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 9th November 2020 commencing at 7:00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Baker (Mayor), Cllr A Kenton (Deputy Mayor), Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Carnell, Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Williams, Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather, Cllr Mrs Wootton and Cllr Mrs Young (left at 9.40pm).

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Russell, Locum Town Clerk, Liz, Johnson-Idan, Tracy Lamb, Anna Matthews (SSDC) Rebecca McElliott (SSDC) and Rev. Georgina Vye, Mayor's Chaplain.

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

CHAPLAIN'S 'THOUGHT FOR THE DAY'
The Chaplain reflected on Remembrance commemorations and read a poem.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME
The following question was submitted. A full written reply would be forwarded to all Councillors regarding the following question raised by Cllr Whittker-Mather:

On the 18th November 2019, it is cited within the composite minutes of this Council under item 2019/263 "Staff in Confidence" the following;

"The Clerk updated Councillors on staffing matters and it was agreed that the Clerk seek an independent review of staffing matters. Cllr Carnell and Cllr Mrs Wootton to assist the Clerk in this process".

Question;

On the 17th August 2020, a payment was included within item 2020/171 "Invoices due for payment by 18 August 2020 for Trade Creditors" to Rebecca Bevins HR Consultancy Ltd, with an invoice date of the 31st March 2020 for a "HR Consultancy and Report" to the value of £2,349.00. This payment was agreed. Can the Clerk confirm that Chard Town Council has;

1. Received the report from Ms Bevins
2. That all Councillors can be provided with a copy and can discuss whatever it entails in the correct manner or

3. That the report has been received but is not being disclosed or shared with members, and that consequently Chard Town Council is not dealing with the “Staffing Matters” demonstrating an unwillingness to deal with internal issues
4. Chard Town Council has wasted the time of our staff, the council and tax payers money to the value of £2,349.00?

A request was received for additional cycle racks to be provided in the town centre. It was noted that cycle racks were included in the public realm upgrade plans.

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.

2020/209 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following apologies for absence were received and accepted:

- Cllr Mrs Orchard (illness)
- Cllr Shortland (work)

2020/210 MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- A school lunch initiative was delivered during the half term and 172 packed lunches were handed out. Thanks were extended to all those who had supported the initiative especially the businesses who had provided sponsorship;
- The Chard Christmas Lights would be erected in the coming week.

2020/211 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Cllr J Kenton: Personal interest 2020/214
- Cllr Bulmer: Personal interest 2020/214
- Cllr Baker: Personal interest 2020/214. Financial 2020/217(c) & (d);
- Cllr O’Brien: Personal interest Youth Committee: 2020/217(c);
- Cllr Morrison: Personal interest Town Team;
- Cllr Wootton: Personal interest Youth Committee: 2020/217(c).

2020/212 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison
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 2020/208, 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.

2020/213 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Proposed: Cllr Mrs O'Brien Seconded: Cllr Mrs Wootton

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

Against: Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather. Objection noted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held on 12th October 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

2020/214 TOWN COUNCIL FUNDING FOR EASTERN GATEWAY PUBLIC REALM

Council received a report from South Somerset District Council regarding the progression of this scheme and the improvement of the public realm at this location. An initial report was presented in December 2017 to the Town Council and it had been agreed to allocate a sum of £15,000 from balances towards to cost of the scheme.

The current cost of the scheme had now increased to £97,193 and included all the fees related to implementing the project.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr O'Brien

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

Against: Cllr Mrs Morrison and Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED:

- That the content of the report be noted, including progress made towards delivering the scheme and changes in project management;
- That members agree to increase the Town Council's commitment from £15,000 to £30,000 in order to progress to implementation of the scheme, alongside SSDC's Area West Committee commitment of £67,193. The allocation would be funded from the Town Council's current balances.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr O'Brien

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

Abstentions: Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather and Cllr Mrs Kenton.

RESOLVED:

- That members agree to delegate final design development for the scheme to the project team leading Chard's public realm projects with the final sign-off by Chard Regeneration Board.

2020/215 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Council noted that the Locum Clerk had nothing to report.

2020/216 CORONAVIRUS

Council noted the update presented regarding the new national restrictions that came into force on Thursday 5th November 2020 and the impact they would have on service delivery by the Town Council.

2020/217 FINANCE

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

(b) **Budget Virements** – Council considered the budget virements proposed.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs Wootton
Unanimous

RESOLVED to adopt the budget virements.

(c) **Direct Debit, BACS and Manual Payments** – Council considered the Schedule of Payments for November 2020

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

(Cllrs Baker, Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Wootton abstained from voting on payments that they had declared an interest in)

RESOLVED to ratify the Schedule of Payments for November 2020 amounting to £45,276.77.

