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 **Full Council** meeting held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PP on **Monday 28th July 2025** commencing at 19:00pm.

Councillors Present: Councillors: Bates, Bulmer, Crook, Eggins, Hussey, A Kenton, J Kenton, O'Brien, Richter & Shortland.

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

Public Participation Time
There were 6 members of the public present. No questions or comments were received.

Somerset Councillor Reports
Council received updates from Unitary Councillor J Kenton

Section 1 Standing Items:

2025/76 **Apologies for Absence**
Council received apologies from the following Councillors;
Baker, Hassan, Watson & Williams

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor Eggins
Unanimous

Resolved: For Council to formerly accept the apologies declared.

2025/77 **Declarations of Interest**
Cllrs J Kenton, Bulmer and Shortland checked with the Chief Executive & Town Clerk regarding agenda item 2025/82, first point. The Chief Executive & Town Clerk confirmed as this item was for noting only no declarations were required.

2025/78 **Council Meeting Minutes**
The Chief Executive & Town Clerk withdrew Full Council draft minutes for the 12th May 27th May & 23rd June for Full Council approval, explaining that in the spirit of working together amendments had been received, that these would be considered and an amended draft version circulated. However, going forward amendments ARE requested before the meeting i.e. after the summons e-mail containing the draft minutes, or before the meeting.
The minutes for the Extraordinary Full Council 18th July 2025 meeting remained on the agenda for approval.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor Eggins
For: 7 Abstain: 3

Resolved: For Council to approve the draft minutes of the 18th July 2025 extraordinary Full Council meeting

2025/79 **Committee Meeting Minutes**

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk withdrew the minutes from the Amenities & Events meetings; 11th March and 17th June 2025, as for Full Council previous sets of minutes, explaining that in the spirit of working together amendments had been received, that these would be considered and an amended draft version circulated. However, going forward amendments are requested before the meeting i.e. after the summons e-mail containing the draft minutes, or before.

The minutes for the HR meetings 7th May & 14th July 2025 meeting remained on the agenda for noting and the recommendations within for approval.

Committee noted the HR minutes for the 7th May & 14th July 2025.

- For Full Council to consider the recommendation from 7th May HR Committee meeting.

  Proposed: Cllr Bulmer Seconded: Cllr Shortland
  Unanimous

  Resolved: Full Council approved the HR committee recommendation that all HR committee members undertake HR training and that relevant training for Finance & Audit, Amenities & Events and Planning & Highways Committees be considered.

- For Council to consider the recommendations made from 14th May HR Committee meeting.

  Proposed: Cllr Eggins Seconded: Cllr Richter
  Unanimous

  Resolved: Full Council approved the HR committee recommendations that;

  - Standing orders should include a requirement **all** council members should undertake the "The council as an employer" (Provided by SALC)

  - Standing orders should include a requirement **all** HR and Appeals Committee members are required to undertake **a more in-depth Employment course** than the "The council as an employer" (Provided by SALC).

2025/80 **Financial Checks**

- **Reconciliation Of Bank Account**
  For Full Council to approve the bank statements at 30/05/25 as accurate against the internal bank reconciliation.

  Proposed: Cllr J Kenton Seconded: Cllr Eggins
  Unanimous

- **Payment Checks**

For Full Council to approve the payments and petty cash payments for April & May 2025

Proposed: Cllr Eggins Seconded: Cllr J Kenton
Unanimous

For Full Council to approve the payments and petty cash payments for June 2025.

Proposed: Cllr Eggins Seconded: Cllr Crook
Unanimous

Section 2: Items To Note

2025/81
Mayors Updates & Announcements

The mayor started her updates by extending a heartfelt official Chard Town Council 'well done' to The Women's English football team for winning the European Cup. The mayor then provided updates on her recent engagements and activities which included:

- Attendance at the Numatics Show held at Holyrood school, a wonderful event that brought the town together and raised considerable monies for several charities.
- Attendance at the poetry event
- Watching the wonderful Clocks production of the Sound Of Music
- Attendance at various openings to include an amazing Art Exhibition at Jenny's Cafe.

2025/82 Chief Executive & Town Clerk Updates.

- **Youth Provision In Chard – Update**
  The Chief Executive & Town Clerk Gave a comprehensive update of the current situation to include recent discussions from the last meeting & further stated that this project continues to progress at a pace.

- **7th July Informal Workshop**
  The Chief Executive & Town Clerk acknowledged the preparation work Cllr J Kenton undertook for this workshop to take place and her facilitation of the event. That the items listed below were all considered to be pieces of work required to be undertaken (and that Council had previously agreed to). Some of these related to 'Devolution' – this is not an exhaustive list:

  - Bath Street Toilets and Adjacent Parking Spaces for a possible Changing Places Toilet.
  - Bonfield Way Allotments
  - All Parks & Play Areas
  - Open Spaces including Mitchell Gardens
  - Verge & Sightline Cutting
  - Footpaths (PROW) as per the Definitive Map.
  - Shrub Beds including raised planters
  - Youth Club Building
  - Beacon
  - Street Cleaning
  - Boden Centre
  - Leisure Centre

- High Street/Fore Street Rills

Councillor Bates commented that one item also discussed at the workshop not on this list was the Mess Room for the Amenities Team and all Councillors in attendance had commented on their agreement for this being a priority.

