Chard Town Council

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard. TA20 1PP
01460 239567 chard.gov.uk
Mayor: Cllr Victoria Bates
Proper Officer Kevin Dyer

Minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on Monday 18th November 2024 commencing at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors Baker, Bates, Bulmer, Crook, Eggins, Hassan, Hussey, A Kenton, J Kenton, Richter, Watson and Webb

Apologies: Councillors Grief-Page, Williams and Shortland

In Attendance: Helen Nathanson (Locum RFO), Beverley Newman (DSO), Somerset Councillor Wale and 26 members of the public

Public Participation Time

4 members of the public spoke. The following points were raised:

A resident spoke about Snowden Park and requested that the Park be maintained as an asset to the town.

A resident thanked officers and councillors for their hard work. It was requested that dates for Task & Finish Group meetings be published. Details around the recruitment of a new Town Clerk were queried in relation to ensuring the process was carried out properly using NALC guidelines. It was agreed to publish the dates of Task & Finish Group meetings on the website and that the NALC guidelines would be followed in the recruitment of a new Town Clerk.

A resident corrected the date on the Minutes of the meeting on 18th August which should read 19th August. He queried the range of titles given to the previous clerk and asked a question about the Council's communications over the Independent Investigation with regard to the police involvement.

A resident asked about Item 2024/138 and the Chard Town Council Standards and Code of Conduct regime.

Somerset Councillor Reports
Somerset Councillors; Wale, J Kenton and Baker provided updates.

DRAFT

2024/133 **Apologies for Absence**
It was resolved to accept the apologies from Councillors Grief-Page, Williams and Shortland for personal reasons.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor S Hassan
Unanimous

2024/134 **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any updates from members for declarations of interests which are not currently entered in the Register.

Declarations were received from Cllrs J Kenton and Baker in respect to agenda item 2024/137 b).

2024/135 **Council Meeting Minutes**
It was resolved to approve the Minutes of the Full Town Council meetings on 19th August 2024 and 16th September 2024. To include the agreed amendments: reflect the correct date of the August Full Council meeting, and full first name of the Mayor

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
For: 9 Abstain 3

2024/136 **Committee Meetings**

a) Amenities & Events: It was resolved to note the minutes of the Amenities & Events Committee meetings held on 14th May, 1st July & 12th November 2024.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor J Kenton
For:10 Abstain: 2

Cllr Kenton requested that any recommendations from committee meeting minutes be listed again separately on the main agenda.

b) HR: To note the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 4th September and consider any recommendations.
Council noted the minutes.

The following recommendations were approved:

HR Committee 2024/38 Local Government Pay Claim 2024/25 Update
It was resolved to approve the recommendation that the pay offer be accepted for all staff as directed by NALC.

Approved: J Kenton Seconded: Watson
Unanimous

2024/137 **Finance**

a) To receive and note the Income and Expenditure Report.
This was noted.

b) To consider updates from the CAYC Task & Finish Group regarding a request for additional funding in the next financial year.

Councillor Webb raised considerations about the fairness, process and transparency of awarding such a large sum of money to only one youth group when there were other youth groups operating within the town. He proposed that the group should be given limited funding to allow them to continue to operate whilst they produced a plan for future sustainability.
The Mayor explained that the group does fundraise and that many grants are match-funded which means that the money from the Town Council would help with this.
Councillor Baker proposed that Standing Orders were suspended to allow the CAYC representatives present to speak in response to the comments raised by Councillor Webb.

Standing Orders were suspended by unanimous vote at 7.44pm.

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr Eggins
Unanimous

The Mayor resumed Standing Orders at 7.51pm.

Councillors discussed the benefits of the Youth Club to the town and how to find a balance of protecting both the youth service and Town Council funds. It was generally agreed that the service was very valuable and that it would be a huge loss to the town if it ceased.

It was resolved that the Town Council would fund CAYC for another year by providing no more than £40k of funding in the financial year 2025/26, via monthly instalments. This money would be taken from the Devolution EMR because the situation had been caused by devolution of services from Somerset Council.

It was further resolved that the Town Council would investigate, with some urgency, either buying or asking Somerset Council to asset transfer, the Youth Club premises or a similar appropriate building in the town with a view to it having a broader community use.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor D Bulmer
For: 11 Abstain 1

2024/138 Chard Town Council Standards Regime

To receive the letter from Somerset Council regarding the Chard Town Council Standards Regime and to consider the recommendations for a response.

The following recommendations, as set out in the letter from Somerset Council, were considered:

1. SALC training courses, including:
The Councillor as Employer
Councillor Refresh/Update 2024
Councillor Essentials Part: 2 – Governance & Finance
Chairpersonship
Code-of-Conduct

2. Bespoke training that would include:

a. HR based training with an external consultant (via zoom) to cover Councillors' Legal Responsibilities as Employers, protocols on member/officer relationships and their respective roles.
b. Governance Review, to be either a desk- based review to look at Standing Orders, Terms of Reference, Financial Regulations, relevant policies; or a self-assessment and observational approach driven by the Nolan Principles and the Civility & Respect agenda. This could include:

i. Open-book review of previous reports/investigations
ii. A self-complete questionnaire for Councillors and Officers
iii. Observation of Town Council meetings and committees
iv. Engagement and participatory sessions with aims, objectives and expectations clarified and agreed.

c. Mediation or Facilitated Group Conversations – however for this to be successful all parties must agree that they want to participate and a willingness to improve the current situation without self or political interest.

3. The formation of an Independent Improvement Board. The terms of reference for the Improvement Board would be agreed between Chard Town Council and Somerset Council and would follow an independent peer review approach and produce a report and action plan for the Town Council.

It was resolved to ask officers to investigate the costs of all the options so that councillors could consider them. It was acknowledged that some options would take longer to investigate and it was requested that costs be presented as they come in.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor Eggins
For: 11 Abstain: 1

2024/139 Date of Next Meeting

To note the date of the next meeting which will be held on Monday 16th December 2024 in the Guildhall at 7pm.
This was noted.

2024/140 Exclusion of Press and Public

Councillors will be asked to resolve to exclude the press and public in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as certain items are expected to include the consideration of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Proposed: Councillor Bates Seconded: Councillor
Unanimous

2024/141 Staffing Matters

To consider the recommendations in the confidential notes to the minutes of the HR Committee on 5th November 2024.
See confidential notes to the Minutes.

