Chard Town Council

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

Minutes: Chard Town Council meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on **Monday 17th March 2025** commencing at 19:00pm.

Present: Councillors: Baker, Bates, Bulmer, Eggins, Hussey, Richter, Watson & Webb

Apologies: Councillors: Crook, Hassan, A Kenton, J Kenton Shortland, and Williams

In attendance: Chief Executive & Town Clerk (CE TC) David Bell, Tim Bickham Events Officer (EO), Deputy Town Clerk & Operations Manager (DTC- OM) Kevin Dyer, Beverley Newman Democratic Service Officer and approximately 25 members of the public.

Public Participation Time

Somerset Councillor Reports
Council received a report from Unitary Councillor Jason Baker.

Minutes

Section 1 Standing Items:

2025/13 **Apologies for Absence**
Council received apologies from the following Councillors;
Crook (Personal), Hassan (work), A Kenton (personal), J Kenton (personal), Shortland (Personal) and Williams (personal).

Proposed: Councillor Watson Seconded: Councillor Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: For Council to formerly accept the apologies declared.

2025/14 **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were stated.

2025/15 **Council Meeting Minutes.**
Cllr Bulmer requested the named vote to be included in the minutes for Full Council December 16th 2024 agenda item 2024/147 as follows:

For: Cllr Eggins, Cllr Bulmer
Against: Cllr Bates, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr J Kenton, Cllr Shortland, Cllr Williams
Abstain: Cllr Baker, Cllr Crook, Cllr Richter, Cllr Watson, Cllr Hussey

Cllr Baker requested the notes for Public Participation be removed as details of Public Participation do not formally form part of the agenda.

It was noted that comments and questions arising from Public Participation were important and going forward one suggestion could be to capture them as notes to the minutes.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor C Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: For Council to agree and accept all sets of minutes provided, subject to the above agreed amendments.

Section 2 – Items To Note

2025/16 **Announcements & Reports to Note**

a) The Mayor
The Mayor provided updates on her recent engagements:
A Beavers visit to the Guildhall, C&D Long Serving Employee Awards, attendance at a Civic Event at Crewkerne and the opening of the Great Meade Garden. In addition she reminded all of the Dragon Parade event 26th April & The Variety Performance event taking place 27th April in aid of the mayor's charities.

b)
The CE & TC.
The CE& TC confirmed the sign off and completion of CTC's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 and provided an update on further actions resulting from the recent stormwater flooding.

The CE&TC also provided an update on the objection to the Link proposal, (copies of his objection were available at the meeting) and confirmed he had received a reply from Link to the objection, which he deemed as flawed and would be writing to them with a counter objection. Updates will be made available in due course.

The CE & TC further confirmed the purchase of various office equipment for staff in order to confirm with Health & Safety requirements and that this expenditure fell within his delegated authority.

Finally, the CE & TC reminded all present of the CTC Councillor vacancy for Crimchard Ward which has met the criteria for a bi-election and that due process to elect a new Councillor was now underway by Somerset Unitary Authority.

Section 3 – Items For Decision

2025/17 **Standing Orders (SO's)**

Proposed: Councillor Bates Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed the following alternative wording to SO 3i

The Council will make reasonable provision to accommodate Councillors, Officers and members of the public (for members of the public: where Standing Orders have been suspended), to raise questions and make comments.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Watson
Unanimous

Resolved: Council adopted the reviewed and amended SO's

2025/18 **Financial Regulations**

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Richter
Unanimous

Resolved: Council adopted the reviewed Financial Regulations.

2025/19 **Insurance Pre-Review Declaration.**

The eight Councillors present all confirmed a 'No' response to the declaration.

Action: Officers to e-mail the remainder of the Council individually (six councillors) for their response to the declaration.

2025/20 **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretion Policy.**

Deferred: Council had not seen this document until publication of agenda and have not previously adopted. More information was requested.

2025/21 **Grant Funding.**

Proposed: Councillor Eggins Seconded: Councillor Hussey

Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders to provide the opportunity for the Chief Executive of the Somerset Youth Theatre to present the grant application submitted.

Cllrs Eggins and Baker input positive feedback to this grant application.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

Resolved: Council resumed Standing Orders in order to vote on the grant application.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Richter
Unanimous

Resolved: Council approved the grant funding application for the Somerset Youth Theatre.

2025/22 **SALC Grant Funding Proposal For CIND Chard.**

Proposed: Councillor Hussey Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

Resolved: Council approved the application of grant funding from SALC.

2025/23 **To Receive the Opinion Of the Chief Executive & Town Clerk (CE &TC) And Agree And Implement A Recommendation For An Apology Based On The Minute 2024/41 From Full Council March 18th 2024**

The CE& TC gave an oral report, upon completion a proposed apology compiled by the CE &TC was projected for all in attendance to see.

Proposed: Councillor Eggins Seconded: Councillor Webb
Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed to suspend SO's so discussion could take place regarding the CE & TC's oral report and proposed apology

Proposed: Councillor Hussey Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed to resume SO's

Named vote was requested by Cllr Eggins. The outcome was as follows:

	For		Abstain
1.	Cllr Watson	1.	Cllr Baker
2.	Cllr Bulmer		
3.	Cllr Webb		
4.	Cllr Richter		
5.	Cllr Hussey		
6.	Cllr Bates		
7.	Cllr Eggins		

Proposed: Councillor Watson | Seconded: Councillor Richter
For: 7 | Abstain 1

Resolved: Council approved the following two caveats to and the apology below as propose by the CE & TC:

Caveats:
a) By accepting the apology, the Council, its constituent Councillors along with Officers of the Council and other persons affected agree, in the interest of the community that they serve, to take no further actions as a Council, group or individuals in relation to the matter of the Rolley Report, including events prior to, resulting from the investigation and publication of that report.

b) Lessons learned from the Rolley Report will be considered, as appropriate, in future Council business and the report will now be archived.

Apology:
This Council offers an unreserved apology to the following named people or groups for, where applicable, not acting in an appropriate and considerate manner. This includes the way in which the report was handled and any subsequent feeling of ill-will, embarrassment and any alleged conduct unbecoming of the post or posts representing Chard Town Council:

1) The Chard wider community,
2) The author of the report, Mr Christopher Rolley,
3) The Full Council,
4) The Officer Team.

2025/24 **Date of the next meeting:**
Due to a number of factors, to include the soon to be scheduled bi-election, the date of the next meeting will be announced in due course.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 20.40

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

