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

Chard Town **Full Council** meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on **Monday 12th May 2025** commencing at 19:00pm.

Councillors Present: Councillors: Baker, Bates, Bulmer, Crook, Hassan, Hussey, A Kenton, J Kenton, O'Brien Shortland, Richter, Webb & Williams.

Officers Present: Chief Executive & Town Clerk, David Bell; Operations Manager, Kevin Dyer; Beverley Newman Democratic Service Officer.

Public Participation Time
There were approximately 28 members of the public present. 5 members of the public spoke.

Somerset Councillor Reports
Council received a report from Unitary Councillors: Baker & J Kenton

Section 1 Standing Items:

2025/24 **Apologies for Absence**
Council received apologies from the following Councillors;
Eggins &Watson - Personal

Proposed: Councillor Williams Seconded: Councillor Webb
Unanimous

Resolved: For Council to formerly accept the apologies declared.

2025/25 **Declarations of Interest**
The following declarations were made:
Councillor Baker for agenda items being also a Somerset Councillor:
- 2025/30, 35, 36 & 38

Councillor J Kenton for agenda items being also a Somerset Councillor:
- 2025/30, 35, 36 & 38

Councillor Richter for agenda item – Councillor Richter lives in a known flood area
- 2025/30

Councillor O'Brien – Councillor O'Brien is currently Chair of the Chard Area Youth Committee.
- 2025/36

2025/26 **Council Meeting Minutes March 17th 2025**

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor C Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed minutes of the 17th march 2025 as an accurate record.

2025/27 **Committee Meeting Minutes – Human Resources 7th May 2025.**
These were not completed as Draft in time for this Full Council meeting.

Section 2 – Items To Note

2025/28 **Announcements & Reports to Note**

a) The Mayor
The Mayor provided updates on her recent engagements:

b)
The Chief Executive & Town Clerk

i. Chard Knowledge Information Directory - The Chief Executive & Town Clerk gave an update on the successful application for the Somerset Association Local Council grant.

ii. Interim Organisational Structure - The Chief Executive & Town Clerk explained this had been devised with particular regard to capacity & capability, commitments and aspirations and would be discussed in Confidential that it is a key element in progressing projects.

iii. The Chief Executive & Town Clerk outlined the public use of this land (Will's Mead Park) and potential for linkage within the Great Mead Garden Project

Section 3 – Items For Decision / Discussion

2025/29 **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretion Policy**

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton — Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
For: 10 — Abstain: 3

Resolved: Council agreed to re-adopt the Local Government Scheme Discretion Policy

2025/30 **Flooding In Chard – Funding support**
Council received a comprehensive explanation of the current situation from the Chief Executive & Town Clerk. A lengthy debate arose out of this comprehensive explanation. In summary:

In relation to Cllr J Kenton's motion, about land at Bond's Close, while she supported undertaking work for the wider Chard area, she felt a) and b) of the Chief Executive & Town Clerks recommendations should be treated as two sperate proposals.

a) Should stay as it stands with an amendment to the amount required from £2,000 to £3,000
and
b) The detail of Bonds Close be removed from the wider area (as it is dealt with in a)), and the rest of the recommendation of the Chief & Executive & Town Clerk could stay the same.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton — Seconded: Councillor Williams
For: 12 — Abstain: 1

Resolved:

a) Council agreed to the following amended proposal:

i. That this Council investigates the cause of the excessive water that is travelling through Council land adjacent to Bonds Close and onto private residents' property.
ii. That it engages an expert drainage engineer to give advice on what we should do to prevent this from causing any further issues to local residents.
iii. That the council gives authority to the Mayor and the Chief Executive & Town Clerk to engage a specialist within a budget of £3000.

Cllr Baker provided an alternative to the proposal b) of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive. Cllr Baker's main concerns being Chard Town Council may, in committing funding to the wider piece of work (£7,000 being recommended), other parties would assume Chard Town Council would continue to pay for everything.

The Chief Executive replied that this amount would be a 'pump prime' contribution that no monies would be spent by Chard Town Council until confirmation that this amount would be matched by a partner/s organisation/s.

