CREDITON
TOWN COUNCIL

Manor Office, 6 North Street
Crediton
Devon
EX17 2BT
Telephone: 01363 773717
Email: reception@crediton.gov.uk

To All Crediton Town Councillors

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **HR Committee**, which will be held on **Thursday, November 5, 2026, at 18:00, at Manor Office, North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT.**

This meeting may be livestreamed via Facebook in order to allow Members of the Public to watch the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to transact the following business.

Rachel Avery FSLCC

Town Clerk

Thursday, 29 October 2026

Please note that:

- Members of the Press & Public are invited to attend under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Members of the public will be given the opportunity to address councillors in attendance as part of the agenda.
- Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, any members of the public or press are allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public sections of the meeting.
- Under the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 Sch 12 10(2)(b), Crediton Town Council is unable to make any decision on matters not listed within the agenda.
- Crediton Town Council will always attempt to record and livestream meetings to Crediton Town Council's social media platforms.

AGENDA

28 - Welcome and Introductions
Opening of meeting by the Chair and member introductions

29 - Public Question Time
To receive questions from members of the public relevant to the work of the committee AND related to matters on the agenda (CTC's adopted Standing Orders 3d, 3e and 3g; a maximum period of 3 minutes will be permitted for any person wishing to ask up to three questions with a maximum of 15 minutes being allowed for this item)

30 - Apologies
To receive and accept Town Councillor apologies (apologies should be made to the Town Clerk)

31 - Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

31.1 - To receive declarations of personal interest and disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI's) in respect of items on this agenda

31.2 - To consider any dispensation requests (requests should be made to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting)

32 - Climate Emergency
To note that decisions will be made with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making

33 - HR Committee Minutes
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on **08 October 2026**, as a correct record

34 - Chair's and Clerk's Announcements
To receive any announcements which the Chair and Town Clerk may wish to make (for information only)

35 - Staffing Capacity and Governance Review
To receive a report from Cllr Backhouse regarding Staffing Capacity and Governance Review, and to consider the recommendations therein

36 - Organisational Review
To receive and note the Executive Summary document regarding the Organisational Review undertaken by LCC

37 - Date of next meeting
To note that the date of the next meeting will be on **Thursday 07 January 2027**

38 - Part II
To resolve that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items as it involves the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information

39 - Organisational Review
To receive the full Organisational Review document undertaken by LCC, and to consider any recommendations to the Oversight Committee

40 - Staffing Report
To receive the confidential staffing report and to consider any recommendations to the Oversight Committee

41 - Reports Pack

Attachments – for internal use only
2026-10-08 - HR Committee - Minutes.pdf
HR Capacity Proposal RB.pdf
Crediton Town Council - Job Evaluations Report Executive Summary.pdf

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Minutes of the HR Committee of the Democratic Services held on Thursday, October 8, 2026 at, at Manor Office, 6 North Street, Crediton, EX17 2BT.

Present: Cllrs Liz Brookes-Hocking, Rachel Backhouse, Vix Frisby, Steve Huxtable, and Joyce Harris

In Attendance: One member of the public

Minute Taker: Rachel Avery, Town Clerk

MINUTES

15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
Cllr Brookes-Hocking the meeting and members introduced themselves.

16 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
A member of the public asked for an update on an earlier request to fund a staff member's master's degree. The response provided by Cllr Brookes-Hocking was that no council funding had been provided for that purpose and that no funding would be provided for it.

17 APOLOGIES
There were no apologies.

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

18.1 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA
There were no declarations of interests

18.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)
No dispensation requests had been received.

19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY
Members noted that decisions would be taken with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making.

20 HR COMMITTEE MINUTES
The committee reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 09 July 2026 and confirmed that they were an accurate record.

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 09 July 2026. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

21 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
There were no announcements.

22 TOWN CLERK APPRAISAL

Members reviewed the recent Town Clerk appraisal process and that:

- the process had been worthwhile as a first attempt and provided a useful starting point
- the exercise involved significant work and thought, but participation from members was poor. It was noted that around half of councillors did not respond, despite the request being limited to roughly 10 to 15 minutes, and this was described as a poor reflection on the council and unfair on the Town Clerk. Members supported raising the lack of participation with Full Council so councillors could be asked to reflect on the issue
- building the next review more clearly around the objectives from the 2026 appraisal was required
- rather than waiting for the next annual appraisal, members supported an interim appraisal in mid-December.

Decision: It was **agreed** that an interim Town Clerk appraisal would take place in mid-December, by the Chair of HR and Chair of CTC, to be based on the existing objectives and followed up at the HR Committee meeting on 07 January 2027.

23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 07 January 2027.

24 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 Brookes-Hocking)

25 PAY 2026/27

25.1 TO APPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED PAY SCALES FROM 01 APRIL 2026 FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON NJC CONTRACT TERMS

Decision: It was **resolved** to **approve** the implementation of revised payscales, as set out in the confidential report. (Proposed by Cllr Harris)

26.2 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE PAY AGREEMENT FROM 01 APRIL 2026 FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON NJC CONTRACT TERMS

Decision: The pay agreement, effective from 01 April 2026, was **noted**.

27 STAFFING

Decision: The contents of the confidential staffing report were **noted**.

