



# Crediton Town Council



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 21 April 2009

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### Present:

#### Councillors

Mr F Letch (Chairman)  
Mr W Brown  
Mr J Downes  
Miss J Harris  
Mrs A Hughes  
Mr N Way (part meeting)  
Mrs L Brookes-Hocking  
Mr P Finnegan  
Mr D Nation  
Mr R Wright

### In Attendance:

#### Clerk

Mr M Maggs

#### Devon Association of Parish Councils

Ms L Smith MBE

#### Press

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## AGENDA ITEMS

### 272. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Adams and Scarbrough (personal). Councillor Way would be delayed due to attendance at another meeting.

### 273. Declarations of Interest

Prejudicial	Councillor Nation	Minute 296
Code of Conduct	Downes, Way, Nation and Wright	As members of more than one authority, declared 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.

### 274. Presentation by County Association Secretary

The County Association Secretary presented a shortened briefing on the Quality Council Scheme, the current qualifying criteria and the benefits of gaining Quality Council status. She continued by answering questions from members.

Councillor Nation expressed the only major concern which related to amount of resources needed to comply with the scheme. He felt that we would be doing things just for the sake of it. As an example, he considered the production of four Council newsletters to be excessive.

The Secretary did not agree that it would be a pointless exercise. The newsletters could be used to explore issues and give particular emphasis to Council policies and actions. She confirmed that a minimum of four would be required to comply with Quality Status. The accreditation process would also provide the Council with a useful means of assessing how the Council was run, how it engaged with the community and, more

importantly, it would provide proof of the Council's ability to manage its affairs properly and to a nationally agreed standard.

The Chairman thanked the Secretary for her presentation; the debate would be concluded under the relevant agenda item.

**275. Public Question Time**

None. It was agreed that Planning would be advanced to accommodate members of the public who wished to make representations.

**276. Chairman's & Clerk's Announcements**

The Clerk had no announcements to make.

The Chairman reported that the Mayor's Surgery scheduled for 11 May would need to be cancelled.

Revised dates for the Police Liaison meetings were also being discussed.

Channel Four (Wales) was planning to produce a documentary on the Mayor of Crediton. The programme would be broadcast in Welsh and it was hoped that it would cover the Mayor's reception and other town events.

**277. Town Council Minutes**

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24 March 2009 were received and approved as a correct record.

**278. Matters Arising**

*Minute 259:* councillors agreed to attend the Annual Town Meeting and man the exhibition.

**279. General Purposes Committee Minutes**

a) *Minutes*

The minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7 April 2009 were received and noted.

b) *Recommendations*

The recommendations of the Committee were approved as minuted.

**280. Matters Arising**

*Minute 154:* contact had been made with MDDC officers who had agreed to provide the necessary information.

**281. Town Plan Working Group Notes**

a) *Meeting Notes*

Not available.

b) *Recommendations*

Deferred pending presentation of report.

**282. Planning**

a) *Planning Decisions*

Noted. Decisions notified by the planning authority are appended.

b) *Planning Applications*

Comments made in respect of planning applications considered at this meeting are appended.

c) *Planning Applications/Items for Determination week ending 21 April 2009*

None.

**283. Finance**

a) *Schedule of Accounts*

The schedule of accounts, numbers 002934 to 002937 and 002939 to 002947 amounting to £1999.11 was approved. Account 002938, which Councillor Brown asked to be discussed under confidential business, was deferred to the end of the meeting.

b) *Donations*

The Chairman and Clerk provided an explanation on the need to proceed with the payment of annual donations.

It was agreed that a donation request from Involve would be paid out of the "ad hoc" budget and limited to £200. All other annual donations would be paid as listed in the Summary of Accounts presented to councillors as part of the budgeting process. The

donation to the Tourist Information Centre would be placed on hold until developments to provide a new service had been determined.

**284. Councillor Reports**

None

## SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS

**285. Quality Council Scheme**

Following the presentation by the County Association Secretary, it was agreed to reaffirm the Council's commitment to achieving Quality Status. It was further agreed to support the Clerk in completing the portfolio of evidence and the application process by providing an additional two hours per week of Council time. The Clerk offered to provide an additional two hours of his own time to help complete the process more quickly. However, it was agreed that work would not start until the current staffing crisis had been resolved (staffing levels returned to normal and any backlog of work cleared).

**286. CCTV**

Deferred to Part Two.

**287. Council Communications**

a) *Update*

The Clerk provided details on the need to produce articles for the next edition; deadline for copy 6 June. This edition would contain the Annual Report which had a legal publication date deadline of 30 June. He would complete the desktop publishing, annual account details, contact details and photographs if the Chairman would provide a summary of the previous year's events and councillors would provide a maximum of four articles. This was agreed.

Work on the long delayed modified and updated website had been completed and was now available for public access.

b) *Community Engagement*

The Clerk provided details on the need for improved community engagement and suggested that the Communications Working Group should look at the discretionary criteria for Quality Status and make recommendations to the Council. This was agreed.

The Chairman asked councillors to distribute at least two Floral Crediton Competition entry forms to help encourage greater support for the event.

Councillor Brookes-Hocking was thanked for her efforts in raising the profile of the Council by setting up a stall at the monthly Farmer's Market. The stall helped promote the work of the Council by providing copies of the new Town Guide, Town Council newsletters, Festival 2009 leaflets and other material useful information.

