



**Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 19:00
in Credition Library, Belle Parade, Credition**

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

MINUTES

2026/001 ELECTION OF CHAIR/MAYOR 2026/27

2026/001.1 RETIRING CHAIR/MAYOR WILL MAKE A SHORT SPEECH

The retiring Chair, Cllr Huxtable, made a brief speech reflecting on the past year, highlighting the achievements and the ongoing projects that will continue into the next term.

2026/001.2 TO SEEK NOMINATIONS AND ELECT THE CHAIR/MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Decision: It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Steve Huxtable as Chair/Mayor for the year 2026/27. (Proposed by Cllr Fawssett)

2026/001.3 NEW CHAIR/MAYOR TO SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Huxtable signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2026/002 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR/DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2026/27

2026/002.1 CHAIR/MAYOR WILL SEEK NOMINATIONS AND ELECT THE DEPUTY CHAIR/DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Nominations were sought, and two councillors, Cllr Backhouse and Cllr Brookes-Hocking, were put forward. A vote was conducted, 3 votes for Cllr Backhouse and 4 votes for Cllr Brookes-Hocking.

Decision: It was **resolved** to elect Cllr Brookes-Hocking as the Deputy Chair/Deputy Mayor for the year 2026/27. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2026/002.2 NEW DEPUTY CHAIR/DEPUTY MAYOR TO SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Brookes-Hocking signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2026/003 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Huxtable welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting of Crediton Town Council and members introduced themselves.

2026/004 APOLOGIES

Decision: It was **resolved** to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs Perriman, Letch, Downes, Cairney, and Stanford (personal). (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/005 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

2026/005.1 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.

2026/005.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

No dispensation requested had been received.

2026/006 ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes to the order of business.

2026/007 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk informed members that the Local Council Award Scheme submission had been completed and submitted on the previous Friday afternoon.

2026/008 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 30 April 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2026/009 TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Minutes of the following meetings were reviewed:

- Grounds Maintenance Task and Finish Group held on 11 February 2026
Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Grounds Maintenance Task and Finish Group held on 11 February 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)
- HR Committee held on 06 March 2026
Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the HR Committee held on 06 March 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)
- Youth Committee held on 10 March 2026
Decision: It was **resolved** to ratify the minutes of the Youth Committee held on 10 March 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/010 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Crediton United Charities: Cllr Harris mentioned that meetings are held regularly but discussions are confidential.

Crediton Twinning Association: Cllr Huxtable reported on the recent trip to Dokkum, which was very successful and the young resident who attended enjoyed it.

Sustainable Crediton: Cllr Backhouse advised that a 45-minute film “National Emergency Briefing” is due to be shown on 10 June at the Methodist Church, followed by a discussion with a panel of experts.

2026/011 ELECTION OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES 2026/27

Members considered and approved the appointment of members to various committees for the ensuing council year:

- **Community Committee**
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Brookes-Hocking, Cairney, Cochran, Fawssett, Frisby, Harris, and Stanford with Cllr Huxtable as ex officio. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)
- **Oversight Committee**
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Backhouse, Brookes-Hocking, Cochran, Downes, Frisby, and Harris, with Cllr Huxtable as ex officio. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)
- **HR Committee**
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Backhouse, Brookes-Hocking, Frisby, Harris and Huxtable. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)
- **Grants Sub-Committee**
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Brookes-Hocking, Downes, Frisby, Harris, and Huxtable. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- **Youth Sub-Committee**
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Brookes-Hocking, Huxtable and Cochran. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/012 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2026/27

Members appointed representatives to various outside bodies for the year 2026/27:

- Hayward’s Educational Foundation
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Cairney. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- Crediton United Charities
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Harris alongside Hannah Zorlu. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) and the Larger Councils Sub Committee
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Brookes-Hocking. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- Crediton Twinning Association
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Huxtable. (Proposed by Cllr Fawssett)

- Boniface Link Association
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Harris. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- Friends of Crediton Station.
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Fawssett. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- Sustainable Crediton
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Backhouse. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- Boniface Trail Association
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Fawssett. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)
- Crediton Chamber of Commerce
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Cochran. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)
- The North Devon Rail Development Alliance
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Huxtable, Cairney and Cochran. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)
- League of Friends of Crediton Hospital
Decision: It was **resolved** to defer this appointment until an update was provided at the next meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)
- Age Concern Trustee.
Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Frisby. (Proposed by Cllr Fawssett)

2026/013 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members reviewed the Financial Regulations, noting the minor amendment regarding petty cash.

Decision: It was **resolved** to re-adopt the Financial Regulations. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/014 INSURANCE

The Deputy Clerk presented a report on quotations for insurance. Members discussed the various options, noting that Provider C offered the most comprehensive cover. It was **agreed** to investigate additional cyber cover.

Decision: It was **resolved** to proceed with Provider C (James Hallam, underwritten by Aviva) with the inclusion of the additional Personal Accident Cover at a total cost of £4,324.01, entering into a 3-year stability agreement, with a maximum increase of 5%. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse). It was also **noted** that the personal accident cover is not included in the stability agreement and will need reviewing annually.

Task: Investigate cyber insurance options to ensure adequate coverage against data breaches and external attacks. @Emma Anderson

2026/015 ASSET REGISTER

The report was received and **noted**.

