



Minutes of the of Credition Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18 January 2022 at 19.00 - Old Landscore School, Greenway, Credition

Present: Cllrs E Brookes-Hocking (Mayor and Chairman), J Harris, J Downes, G Cochran, M Szabo, J Cairney and F Letch (part meeting)

Apologies: Cllrs S Huxtable and L Martin

In Attendance: R Avery, Town Clerk
4 members of the public

2201/112 **To receive and accept apologies**

It was **resolved** to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs Huxtable and Martin.
(Proposed by Cllr Downes).

2201/113 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Downes and Cairney declared that as members of more than one authority, that any views or opinions expressed at this meeting would be provisional and would not prejudice any views expressed at a meeting of another authority.

2201/114 **Public Question Time**

The following questions were raised by a member of public not in attendance:

1. When are the public toilets adjacent to Newcombes Meadow likely to be renovated to a good standard as opposed to being uninviting to both local residents and visitors to our town? As a welcome to Credition they are currently a disgrace.

It was agreed that the toilets were not in an acceptable condition and investigation was being undertaken on the building and area in front to determine how the building could be best used.

2. On looking at the proposed budget for 2022 to 2023 I note that the salaries including National Insurance and pensions for the year 2020 to 2021 actually paid were £97,533. It is now proposed that for the coming year they should increase to £182,465. This is an increase of approximately 90%, an extraordinary percentage over a period of two years. Please explain and justify this proposed increase. Furthermore, please explain why salaries now proposed are approximately 47% of total council expenditure. Salaries include national insurance and pension contributions. The Town Council employs four office staff and two youth workers, two of whom will be employed for the first time for the full year.

3. I understand that the council now employs at least one youth worker. How many young people are actually helped by him/her/them? I also understand that other youth workers are employed by some of our churches. If this is the case, why is the council actually involved with direct employment with all its associated costs when support with the costs incurred by other organisations by means of council grants would appear to be more efficient?

The town council cannot financially support secular activities, but will look to work with the church youth workers where possible.

The following questions were raised by a member of public in attendance:

Spending £234,000 that has been allocated to Newcombes Meadow for community facilities-

1. What has the town council done to identify and agree a suitable project for Newcombes Meadow?
2. What is the extent of involvement by a) the Project Officer and b) the Youth Worker?
3. Has the town council researched the examples of recent community buildings in public parks, eg: Yeoford Community Hall, Newtown Community Centre (Belmont Park, Exeter) and especially the newly completed Park Life Heavitree?
4. What discussions have taken place with Mid Devon District Council (which holds this Section 106 funding)?
5. How will the Town Council ensure that the funds are properly spent and not be permitted to expire (and the opportunity to benefit the local community wasted)?
6. The town council is intending to upgrade signage for visitors to the town. Will new signs include - for the first time - signs to Newcombes Meadow, and on any of the three entrances to Newcombes Meadow itself?

The Town Council is working with Mid Devon District Council to understand how the S106 money can be spent.

Engaging with young people and providing worthwhile activity for teenagers

7. What activities will the youth officer(s) be carrying out during 2022, and how will the Town Council demonstrate that their work represents good value?
8. What will be the cost during 2022 of the Town Council employing one or more youth workers, in terms of salaries, employment costs, workspace, equipment and materials?
9. Does the town council's activities for young people require the presence of two adults at all times (with current DBS checks to fulfil safe-guarding procedures)?
10. What level of co-operation is there between the Town Council's youth worker(s) and the existing youth workers employed by Crediton Congregational Church?

It was explained that the youth workers will work with existing youth provision in the town where possible, and that the salaries of town council staff are included within the budget.

11. Our two newly elected councillors stated in their election leaflets: "I will ensure the Town Council supports a programme for our young people to travel abroad and meet their contemporaries. They will be our 'Boniface Ambassadors' " When can we expect the first Boniface Ambassadors to make their first trips abroad? How much is the town council committing to this programme, and how will it work?

This was an election statement and not an agreed objective of the Town Council.

