Chard Town Council

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard. TA20 1PP
01460 239567 chard.gov.uk
Mayor: Cllr Victoria Bates
Town Clerk Neil Bloomfield

All Council Meetings are open to the Public and Press

Date of Publication: Wednesday July 17th 2024

To: Cllr Baker, Cllr Bates, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Crook, Cllr Eggins, Cllr Grief-Page, Cllr Hassan, Cllr Hussey, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr J Kenton Cllr Richter, Cllr Shortland, Cllr Watson, Cllr Webb and Cllr Williams

You are summoned to attend a meeting of Chard Town Council at
7pm on Monday 22nd July 2024 at The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP.

Neil Bloomfield
Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Members of the public may make representations at a meeting in respect of the business on the agenda. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chairperson of the meeting. This does not form part of the meeting and discussions are not minuted. A member of the public shall not speak for more than three minutes. A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chairperson of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

19.00 Chaplain's 'Thought for the Day'

- **Public Participation**
- **Somerset Cllr reports**

AGENDA

2024/113 RECORDING OF MEETINGS

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 recording is allowed at all formal meetings of Chard Town Council. The council will record this meeting. Anyone wishing to record the meeting is asked to notify the chair or clerk prior to or at the commencement of the meeting

2024/114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Town Clerk as it is usual for the grounds upon which apologies are tendered also to be recorded. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence are acceptable.

2024/115 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of it.

2024/116 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To consider resolving to accept the draft minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on the 17th June (attached).

2024/117 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

To note the minutes of the Extraordinary HR meetings Friday 14th June and consider any resolutions contained - see attached minutes.

2024/118 Responsible Finance Officer

Council agreed to appoint a temporary Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) at the 17th June meeting.

To note the appointment of Helen Nathanson as RFO for an initial period of 3 months starting from 8th July 2024

2024/119 CHARD TOWN COUNCIL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS, FIRST AID, AND SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY - see attached policy

For Council to consider the policy and resolve to add it to its existing set of policies.

2024/120 REVISED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS – see attached

For Council to note and accept the revised schedule.

2024/121 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Full Chard Town Council meeting will be held on Monday 19th August 2024 and will take place in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP commencing at 7pm.

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP
01460 239567 ww.chard.gov.uk

Mayor: Toria Bates and Temporary Proper Officer Neil Bloomfield

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on Monday 17th June 2024 commencing at 7:00pm

PRESENT: Cllr Baker, Cllr Bates (Mayor), Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Eggins, Cllr Grief-Page, Cllr Hussey, Cllr A Kenton (Deputy Mayor), Cllr J Kenton, Cllr Richter, Cllr Shortland Cllr Williams and Cllr Webb

OFFICERS & OTHERS PRESENT:
Neil Broomfield Temporary Proper Officer, Beverley Newman DSO, Rev. Georgina Vye (Chaplain), Cllr Wale (Somerset Councillor) & Cllr Payne (Somerset Councillor)

Chaplain's 'Thought for the Day'
Presented by Rev. Vye.
The Main theme for the thought of the day was: Reflection on who we are as: Chard Town Council, as the community of Chard and as individuals. With a focus on the qualities of; kindness, care, grace and humility.

Public Participation Time
There were 6 members of the public present.
3 questions were asked, 1 by proxy in writing to the Proper Officer

The first question was two-fold; first highlighting an inaccuracy of a previous question asked at public participation at the Full Council meeting from the 20th May 2024 and then further highlighting the requirements for Cllrs to declare an in interest and secondly requiring confirmation of any virement of funds for the SALC grant related project.
The proper Officer sated he had not released any funds for this project and agreed to provide this confirmation in writing.

The second question asked if the recruitment of the permanent Town Clerk would be undertaken to the letter of the law. The Proper Officer replied 'Yes'.

The third question: Are the Council spending money in a way they should be for the benefit of Chard?

Somerset Councilor reports.
Updates were received by Cllr Wale, Cllr Kenton & Cr Baker.