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Mayor: Cllr Victoria Bates
Proper Officer Kevin Dyer

Minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on **Monday 16th December 2024** commencing at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors Baker, Bates, Bulmer, Crook, Eggins, Hussey, A Kenton, J Kenton, Richter, Shortland, Watson and Williams.

Apologies: Councillors Grief-Page, Hassan and Webb

In attendance: Helen Nathanson (Locum RFO), Beverley Newman (DSO), Somerset Councillor Wale and 17 members of the public.

Chaplin's Thought for the Day'
The mayor conveyed the Chaplin's apologies – due to the time of year he was unable to attend**.**

Public Participation Time
Two members of the public spoke one in relation to a grant submission for the Chard Scouts Group and one raised three questions in relation to the boundary review (agenda item 2024/149 a). Cllr Baker provided a response to this. A further two questions were asked; a request for an update on the Chard Youth Club and an update on the devolution of services.

Somerset Councillor Reports
Somerset Councillors; Baker, J Kenton and Wale, provided updates.

2024/142 **Apologies for Absence**
It was resolved to accept the apologies from Councillors Grief-Page, Hassan and Webb for personal reasons.

Proposed: Councillor J Watson Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

2024/143 **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations received.

2024/144 **Council Meeting Minutes**
It was resolved to defer the Minutes of the Full Town Council meeting on the 18th November due to the requirement of some amendments.

Proposed: Councillor Bates Seconded: Councillor Baker
For: 9 Abstain 3

2024/145 **Committee Meetings**

a) HR:

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Council noted the minutes of the HR meeting held 4th December
The consideration of employing an interim Town Clerk - See *Exclusion of Press and Public* below

2024/146 Finance

a) Council requested a pre-budget meeting to go through line by line.
Action Point: Officers to arrange a pre-budget meeting
.
b)
i) Brave Bold Drama

Resolved: For council to agree the grant application

Proposed Cllr Bates Seconded Cllr Eggins
For: 10 Abstain: 2

ii) Wellington Community Counselling

Resolved: For council to agree the grant application subject to receiving the Children element of grant funding (having the adult element of grant funding already secured)
Action Point. RFO to inform Wellington Community Counselling.

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr J Kenton
For: 11 Abstain: 1

iii)1st Chard Scout Group

Resolved to suspend Standing Orders

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr Shortland
Unanimous

Resolved: For council to agree the grant application

Proposed Cllr Williams Seconded Cllr Baker
Unanimous

2024/147 Councillor Motion
See *Exclusion of Press and Public* below

2024/148 Legal and ICO Casework - See *Exclusion of Press and Public* below

2024/149 Correspondence

a) Council noted the link provided for the Consultation document 'Local Government Boundary Review in Somerset'

Resolved to suspend Standing Orders

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr J Kenton
Unanimous

Further discussion and information were exchanged in particular the feasibility of the current plans.

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Standing Orders were resumed

Proposed Cllr Baker Seconded Cllr Hussey
Unanimous

b) Council noted the Letter to Parishes from Somerset Councillor Revans

Exclusion of Press and Public
Resolved: For Council to exclude the press and public in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as items 2024/145 a), 2024/147 & 2024/148 are expected to include the consideration of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Williams
For:9 Against: 3

2024/150 **Date of Next Meeting**
Council noted the date of the next Full Council meeting: **Monday January 20th 2025 19.00**

Confidential

2024/145 **a) Recommendations of the HR Committee meeting 4th December**
Council considered the recommendations of the HR Committee meeting held 4th November in respect to the employment of an interim Town Clerk

Resolved: For Council to recruit Mr David Bell into the position of Chief Executive Town Clerk for Chard Town Council Mr Bell having completed a successful interview and provided two references.

Proposed: Cllr Bates Seconded: Cllr J Kenton
Unanimous

2024/147 **Councillor Motion**
For council to consider retracting the resolution made at March 18th 2024 agenda item 2024/41 a) which requested the rescinding of the Independent Investigation commissioned by the Council February 2023, to offer an 'unreserved apology to those affected' and to allow £3k to seek advice on the wording of this apology.

Resolved: Not to retract the resolution made at March 18th Full Council meeting agenda item 2024/41 a)

Proposed: Cllr Eggins Seconded: Cllr Bulmer
For: 2 Against: 5 Abstain: 5

2024/148 **Legal and ICO Casework**
Council noted the update on this work

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Chard Town Council

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01460 239567 chard.gov.uk
Mayor: Cllr Victoria Bates
Chief Executive & Town Clerk David Bell

Minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on **Monday 27th January 2025** commencing at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors Baker, Bates, Bulmer, Eggins, Hassan, Hussey, Richter and Watson.

Apologies: Councillors Crook, Grief-Page, A Kenton, J Kenton Shortland, Webb and Williams

Apologies were also received from Cllr Wale.

In attendance: Chief Executive & Town Clerk David Bell, Deputy Town Clerk Kevin Dyer, Beverley Newman Democratic Service Officer and 29 members of the public.

Tributes were paid and a minute's silence was upheld in acknowledgement of the sad passing of previous Mayor John Bryce.

Public Participation Time
Two members of the public spoke:
1.
- Does Chard Town Council have a Major Incident Plan? If so where is it? If not why not? The member of public acknowledged there is no statutory duty for Town Councils to have one but argued that in the event of events like last night having a Major Incident Plan helps all hugely.
- At what time did Somerset Council announce a Major Incident? It was first spotted at 9.00 O'clock the following morning. Someone on Chard Town Council needs to hold Somerset Council to account.
- There were 2 hours last night where there was no access into or out of Chard, drivers were not driving to the weather conditions – where were the police?

2.
- A mapping of last night's incident was undertaken by a member of Chard Area Resilience Group (CARG), 60 'pinch points' were identified.
- All the evidence needs to be gathered in one place and shared with all relevant agencies and organisations so it can be used to help prevent further damage.
- The combined response last night from all those involved was 'spectacular'

Somerset Councillor Reports
Committee received updates from Councillor Baker

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Section 1 – Standing Items

2025/01 **Apologies for Absence**
It was resolved to accept the apologies from Councillors Grief-Page, Hassan and Webb for personal reasons.

Proposed: Councillor Watson Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

2025/02 **Declarations of Interest**
Cllrs Baker and Bates declared a possible & personal interest depending on any discussion in respect to Agenda item 2025/04 b) i)

Council noted the declarations of interest.

