROVE THE YEAR END BANK RECONCILIATION FOR 2024/25

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Year End Bank Reconciliation for 2025/25. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/014.6 TO APPROVE THE DATES OF 3RD JUNE – 14TH JULY 2025 FOR THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the dates of 3rd June – 14th July 2025 for the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/014.7 TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE CURRENT ASSET REGISTER

2025/015 STANDING ORDERS

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** and adopt the Standing Orders. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/016 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** and adopt the Financial Regulations. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2025/017 MEETING SCHEDULE

This agenda item was rendered irrelevant due to the changes in the committee structure agreed upon in agenda item 202/011. It was **agreed** to approve the amended meeting schedule at the next meeting.

2025/018 PUBLIC DISCUSSION

The council reviewed the use of public discussion prior to each full town council meeting. After a brief debate, the council voted to continue the practice, recognising its importance in engaging with the community and allowing public input on council matters.

Decision: It was **resolved** to continue the period of public discussion at Full Council meetings. (Proposed by Cllr Letch, Cllr Cairney voted against)

2025/019 PULSE HUBS

The council discussed the proposed site locations for Pulse Hubs and the approval for them to proceed to the planning application stage with MDDC. It was **agreed** to postpone the final decision until the next meeting to allow time for further questions and clarifications.

2025/020 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Due to the new committee structure, the next meeting would take place on Tuesday, 3rd June 2025.

2025/021 PART II

Decision: It was **resolved** to move into Part II under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, excluding the public and press. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2025/022 INVESTIGATION PANEL FINDINGS

The council received and acknowledged the notes from the Investigation Panel meeting.

2025/023 YOUTH WORK

The report on youth work delivery and associated staffing for September 2025 to March 2026 was received. It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting, following a further meeting of the Youth Sub-Committee.

2025/024 REPORTS PACK

Signed

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