28 REPORTS PACK

Signed ……

Dated……

CREDITON TOWN COUNCIL

HR Proposal

Report by: **Rachel Backhouse**
To: **HR Committee**
Date: **For consideration on 5th November 2026**

Recommendation: That HR consider the report.

1. **Purpose**
   1.1 To consider how to address a number of staffing capacity and governance issues.

2. **Background**
   2.1 A number of serious issues relating to out of date and unaligned policies, as well as GDPR issues linked with ineffectively redacted documents have arisen over the last few months. A task and finish group had already been established to address some of the core policy issues. While these matters concern governance, they also raise an HR issue regarding the staff capacity available to deliver the work needed. The focus is on ensuring that resources and organisational arrangements enable governance responsibilities to be met, rather than attributing fault to individual staff. The HR Committee is therefore asked to consider the capacity and resourcing implications and make recommendations to the Oversight Committee on the arrangements needed to take this work forward.

3. **Proposals**
   3.1 HR committee request that council acknowledges there are governance issues by recommending that the Oversight Committee set up a Governance Tracker or Log to show what the issues are and a timeline of how these are going to be addressed.
   3.2 HR committee strongly recommends the policy task and finish group to carry out a full policy review following on from the review of the 3 core policies which are currently under review. This will prevent issues relating to procurement, safeguarding and other key issues cropping up unexpectedly due to any number of possible unidentified problems lying within unscrutinised policies. This will in turn reduce staff pressure, public criticism and improve staff well being.
   3.3 HR committee consider appointing or recommending appointing a temporary or contracted individual to work with the task and finish group on a full policy review. A recent law graduate wishing for relevant experience is a possibility. This could be a virtual position. This would support the policy issue to be addressed without adding further pressure to the town clerk.
   3.4 HR committee consider recommending that the task and finish group includes members of the public at a stage towards the beginning and again towards end of the process, to input ideas and give feedback. I believe the clerk has made such a suggestion previously, which was met with varying reactions from councillors.
   3.5 HR committee considers whether current staffing has the scope to manage the redaction issues, which are going to be time consuming but unskilled to address, and whether any additional staffing is needed to support this.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Possible implications if a paid temporary positions or contracts are.

5. Climate Implications

5.1 None

6. Conclusion

6.1 Committee is requested to consider the recommendations.

Crediton Town Council Staffing Review – August–September 2026

Executive Summary

Purpose and scope

In August 2026, Crediton Town Council commissioned an independent staffing review to assess its staffing structure, working arrangements, organisational capacity and resilience, and the appropriateness of its role and grading framework. The Council's youth work team was excluded from the review. The review also considered the Council's future needs in the context of potential local government reorganisation, devolution and the possible expansion of its services and responsibilities.

Overall findings

The review concluded that the Council has an established workforce with the skills, knowledge, expertise and flexibility needed to deliver its current services. However, it identified a number of organisational challenges which require attention to ensure the Council remains effective, resilient and equipped to meet future demands.

The principal findings relate to workforce capacity, the need for clearer and more up-to-date role descriptions, fragmented working arrangements, gaps in operational maintenance provision, business continuity planning, and the need to strengthen aspects of health and safety and employee support.

The review also assessed the Council's existing role evaluation and grading arrangements against recognised National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and National Joint Council (NJC) guidance. It recommended a consistent and transparent framework for determining role responsibilities and appropriate grading across the organisation.

Organisational capacity and future workforce requirements

The review identified limited capacity within the existing staffing structure to accommodate additional responsibilities or respond effectively to emerging operational demands. In particular, the Council currently lacks dedicated in-house resources for the routine operational maintenance of its assets, including buildings, public conveniences, play areas and other public facilities.

The review recommends that the Council develop a longer-term workforce plan which reflects its existing service commitments and anticipated future responsibilities. Options include reviewing staffing hours and capacity, strengthening financial management arrangements, and establishing dedicated operational maintenance provision.

The review also highlights the potential benefits of clarifying the distinction between the Town Clerk's leadership and governance responsibilities and the Responsible Financial Officer's financial management responsibilities as the organisation develops.

The future arrangements for events, communications and town-centre activity should also be considered strategically, particularly in advance of the current fixed-term events and town-centre provision ending in September 2027. The Council should ensure that its future structure supports effective communication with residents and stakeholders, alongside its wider community and economic development ambitions.

Working arrangements and operational efficiency

At the time of the review, staff were working across several locations, including temporary premises and home-based arrangements. The review found that this fragmented approach created practical difficulties for collaboration, communication and the efficient coordination of work.

The planned accommodation of staff at Manor Office, anticipated in spring 2027, presents an opportunity to improve teamwork, information sharing and the consistency of service delivery.

The review also identified opportunities to streamline administrative processes through improved use of existing digital systems and software, including potential automation of allotment administration. Such measures could help release capacity for other Council priorities.

Governance, resilience and risk management

The review identified a need to strengthen organisational resilience and reduce reliance on individual members of staff for essential functions. It recommends the development of a formal business continuity plan to support the uninterrupted delivery of key services during periods of absence, disruption or organisational change.

Further consideration should be given to access to specialist human resources and health and safety support, including the potential use of an external provider and an employee assistance programme.

The review also highlighted the importance of maintaining appropriate risk assessments, including assessments for workstations and homeworking environments, and establishing clear lone-working procedures. Measures to improve lone-worker safety and provide appropriate training in handling violence and aggression should be considered.