2025/03 **Council Meeting Minutes**

Resolved: To defer the Minutes of the Full Town Council meeting on the 18th November and 16th December 2024 to appear on the February 2025 Full Council meeting agenda due to the requirement of some amendments and to implement new processes

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

Section 2 – Items to note

2025/04 **a) The Mayor**
The Mayor outlined some of her recent activities as Mayor:

- Support during last night's flooding and the Mayor expressed her sincere thanks to all those who had also contributed support; Counillors, Officers, Volunteers.
- Attendance at Manor Court School Art Show, stating it was an 'absolute privilege' to be asked to judge the children's work and see the joy this event brought to all.
- Collaboration and attending meetings with Officers, Councillors & local community group representatives in planning for Chard's VE celebrations, adding if anyone was interested to get in touch. All ideas and contributions are welcome.

b) Chief Executive & Town Clerk
The Chief Executive Town Clerk gave an opening statement this being his first Full Council and then gave the following updates:

- Application for 35k grant from Somerset Association Of Local Council –
  The monies received have been returned to SALC, The Waffle House is totally self-funding.
- Legal and ICO Casework –
  There has been significant progress made with ICO cases with an update since publication of the agenda being there is now only 1 outstanding.

  Detailed information was request for this update.
  Action Point: Officers to provide an opportunity to discuss with Council.

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- Contracts –
  Confirmation of a newly recruited Responsible Financial Officer – Carrie Pillow
- Financial Reports –
  Reports were provided for Income & Expenditure, Balance sheet, Earmarked Reserves and Expenditure over £500

Council noted the updates from the Mayor and Chief Executive & Town Clerk

Section 3- Items for decision

2025/05 **2025/26 Budget**

Resolved: To formerly adopt the 2025/26 Financial Year budget for Chard Town Council.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Bulmer
Unanimous

2025/06 **Precept**

Resolved: To formerly request a precept of £1,185,00 from Somerset Council for 2025/26.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Richter
Unanimous

2024/07 **Reserves**
To formerly accept the use of the reserves: Play Equipment, £6,000, CIL (County Infrastructure Levy) £14,000, Cemetery £15,000 and Guildhall £25,000 within the next two months, this being the end of the time frame allowed in which to spend.

Proposed: Councillor Eggins Seconded: Hussey
Unanimous

2025/08 **Date of Next Meeting**
Council noted the date of the next Full Council meeting: **Monday February 17th 2025 19.00**

Section 4 - Confidential

No confidential items for this meeting.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20.18

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Chard Town Council

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard. TA20 1PP
01460 239567 chard.gov.uk
Mayor: Cllr Victoria Bates
Chief Executive & Town Clerk David Bell

Minutes of the Chard Town Council Extraordinary meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on **Monday 17th February 2025** commencing at 18:30pm.

Present: Councillors: Baker, Bates, Bulmer, Eggins, A Kenton, J Kenton & Webb

Apologies: Councillors: Crook, Hassan, Hussey, Shortland, Richter and Watson

In attendance: Chief Executive & Town Clerk (CE TC) David Bell, Deputy Town Clerk & Operations Manager (DTC- OM) Kevin Dyer, Beverley Newman Democratic Service Officer and 10 members of the public.

Public Participation Time
Six members of the public spoke
Summary of questions and comments on the following subjects:

<u>Lloyds bank closure</u>

1. Can the Council find out when the Nationwide lease runs out? Anecdotal evidence suggest they are only committed to stay in Chard till this time which is believed to be 2026
2. Closure of Lloyds bank is likely to cause:

- Increase footfall to Nationwide which may be problematical
- Reduced to trade to local businesses as people going out of Chard to bank may do their shopping in those places instead of Chard
- Difficulties to undertake banking for a number of groups, people with disabilities, people with children lack of transport, people who don't have access to or are able to use on line banking.
- Greater vulnerability to scams

3. The post Office offer most banking facilities the only one it doesn't' provide is the services of a 'Community Banker'
4. Refusal of Banking Hub in Chard could be due to Link capacity. Recently set up and are still completing one in Crewkerne and are rolling out more.
5. Lack of understanding of what a Banking Hub is and what it provides.
6. Lloyds bank complaints contacted regarding the closure in Chard. Reassured a Banking Hub would be set up in Chard.
7. Why the urgency of this meeting at yet more cost to the tax payer? Why could the Lloyds Bank closure be included in the Mach Agenda?
    a. Answer provided by CE TC – An informal meeting was already scheduled with Councillors on this evening and to meet the response deadline to Link. An offer to meet was also provided.

<u>Excellent service received.</u>

A letter of thanks and appreciation was given to Cllr Baker regarding the service a member of Chard Community received for the recent burial of their spouse.

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2025/09 **Apologies for Absence**

It was resolved to accept the apologies from the following Councillors;
Crook (Personal), Hassan (work), Hussey (personal), Richter (Work), Shortland (Personal) and Watson for personal.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

Resolved: For Council to formerly accept the apologies declared.

2025/10 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Baker and J Kenton declared a personal interest in respect to Agenda item 2025/11 as they are customers of Lloyds Bank.

Cllr Baker also declared there is Political Party interest form the Liberal Democrats.

Council noted the declarations of interest.

2025/11 **Notice of Motion from Councillor Json Baker in respect to the recent Link Group decision to not supply a banking hub in Chard.**

Cllrs Baker and J Kenton provided the following as reasons for appealing the Link decision:

- Refute the transport / bus Link argument both feasibility and cost of. (Cllr baker has researched the bus times and routes and can quantify this)
- Higher population than Crewkerne
- Demographics of Chard are different of those assumed by Link, in particular higher volume of older people (65 & over) & higher volume of social deprivation.
- There are 75 shops in Chard High St. They all concur they need banks to support the day to day function of their business.

Other points raise:

- There is unconfirmed information to suggest that Lloyds bank will be providing a 'Community Banker' but no further information to say how often or what days of the week.
- Current demographics in Chard should mean Chard meets the Link criteria, the forecast increase to Chard's population should also be considered.
- Cllr Baker confirmed the closure of a bank automatically triggers a Link review. The report from the review was published 29th January 2025 and there are 28 days to submit an appeal.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor J Kenton
Unanimous

Resolved: To support local residents, businesses and visitors (given the recent announcement of the Lloyds Bank closure in Chard) by formerly appealing the decision of the Link Group not to supply a banking hub in Chard.

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Action: CE TC David Bell, Cllrs Baker & J Kenton, to include feedback from other Cllrs and involvement of the owners of Chard Post Office will submit an appeal to the Link decision.

2025/12 Date of Next Meeting

Council noted the date of the next Full Council meeting: Monday March 17th 2025 19.00

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 19.10

DRAFT

David Bell

From: David Bell
Sent: 25 February 2025 20:33
To: 'accesstocash@link.co.uk'
Subject: Banking Hub Decision Appeal - Chard, Somerset

Appeal Against LINK Decision Not To Provide A Banking Hub For Chard, Somerset

Please find set out below our case to appeal your decision.

1) In 2021 the South Somerset District Council "Future Chard strategy" identified that Chard had a population where 1 in 4 people were over the age of 65. This is higher than the national average of 1 in 5.

2) Age concern UK published a report in May 2023 with evidence that 4 in 10 of these older residents did not bank online and are at high risk of financial exclusion. The research also found that 75% of older people feel uncomfortable with using online banking, especially those over 85 and that they will lose their control of their own life and money by having to rely on younger members of their family or, in some cases, put themselves at risk of fraud by asking others to bank for them. The Town Council regularly comes in contact with people in our community who not only do not possess a mobile phone but also do not have broadband. In addition, broadband speeds in this area are poor, despite promises.

3) This situation would be exacerbated by a lack of easy to access banking advice and access to a bank person to advise on issues like payments, transfers, managing your money and how to use online banking if it is available to them. A banking hub, centrally located, would be a critical service, in the absence of banks.

4) If implemented, the proposed closure of banking services in the town means they will find it difficult, if not impossible, to manage their money and will therefore mean they will lose their much valued independence in older age.

5) Your LINK report itself mentions 75 local shops within Chard "high Street", who would be without access to cash services for their business. Access to cash for these shops and restaurants is vital for the local economy. Your report does not give the impression that you understand the linear nature of Chard, built primarily around the A30 and A358, and this makes it very different. In addition, it is a historic market town. It has this status for several reasons but, in relation to this matter, it is because local and more distant people traditionally visit Chard from the surrounding areas to shop, visit and do their personal and commercial business.

    - Chard appears to have more retail shops than Crewkerne, so could this be an error in the assessment ?

- It is not clear that side roads such as Holyrood Street, Boden Street and the Leisure Centre have been included in the assessment. Please confirm whether or not this is the case.

6) If these people and businesses were to access the Post Office (PO) service twice a week that would be at least 150 extra transactions a week for the business element alone and the necessity of providing a large amount of cash to cover the requirements of these transactions. A banking hub in Chard would maintain and stimulate local businesses, provide vital services for our local community and strengthen the local economy. Chard is trying hard to regenerate, whereas some see this as the last nail in the economic coffin.

7) The people who run of Chard PO supply an excellent PO service, which is well used by the community for a range of services. They are already running a banking hub at one of their other branches and have experience in such facilities.

8) On the matter of the PO use, please confirm that you (and the Post Office Organisation) have assessed the viability and suitability of the Chard Post Office building and access assets to take the additional strain, particularly for cash withdrawal and cash deposit services.

    - In particular, please confirm that the security measures at the Post Office are not an issue and conform to current standards for servicing the likely significant increase in throughput of cash based services.

    - Has an investigation of this throughput and the significant, additional cash holdings required been assessed on-site and found at least up to current standards for banking and PO services combined, following the bank branch closure proposal ?

9) The Council is aware that Post Offices rely on retail to make them viable. The additional volume of banking services is likely to put a very large strain on the current excellent quality of service and retail and for reasons of site footprint, layout and capacity of transactions are likely to lead to a downturn in services for our ever-growing community.

10) You are unlikely to be aware of the Local Plan proposals and “tilted balance” headlong drive for additional residential housing sites in Chard. Many of these are on the outskirts and will not have reasonable access to neighbourhood banking facilities. The lack of a banking hub is likely to lead to unsustainable and unnecessary travel, by private car.

11) The travel time between some of our surrounding villages in particular is unreasonable. Older and younger residents who need to use face-to-face services in larger population areas may require two separate buses that with our two-hour schedule mean a trip to a bank for personal or business advice rather than the PO on a bus may take 6 hours. If the connection is missed an overnight stay is likely to be needed where the connection is made. Does your assessment procedure take this into consideration ?

12) In the recent flood conditions, Chard was cut off along with severe flooding in places such as Donyatt (A358 on the way to Taunton), Windwhistle (A30 on the way to Crewkerne) and Weycroft (A358 on

the way to Axminster). Other, more rural routes to Taunton to the west were cut off by flooding and fallen trees. At times like that Chard needs to be more resilient and self-sufficient. Rurality is a significant problem in this area.

13) Crewkerne (with a population of about **8,000**) has both a PO and a Nationwide Building Society but, we understand, has just been granted a banking hub. We are pleased about this but, in addition to having a greater number of commercial premises than Crewkerne and then the layout in Chard not being as centralised, Chard (excluding the local surrounding villages, is **over 14,000**) has a larger and older population with, at the moment, similar services. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that similar "rules" and considerations are not being applied in a fair, consistent and demonstrable manner.

14) We are assured that the Government recognises the importance of banking to communities and high streets and has, apparently, committed to work closely with banks to roll out at least 350 banking hubs, which provide individuals and businesses up and down the country with critical cash and banking services.

- I do not believe that this is a maximum number, as the assessment should guide the process.

15) I understand from your information that:

- The larger a place is, the more likely it is that you will need to recommend a new service.
- You accept and know that each area is different, so there is no hard and fast rule, but banking hubs will work best if there are at least:

  ❖ 10,000 people within the local area
  and
  ❖ at least 70 shops

I refer you to point 13) of this email where, for Chard, these guidelines are more than met.

I was going to provide you with a graphic showing the significant distances between cash machines (assuming they are working) for our more able, elderly and more vulnerable community members to travel, but this is not simply about access to cash. It is also about wider banking services, Chard regeneration and doing private and commercial business. This applies to our residential, commercial and visitor communities alike.

I note that you do not appear to consult Town and Parish Council organisations by default. Both are recognised in Central Government and County-Based systems as being good indicators of community opinion. I recommend, on behalf of this Council and the local community we serve, that such direct communication and consultation is relatively easy to implement and an effective way to consult wider communities.

