CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP
01460 239567 www.chard.gov.uk
Mayor: Garry Shortland Town Clerk: Gareth Hughes

CHARD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Chard Town Council meeting held in the Guildhall Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP on Tuesday 13th June 2023 commencing at 19:00pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Bates, Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Crook, Cllr Eggins, Cllr Hawkes, Cllr A Kenton, Cllr Richter, Cllr Shortland (Mayor), Cllr Williams,

OFFICERS & OTHERS PRESENT
Gail Chadwick Finance & Responsible Finance Officer, Gareth Hughes Town Clerk, Beverley Newman Democratic Services Officer (DSO); Rev Georgina Vye

19.00 'Thought for the Day'

Public Participation Time
There were in the region of 20 members of the public present.

5 members of the public spoke. There was a mixture of statements and questions relating to the reoccurring theme in Public Participation time of bullying its detrimental effects and perceived lack of action from Council to deal with any councillors known to exhibit bullying behaviour.

One question related to the draft minutes from the May 9th Full Council meeting pointing out there was no record of suspending Standing Orders to allow the public to speak. (See Agenda item 2023/87)

There was a request of council to consider raising the LGBTQ+ Flag on Pride Day 28th June.

A full account of public participation can be listened to on the link on the Chard Town Council Website. https://www.chard.gov.uk/your-council/meetings/

Reports from County and District Councillors
Council received County Councillor reports from Cllr Payne and Cllr Wale. (reports attached)

Police Report
No police report was received.

The Mayor reinstated Standing Orders at 20.15

(b) Proposed Cllr Shortland Seconded Cllr Hawkes

RESOLVED: To formerly adopt the NALC Civility and Respect Pledge and to publish this pledge on the Chard Town Website as recommended by Chris Rolley report February 2023, with agreement that training has now started for Councillors and Officers and that a formal training programme would be presented at the July 17th Full Council meeting.

(c) Council noted the amendment to the meeting schedule: Monday11th September being the revised date of the September Full Council meeting

(d) Council agreed the DSO should co-ordinate the Councillor surgeries for the coming Council year.

2023/89 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council noted the minutes of the Amenities & Events Committee meeting held on 15/5/23.

Proposed: Cllr Bates Seconded Cllr Richter
Unanimous

RESOLVED: That Council accepted the recommendation in point 2 of the OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT MAY 23; Agenda item: 2023/21 (a) 2. to undertake a valuation of the land adjacent to the car park by the cemetery in order to progress with the extension. The payment of £1,500 plus VAT for the valuation to be paid from the Cemetery EMR.

2023/90 STANDING COMMITTEES

(a) Council was asked to provide another 2 councillors for the HR and Planning & Highways Committees to fulfil Minimum membership of these committees in line with Council Standing Orders.

Cllr Eggins put himself forward for the HR Committee which was accepted by Council. There remains a requirement for 1 member for the HR Committee and 2 members for the planning & Highways Committee. This matter will be placed on the next Full Council meeting 17th July 2023.

(b) Council was asked to consider increasing numbers of all the Standing Committees to reduce the possibility of being inquorate.

2023/91 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23 AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2022/23

(a) Proposed: Cllr Hawkes — Seconded Cllr Eggins
For:7 — Abstain:1

RESOLVED: That Council approve and sign Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 (attached) as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee.

(b) Proposed: Cllr Eggins — Seconded Cllr Richter
Unanimous

RESOLVED: That Council approve and sign Section 2 –Accounting Statements 2022/23 (attached) as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee, including the balance sheet, Earmarked Reserves and variances.

(c) Proposed: Cllr Hawkes — Seconded Cllr Williams
Unanimous

RESOLVED: That Council adopt the end of year Internal Audit Report for 2022/23 financial year and give delegating authority to Officers to research methods for diversifying funds to minimise the risk of loss whilst maximising interest earning opportunities and report back to Full Council with the options to enable it to decide on the optimum way forward. Research should include ethical investments. An investment strategy should then be developed based on the outcome. This action will address the outstanding recommendations (8 & 9) in the Internal Audit Report.

2023/92 GENERAL AND EARMARKED RESERVES AND RESERVES POLICY

(a) Proposed: Cllr Bates — Seconded Cllr Williams
Unanimous

RESOLVED: That Council adopt the recommendations of the Finance and Audit Committee to address the shortfall in General Reserves.

(b) Proposed: Cllr Hawkes — Seconded Cllr Eggins
For: 7 — Absatin1

RESOLVED: That Council approve the Reserves Policy as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee, reducing the requirement for operating costs cover to 3 months.

(c) Proposed: Cllr Hawkes — Seconded Cllr Eggins
Unanimous

RESOLVED: That Council approve a transfer from the Climate Change Earmarked Reserve to cover the cost of the architect's fees in the sum of £3,000 relating to the plans for additional solar panels for the Guildhall.

2023/93 BANK MANDATE – ONLINE BANKING ACCESS

Proposed: Cllr Bates Seconded Cllr Eggins
Unanimous

RESOLVED: Council approved adding the new Town Clerk, Gareth Hughes, to the bank mandate for online inputting/releasing in substitution for Adrian Turner, who was previously the Acting Proper Officer.

2023/94 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next Full Council meeting Tuesday will be held on Monday **17th July 2023** in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP **commencing at 19.00 pm**.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting at 20.36

17/07/23

MAYOR: **DATE:**