

Questions for Crediton Town Council Full Council meeting: Tuesday 22nd November

1.

Bus shelter panels to be replaced 'soon'

Cllr Brookes-Hocking said in April 2021 that the piggish appearance of the town centre bus shelters – especially those with perspex panels at Lloyds Bank and St Lawrence Green – would be sorted out 'soon'. It was noted at the Full Council meeting that discussions were being held with DCC, and that the Town Council 'was continuing to chase.' :

What is the progress on those discussions? Will the Town Council consider alternative ways of replacing the panels?

The response from Fernbank Advertising, who are providing the bus shelters in cooperative with DCC have confirmed the new bus shelters will be installed by the end of February, subject to available road space and weather conditions.

2.

Video of violent assault at QE Academy

A video made on a smartphone by a pupil or pupils of QE Academy school was in circulation a few weeks ago both within and outside the school community, showing the scene leading up to a pre-meditated attack on a pupil who was assaulted by another pupil and knocked to the ground:

Will Crediton Town request the Principal of QE Academy to attend a Full Town Council to explain how the incident came to take place, to be recorded and circulated on-line, to comment on the current level of peer-on-peer bullying at QE Academy, and to say how such incidents will be prevented in future?

A response had been provided on this matter and there would be no further comments made on this issue.

3.

Children's Homes at Newcombes

Given the high level of local concern about this development, will the Town Council invite the developers of the proposed children's homes to give a presentation to local people about the business and how it will operate, with special emphasis on the impact on local residents and the level of provision for the children whom the development will house?

An invitation can be extended if the application is approved.

4.

Youth work

What is the Town Council's youth service doing to mitigate anti-social behaviour by young people in Newcombes Meadow? Does the Town Council agree that a programme of activity engaging young people would help prevent the park becoming a no-go area for many members of the community, and becoming a centre for alcohol consumption and drug-dealing?:

5.

£234,000 grant for Newcombes Meadow

The Chair stated (Full Council meeting, 7th June) that the time limit for spending the £234,000 (Section 106) fund allocated for capital improvements to the park would not be allowed to expire.

What date does the grant expire? What action has the Town Council taken to identify and progress a suitable project to benefit our community? What further discussions have taken place with Mid Devon?

The MDDC reports no longer show the expiry date, and this information has been requested. CTC are continuing communication with them regarding the S106 funds, with the Town Clerk having a meeting with the CEO and Chief Financial Officer in December.

6.

Floral displays in town centre

The Town Council this year budgeted £8,000 for an outside operator travelling considerable distances to supply and maintain Crediton's hanging baskets. Apart from being incompatible with the Town Council's statement that "decisions will be made with the climate emergency at the forefront of decision and policy making" the task of watering these could be carried out by at least two of the town's regular window-cleaning firms. The owners use similar equipment and would be willing to undertake seasonal watering at a lower cost (given a simpler/more flexible contract). Crediton has a well-established garden centre which could provide hanging baskets:

Will the Town Council approach these local businesses instead in future?

No decisions have been made regarding next year's budget. CTC always prefers local contractors, however balance overall cost with value for money. The current contractor is local.

7.

'Boniface Ambassador' scheme

Has the Town Council yet considered how to implement the pledges made by Cllr Natalia Letch and Cllr Sandy Chenore to set up a Boniface Ambassador scheme for young people? When will this be discussed by the Town Council?

This item has not been requested by either councillor to form part of a Town Council or committee agenda.

8.

Parking penalties for pizza van

Devon County Council civil enforcement officers have issued parking penalty notices to Exe Valley Pizzas whose takeaway pizza vans stop on Wednesdays and Fridays in the bus lay-by at St Lawrence Green. (No buses use the layby at this time.):

Will the Town Council write to Devon County Council Highways to point out that such punitive action is unhelpful, given that the pizza vans are providing a popular service for local residents and commuters?

This issue should be directed to DCC and the local county councillor.

9.

Independents for Crediton, Urban Environment Initiative

Recent IfC street cleaning/tidying has included the pavement and seat at the top of Jockey Hill, the junction of Jockey Hill with Long Meadows, the street frontage outside Haywards Primary School, a section of Union Road (under wall beneath Union Terrace), and the walkway between Saxon Close and Four Mills Lane:

Will the Town Council recognise and commend the activity by the Independents for Crediton (IfC) group in clearing weeds and other growth from pavements, kerbs and other urban sites over the last few weeks?

Yes, thank you for undertaking this work.

10.

Concerns re public participation at council meetings

Will the Town Council recognise that members of the public are rightly angry when the council fails to engage constructively with issues raised by individual members of the public attending meetings?

Will the Town Council agree that holding council meetings with seats arranged 'in the round' would alleviate the sometimes confrontational 'us and them' atmosphere generated by councillors around a table while members of the public sit in a separate area?

What will the Town Council do to encourage the greater attendance by members of the public at council meetings?

Any member of the public who feels they are fairly engaged with should inform CTC. We would welcome meetings to discuss.

Attending council meetings is not the only way to engage with CTC staff and elected members.



Civility and Respect Report

Report by: Town Clerk
To: Full Council
Date: For consideration on 22 November 2022

Recommendation

Full Council is recommended to resolve, as recommended by the Council Affairs and Finance Committee, to adopt the Civility and Respect Pledge.

1. Purpose

1.1 This report sets out the pledge proposed by The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and One Voice Wales (OVW), to start a cultural change for the local council sector.