I ask, on behalf of our community, that you review your "cash access assessment" decision based on this and other local representations with a view to providing at least a banking hub in Chard. At the risk of being repetitive, this is not just about access to cash, it is also about banking services.

Regards,

David

David Bell
Chief Executive & Town Clerk
Chard Town Council
Guildhall
Fore Street
Chard
TA20 1PP
01460 239567

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

Adopted: - **17/03/2025** **Minute:-** **Next Review (Annually)**

MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2018 (ENGLAND) — UPDATED APRIL 2022 AND FEBRUARY 2023

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
109 Great Russell Street
London
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1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.

b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.

c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.

d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.

f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.

g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.

h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.

j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.

k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.

l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.

m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

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o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:

i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;

ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;

iii. to make a point of order;

iv. to give a personal explanation; or

v. to exercise a right of reply.

p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.

q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.

r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:

i. to amend the motion;

ii. to proceed to the next business;

iii. to adjourn the debate;

iv. to put the motion to a vote;

v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;

vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;

vii. to exclude the public and press;

viii. to adjourn the meeting; or

ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.

t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

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2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

Full Council meetings ●
Committee meetings ●
Sub-committee meetings ●

● a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**

● b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**

● c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice** OR [The minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting].

● d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial**
● **to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**

e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

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g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.

h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

i A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). A person shall raise a hand or otherwise indicate to the Chair when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.

j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.

k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**

m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

n **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**

p **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**

q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**

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r **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

i. the time and place of the meeting;

ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;

iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;

iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;

v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;

vi. if there was a public participation session; and

vii. the resolutions made.

u **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**

v **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

x A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours, unless agreed by the Chair.

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4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**

b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**

c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**

d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:

i. shall determine their terms of reference;

ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;

iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;

iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;

v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;

vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;

vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;

viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;

ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;

x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;

xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and

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xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**

b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**

c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**

d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**

e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council.**

f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:

i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his**

acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;

ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;

iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;

iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;

v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;

vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;

vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;

viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;

ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;

x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.

xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;

xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;

xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;

xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;

xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;

xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;

xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);

xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;

xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;

xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.

xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**

c The chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or the sub-committee) at any time.

d If the chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee (or the sub-committee), any 2 members of the committee (or the sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or a sub-committee).

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 4 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

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9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least ( ) clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.

c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the meeting.

e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.

f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.

h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

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10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
ii. to move to a vote;
iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
viii. to require a written report;
ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
xvii. to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**

b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**

c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

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12. DRAFT MINUTES

Full Council meetings
Committee meetings
Sub-committee meetings

a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).

c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

> "The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

e **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**

f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(u).

a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

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d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer OR by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.

f A dispensation request shall confirm:

i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;

ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;

iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and

iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered [by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].

h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:

i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;

ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or

iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

a Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council as soon as possible after the decision is made.

b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).

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c The Council may:

i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;

ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;

d **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. PROPER OFFICER

a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

b The Proper Officer shall:

i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee** or a sub-committee**,**

- **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
- **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least ( ) days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;

iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**

iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**

v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**

vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;

vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;

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viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;

ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);

x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;

xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);

xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(*see also standing order 23);*

xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;

xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;

xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Planning & Highways Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Committee;

xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and

xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(s*ee also standing order 23).*

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

a The Proper Officer or Council (in the absence of a Proper Officer) shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".

b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in

accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.

c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:

i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;

ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;

iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and

ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;

ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;

iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;

iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and

v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£30,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the "light touch" arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**

d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;

ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;

iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;

iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;

v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;

vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.

f. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities**

Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details (LTN87).

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council OR the Human Resource Committee is subject to standing order 11.

b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of the Human Resources Committee or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman (if there is one) of Human Resources Committee of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Human Resources Committee at its next meeting.

c The chairman of the Human Resources Committee or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the member of staff's job title. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Human Resources Committee.

d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chairman of the Human Resources Committee or in his absence, the vice-chairman of the Human Resources Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Full Council.

e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by The Town Clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the Human Resources Committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the Human Resources Committee, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Human Resources Committee.

f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

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20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**

b. **The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015**.

21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list). / *See also standing order 11.*

a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.

b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**

c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**

d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**

e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**

f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media. The nominated point of contact for day to day communications is the Chief Executive & Town Clerk.

23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).

a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

b **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall**

witness their signatures.

24. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS

a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the Unitary Council (unless they are also a Town Councillor) representing the area of the Council.

25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

a. Unless duly authorised, no councillor shall:

i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or

ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.

b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least (4) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.

c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of, or link to, the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.

d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

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CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

DRAFT

Adopted: - 17/03/2025 Minute:- Next Review (Annually)

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1. GENERAL

1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.

1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.

1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.4. In these Financial Regulations:

- 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
- "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
- "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
- 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
- *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
- 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
- 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.

1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the council;
- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £5,000.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**

2.2. The Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.

2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**

2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
- **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
- **ensure division of responsibilities.**

2.6. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity,

including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council {Finance Committee}.

2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**

- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
- **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**

3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices**.

3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.

3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.

3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:

- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
- reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;

- can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the management or control of the council

3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the auditor.

3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

3.11. The RFO shall make reasonable arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of the Proper Officer and all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. BUDGET AND PRECEPT

4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax (England)/budget (Wales) requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**

4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft their budgets.

4.3. No later than November each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all [receipts and payments/income and expenditure] for the following financial year, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be

carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the full council.

4.5. Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council finance committee not later than the end of November each year.

4.6. The draft budget with any committee proposals and forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the finance committee and a recommendation made to the council.

4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and forecast, the council shall determine its council tax (England)/budget (Wales)] requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.

4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**

4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.

4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or relevant committee.

5. PROCUREMENT

5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

5.2. The RFO or Financial Assistant should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.

5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**

5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:

5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £10,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall **seek formal tenders** from at least three suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation[1] regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**

5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk [or RFO] shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;

5.9. where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk [or RFO] shall try to obtain 3 estimates {which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.}

5.10. For smaller purchases <£500, the Clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

5.11. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;

ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;

iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;

iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council or relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £2000 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council (or Chair of the appropriate committee), for any items below £3,500 excluding VAT.
- a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £5,000 excluding VAT.