2026/016 INTERNAL AUDIT

2026/016.1 TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR 2025/26

The internal auditor's report for the financial year 2025/26 was received. The Town Clerk summarised the key points and observations:

- Awarding of contracts must be formally recorded in the minutes including the name of the successful bidder. Following this, it was **noted** that the

Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2026-29 was awarded to ID Verde, following the meeting of the Task & Finish Group on 11 February 2026

- The Council had not formally reviewed the effectiveness of its internal control systems, which is a regulatory requirement. The Clerk advised that this will be included as part of the internal audit process moving forward
- The auditor highlighted an issue with the payment method for youth workers, which differed from the terms stated in their contracts. The Clerk advised that she would seek legal advice and issue variation letters to affected employees to ensure compliance
- The Council, or nominated committee, must formally review and approve staff rates and hours of pay on an annual basis
- The report highlighted the need for an Overtime and Time-Off-In-Lieu Policy
- The auditor recommended the Council approve a minimum value for items listed on the Asset Register. The additional updates to the asset register were noted under minute 2026/015
- The Clerk acknowledged the need to complete a data audit, which is in progress.

The internal auditor's thoroughness was acknowledged, and it was **noted** that the majority of the tests produced positive response.

Decision: It was **resolved** to receive and accept the internal auditor's report for 2025/26. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

Task: Provide variation letters to youth workers regarding salary payment methods to ensure compliance with Green Book terms, if required. @Rachel Avery

Task: Adopt an overtime and time-off-in-lieu policy at the next oversight committee meeting. @Rachel Avery

2026/016.2 TO NOTE THAT THE INTERNAL AUDITOR CONSIDERS THAT INTERNAL CONTROLS WERE EFFECTIVE

Decision: The Council **noted** that the Internal Auditor considers that internal controls were effective.

2026/016.3 TO CONFIRM THE COMPETENCE AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

Decision: It was **resolved** to confirm the competence and independence of the Internal Auditor. (Proposed by Cllr Huxtable)

2026/017 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW 2025/26

2026/017.1 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (SECTION 1 OF THE ANNUAL RETURN) AND RESOLVE THAT THE CHAIR AND TOWN CLERK SIGN THE DOCUMENT

Cllr Frisby left the meeting at 20.17

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the Annual Governance Statement (section 1 of the annual return) and for the Chair and Town Clerk to sign the document. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/017.2 TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (SECTION 2 OF THE ANNUAL RETURN) AND RESOLVE THAT THE CHAIR SIGNS THE DOCUMENT(S)

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the accounting statements (section 2 of the annual return) and for the Chair to sign the document. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

Cllr Frisby re-joined the meeting at 20.19

2026/017.3 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026 AND RESOLVE THAT THE CHAIR SIGNS THE DOCUMENT

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the annual financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

2026/017.4 TO APPROVE THE YEAR END BANK RECONCILIATION FOR 2025/26

Members discussed the year-end bank reconciliation for 2025/26. Although the relevant bank statements were not included in the meeting pack, it was **noted** that they had been approved at the previous Full Council meeting.

Decision: It was **resolved** to **note** the year-end bank reconciliation for 2025/26, as previously approved by Full Council on 21 April 2026, minute number 2026/519.2. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

2026/017.5 TO APPROVE THE DATES OF 03 JUNE – 14 JULY 2026 FOR THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS, BEING PUBLISHED BY THE TOWN CLERK ON 11 MAY 2026

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the dates of 03 June – 14 July 2026 for the period for the exercise of public rights, being published by the Town Clerk on 11 May 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

2026/018 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

2026/018.1 TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF IAC FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2026/27, FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF QUOTATION

Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint IAC Consultancy as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2026/27, at a cost of £840 + VAT. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/018.2 TO FURTHER CONSIDER APPOINTING IAC FOR AN ADDITIONAL TWO YEARS (2027/28 AND 2028/29)

Members considered extending the appointment of IAC for an additional two years, this would take the total term to five years, after which the Council would go out to tender again.

Decision: It was **resolved** to appoint IAC's appointment for an additional two years (2027/28 and 2028/29). (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

2026/019 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2026/27

The proposed calendar of meetings for 2026/27 was reviewed. It was agreed to amend the time of the HR Committee meetings to 15.00 to accommodate members. In addition, a Grants Sub-Committee meeting will be added before September. Members discussed potential clashes with Mid Devon District Council

meetings, which are scheduled to be published soon. It was **agreed** to review these dates once published.

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the calendar of meetings for 2026/27 with the amendments to HR Committee timings and an additional grants meeting.

(Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking)

Task: Amend HR meeting timings in the calendar to 15.00 as discussed during the meeting. *@Emily Armitage*

Task: Review potential clashes between Crediton Town Council meetings and Mid Devon District Council meetings once their calendar is published. *@Rachel Avery*

2026/020 PADDLING POOL SURVEY

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the recommendation within the report, with further discussion taking place at the upcoming Community Committee meeting.

(Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

2026/021 WINDOWS 11 UPGRADE

The Town Clerk provided an update on the progress of the Windows 11 upgrade for all laptops. It was **noted** that staff would proceed with the upgrade internally, rather than paying an external provider.

2026/022 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Full Council meeting was confirmed as Tuesday, 07 July 2026. It was also noted that the Annual Town Meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 26 May 2026, on the Town Square. Meeting closed at 20.32.

2026/023 REPORTS PACK

Signed

Dated.....