(d) **Accounts for Payment –** Council reviewed the expenditure for Month 7 as outlined in the report presented.

It was confirmed that the provision of youth services was still being delivered despite the building having been closed during the Covid pandemic. The funding had been used to provide outreach work and deliver one to one sessions. There was currently no Service Level Agreement in place.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates
Unanimous

(Cllrs Baker abstained from voting on the payment he had declared an interest in)

RESOLVED to pay all outstanding accounts amounting to £25,741.41.

(e) **Waste Contract –** Council considered the quotation received from Veolia.

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

RESOLVED:

- To draw up a specification to enable Chard Town Council to improve the disposal of its waste, reduce waste to landfill and improve its recycling;
- To seek at least two additional quotations so that prices could be assessed on a like to like basis;
- To ensure that all quotations included the company's green credentials.

(f) **Review of Fees and Charges –** Council considered the draft fees and charges for 2021/22 with various options.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison

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

Abstentions: Cllr Bulmer and Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED to delegate the Guildhall Working Group and the Property & Services Committee to review the fees and charges for 2021/22 and submit recommendations for consideration by Full Council at its meeting to be held on 7th December 2020.

(g) **Budget 2021/22 –** Council noted the information developed to date regarding the 2021/22 budget.

(h) **CAB Film –** Council discussed the option suggested by CAB to make a film specifically for Chard residents outlining advice on employment and redundancy.

Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Mrs Wootton

For: Cllr Bulmer and Cllr Mrs Wootton.

Against: Cllr Baker, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr Mrs Bates, Cllr Carnell, Cllr Mrs Morrison, Cllr Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Williams, Cllr Whittaker-Mather and Cllr Mrs Young.

Abstentions: Cllr Mrs Kenton.

RESOLVED that Council would not support the production of a film at this time but would carry out further investigations into the need as well as identifying and making available existing information that is currently available.

2020/218 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

(a) **Committee Meeting Minutes –** Council considered the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on Tuesday 27th October 2020.

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

RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on Tuesday 27th October 2020 and to ratify the decisions and recommendations submitted.

(b) **Grant Applications –** Council considered the following grant applications received:

- Chard Museum (£1,000)
- Radio Ninesprings (£1,000)

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Kenton Seconded: Cllr Bulmer

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

Abstentions: Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather

RESOLVED:

- To award a grant of £1,000 to Chard Museum;
- To defer consideration of the Radio Ninesprings application until the Full Council meeting on 7th December 2020.

2020/219 COMMUNITY

(a) **Community Liaison Report –** Council noted the Community Liaison Officer's report.

(b) **Climate Change Working Group Report –** Council noted the update from the Climate Change Working Group Report.

(c) **Task & Finish/Working Group Reports –** Council amended the Task & Finish/Working Groups that had previously been set up:

- Heritage Action Zone Representatives (Cllrs Bates and Morrison)
- Community Venue (Cllrs Morrison & Wootton) – To consider options for a permanent community venue;
- Armistice Working Party (Cllr J Kenton and the Community Liaison Officer)
- Bus Shelter (Cllrs Mrs Kenton & Morrison)
- Guildhall Working Group (Cllrs Baker, Carnell, Mrs Kenton, Morrison & Orchard)
- Amalgamate Parks & Play Areas (Cllrs Baker, Shortland, Bates, Carnell, Mrs Kenton, Orchard, Bulmer, Morrison)
- Saturday Market WG (Cllrs Bulmer, Morrison & Shortland)
- Skate Park Improvement WG (Cllrs Baker, Morrison, O'Brien, Shortland & Orchard)
- Strategic Plan (Cllrs Wootton, Baker, Mrs Kenton, Williams & Whittaker-Mather)
- Street Cleaning (Cllrs Baker, A Kenton, Morrison & Bulmer)

It was agreed that the following Groups be discontinued:

- Guildhall Bar
- IT Working Group
- Changing Rooms (Cllr Baker)
- Newsletter Working Group
- Truck Working Group
- Youth Engagement Working Group

2020/220 PLANNING

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

2020/221 COUNCIL GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

(a) **Project Update Report –** Council noted the update report.

2020/222 MOTIONS

Motion One:
Notice of Motion from Councillor Jason Baker, seconded by Cllr Mrs Morrison: 'that this Council agrees to offer support to the residents of Chard that may be affected by the possible closure of Oscar Mayer

Members will be aware that there is now a consultation looking at the future of Oscar Mayer in Chard. Following several conversations with Oscar Mayer I would like us as a town council to offer support by offering the use of the Guildhall free of charge to give a venue for training and advice.