2024/94 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
The following apologies were received and accepted
Cllr Crook (personal), Cllr Hassan, (Work) Cllr Watson, (Personal)

2024/95 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**
No declaration made at this time

2024/96 **EXCLUSION OF MEMBERSOF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Proposed: Cllr Shortland Seconded Cllr Bulmer
Unanimous

RESOLVED: That will exclude members of the press and public in accordance with Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

2024/97 **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Proposed Cllr J Kenton Seconded Cllr Shortland
For: 5 Abstain: 6 Against: 1

RESOLVED: to make the following amendment to: agenda item 2024/31 a), Minutes from March 18th 2024 to delete the word '**NOT,** for minutes 4th April 2024 to show Cllr Kenton declared an interest as a member the Town Team not the Town Carnival and to agenda item **2024/53** minutes 8th April 2024 so the resolution reads:
To accept the offer made by the applicant to be employed as the Proper Officer and give delegated authority to the Mayor and RFO to negotiate terms of employment.
and for these sets of minutes and 20th May 2024 minutes be agreed as an accurate account.

2024/98 Council noted the minutes from the Finance and Audit meeting12th December and the fact the Resolution to 2023/60 a) wasn't actioned**:**

RESOLVED: *To accept the draft budget on the basis that a further Councillor workshop is conducted in January to take account of the output of the Tree Survey and the need to deliver services previously undertaken by Somerset Council, which may result in revisions being made before presentation to Full Council.*

2024/99 REVIEW OF POLICIES

It was noted that due to; a) The Scheme of delegation requiring changes - as stipulated at Full Council 20th May, and b) the need to defer the Financial regulations as significant updates are required.

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr A Kenton

For:8 Abstain: 4

RESOLVED: That the Finance & Audit Policy Group will review these to submit for approval to Full Council July Monday 22nd 2024

2024/100 STANDING ORDERS

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded: Cllr A Kenton

For:9 Abstain: 2 Against:1

RESOLVED: Not to consider the revisions of the Standing Orders at this time as both original and revised documents are required to a comparison.

2024/101 INTERNAL AUDIT

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr Grief-Page

For: 10 Abstain: 2

RESOLVED: For Council to adopt the Internal Audit Report 2023/24

2024/102 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 203/24 AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2023/24

Proposed: Cllr Bates Seconded Cllr Shortland

For: 7 Abstain: 2 Against: 3

RESOLVED: For Council to go into Closed session to discuss an aspect of this agenda item that may have impacted on insurance had it been discussed with member of the public present.

Discussion

Proposed: Cllr Seconded

Unanimous

RESOLVED: For Council to come out of Closed session to continue open discussion on this agenda item.

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(a) Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr Grief-Page

For: 6 Abstain: 3 Against: 3

RESOLVED: For Council to approve all numbers apart from number 8 of the section 1 Annual Governance Statement document 2023/24, to state Council are unable to put a remedy in place for this and sign the document.

(b) Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr A Kenton

For:10 Abstain: 1

RESOLVED: For Council to approve and sign Section 2 Accounting Statements 2023/24.

2094/103 CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL UNSURED RISKS:

Council noted all renewal details

2024/104 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Council noted and agreed the table of annual subscriptions

2024/105 BANK MANDATE

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded Cllr J Kenton

For: 7 Abstain: 5

RESOLVED: For Council to agree to issue a Debit card to both Temporary Town Clerk / Proper Officer and Operations Manager in the knowledge reiterated by the DSO at this meeting that debit cards have do not upper limit spend restraints.

2024/106 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

Proposed: Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr J Kenton

Unanimous

RESOLVED: For Council to accept the month of July schedule of meetings and agree the rest of the council year meetings at the Full Council meeting 22nd July 2024

2024/107 RECRUITMENT OF A PERMANENT TOWN CLERK
This item was withdrawn as it has been scheduled to discuss under Confidential 'Staffing Matters'

2024/108 RECRUITMENT OF A RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER (RFO)

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Council noted the HR Committee had instigated a recruitment process for a Locum RFO and that according to the internal audit 2022/23 it is good practice to have the RFO as a separate role to that of the Town Clerk.