Living more locally' - our response to climate change, & promoting sustainability-

12. How much does it cost to hire the 'land train' - brought from Torbay and driven up and down the High Street on the day of the Christmas lights switch-on? Given the Town Council has agreed that "decisions will be made with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making" how does this petrol-driven 'train' and its low-loader transport requirements fit into the council's thinking on climate change and sustainability?

The Land Train is hired from Exmouth, and the cost is covered by the takings on the day. It is an attraction that is provided for the enjoyment of the town, but it is not an expectation that those attending the Christmas event must ride the land train.

13. In her New Year Message (printed in the Courier), Mayor Liz Brookes-Hocking wrote "The climate emergency will require us to make changes over the next few years . . . Challenges are also opportunities to come up with new ideas and do things differently.

That includes the Town Council. What will the Town Council be doing differently in 2022?

Cllr Letch joined the meeting at 19.27.

- 2201/115 To receive a presentation from Crediton Area History and Museum Society regarding their consultation relating to a Summer 2023 exhibition**
Two representative from Crediton Area History Museum Society gave a presentation regarding their Summer 2023 exhibition on the Great Fire of Crediton. The presentation forms the minutes as appendix one.
- 2201/116 Order of Business**
There were no changes to the order of business.
- 2201/117 Chairman's and Clerk's Announcements**
The Town Council read out a letter of resignation from Cllr Zorlu. Cllr Brookes-Hocking thanked Hannah for her huge amount of work, support and expertise.
- 2201/118 To receive County and District Councillor Reports**
Cllr Letch reported on the following matters:
Mid Devon District Council - called in the Newcombes planning application, which will not be considered by the Planning committee in March.
Devon County Council: Reported issues regarding roads, especially potholes, parking and speeding. The Speedwatch team needs more volunteers. Attending Children's Scrutiny Committee which deals with a wide range of issues concerning babies, young children, family dynamics, education, social care and fostering. Requested school transport officer to look at school buses on Barnfield. Requested parking at the station car park and Lords Meadow Industrial Estate tp be investigated. Locality fund has provided grants to the Town Team, Turning Tides, and 'Caught in the Web' books to 6 primary schools.

District Cllr Downes reported that next budget is being set, with cuts to services as budgets cannot be cut further with a target of £500,000. Cllr Downes stated that he would expect cuts to grounds maintenance, planting and toilets.
He reported on the Economy Policy Development Group, looking at economic regeneration projects to bring income into district. It is currently looking at the M5 junctions 27 and 28 with a view to look at economic opportunities, with a proactive commercial stance and looking at finding spaces for affordable/social housing pods. District Cllr Cairney agreed that MDDC will have to reduce or cut budgets where possible, with rents on affordable housing likely to rise in line with inflation.
- 2201/119 Town Council Minutes**
It was **resolved** to approve and sign the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 16 November 2021 as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Harris).
- 2201/120 To receive and adopt the minutes of the following Committee meetings:**
The minutes had been issued with the agenda
- **Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee held on 03 August 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).

- **Amenities and the Built Environment Committee held on 14 September 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Amenities and the Built Environment Committee meeting (Proposed by Cllr Harris).
- **Property and Assets Committee held on 28 September 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Property and Assets Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Letch).
- **Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee held on 21 September 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).
- **Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee held on 02 November 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).
- **Planning and Town Strategy Committee held on 02 November 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Planning and Town Strategy Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).
- **Council Affairs and Finance Committee held on 09 November 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Council Affairs and Finance Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Harris).
- **Amenities and the Built Environment Committee held on 23 November 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Amenities and the Built Environment Committee meeting (Proposed by Cllr Harris).
- **Planning and Town Strategy Committee held on 07 December 2021**
It was **resolved** to receive and to adopt the minutes of the Planning and Town Strategy Committee meeting. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).

