



Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 19:30 in the Credition Library, Belle Parade, Credition.

- Present:** Cllrs Steve Huxtable, Guy Cochran, Giles Fawssett, Jim Cairney (part meeting), John Downes, Joyce Harris, Liz Brookes-Hocking, Natalia Letch, Paul Perriman, Rachel Backhouse, Tim Stanford and Vix Frisby
- In Attendance:** 4 members of the public
Tim Bland, Events and Town Centre Officer
- Minute Taker:** Rachel Avery, Town Clerk

MINUTES

2026/459 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Cllr Huxtable opened the meeting and members introduced themselves.

Several members of the public raised questions and concerns:

- clarification on percentages mentioned in a previous meeting
- the repurposing of the BT phone box
- update on the town clock, which the Chair confirmed as being serviced tomorrow
- where the King's portrait was, with the Chair confirming that it would be installed when the council offices are in use following building work
- concerns about the council's operations, specifically regarding the CCTV cameras, deletion of Facebook comments, outdated policies, and the use of the local government gold award badge. They questioned who in the council is responsible for ensuring policies are kept up to date and legal obligations are met. The Chair acknowledged the concerns and promised to address them
- A request for funding for a master's degree had previously been on an agenda, questioning whether it had been discussed at a different meeting. The Chair confirmed that a response would be provided
- Outstanding request for information on the expenditure for staff/councillor training were raised, specifically a £2097.00 expense in December. The Chair clarified that it was for an annual subscription to Breakthrough Communications and promised to provide more details
- concerns about anti-social behaviour related to the proposed toilet block location near the paddling pool. The Chair noted that no decision would be made at the meeting and that the issue would go through planning, allowing for further public input.

The Chair advised that any question having not received a response at this meeting would receive a written response.

2026/460 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies. It was **noted** that Councillor Cairney would be late, due to attending another meeting.

2026/461 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**2026/461.1 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

2026/461.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

No dispensation requests had been received prior to the meeting.

2026/462 ORDER OF BUSINESS

Cllr Backhouse questioned the order of discussing the paddling pool survey after the refurbishment options, suggesting it would make more sense to discuss the survey first.

Decision: It was **resolved** that item 477.2 would be taken as 477.1 and 477.2 would be taken as 477.1. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/463 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk provided an update on the installation of the bus shelter at Joseph Lock Way as part of phase three of the roundabout works, scheduled between 31 August and 20 October 2026. The Chair welcomed this update and noted that more information would follow.

2026/464 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 03 March 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

2026/465 TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Decision: It was **resolved** to **ratify** the minutes of the Youth Committee meeting, held on 27 January 2027, despite Cllr Brookes-Hocking expressing dissatisfaction, noting signs of AI involvement and inaccuracies in recording decisions and tasks. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/466 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

The Town Clerk confirmed that no new reports had been received.

2026/467 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Crediton Twinning Association: Cllr Huxtable advised that they had recently held its AGM.

Sustainable Crediton: Cllr Backhouse advised that they group is holding a meeting this Thursday, with an AGM coming up.

North Devon Line Stakeholder Forum: Cllr Downes and Cochran discussed improvements to rail links between Barnstaple and Exeter, including new rolling stock and potential infrastructure upgrades. The feasibility of dual railway lines and passing loops was considered, though funding and implementation remain uncertain.

2026/468 FINANCE**2026/468.1 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN 01 FEBRUARY AND 28 FEBRUARY 2026**

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** transactions between 1 February and 28 February 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/468.2 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION TO 28 FEBRUARY 2026

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the bank reconciliation to 28 February 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

2026/468.3 TO NOTE BANK BALANCES TO 28 FEBRUARY 2026

The bank balances to 28 February 2026 were **noted**.

2026/468.4 TO NOTE YEAR TO DATE SPEND

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

2026/468.5 TO NOTE EAR MARKED RESERVES BALANCES

Ear Marked Reserves balances were **noted**.

2026/469 EAR MARKED RESERVES

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the following transfers:

- £220.00 into EMR 324: P3 Parish Paths.
- remaining youth subs balance (as at 31 March) into EMR 373: Youth subs (N.B. renamed to remove "24/25")
- transfer of £176.11 from EMR 365: Youth PCC Grant into the main youth budget
- transfer of £1,000 into a new EMR (374: Youth Places to Go Grant).

(Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/470 ASSERTION 10 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

Cllr Cairney joined the meeting at 19.24

Members received the Internal Auditor's report on Assertion 10, which emphasised digital and data management. The report included an action plan, created by the Town Clerk, to ensure compliance with proper practices.

Actions agreed upon included reestablishing FOI handling procedures, implementing an FOI response tracking system, ensuring all councillors attend training on FOI and GDPR, conducting data protection audits, and updating the retention schedule.

There was a discussion regarding audio and visual recordings of meetings, which would be considered following completion and review of the data audit.

Decision: It was **resolved** to **receive** and **note** the Internal Auditor's Report. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

Decision: It was **resolved** not to voluntarily adopt the Transparency Code 2015, as the ICO Model Publication Scheme is adopted and in use. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/471 REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS**2026/471.1 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MOTION FORM SIGNED BY CLLRS HUXTABLE, BROOKES-HOCKING, COCHRAN, DOWNES AND HARRIS, AND TO APPROVE THE AMENDED STANDING ORDERS**

Members debated a motion to amend Standing Orders to improve public engagement by allowing responses to questions at the meeting if submitted by 12 noon the day before. Concerns were raised about excluding new attendees from asking questions. The motion was amended to ensure that questions submitted in advance would be answered at the meeting, while questions asked on the day would receive a response within 10 working days. The amended motion was agreed to be revisited at an appropriate meeting in April to discuss the Standing Orders, with clear wording to reflect the discussion.