2024/109 PROPER OFFICER UPDATES

(a) Information Centre & Guildhall Entrance

Cllrs Baker and J Kenton declared an interest and left the room as if agreed this agenda item would necessitate a request to Somerset Council planning. Cllr Baker is the Chair of Somerset Planning & Cllr J Kenton is a member of the Somerset Planning.

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded Cllr Eggins
Unanimous

RESOLVED: For Council to reaffirm its commitment to this project and seek the necessary quotes.

Cllrs Baker and J Kenton re-entered the meeting room.

(b) Staffing Matter

Cllr Baker and Cllr J Kenton declared an interest and left the room as their capacity as Somerset Councillors affords them information relating to the devolution process currently underway.

Proposed: Cllr Williams Seconded Cllr Bulmer
Unanimous

RESOLVED: For Council to increase the number of Amenities operatives by one and to take the funds for this from the Devolution EMR.

Cllrs Baker and J Kenton re-entered the meeting room

2024/110 Notice of Motion from Councillor Baker – Community Governance Review

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded Cllr Richter
Unanimous

RESOLVED: For Council to suspend Standing Orders so a member of the public could speak.

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The suggestion put to council on this item was to seek collaboration with the relevant neighbouring parishes before commencing this project.

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded Cllr Richter
Unanimous

RESOLVED: For Council to resume Standing Orders

Proposed: Cllr Hussey Seconded Cllr Richter
For: 9 Abstain: 2 Against: 1

RESOLVED: For Council to agree:

- A Community Governance Review is needed,
- To set up a working group to apply for a community governance review with a view to apply to the Unitary Council who have responsibility for undertaking Community Governance Reviews
- To report back to Full council on progress of this work

The following Cllrs agreed to be part of the working group:

- Cllr Baker
- Cllr Bulmer
- Cllr Hussey
- Cllr Grief-Page
- Cllr Williams

It was further agreed by Council that other Cllrs not present at tonight's meeting could be members of the group.

2024/111 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next Full Chard Town Council meeting will be held on Monday 22nd July 2024 and will take place in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP commencing at 7pm.

2024/112 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

The Clerk gave a verbal report to council and advised the HR Committee had resolved the following but brought it to council for ratification.

1. **STAFFING MATTERS**
   a) It was **RESOLVED** that Work Nest be appointed as the Councils HR advisors on a five-year contract (3 year break clause) at a fixed cost of £3,051.25pa

AGREED

DRAFT

b) It was **RESOLVED** the Operations Manager contract be amended and brought into line with the scheme of delegation and that in the absence of the Town Clerk he be appointed Deputy Clerk and Proper Officer. The job title amended to Operations Manager & Deputy Clerk.

AGREED

c) It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk (temporary) contract, due to end 8th July 2024 be extended by a further 3 months.

AGREED

d) It was **RESOLVED** a locum RFO would be sought soonest to allow council to recruit a permanent post holder.

AGREED

2. Complaints/Discipline

a) The Clerk gave a verbal update on the number of current complaints.
b) In regards the ongoing complaint and the process thus far. The council resolved that the process would be completed in accordance with the councils policy. External Cllrs would be used if necessary.

AGREED

END

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Chard Town Council Mental Health Awareness, First Aid, and Suicide Prevention Policy

****Purpose****

The purpose of this policy is to promote mental health awareness, provide mental health first aid, and prevent suicide within Chard Town Council. This policy outlines the commitment of the Council to ensure that both full-time staff and town councillors are trained and equipped to support individuals experiencing mental health issues or crises.

****Scope****

This policy applies to all full-time staff and town councillors of Chard Town Council. It aims to create a supportive and informed environment that prioritises mental health and wellbeing for all employees and members of the community.

****Commitment to Training****

Chard Town Council is committed to providing comprehensive training in Mental Health First Aid and suicide prevention (ASIST - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) for both full-time staff and town councillors. This training will be regularly updated to ensure all trained individuals are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge.

****Training Objectives****

- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)**: To equip staff and councillors with the skills to recognise signs of mental health issues, provide initial help, and guide individuals towards appropriate professional help.