2201/121 To receive nominations for the appointment of council members to existing committees and sub-committees, where there are vacancies:

- **Planning and Town Strategy Committee– 2 vacancies**
It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr N Letch to the Planning and Town Strategy Committee. (Proposed by Cllr F Letch).
- **Council Affairs and Finance Committee – 1 vacancy**
It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr N Letch to the Council Affairs and Finance Committee. (Proposed by Cllr Harris).
- **Amenities and the Built Environment Committee – 1 vacancy**
There were no nominations.
- **Property and Assets Committee– 2 vacancies**
It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Cairney and Cochran to the Property and Assets Committee. (Proposed by Cllr F Letch).
- **Climate Emergency Committee – 2 vacancies**
It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs N Letch and Chenore to the Climate Emergency Committee. (Proposed by Cllr Cairney).
- **Grants Sub-Committee – 2 vacancies**
It was **resolved** to appoint Cllrs Chenore and Cochran to the Grants Sub-Committee. (Proposed by Cllr Brookes-Hocking).
- **Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee – 1 vacancy**
It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Chenore to the Christmas in Crediton Sub-Committee. (Proposed by Cllr Cairney).

- 2201/122 Budget 2022/23 (A copy of the budget will be issued prior to the meeting):**
- **To consider and agree/amend Crediton Town Council's budgets for the financial year 2022/2023**
It was **resolved** to agree Crediton Town Council's budgets for the financial year 2022/23. (Proposed by Cllr Szabo).
 - **To consider and agree/amend Crediton Town Council's level of reserves for the financial year 2022/23**
It was **resolved** to agree Crediton Town Council's levels of reserves for the financial year 2022/23, noting the substantial decrease over the financial year 2021/23 due to youth work provision. (Proposed by Cllr Letch).
 - **To consider and agree Crediton Town Council's precept for the financial year 2022/23**
Consideration was given to the three options provided by the Town Clerk. Concerns were raised regarding the levels of reserves and the expectation for further reductions in services offered by Devon County and Mid Devon District Councils. It was **resolved** that option C plus £20,000 be approved, to allow Crediton Town Council to build up additional reserves. It was **resolved** that the 2022/23 precept would be set at £385,738.00. (Proposed by Cllr Cochan).
- 2201/123 To receive an update on the Welcome Back Fund**
It was noted that the proposals for signage was unlikely to be approved as it does not meet the guidance requirements. It was **resolved** that the Town Clerk would investigate the purchase of planters. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran).
- 2201/124 To receive an update on the replacement of bus shelters in the High Street**
It was **noted** that Devon County Council and Fernbank Advertising were setting up an agreement and a date for installation should be agreed imminently.
- 2201/125 To consider the Town Square draft lease received from Mid Devon District Council**
It was **noted** that a second draft lease had been submitted to the Town Clerk for consideration and this would be discussed at the next meeting of the Property and Assets Committee.
- 2201/126 To consider how councillors could be more involved in the preparation work of town council issues and projects (Item requested by Cllr N Letch)**
Cllr N Letch set out how councillors should be more accountable to the preparation of items for agendas and how they should be more involved in the undertaking of projects, which was **noted** and **agreed** by all councillors in attendance.
- 2201/127 To receive a report on plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and to agree any required courses of action**
The following events were noted:
Thursday 02 June – Beacon lighting
Friday 03 June – possible church services
Sunday 05 June – Big Sunday Lunch/Boniface Day event
It was **noted** that a tree planting is planned on St Lawrence Green to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee.

2201/128 To receive reports from Town Councillors (For information only)

Cllr N Letch reported on the following issues raised by members of the public during her election campaigning:

- The necessity for a zebra crossing near the Leisure Centre
- Complaints about high speeding on Exhibition Road
- The transparency and access to the information about plans of new house building, the use of the land and the green space preservation along the Exhibition Road
- The owner of Exhibition Road, 40 complained about trees and bushes' branches getting across the pedestrian path into her garden from the allotments
- Drop curbs needed for scooters' users to move from the road to the pedestrian side near the end of the Union Terrace
- Calls to support the Lidl supermarket.

2201/129 To note the date of the next meeting – Tuesday 15 March 2022

The date of the next meeting was **noted**. The meeting was closed at 21.46.

Signed

Dated.....

Chairman