**288. Structural Review of Devon**

Councillor Way arrived and declared 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.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed to reiterate the Council's previous comments supporting the proposal for a single unitary authority. The Council emphasised its concern about the impact on Crediton and the surrounding rural community if a county wide option was not supported.

**289. Peoples Park & Scout Memorial Gardens**

No further developments were reported.

**290. Parliament Street Site**

No further developments were reported.

**291. Town Guide**

Nothing to report. However, it was suggested that the inclusion of details on caravan and camping sites, things to do and places to visit should be considered for the next edition.

**292. Town Square**

A councillor provided details on a recent accident and the perceived need for handrails. It was agreed that MDDC should be asked to investigate the feasibility of installing removable handrails at certain locations on the Town Square in consultation with the architects.

**293. Public Transport Issues**

a) *Crediton Town Bus*

The Clerk had circulated information provided by Councillor Brown. Councillor Brown provided a summary and a suggested course of action (see item b below).

b) *Existing Bus Timetables*

Councillor Brown insisted that this was essentially a DCC responsibility and that the Town Council has complained on a number of occasions in the past without a satisfactory outcome. It was agreed that Councillor Brown would provide a draft letter for the Clerk to send to DCC.

c) *New Timetable Displays*

Several problems were reported with the new timetable displays:

- Visibility problem at Lloyds TSB site
- Design was out of keeping with existing street furniture
- Failure to remove old displays/flags

It was agreed that the issues highlighted by Councillor Brown and the Clerk should be brought to the attention of the Transport Authority. It was further agreed to suggest that the old displays be used to display train information rather than be removed. The Council reiterated its concern over the lack of proper consultation on this issue.

**294. S106 Contributions – former Bow Belle site, Mill Street**

Councillor Brown's proposal to resolve the problems associated with the non-payment of an agreed S106 payment was supported. The Clerk to write to MDDC.

**295. Cherry Gardens**

Deferred to the next General Purposed Committee meeting, with delegated powers, to allow for an individual site inspection by councillors.

**296. Crediton Area History and Museum Society Proposals**

Following his declaration of a prejudicial interest and in accordance with the Code of Conduct for members, Councillor Nation made a statement before leaving the meeting for the duration of the debate on this item.

Councillor Nation provided an update on current proposals to open a museum in the town. Negotiations were proceeding with the management of the Old Town Hall and applications for grant funding were being pursued. He hoped that the Council would agree to provide support, in principle, for this initiative and look favourably towards providing financial assistance when approached by CAHMS.

Councillor Nation left the meeting.

It was agreed, in principle, that the Council should provide full support for the creation of a museum in the Old Town Hall. It was further agreed that the Council would favourably consider a submission for grant aid on the production of a satisfactory business plan.

**297. Correspondence Received**

- 1) Creedy Walkers – details of summer programme 2009.
- 2) MDDC – details of Big Litter Pick Spring 2009.
- 3) Equality & Human Rights Commission – letter and details on Public Sector duties as a result of the forthcoming Equality Bill. Future agenda item.
- 4) Mrs J Conibear – letter offering donation of trophy for Floral Crediton competition. The Chairman to liaise and accept on behalf of the Council.
- 5) Exchange of emails between Councillor Nation and Clerk on paper documents.
- 6) Local Authority Publishing – letter (requesting details on service experience) and copies of town map. Councillor Brookes-Hocking to action.
- 7) Crediton Festival 2009 Committee – meeting notes for 18 March meeting.

## **BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD**

### **298. Newcombes Meadow**

Problems were reported with cycling in the park. The Clerk to raise with MDDC.

### **299. Tarka Line Walks**

The County ward member provided copies of the newly published Tarka Line Walks booklet which would be available from the MDDC office.

### **300. Link Road Briefing Meeting**

The County ward member reported following a recent meeting with officers and the Leader of the Council. A briefing meeting would be held with interested parties on 28 May at County Hall. Councillors Brookes-Hocking, Wright and Hughes agreed to attend with the ward member. It was hoped that any information could be fed into the Annual Town Meeting to be held that evening.

### **301. CCTV Appendages**

A councillor commented on the ugly and obtrusive CCTV appendages on the lamp standard at the junction of Market Street/High Street.

### **302. Bulls**

The potential danger of a bull seen in a field in the Stoney Park area was discussed. Councillor Downes to contact MDDC to check on the legal and safety implications.

### **303. Toilets**

Agenda item at next General Purposes Committee meeting on the continued provision of facilities at the St Lawrence Green toilets

### **304. Mayor's Surgery**

Some issues raised by members of the public were mentioned, including pot holes in Park Street, Barnfield Hill and Landscore and bus stops at the hospital and Western Road.

### **305. Hospital Bus Stop**

Agenda item at next Council meeting.

## **PART TWO**

*In view of the sensitive and confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was agreed, in the public interest, that the press and public be excluded and instructed to withdraw.*

### **306. Finance (deferred from agenda item 12a – minute283a)**

The Clerk provided an explanation of the breakdown of costs and, consequently, account 002938 was approved.

### **307. CCTV (deferred from agenda item 15 – minute 286)**

The Chairman read out the letter from the MDDC Director of Corporate Services. A meeting had been arranged for 23 April which would be attended by the Chairman and Clerk. In view of the importance of the matter, the Chairman requested that the Council confirmed its position on the outstanding issues, as detailed previously. This was done.

Meeting closed at approximately 9.45pm.

Signed:

(F Letch, Chairman)

Date: