Chard Town Council
The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP
01460 239567 www.chard.gov.uk
Mayor: Cllr Jason Baker Locum Clerk: Paul Russell

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held remotely via zoom technology on Monday 14th September 2020 commencing at 7:00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Baker (Mayor), Cllr A Kenton (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather, Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Williams and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Russell, Locum Town Clerk, Liz Johnson-Idan, Community Liaison Officer, Neil Richards, Amenities Supervisor, Gary Huish, Caretaker and Rev. Georgina Vye, Mayor's Chaplain.

There was one member of the public or press present.

The Mayor informed Members that voting would be by a named vote.

CHAPLAIN'S 'THOUGHT FOR THE DAY'
The Chaplain reflected on climate change and individuals making an individual contribution to help achieve a carbon neutral world.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME
There was one member of the public present. The following issue was raised by Cllr Bulmer:

- The Rotary Club wished to plant blue crocus bulbs as part of its support to eradicate polio worldwide by the Beacon Centre to add to the existing colour displays throughout the town. Council agreed to support this initiative and requested Cllr Bulmer to liaise with the Locum Clerk and Amenities Supervisor to confirm details.

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS
District and County Councillors reports had been distributed to Members and were noted.

POLICE REPORT
The Police were unable to attend.

2020/184 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
The following apologies for absence were received and accepted:

- Cllr Carnell (holiday);
- Cllr Shortland (personal);
- Cllr Mrs Young (work).

2020/185 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
The Mayor has no announcements. Invites had been cancelled due to the further restrictions implemented on 14th September 2020.

2020/186 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Cllr O'Brien: Personal and Prejudicial – Chard Area Youth Committee

- Cllr Morrison: Personal – Minute 192(a)
- Cllr Baker: Personal – Western Power Grant/Covid Group
- Cllr Wootton: Personal – Western Power Grant/Covid Group

2020/187 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Wootton
Unanimous

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed under agenda item 2020/196, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2020/188 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison
Unanimous

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held on 17th August 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record subject to the agreed amendments.

2020/189 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Council received the following report from the Locum Clerk:

(a) **Website –** Council noted the quotation received from Somerset Web Services to update the website to implement the Accessibility Regulations that were coming into force and to provide a lifetime license amounting to £750 + VAT.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison
Unanimous

RESOLVED to accept the quotation and to carry out these works as a priority.

(b) **High Streets Heritage Action Zone Cultural Programme –** Council noted that guidance had now been received from Historic England to apply for up to £120,000 to support a local cultural programme. Chard Town Council would be the lead organisation with other members of the group being Chard Museum, Holyrood Academy, Chard Town Team and Chard Carnival Committee. Following discussion, it was agreed to appoint Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Mrs Morrison and the Town Clerk to sit on this Group from Chard Town Council.

(c) **The Community Liaison Officer –** Council noted that due to personal reasons the Community Liaison Officer would be away for the next six weeks.

(d) **Remembrance Events and Remembrance Sunday 2020 –** Council noted the information received from the Avon and Somerset Constabulary operational planning department regarding these civic events.

2020/190 FINANCE

(a) **Budget Analysis Report –** Council noted the Income and Expenditure Balance Sheet for the year to date.

(b) **Budget Virements** – Council noted the budget virements outlined in the report.

(c) **Direct Debit, BACS and Manual Payments** – Council noted the Schedule of Payments for August 2020 amounting to £36,199.30.

(d) **Accounts for Payment –** Council reviewed the expenditure for Month 5 as outlined in the report presented. A number of queries were raised and addressed.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Bulmer
Unanimous

RESOLVED:

- To defer consideration of the licence for four parking spaces at Lace Mill so that Members could consider all the background information;
- To adopt the accounts and invoices due amounting to £11,105.69.

(e) **Financial Report –** Council noted the financial report outlining the current impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the Council's financial position.

(f) **Commencement of the 2021/22 Budget –** Council noted that it would be commencing the development of the 2021/22 budget over the next few months.

2020/191 AMENITIES

(a) **Amenities Report –** Council noted the update report presented by the Amenities Team on work undertaken over the past month. Thanks were extended to the Team for all their hard work.

(b) **SSDC Support –** Council considered the report presented.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED:

- That the report be noted;
- That the informal contract between Chard Town Council and South Somerset District Council be terminated at the earliest opportunity;
- That the team from South Somerset District Council be thanked for their support provided over the past months.

2020/192 COMMUNITY

(a) **Boden Centre Report –** Council considered the update report presented by the Community Liaison Officer regarding the proposed lease for the Boden Centre.

Concern was expressed regarding the capacity of the Town Council to support this project and act as the lead due to staff shortages, a backlog of work and the rapidly changing Covid advice. There was a great deal of support for the initiative and it was agreed to appoint a Task & Finish Group of Cllr Mrs Morrison and Cllr Mrs Wootton to investigate long term venue options to develop a community base and report back to Council in due course.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates

For: Cllr Baker, Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

Against: Cllr Mrs Morrison and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

Abstention: Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Williams and Cllr Kenton.

RESOLVED that Council would not adopt the recommendation to enter into a six-month lease, but would provide what support it could to the community group to secure a venue to enable it to deliver its services from.

(b) **Community Liaison Officer Report –** Council noted the Community Liaison Officer's report relating to September. Disappointment was expressed that the advertisement for the Mace Bearer had not been placed before Council for consideration. It was noted that the post had been advertised based on existing Council policy which could be reviewed in future.

