Chard Town Council

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP
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Mayor Cllr. Jason Baker **Town Clerk Andrew Gunn**

COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Town Council held remotely via zoom technology on Monday 20th July 2020

Present: Cllr Baker (Chairman), Cllr Williams, Cllr Mrs. Wootton, Cllr Kenton, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather, Cllr Mrs Orchard, Cllr Shortland and Cllr Carnell.

In Attendance: Andrew Gunn – Town Clerk, Tracy Lamb - RFO/Deputy Clerk and Liz Johnson-Idan – Community Liaison Officer.

There were No. #0 members of the public and No. #0 members of the press present.

The meeting started at 7.00 pm

7.00pm Chaplain's 'Thought for the Day'

Public Participation Time
This section (at the Chairman's discretion may last up to 15 minutes) is not part of the formal meeting of the Council.

Cllr Mrs Kenton spoke and wished to thank the Chard Covid-19 Support group volunteers for all of their help over the last 4 months. They have provided great support to many in the community, especially to those who have been shielding.

AGENDA

2020/137.
Apologies for absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given (If you cannot attend please telephone or email your apologies to the Town Clerk). LGA 1972 s85 (1).

Cllr Mrs Morrison – Family Commitment
Cllr Mrs Young – work commitment

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Carnell
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To accept the apologies and approve the reasons given.

2020/138.
Mayor's Announcements
The Mayor wished to thank all of the Chard Covid-19 support group volunteers, who have provided such great help and support to many people in the community.

The play areas have re-opened and its great that children can re-use those facilities again.

2020/139.
Declarations of Interest. Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 SI No.1159. (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

Cllrs Mrs Kenton – Town Team
Cllr Shortland - Town Team
Cllr Baker – Town Team and Chard Covid-19 Support Group
Cllr Mrs Wootton – Chard Covid-19 Support Group

2020/140.
To resolve to exclude members of the press and public - To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Carnell
Unanimous

RESOLVED – That owing to the confidential nature of the item the public, including the press, should be excluded from the meeting when Agenda Item 2020/161 (Staff in Confidence) is discussed.

Due to the large agenda and importance of agenda item #2020/161, Cllr Carnell proposed that this item is brought forward and discussed next.

Proposed: Cllr Carnell Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates.
Unanimous

RESOLVED – That agenda item #2020/161 is brought forward and discussed as the next agenda item.

2020/161
Staff in Confidence –
Update following the Full Council meeting held on the 13th July 2020 (#2020/136) in regard to the Town Clerk's departure and to agree the way forward.

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
11 For 1 Against.

RESOLVED – That Paul Russell is offered the Locum Clerk post.

2020/141
Council Meeting – minutes – To confirm and sign the minutes of the Extraordinary Full Town Council meeting held on the 13th July 2020 (attached) LGA 1972 SCH 12 PARA41 (1)

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Kenton Seconded: Cllr Shortland
Unanimous

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Extraordinary Full Town Council meeting held on the 13th July 2020 be adopted.

The Chairman signed the minutes

2020/142
Town Clerk's Report – to receive and note the verbal update from the Town Clerk.
The Clerk referred to the ongoing closure of Holyrood Street and as mentioned previously would welcome any additional comments about the closure. Those would then be forwarded to SSDC who are continuing to monitor the project.

2020/143
Town Clerk – Delegated Decisions.
The Town Clerk will give details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last Full Council meeting

The Clerk referred to a letter received from Jason Hawkes, Chair, Chard Covid-19 Support Group in respect of the use of the remaining money awarded by the Town Council to the group. In addition, in regard to the successful grant application to Western Power Distribution to support communities in regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. £5,000 was awarded.

The RFO advised that £4,000 out of the £10,000 from the Town Council was still available for the group.

The Clerk advised that a report should be brought to Full Council to discuss and agree the use of the £5,000 Western Power Distribution grant.

Report Noted

2020/144 Reports from Representatives of Outside Bodies – Please notify the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting if you will be making a report
None

2020/145
Policy and Governance – to review and approve the following:
A) Standing Orders
B) Financial Regulations
C) Scheme of Delegation
D) Full Council Terms of Reference
E) Planning and Highway Committee Terms of Reference
F) Personnel Committee Terms of Reference
G) Property Committee Terms of Reference
H) Services Committee Terms of Reference

Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather wanted her objection in regard to the short timescale from receiving the documentation in regard to the above, to the time of the meeting, to be noted.

The Chair advised that Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations would be considered separately. However, as the different Terms of Reference have now been incorporated into the Scheme of Delegation as one document, those would be considered together.

2020/145 A) Standing Orders

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Kenton Seconded: Cllr Bulmer
Unanimous

RESOLVED – To approve and adopt the updated Standing Orders.