I am currently working closely with the district council, citizens advice and am in talks with Somerset Skills & Learning to ensure that we have a joined-up approach to support residents as and when needed.

I would like to see multi-agency task force set up to ensure that we are offering the best level of support and joined up recourses possible.

Motion Two:
Notice of Motion from Councillor Jenny Kenton "That this council approaches the committee of the Covid group and offers to use Council resources including staff to ensure any future outbreak of Covid or similar disasters is dealt with in the best interest of our community and that Chard town Council becomes an enabler for relief for our town."

Motion Three
Notice of Motion: To support DEFRA's ambition to phase out the badger cull in England as a method of controlling the spread of bovine tuberculosis (bTB).

Councillors were requested that in future, when submitting a Motion for consideration by Council, that a full report behind the Motion be provided and distributed to all Members.

2020/223 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item #2020/212 above refers)

(a) **Confidential Minutes –** To confirm and sign the confidential minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on the 12th October 2020 (attached).

(b) **Confidential Priority Plan Update Report –** To consider the attached report.

(c) **Draft Staffing Structure –** To consider the attached report.

2020/224 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Council is requested to consider altering the date of the next Full Council meeting from Monday 14th December 2020 to Monday 7th December 2020.

2020/200 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
2020/203 FINANCE

(e) **BACS Limit –** Council considered the request to increase the current BACS limit set by the Co-op Bank from £30,000 per month to between £60 - £80,000, bearing in mind the number of larger projects that are about to commence in the next few months.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs Bates

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

Abstention: Cllr Mrs Kenton, Cllr Bulmer and Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED to increase the BACs limit from £30,000 per month to £80,000 per month.

(f) **Budget 2021/22 –** Council noted that an initial budget was currently in development. The Property & Services Committee had arranged an informal discussion and a budget workshop would be arranged.

2020/204 PROPERTY & SERVICES COMMITTEE

(a) **Committee Meeting Minutes –** Council considered the minutes of the Property & Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday 29th September 2020.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Morrison Seconded: Cllr Mrs Kenton

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

Against: Cllr Mrs Whittaker-Mather.

RESOLVED to ratify the decisions and recommendations agreed by the Committee.

2020/205 COMMUNITY

(a) **Climate Change Working Group Report –** Council noted the two Climate Change Working Group Report reports outlining recommended initiatives that were currently being developed and costed. It was agreed to request a demonstration of battery powered equipment prior to purchase.

(b) **Task & Finish Group Reports –** Council noted the following Task & Finish Group reports:

- Heritage Action Zone Representatives – This had not yet met but a meeting was being scheduled towards the end of October 2020.
- Community Venue – This group had not yet met.
- There were no other reports from any other Task & Finish Groups that had been set up.

(c) **Remembrance Commemorations 2020 –** Council noted that a meeting had been held with the Royal British Legion Chard Branch to discuss this year's Remembrance commemorations. There would be no parade on Remembrance Sunday and wreaths would be laid in the churchyard, but it would be a much smaller event. A further meeting to discuss final arrangements would be held.

The Remembrance commemoration on the 11th November 2020 would be held in the town centre and the Police would be requested to close the road as in previous years. Current Covid guidelines and social distancing would be observed. Arrangements to enable this to happen would be discussed with the Caretaker of the Guildhall. Councillors were requested to inform the Clerk as to whether they would be attending.

2020/206 PLANNING

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

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

RESOLVED to ratify the responses outlined in the report.

2020/207 COUNCIL GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

(a) **Committee Members –** Council agreed to nominate the following additional Members to the Property & Services Committee and the Policy & Resources Committee. It was further agreed to increase the Property & Services Committee membership by one:

Property & Services Committee
Cllr Bulmer
Cllr Bates

Policy & Resources Committee
Cllr Bulmer

(b) **Project Update Report –** To note the update report presented by the Locum Clerk and consider any recommendations.

2020/208 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

As certain items to be discussed included the consideration of exempt information it was **RESOLVED** under Item 2020/200 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 –** Council considered the confidential minutes of the Full Town Council meeting held on the 14th September 2020.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Bates Seconded: Cllr Mrs Morrison

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

Not Present: Cllr Bulmer and Cllr Carnell.

RESOLVED that the confidential minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held on 14th September 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

(b) **Confidential Priority Plan Update Report –** Council noted the report presented and ratified the recommendations contained within the report.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9:14pm.

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MAYOR:	**DATE:**