Councillor J Kenton commented there were 25 items in total which had all been previously resolved by Council to act on. She further explained the process taken at the workshop for informally prioritising these items and asked if those councillors unable to attend the workshop would participate in the same process via e-mail with her.

Councillor Bulmer enquired of the Chiel Executive & Town Clerk whether he had any further information on a start time for the devolution as this would impact on those items listed in terms of them being actioned.

Chief Executive & Town Clerk replied when last asked of Somerset Council the date given was the 1st April 2026, however he was hopeful that once officer to officer dialogue began on distinct pieces of work this date could move forward.

Section 3 – Items For Discussion & Decision

2025/83 Committee Membership

- **HR Committee – election of replacement committee member**
  For Council nominate a committee member for the HR Committee and select a new member.

  Cllr Eggins nominated Cllr Crook, seconded by Cllr Bulmer and Cllr Crook accepted the nomination.

  Council voted on this nomination :
  For 5 Against 5 (6 to include the Mayors casting vote)

  Cllr J Kenton nominated Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr O'Brien and Cllr Baker accepted the nomination prior to the meeting.

  For: 5 (6 to include the Mayors casting vote Against: 5

  Resolved: That Cllr Baker become the replacement member of the HR Committee.

- **HR Committee election of Vice Chair**
  For Council to nominate and select the Vice Chair for the HR Committee

  Cllr J Kenton nominated Cllr Shortland, Cllr O'Brien seconded, and Cllr Shortland accepted.

  Council voted on this nomination :
  For 5 (6 to include the Mayors casting vote) Against 5

  Cllr Eggins nominated Cllr Bulmer, Cllr Richter seconded, and Cllr Bulmer accepted the nomination.

  Council voted on this nomination :
  For 5 Against 5 (6 to include the Mayors casting vote)

Resolved: That Cllr Shortland becomes the Vice Chair of the HR Committee

- **Committees and subcommittees**
  Committees:
  Cllr Eggins requested to be on the Finance & Audit, Amenities & Events and the Planning & Highways committees

  Proposed Cllr J Kenton Seconded Cllr Shortland
  Unanimous

  Resolved: Cllr Eggins is now a member of the Finance & Audit, Amenities & Events and the Planning & Highways committees.

  Appeals Committee:
  Cllr Eggins nominated Cllr Crook to be on the Appeals Committee, seconded by Cllr Richter, Cllr Crook accepted the nomination.

  No other nominations were made.

  Resolved: That Cllr Crook is a member of the Appeals Committee

  Grants Sub-committee:

  Proposed Cllr J Kenton Seconded Cllr Shortland
  Unanimous

  Resolved: That Cllrs J. Kenton, A. Kenton & Eggins be members the Grants Sub-committee and that when this Committee first meets, they elect the chair.

2025/84 Councillor Motions:

- **CCTV Cameras – Cllr Baker**
  The Mayor deferred this motion due to the absence of Cllr Baker, there by not being able to put the motion or answer any questions regarding it.

- **Schedule of Committee meetings – Cllr J Kenton**
  Cllr J Kenton read her motion to the Council, reiterating her reasoning behind it & requesting on a bimonthly basis the Full Council could look to the Full Council to meeting the third Monday of the month to enable her to attend the Coombe St Nicolas Parish Council meetings.

  Proposed Cllr J Kenton Seconded Cllr Shortland
  Unanimous

  Resolved: For the Chief Executive & Town Clerk to look at changing some full council dates in line with Cllr Kenton's motion and re-circulate to the Council

Section 4 Confidential

2025/85 Exclusion of Public and Press

Proposed Cllr Eggins Seconded Cllr J Kenton
Unanimous

Resolved: 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.

2025/86 **Jocelyn Park**
The Chief Executive & Town Clerk presented a paper on this agenda item. A full discussion followed resulting in 3 recommendations which were unanimously resolved. *Confidential notes*

2025/87 **HR Consultancy**
Council discussed this item and reached unanimous conclusion. *Confidential notes*

2025/88 **Overtime & Vacancies**

- **Contracts of Spinal Column Point 12 & below**

  Proposed Cllr Eggins — Seconded Cllr Bulmer
  For: 6 — Abstain: 4

  Resolved: That contracts of scale point 12 and below are changed to allow overtime payments, in addition to the opportunities or allow toil.

- **Cleaner & Stakeholder Liaison costs**

  Proposed: Cllr Bulmer — Seconded: Cllr Crook
  For: 8 — Abstain: 2

  Resolved: To acknowledge the current recruitment process for the positions as stated in the HR meeting and minutes and note the current terms and conditions of the Town Clerk's contract allowing this position to be advertised and appointed. The bid process and proposal has been to Full Council and the Kind Chard project agreed.

2025/89 **IT Systems and Audio Equipment Updates**
The Chief Executive & Town Clerk provided an oral account of a potential data security situation, steps taken to mitigate and actions taken to prevent further instances of a similar nature.

2025/90 **Date of next Meeting**
Council noted the next Full Chard Town Council meeting is Monday 11th August 2025. To be held at The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP and commence at 7pm

There being no other business, The Mayor thanked all those in attendance for coming and closed the meeting at 22.15 pm

SIGNED: DATE: 19/10/25