- **Suicide Prevention (ASIST)**: To enable staff and councillors to identify individuals at risk of suicide, engage with them effectively, and ensure their safety by connecting them with appropriate care and support services.

****Implementation****

- **Access to Training**: Both full-time staff and town councillors will have access to MHFA and ASIST training. Training sessions will be scheduled regularly and made available to all eligible participants.

- **Designated Mental Health First Aiders**: A list of designated Mental Health First Aiders will be maintained and made accessible to all staff and councillors. These

individuals will serve as the first point of contact for anyone experiencing a mental health issue or crisis.

- **Ongoing Support and Resources**: Chard Town Council will provide ongoing support and resources to trained individuals, including refresher courses and access to mental health resources and networks.

Confidentiality

All interactions regarding mental health and suicide prevention will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity. Information shared will only be disclosed to appropriate personnel as necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual involved.

Support and Resources

- **Internal Support**: Full-time staff and councillors are encouraged to seek support from designated Mental Health First Aiders or their supervisors if they or someone they know is experiencing mental health issues.

- **External Resources**: The Council will provide information on external mental health resources, including local mental health services, hotlines, and online resources.

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from staff and councillors will be considered in the review process to continually improve mental health support within Chard Town Council.

Communication of Policy

This policy will be communicated to all full-time staff and town councillors through internal communications channels, including email, staff meetings, and the Council's intranet. Additionally, it will be made accessible on the Council's website for public awareness.

Conclusion

Chard Town Council is dedicated to fostering a supportive environment where mental health awareness, first aid, and suicide prevention are integral to our community's wellbeing. Through ongoing training and support, we aim to ensure that every individual feels safe, supported, and valued.

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING SCHEDULE May 24 to May 25

June 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Youth Council	Tuesday 4th June	13.45
Finance & Audit (Year End)	Tuesday 12th (Extr)	19.00
Planning & Highways	Thursday 13th	18.30
HR	Friday 14th	11.00
Full Council (End of year)	Monday 17th	19.00

July 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Amenities & Events	Monday 1st	19.00
HR Didn't take place	Tuesday 2nd	19.00
Mayoral Robing Day	Sunday 14th July	All day
Planning & Highways	Monday 22nd	18.30
Full Council	Monday 22nd	19:00
Youth Council	Thursday 11th	TBC
Finance & Audit - Postponed	Tuesday 23rd	19.00

August 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 13th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 19th	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 26th	18.30

September 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 10th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 16th	19:00
Youth Council	TBC	TBC
Planning & Highways	Monday 23rd	18.30

October 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Finance & Audit	TBC	19.00
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 14th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 21st	19.00
Youth Council	TBC	TBC
Planning & Highways	Monday 28th	18.30

November 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
HR	Tuesday 5th	19.00
Amenities & Events	Tuesday12th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 18th	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 25th	18:30
Youth Council	TBC	

December 2024		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING SCHEDULE May 24 to May 25

Finance & Audit	TBC	19.00
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 9th Dec	19.00
Full Council	Monday 16th	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 23rd	18.30

January 2025		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 14th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 20th	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 27th	`9.00
Youth Council	TBC	TBC

February 2025		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Finance & Audit	TBC	19.00
HR	Tuesday 4th	19.00
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 11th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 17th	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 24th	18.30
Youth Council	TBC	TBC

March 2025		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 11th	19.00
Full Council	Monday 17th	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 24th	18.30
Youth Council	TBC	TBC

April 2025		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Finance & Audit	TBC	19.00
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 15th	
Full Council	Monday 21st	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 28th	18.30
Youth Council	TBC	TBC

May 2025		
Committee		**Time**
Finance & Audit (Year End)	TBC	19.00
Amenities & Events	Tuesday 13th	19.00
Annual Town Council	Monday 19th	19.000
Planning & Highways	Monday 26th	18.30
Youth Council	TBC	TBC

June 2025		
Committee	**Date**	**Time**
Full Council	Monday 16th (End Yr)	19.00
Planning & Highways	Monday 23rd	18.30