[1] The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

- in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.

- the council for all items over £5,000; Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council or make any contract on behalf of the council.

5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference except in an emergency.

5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £3,500 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. BANKING AND PAYMENTS

6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised, and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO or Clerk. Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO or Clerk that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO or Clerk.

6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking or cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the council or duly delegated committee or a delegated decision by an officer, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.

6.6. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council or a duly delegated committee may authorise in advance for the year.

6.7. A copy of this schedule of regular payments shall be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is made - to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.

6.8. A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee for information only.

6.9. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:

i. any payments of up to £2000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.

ii. payments of up to £3,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.

iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk and/or RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.

iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.

6.10. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council or finance committee. The council or committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

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7. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.

7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.

7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to two authorised signatories.

7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.

7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.

7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and appended to the minutes.

7.9. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained, and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

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7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by two of either the Clerk and the RFO or a member. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.

7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

7.14. Remembered password facilities (other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification) should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. CHEQUE PAYMENTS

8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members and countersigned by the Clerk.

8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

8.4. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council {or committee} meeting. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council or Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.

9. PAYMENT CARDS

9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk / RFO / Operations Manager and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council.

9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk / RFO / Operations Manager and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

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10. PETTY CASH

10.1. The RFO shall maintain a petty cash of £300 and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.

b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on any schedule of payments presented for approval.}

11. PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

11.1. **As an employer, the council must make reasonable arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**

11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**

11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council or relevant committee.

11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.

11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.

11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the finance committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.

11.8. Before employing interim staff not under the delegation to the Town Clerk, the council must consider a full business case.

12. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

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12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must written be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the safe custody of the RFO and Finance Assistant.

12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. INCOME

13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO or Clerk and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO and Clerk consider necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted form the software by the due date.

13.7. Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO or Finance Assistant shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control

record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

13.8. Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.

14. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS.

14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments, the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

15.1. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into any store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

15.2. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

15.3. The RFO and/or Operations Manager shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, as reasonable for the storage facility

16. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

16.1. The Clerk shall make reasonable arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.

16.2. The RFO and Operations Manager shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least bi-annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

16.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a business case.

17. INSURANCE

17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.

17.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.

17.4. All appropriate members, employees and approved volunteers acting for the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the council, or duly delegated committee after review.

18. CHARITIES

18.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.]

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19. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

19.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk and / or RFO. The Clerk and RFO shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

19.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.

19.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

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APPENDIX 1 - TENDER PROCESS

1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

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Chard Town Council

LGPS Discretions Policy

Adopted:- **16th March 2015** **Minuted:-** **2015/25**

Reviewed :- **2025**

Regulation	Policy
Regulation B12 **Power of employing authority to increase total membership of active members** An employer may agree to increase the total membership of an active member who is leaving on grounds of redundancy / efficiency on or before 31st March 2014. The maximum award (including additional membership in respect of different employments) must not exceed 10 years. An employer may also agree to award augmented service to a member up to 6 months after they have left employment provided that their termination of employment was on redundancy/efficiency grounds and date of leaving was before 1st April 2014. **NB** This is a time limit discretion which expires on 30th September 2014 for those whose employment is terminated on 31st March 2014.	The Council will consider a request under Regulation B12 on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications
Regulation B18 **Flexible retirement** Employers may allow a member from age 55 onwards to draw all or part of the pension benefits they have already built up while still continuing in employment. This is provided the employer agrees to the member either reducing their hours or moving to a position on a lower grade. In such cases, pension benefits will be reduced in accordance with actuarial tables unless the employer waives reduction on compassionate grounds or a member has protected rights.	The Council will consider a request under Regulation B18 on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications
Regulation R16(2)(e) **& R16 (4)(d)** **Shared Cost Additional Pension Scheme** An employer can choose to pay for or contribute towards a member's Additional Pension Contract via a Shared Cost Additional Pension Contract (SCAPC)	The Council will consider a request under Regulation 16 (2)(e) & R16 (4)(d) on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications
Regulation B30 **Choice of early payment of pension** **B30 (2)** Employers can also allow the early payment of deferred benefits to former members of the LGPS between the ages of 55 and 59. **Please note where a deferred member left the LGPS before 1 April 2008 the employer policy under the 1997 Regulations will apply.** **B30A(3)** Employers may also grant an application for reinstatement of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension on or after age 55 and before age 60. **B30 (5) & B30A (5)** In such cases, pension benefits will be reduced in accordance with actuarial tables unless the employer waives reduction on compassionate grounds or a member has protected rights.	The Council will consider a request under Regulation B30 on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications

Regulation R30(6) & TP11(2) **Flexible Retirement** Employers may allow a member from age 55 onwards to draw all or part of the pension benefits they have already built up while still continuing in employment. This is provided the employer agrees to the member either reducing their hours or moving to a position on a lower grade. In such cases, pension benefits will be reduced in accordance with actuarial tables unless the employer waives reduction on compassionate grounds or a member has protected rights.	The Council will consider a request under Regulation B30(6) & TP11 (2) on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications
Regulation R30(8) **Waiving of actuarial reduction** Employers have the power to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction (in whole or part) applied to members benefits paid on the grounds of flexible retirement. Employers may also waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction (in whole or part) applied to member's benefits for deferred members and suspended tier 3 ill health pensioners who elect to draw benefits on or after age 60 and before normal pension age Employers also have the power to waive, in whole or in part, the actuarial reduction applied to active members benefits when a member chooses to voluntarily draw benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.	The Council will consider a request under Regulation R30 (8) on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications
Regulation R31 **Power of employing authority to grant additional pension** An employer can choose to grant additional pension to an active member or within 6 months of ceasing to be an active member by reason of redundancy or business efficiency (by up to £6,500* per annum) (* the figure of £6,500 will be increased each April under Pensions Increase orders)	The Council will consider a request under Regulation R31 on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications
Regulation TPSch 2, para 2(2) & 2(3) **Power of employing authority to 'switch on' the 85 Year Rule** An employer can choose whether to "switch on" 85 year rule for members who voluntarily retire on or after age 55 and before age 60. An employer can also choose to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to benefits for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60.	The Council will consider a request under Regulation TPSch 2,para 2(2) & 2(3) on a case by case basis taking into account all potential cost implications

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

Community Development Fund Grant Application Form

Before completing this application form, please read the Grant Funding Policy to ensure your project is eligible for grant funding under the Council's grant scheme. Please complete in full and provide ALL supporting documentation. Further information can be submitted on additional sheets, if necessary, clearly referring to the question(s) being answered.