2. Background

2.1 Throughout the local council sector, there are growing concerns about the impact bullying, harassment and intimidation is having on councils, councillors and staff and the resulting effectiveness of local councils.

3. Proposals

3.1 That Credition Town Council resolves to sign up to the civility and respect pledge, as cited in appendix one of this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Whilst there are no immediate financial implications, the training budget should be increased to allow for additional support to staff and councillors.

5. Climate Implications

5.1 There are no implications.

6. Conclusion

5.1 By adopting the Civility and Respect Pledge, Credition Town Council is committing to modelling high standards of behaviour, being mutually respectful of councillors and staff, to reduce the type of conduct that can lead to complaints and protecting councillors, staff, the public and the reputation of local government.

Rachel Avery
Town Clerk and RFO

Civility and Respect Pledge suggested agenda item:

'To pass a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge'

Definition of Civility and Respect
Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word.
Examples of ways in which you can show respect are by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), and One Voice Wales (OVW), believe now is the time to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

By our council signing up to the civility and respect pledge we are demonstrating that our council is committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.

Signing up is a simple process, which requires councils to register and agree to the following statements:

Statement	Tick to agree
Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.	
Our council has committed to training councillors and staff.	
Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors	
Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.	
Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.	
Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it happens.	
Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme	
Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.	



Bungalow Heating Report

Report by: Town Clerk
To: Full Council
Date: For consideration on 22 November 2022

Recommendation

Full Council is recommended to approve the payment of £3260.98 (£2724.98 + £545.00 VAT).

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposal to approve the partial payment of the connection and installation of a gas boiler to replace the current oil fuelled system.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Bungalow currently has no heating, as the oil-fired boiler was intermittently working initially, but was condemned by a heating engineer in the summer.
- 2.2 Staff are heating office spaces with electric heaters, which are inefficient and expensive to run.
- 2.3 The lease requires the town council to maintain and repair all fixtures and fittings.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 That Credition Town Council approves the payment from Earmarked Reserves.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Funds to pay for the work will be taken from earmarked reserves, totalling £3260.98 (£2724.98 + £545.00 VAT).

5. Climate Implications

- 5.1 Whilst it is recognised that gas heating is not a renewable energy, the landlord has proposed the installation of either gas or a replacement oil fired boiler.

6. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Town Council is responsible for ensuring staff have comfortable working conditions.
- 5.2 The Town Council must adhere to the terms of the lease.

Rachel Avery
Town Clerk and RFO



Meeting notes of Credition Cluster meeting held on Wednesday 03 August 2022 at Old Landscore School

Present: Dee Ross (DR) (Credition Town Councillor), Rachel Avery (RA) (Town Clerk – Credition Town Council), Rachel Hodder (RH) (Parish Clerk - Credition Hamlets Parish Council), Jim Enright (JE) (Newton St Cyres Parish Council Chairman), Liz Brookes-Hocking (LBH) (Credition Town Council Mayor and Chairman), Brian Fyfe (BF) (Sandford Parish Councillor), Elizabeth Dolton (ED) (Sandford Parish Councillor)

Apologies had been received from Shobrooke Parish Council.

BF had circulated a list of items proposed for discussion through the newly formed cluster group, which were as follows:

1. An update on the Credition Neighbourhood plan – section by section
2. Pedlarspool be revisited for an update including:
 - the archaeological survey of the site
 - the proposed new school
 - public provision of EV charging points
 - the allocated Traveller's site
 - meeting with the developer
 - the road layout and configuration in the new estate and surrounding lane network
3. PROW matters including walk and cycle path infrastructure
4. The use of Q land applications. Are planning applications received an abuse of the legislation?
5. An update regarding the cycle footpath to Exeter
6. Speed limits – use of 20 is plenty and arterial road speed in rural settings.
7. Identification of Sandford Parish in its own right. The use of the Gazetteer fails to serve the democratic intention of consultation on planning matters. This may be considered a matter by other parishes.

JE reported on concerns for Newton St Cyres around the Pedlars Pool application, with increased traffic and possible concerns around the new cycleway.

RH stated that concerns for Credition Hamlets included speed limits, poor road standards, accessibility to the High Street and development of QE and lack of education places and medical provision as development in and around Credition increases. LBH stated that there are school places available in all Credition schools.

LBH provided a brief update on the following:

- There is a shared interest in the creation of a new cycleway, with JE agreeing that lobbying for cycling infrastructure was important as a cluster. The area needs a sustainable commuter route
- The Credition Masterplan is now being discussed, with consultancy being approved by MDDC cabinet before the autumn

- Crediton Neighbourhood Plan referendum taking place in September, which focusses on community, sustainability, support a one site QE, development of a hub (Crediton Heart Project), protection of historic buildings, use of railway and retaining and creating green open space and wildlife corridors.

The following issues where co-operation would be beneficial were agreed:

- Separate discussion around the Pedlars Pool development, including the travellers' site, the request from Crediton Town Council to have a meeting with Bellway Homes and to obtain an update from the planning officer
- Safety on the A377, including the cycleway and increased communication with DCC
- Upcoming developments and upcoming strategic documents (including Crediton Master Plan and Plan Mid Devon) and increased communication with MDDC
- Speeding on lanes
- Abuse of valley/river landscapes.

An initial action was considered and it was requested that each council add the following item to their next agenda:

'To consider lobbying Devon County Council for:

- *Addressing speeding on local roads*
- *An appropriate cycleway for Crediton – Exeter that fully meets the requirements of the area.'*

It was agreed that this meeting had been beneficial and all in attendance would be willing to continue to meet, with more structured agendas being created and circulated.