Cllr Baker then provided his alternative proposal:

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
Unanimous

Resolved: For Council to agree a Working Group that includes all parties; Land owners, Councils, SRA, FWAG, Flooding Agency etc. to meet as a matter of urgency to discuss solutions and funding and membership should be delegated to Operations Manager or Chief Executive or both and for members to contact Officers by the end of this week if they wish to be a part of this group.

2025/31 **Anti-Social Behaviour In The Parks And Cemetery.**

Council received a comprehensive explanation of the current situation from the Operations Manager.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: Officers to arrange for:

- Provision of training for all Amenities staff in the collection of all contaminated waste.
- Payment for a course of Hepatitis B medication for Amenities staff, subject to their approval.
- Linking with the existing Task Force, relevant agencies and MP and arrange appropriate meetings to discuss this issue.

2025/32 **Date of next Meeting**

Council noted the dates of the Annual Town's Meeting, Monday May 19th 2025 and the date of the next Full Council Meeting Tuesday 27th May 2025

2025/33 **Confidential**

Proposed: Councillor Richter Seconded: Councillor Crook
Unanimous

Resolved: To exclude the press and public in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as item 2025/37 will include the consideration of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, specifically personal data information. Agenda items 2024/33 to 2025/38

2025/34 **Leave Of Absence**

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor J Kenton
Unanimous

Resolved: Council approved leave of absence requested by two Councillors.

2025/35 **Bath Street Toilets (In the car park adjacent to the Sainsbury's Store)**
Council received a comprehensive update from the Chief Executive Town Clerk and Operations Manager.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor J. Kenton
Unanimous

Resolved:

- Councillor Baker will arrange as soon as possible for a meeting with Asset Management Team and Portfolio Holder and Officers to agree a way forward for putting interim arrangements in place to open the toilets given the current difficulties with the proposed lease.

- To give delegated authority for the Chief Executive & Town Clerk and Operations Manager to identify a suitable provider who is able to undertake a comprehensive cleaning process with a budget of up to £20,000. This to be taken from the devolution budget.

- Look into undertaking the refurbishment of the toilets as stated in a previous Full Council meeting 2024 which include detailed plans and drawings.

Councillor O'Brien left the meeting.

2025/36 **Chard Area Youth Committee**
Council received a comprehensive update from the Chief Executive Town Clerk and Operations Manager.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor J. Kenton
Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed to the following recommendations proposed by the Chief Executive & Town Clerk:

- To instruct the Chief Executive & Town Clerk to organise and recruit a CTC Youth Provision Steering Group to investigate such a vehicle and for Full Council to nominate Councillors (it is suggested a maximum of four) to be on such a Steering Group.
  Nominated Councillors are:

  - Webb
  - Hassan
  - Crook

- Bates
- Richter
- Baker

- To Authorises the Chief Executive & Town Clerk to investigate the provision, financial aspects and input into youth services in Chard and report back to Full Council at the earliest opportunity, if necessary via an Extraordinary Meeting.

Councillor O'Brien returned to the meeting.

2025/37 **Corporate Structure & Interim Organisation Chart**
This item was not discussed due to the length of the meeting.

Councillors Crook, Hassan and Webb left the meeting: 10.10 p.m.

2025/38 **Pavilion Changing Facilities, Jocelyn Park**
Council received a comprehensive update from the Chief Executive Town Clerk and Operations Manager.

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: Council agreed :

- Chief Executive & Town Clerk and Operations Manger to seek advice on how to create a suitable lease for hire.

- Officer time to investigate a maintenance and operational agreement for the day to day management of the new Jocelyn Park Facility and for this to be incorporated into the new lease agreement for the premises

- To facilitate and fund the removal of the temporary changing rooms once the new building is completed. Prices to complete this task to be consulted back with Chard Town Council in due course.

- Chard Town Council to appoint a project Manager on a consultancy basis for the completion of the completion of the Jocelyn Park Changing room project.

Councillor Bulmer left the meeting: 10.20

2025/39 **IT Systems Contract**
Council noted the Chief Executive & Town Clerk's overview of the current issues with Chard Town Council's IT support system and the need to resolve these issues with urgency and on an emergency basis.

The Mayor thanked Councillors and Officers for their attendance and input and closed the meeting at 10.30 p.m.

SIGNED:

DATE:
19/10/25