Your Organisation and Applicant's details

Name of Organisation	Somerset Youth Theatre CIC
Name of Contact	Fiona Hulme
Position within Organisation	Executive Director
Address of Organisation	Arts Hub Flook House Taunton TA1 1BT
Contact telephone number	[redacted]
Email address	fionahulme@somersetyt.com
Type of organisation (e.g. charity, company, club, etc.)	CIC
Registration Number	13135600
How long has your organisation been established?	January 2021

If your organisation has a Constitution, agreed set of Rules or Memorandum and Articles of Association (companies), please enclose a copy with this application form

What are the aims, objectives or activities of your organisation?	Somerset Youth Theatre CIC provides a safer space for children and young people (CYP) to create, explore and find their voice through theatre & the arts. We do this because we believe that all young people's voices matter. Through our work, we seek to create equal access to performance making and production across Somerset, working towards our four, key higher level outcomes for children, young people and families: 1. Young people have a more active voice in their communities 2. Reduced social isolation 3. Enhanced life chances 4. Improved physical, mental health and well-being We achieve these outcomes through delivery of four strands of work across the county. Each strand feeds into and compliments the next, growing our reach and gathering a unique picture and understanding of need for children and young people, specific to each location. SYT's four strands of work are: Strand 1: Weekly Pay What You Choose (PWYC) sessions in Somerset towns & villages;young person led, co-creation between children, young people and professional Theatre makers. Strand 2: Play-in-a-Week (PIAW) in partnership with community organisations & venues Strand 3: Developing partnerships and deep-rooted relationships, providing opportunity and creative education that supports well-being in underserved places Strand 4: Training, consultancy and resources We currently deliver 12 weekly, open access youth theatres in 8 towns and villages across Somerset for young people aged 6-18 years, including Chard. Sessions run on a PWYC basis, supporting low-income families and disadvantaged CYP who are in receipt of Free School Meals, Pupil premium or those with an EHCP. Somerset Youth Theatre (SYT) has been working in Chard since 2023 with financial support from various sources including Arts Council England and Chard Town Council. It is also funded by our Pay What You Choose subscription income. We never turn a child away on the grounds of not being able to afford to participate. The Chard Youth Theatre sees a diverse range of young people aged 9 -14 meet at Guildhall every Monday evening during school term time.

How is your organisation financed?	Grants, commissions, traded income.
Have you received a grant from this Council in the last 3 years? If so, please confirm the amount, purpose and outcome.	Yes, September 2023, awarded £1000.
Please provide details of the number of members of your group that live in Chard.	Chard Youth Theatre is facilitated by two staff who both live in Chard. Attendees currently number 15 and are all from Chard.

Your Financial Details and Funding Request

Briefly outline the project and also tell us: • Where it will take place • The timescale for the project • Whether you are partnering with any other Chard groups • How you identified the need for this project • Who in the Chard community will benefit and how they will benefit	We are asking for a grant to support our project from October 2024 to July 2025 with Chard Youth Theatre in its second year. The group meets at Guildhall on Mondays. This grant will go towards costs associated with this specific project, such as allowing the children and young people to commission an artist, materials, food and drink, arts award fees and project management. The grant will also go towards subsidising our pay what you choose offer, allowing young people to participate who may not be able to otherwise. For this year's project we have budgeted to expand Chard Youth Theatre from one group to two groups. We are looking to create a second group, possibly with children from Chard who are home schooled, which could take place during the day on weekdays in the Guildhall. We know there is demand for this, and our work in Chard from talking to members of the community. The Chard Youth Theatre group will spend the first term building relationships and learning skills in performance making including improvisation, characterisation and devising. They will then begin working towards a Christmas performance devised by the children and young people led by Artist Becky Dobson. In the Spring the group will lead on developing a story rooted in the history of Chard. This will be decided upon by the children and young people and might be inspired or linked into a known book or story as part of our SYT adaptation season in 2025. The children may choose to develop their skills in performance making, music, costume, set, lighting and sound tech. We are passionate that all young people have the same opportunity, regardless of parental income. Funding would enable us to provide drinks and snacks for the young people, after

identifying this as an access need with young people expressing hunger, and behaviours supporting the need due to this.

We have budgeted in this project for two SYT commissions. This means that potentially both groups would commission a Somerset based, professional artist to help them develop the work they would like to produce. SYT's commissioning model means the young people lead the way in recruitment, selection and co-creation of the Summer sharing project. From job advertisement, to looking through CV's and interviewing. In this way, young people develop real-world skills in the creative industries. SYT has run this model in Taunton and Highbridge with great success and feedback from young people and families.

We work with volunteers, who we supply with Enhanced DBS through SYT. We also run a young leaders programme for young people aged 16-25, we would like to expand this offer in Chard. The grant would enable us to attach this to Duke of Edinburgh or Arts Award, meaning SYT's young leaders receive Nationally recognised qualifications that will support future employment.

Weekly Youth Theatre participants will also have the opportunity to work with our facilitators to achieve the nationally recognised Arts Award qualification. They'll be able to gain Discover & Explore or Bronze level awards (usually linked to age) We have budgeted to cover the moderation fees for this qualification for children of Chard Youth Theatre in this project.

The grant will enable SYT to continue to build partnerships in Chard that support the offer for children and young people of all backgrounds, connecting and building a youth offer that offers inclusive and accessible opportunities and reduces anti-social behaviour. Becky Dobson will be undertaking outreach work in the Chard and South Somerset area to include local schools and community groups. In Langport we had great success with reaching out to a care home and the youth theatre group there took their pantomime performance to the elderly residents. It would be fantastic to do something like that in Chard as part of this project.

We have worked with funders SASP this past summer to run a very successful Play in a Week which saw 28 children meet for 4 days at Holyrood School to create their own play based on Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes version of Cinderella. From this we have gained new members of our weekly Chard Youth Theatre. This outreach work has also proved the need for our work in Chard.

SYT has developed our core team and become a go-to organisation for advice from Somerset's Theatre makers, community and National partners, on best practice in working inclusively with children and young people.

Funding from Tesco blue token scheme running October to January where we could be awarded between £500 - £1500 which will go towards Chard Youth Theatre.