2026/472 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Members discussed reverting back to a committee structure for the 2026-2027 period, debating the merits of the current structure versus a committee structure. Some members felt that the current structure allowed for better awareness and collective decision-making, while others preferred the efficiency of committees.

Decision: It was **resolved** to revert to a committee structure for the 2026-2027 period, as per the report provided. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Terms of Reference. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

Decision: Dates of committee meetings in 2026/27 were noted, for ratification in May.

2026/473 POLICIES

Members reviewed the Planning Applications Policy, discussing proposals to handle smaller applications via email, with larger applications being discussed in committee. Concerns were raised that change of use applications should be considered by the committee due to their significance.

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Planning Applications Policy, with the amendment to include Change of Use application determination at committee meetings. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable. Cllrs Cairney, Frisby, Downes, Huxtable, Harris, Stanford, Perriman and Cochran voted for, Cllrs Brookes-Hocking and Fawssett voted against and Cllrs Letch and Backhouse abstained)

2026/474 CIVIC EVENTS

Members discussed the upcoming civic events in Dokkum and Fulda. The proposal was for the Mayor to attend these events to maintain and strengthen the town's relationships with these communities, with members agreeing that it was important to keep links with Dokkum and Fulda.

Decision: It was **resolved** to support the Mayor's attendance at the upcoming civic events in Dokkum and Fulda to maintain and strengthen the town's relationships with these communities, with Cllr Huxtable attending the Hessentag despite it being a new Mayoral term. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2026/475 FORMAL RATIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP TO SUMMER FESTIVAL WORKING GROUP

Decision: It was **resolved** to formally ratify the membership of the Summer Festival Working Group, including Cllrs Huxtable, Frisby, Stanford, Brookes-Hocking, and Backhouse. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/476 TOWN-WIDE RESIDENT SURVEY

Members discussed the merits of conducting a town-wide resident survey to gather residents' opinions on services provided by the council. The proposal included a multi-platform survey to ensure all residents could participate, whether electronically or via paper. Cllr Downes highlighted the importance of understanding residents' priorities ahead of the Local Government Reorganisation, which may require difficult decisions regarding service cuts or precept increases. Further understanding on the survey format and logistics would be discussed and finalised in future meetings.

Decision: It was **resolved** to conduct a town-wide resident survey to gather residents' opinions on services provided by the council. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

2026/477 NEWCOMBES MEADOW PADDLING POOL

2026/477.1 TO RECEIVE THE QUOTE WITH OPTIONS FOR REFURBISHMENT OF PADDLING POOL AND SPLASH PAD, RECEIVED FROM MDDC AND TO CONSIDER ANY FURTHER ACTIONS

Taken as item 477.2

Decision: It was **resolved to note** the contents of the report. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/477.2 TO RECEIVE CLLR BACKHOUSE'S REPORT REGARDING A PADDLING POOL SURVEY, AND TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSALS THEREIN

Taken as item 477.1

Members discussed Cllr Backhouse's report regarding the paddling pool survey. She expressed frustration due to the lack of engagement from councillors, noting that only two responses were received despite the urgency of the matter highlighted in December. A working group was formed to address the survey, but due to illness and lack of engagement, she had met individually with members to gather feedback.

She presented the amended survey, which incorporated feedback from the working group. She highlighted the importance of consulting the public quickly and proposed introducing 3 x £50 vouchers as incentives for survey completion. Concerns about data protection, privacy, and the destruction of data were raised, but members agreed that the survey could proceed, subject to due diligence and necessary agreements being in place.

Members acknowledged the need for accurate costings was acknowledged and it was agreed that the survey should focus on gauging public opinion on the expenditure.

Decision: It was **resolved** that the survey on the paddling pool could proceed, subject to due diligence and necessary agreements being in place following a meeting of the Working Group. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/478 TOWN SQUARE BENCH CLEANING

This item was not discussed due to a lack of time and would be added to the next agenda.

2026/479 MANOR OFFICE

The documents associated with the planning application, as detailed in the agenda pack, were **noted**.

2026/480 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

2026/480.1 TO NOTE THAT NO RESPONSES HAD BEEN RECEIVED REGARDING THE CONSULTATION FROM MEMBERS

The Town Clerk advised that no responses had been received regarding the consultation.

2026/480.2 TO CONSIDER, AMEND AND AGREE THE DRAFT LETTER TO GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE LGR CONSULTATION

Decision: It was **resolved to approve** sending the draft letter, as presented in the agenda pack. (Proposed by Cllr Letch)

2026/481 CREDITON AREA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

This item was not discussed due to a lack of time and would be added to the next agenda.

2026/482 ANNUAL MEETING

It was **noted** that the date of the Annual Meeting would be Tuesday, 26 May 2026, at 18:30 on the Town Square. This was acknowledged without further discussion.

2026/483 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The council noted that the date of the next meeting would be Tuesday, 07 April 2026.

2026/484 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)

2026/485 LEGAL MATTER

The Town Clerk provided a verbal report regarding a legal matter.

2026/486 REPORTS PACK

Signed

Dated.....