(c) **Western Power Grant –** Council received the update on the Western Power Grant and noted that the grant received would be used to cover the Covid Group's expenses.

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates

For: Cllr A Kenton, Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather, Cllr Williams.

Abstention: Cllr Baker, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Mrs Morrison and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

RESOLVED to ring-fence the remaining unspent budget for the period that Covid-19 remains an issue.

(d) **Community Development Grants report –** Council received the report and recommendation regarding the Community Development Grants.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs Kenton

For: Cllr Baker, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Williams and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

Against: Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED to vary the criteria of the 2020/21 grant funding conditions to enable community groups to apply for revenue funding.

This variation would only be in place during the 2020/21 financial year and would be publicised as required.

Council **AGREED** to move forward the motion (2020/195):

(d.i) **MOTION ONE**
That this Council agrees to form a task and finish group to look at projects for the Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund and brings back a draft application for approval.

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Wootton
Unanimous

RESOLVED to adopt the motion and to appoint Cllrs Bulmer, Bates, Williams, Wootton and Baker on to the Task & Finish Group

(e) **Climate Change Fund –** Council noted that it had been invited to bid to this funding stream.

(f) **Climate Change Application Support –** Following discussion, it was agreed to offer Council's support to the Somerset Wildlife Trust and the Somerset Climate Action Network in their bid to the newly announced Climate Change Fund. However, Chard Town Council would be unable to act as lead organisation.

Council **AGREED** to complete the agenda and extend the meeting.

2020/193 PLANNING

(a) **Draft Proposal to Review Planning Applications –** Council considered the proposed scheme of delegation to enable Council to consider planning applications in the future.

Proposed: Cllr Whittaker-Mather Seconded: Cllr Mrs Kenton
Unanimous

RESOLVED to adopt the Scheme of Delegation to consider planning and highway matters in the future.

(b) **Outstanding Planning Applications –** Council reviewed the responses submitted to SSDC in the previous month under delegated authority.

Proposed: Cllr Whittaker-Mather Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison
Unanimous

RESOLVED to ratify the responses outlined in the report.

(c) **Planning White Paper –** Council considered the Government's Planning White Paper and supporting papers outlining proposed changes to the planning system.

It was agreed that Councillors submit any comments to the Locum Clerk to collate by 25th September 2020.

2020/194 GOVERNANCE, POLICY AND COUNCIL STRUCTURE

(a) **Revised Committee Structure –** Council considered the report outlining a revised Committee Structure and amendments to the Council and Committee Terms of Reference.

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Mrs Kenton
Amendment: Cllr Morrison

For: Cllr Baker, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Williams and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

Against: Cllr Bates, Cllr Bulmer, Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED:

- That the report be noted;
- That Standing Order 7 be suspended in order for Chard Town Council to amend its recently adopted Council and Committee structure;
- To adopt the following Council and Committee structure:
  - Full Council
  - Personnel & Human Resources Committee
  - Property & Services Committee
  - Policy & Resources Committee
- To adopt the Terms of Reference without amendment;
- To revise the meeting schedule to hold a Full Council meeting every month on the second Monday of the month;
- To revise the meeting schedule to hold committee meetings on the last Tuesday of the month, subject to the agreement of the Committee at its first meeting as outlined in Standing Orders.

Cllr Bulmer left the meeting at 10:06pm

RESOLVED to appoint the following Councillors onto each Committee:

- Personnel & Human Resources Committee:
  - Cllr Baker
  - Cllr Wootton;
  - Cllr Morrison;
  - Cllr Orchard;
  - Cllr O'Brien (Reserve)
- Property & Services Committee
  - Cllr O'Brien
  - Cllr Wootton;
  - Cllr Morrison;
  - Cllr Williams;
  - Cllr Mrs Kenton
  - Cllr Kenton;
  - Cllr Baker.
- Policy & Resources Committee
  - Cllr O'Brien
  - Cllr Wootton;

- Cllr Williams;
- Cllr Mrs Kenton
- Cllr Kenton;
- Cllr Baker

Councillors not in attendance would be requested to let the Locum Clerk know which Committees they wished to serve on.

Council confirmed that all YouTube meetings would be taken down from YouTube following the agreement of the previous meeting minutes.

(b) **Project Update Report –** Council considered the Project Update Report presented.

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED:

- To note the report;
- To adopt the recommendations as outlined in Section 3 of the report;
- To agree the additional items as outlined in Section 4 of the report and accept the quotations outlined for the additional works to the front of the Guildhall and the undertaking of the Tier 1 assessment of the cemetery land;
- To commence the installation of the bus shelter.

2020/195 MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

This item was considered under Agenda Item 2020/192(d.i).

2020/196 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

As certain items to be discussed included the consideration of exempt information it was **RESOLVED** under Item 2020/187 that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below, on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

(a) **Confidential Minutes**

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison
Unanimous

RESOLVED that the confidential minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held on 17th August 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

(b) **Human Resources –** Council considered the Human Resources Report presented.

Proposed: Cllr Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs O'Brien
Unanimous

RESOLVED that the 2020/21 National Salary Award be ratified and backdated to 1st April 2020 for all staff.

(c) **Confidential Priority Plan Update Report –** Council considered the Priority Plan Update Report presented.

Proposed: Cllr Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs O'Brien
For: Cllr Baker, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr Bates, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Williams and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

Abstention: Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED that the recommendations contained within the report regarding staff be progressed and that the remained of the report be noted.

FURTHER RESOLVED to extend the Locum Clerk's contract until 31st March 2021.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 10:57pm.

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MAYOR: **DATE:**