2020/145 B) Financial Regulations

Members discussed the maximum level of spend per agenda item in regard to the Services and Property Committees. This would be £20,000 per agenda item for the Services Committee and £30,000 per agenda item for the Property Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Whittaker–Mather Seconded: Cllr Bulmer
7 For and 5 Abstentions.

RESOLVED: To approve and adopt the updated Financial Regulations, to include the agreed spending limits for each agenda item for the Property (£30,000) and Services (£20,000) Committees respectively.

8.30pm - Cllr Mrs Young joined the meeting.

2020/145 C) Scheme of Delegation including Terms of Reference.

Following the resolution above (agenda item # 2020/145 (b)) in regard to spending limits, the respective section on Powers and Duties contained within the Services and Property Committees Terms of Reference will need to be amended.

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Bulmer
10 for and 1 against.

RESOLVED: To approve and adopt the updated Scheme of Delegation, including the respective Terms of Reference for each Committee. The spending limits for the Services and Property Committees as agreed under agenda item #145 b) to be included.

2020/146
Policy and Governance –

A) To appoint a new Chair for the Planning and Highways Committee
B) To appoint members of the Planning and Highways Committee.

As there were insufficient numbers of Councillors to sit on the Planning and Highways Committee, the Town Clerk advised that planning and highways matters previously taken to the Planning and Highways Committee would now be taken to Full Council. A Scheme of Delegation would be written and a report brought to Full Council for approval.

Noted.

8.45pm Cllr Whittaker-Mather left the meeting. There was a 10 minute comfort break before the meeting resumed.

2020/147 - Finance - Town Council Year 2019/20 to Date Budget - to review the income and expenditure / balance sheet for the year to date (report attached) (Account & Audit Regulations 2011).

The support grant of £25,000 was awarded by SSDC in error and is to be returned.

Report noted.

2020/148.
Finance – Direct Debit, BACS and Manual Payments - to review schedule of payments (report attached).

Report noted.

2020/149.
Finance – Budget Virements – to review and note items budget virements that accord with the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulation # 4.2 and seek approval for transfers in excess of £1,000 (report attached).
Report noted.

2020/150 Bank Reconciliations – to receive and note the signed bank reconciliations (report attached)

Report noted.

2020/151 Finance - Accounts for Payment - to review and note items of expenditure (LGA 1972 s150 (5)) (report attached) – cheque signatories to be agreed.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Kenton Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To agree to pay the cheques as per the report.

2020/152 Finance – to review the Final Audit Report 2018-19 from the Internal Auditor; to note and consider any recommendations made (report attached).

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED: to agree the recommendations in the report.

2020/153 – Finance – Adoption of Accounts for the Year ended 31st March 2019, to approve the signing of the Annual Governance Statement (section one) (Accounts & Audit Regulations 2011**) (**accounts already supplied**)**

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED: Defer agenda item # 2020/153 until the next Full Council meeting in order to undertake and complete sections 5 and 7 of the Annual Governance Statement.

2020/154 – Adoption of Accounts for the Year ended 31st March 2019, to approve the signing of the Accounting Statement (section two) (Accounts & Audit Regulations 2011**) (**accounts already supplied**)**

This item has to be deferred as it can't be completed until item #2020/153 is adopted. Deferred until the next Full Council meeting.

2020/155 – To consider the preferred supplier for the Guildhall electricity contract (report attached**)**

Proposed: Cllr Kenton Seconded: Cllr Baker
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To approve option 2 – Ecotricity.

As the 2 ½ hour period for the duration of the meeting had been reached, the Chairperson asked Councillors permission to continue with the meeting to consider the remaining reports. This was agreed.

9.30pm - Cllr Mrs Young and Cllr Mrs Wootton left the meeting.

2020/156 Community Liaison Officer July Report (to receive and note attached report**)**

Councillors thanked Liz for her report. The report was noted.

2020/157 Community Liaison Officer - Community Development Grant Criteria Report - to receive and approve the report.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Kenton Seconded: Cllr Carnell
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To approve the report.

2020/158 Community Liaison Officer – Black Lives Matter and Equalities Report – to receive and approve report.

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To convene a Task and Finish Group to actively take forward the actions outlined in the report. The Task and Finish Group to comprise the following Councillors: Cllr Williams, Cllrs Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Mrs Obrien, Cllr Bulmer and Cllr Baker. The Community Liaison officer to ask those Councillors not present if they wish to join and to also extend the invite to members of the public and those with relevant experience and knowledge.

2020/159 Community Liaison Officer – Rural Market Towns Group Report – to receive the report and approve membership of the Rural Market Towns Group.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Williams
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To approve membership of the Rural Market Towns Group.

2020/160 Community Liaison Officer – Clothes Bank Report – to receive and approve the use of the Guildhall changing rooms for storage space for a period of 2 months.

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

RESOLVED: To approve use of the Guildhall changing rooms for storage space for a period of 2 months, as per report.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting ended at 9:49pm