Chard Youth Theatre is targeted at the young people and families of Chard. We see first-hand the impact our weekly youth theatre activity has on young people, providing a sustainable opportunity to see themselves as Artists within their community. Young people often join us lacking confidence and self-esteem, or struggling with their identity amongst their peers. We work with families to support them with their children.
We will root all of the work created in the heart of Chard, made with, by and for the town. Audiences will continue to support the work of the young people, performed in their town, celebrating their work, the town's wonderful landmarks and uniting communities.

Recent feedback tells us:
Young people tell us that: 'I'm excited about this cos it's stuff I care about' and Youth Theatre provides a low-pressure environment for myself and other local youths to explore theatrics and activities outside our comfort zone and daily life; encouraging exciting views without enforcing them, it is a very good way to socialise and learn together in a safe place.' and ' I love making your own play and being able to be whoever we want'

Parents say: As a mum of a child with additional needs who has found so many extra curricular groups non inclusive, it was so refreshing to see how he has thrived in a group where everyone is welcome . Thank you so much.

Social workers say: 'Myself and another staff member attended and it brought us to tears three
times whilst watching the performance'

Schools say: 'As a teacher, it was amazing to see certain children being coaxed out of their comfort zones and have a fun time. The leaders were very talented. I can not speak highly enough of the workshop. Hopefully this is something we can have again.'

What is the total cost of the project? If you have a project budget or have received estimates or quotations, please enclose copies.	Delivery artist £2970 Support SEND Assistant £990 Project management £660 Overheads £671 Room Hire £864 Training and Development £250 Materials £300 Food and Drink £396 Arts Award moderation fees £300 SYT Commission £1200 Total project cost £8601
How much grant funding are you requesting from Chard Town Council?	£1000
Please provide details of other sources of income for the project and whether that funding is already secured.	Tesco Blue Token Scheme (October - January 2025) We will be awarded between £500 - £1500, averaged at £1000. Arts Council £4351 - expected Pay What you Choose subscriptions - £2250. This is based on an estimate of 10 children paying £22.50 a month for 10 months.
If there is a shortfall, how will this be funded?	If there is a shortfall we will have to reduce aspects of the project which would lessen the impact. For example we may not be able to offer the second group thus limiting the numbers of children and young people we can work with. Or we would have to remove the commission element of the project, meaning the participants would miss out on the skills of recruiting and working with an additional artist to support their artistic plans.
Will the project require ongoing financial support e.g. maintenance, and if so, how will this be funded?	No. The project will be fully funded from the start.

Payment to your organisation

If your application is successful, we will need the Organisation's bank details to pay the monies.

Bank Name and address	[redacted]

Name of Organisation per bank statement	Somerset Youth Theatre CIC
Sort Code	[redacted]
Account Number	[redacted]
Please list all the people who are authorised to sign cheques or make payments from this account	Selina Keedwell

Declaration

I confirm that:

- I have read and will comply with the Chard Town Council Grants Policy
- All information in this application form is accurate to the best of my knowledge
- I am authorised to apply for grant funding on behalf of the organisation/group.

Signature:	
Date:	19.09.2024

Checklist

Your completed and signed document needs to be accompanied with the following:

- ☐ Annual Accounts, including income and expenditure for the last 2 financial periods
- ☐ A copy of your organisation's bank statement for the last 6 months
- ☐ A copy of your Constitution, Rules or Memorandum and Articles of Association

Please send your completed form and supporting documentation to:
Town Clerk, Chard Town Council, The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP. Or if you would prefer to submit this via email with PDF attachments to: townclerk@chard.gov.uk

SALC Grant Funding Application: A Chard Information Network Directory (CIND)
Communities, Connections, Services all in one place.

Overview & Aim
To establish and maintain a digital information directory for all the people of Chard (and surrounding areas) for all ages and diversity of needs. Led and coordinated by Chard Town Council the express aim is to improve the health and well-being of our residents. Part of the process will be to agree an official name.

The directory for all will offer a range of information on local services, organisations and community groups, as well as resources for families and professionals. There will also be an online calendar, things to do, places to go and other ideas of clubs for all, including fitness and wellness groups. It will include information on a range of local services, such things as, medical services, transport, recycling and other sustainability projects, banking, community clubs and venues to meet.

The Need
An up to date platform to find information for individuals and families has been identified as a high priority. Chard Community Plan was a significant piece of work undertaken by CTC with our community and completed in 2023. People of Chard felt they did not know what is available to them, nor where to find such information. This has been confirmed by other key Chard community groups and organisations. There are great community groups in our town but continuity between them is often lacking as are links to services that could be beneficial to both. Local connections are important to our community and needed to add strength and resilience to our town, improving health and well-being for all ages.

How It Will Work
Initially working with closely with Frome Town Council, who have confirmed their support and who have already established a successful Family Information Network Directory a (FIND) the directory programme will be installed and set up.
“CIND” will actively be promoted on the Chard Town Council’s website and it is envisaged the local library and Community Support Hubs will be able to do the same.

Dedicated Chard Town Council staff will be provided training to use & navigate the directory who will then be able available to assist people to find information required, primarily those with no access to the internet or needing support to use the directory.

Seasonally a print of this will become available in strategic locations around Chard for those members of our community that cannot access the internet. Key pages will be available in Portuguese and Polish as we have a comparatively high population of these nationalities living in our town and groups supporting these and other diverse communities will be involved in the development of the site.

In Addition
Our local Ilminster and Crewkerne Town Councils are working on similar projects and we will look to work in partnership with them on a Neighbourhood model for the benefit of our wider communities.

Current List Of Service Providers Wishing To Use This platform:

- Holyrood Academy, feeder Primary Schools and Pre-schools
- Doctors Surgery (Ariel Healthcare) including health coaches and ante natal services
- Chard Police and PCSO's
- Chard Community Hub (Links to services)
- WATCH Project (Peers support for isolated adults)
- Chard Library
- Forefront Church
- Chard Churches Together
- Lords Larder (food bank)
- Southend Education Trust
- CommuniTEA Waffle
- Chard Museum
- Village Agent
- Diverse Community Groups, including Chard Together and Nightingale.
- Chard Area Youth Club
- Inner Wheel
- Chard Showcase – comprising of more than 50 local Community groups
- Connect Somerset
- Great Mead, Chard's Garden for the Community

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