Chard Town Council

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP

01460 239567 www.chard.gov.uk

Mayor: Cllr Victoria Bates

Chief Executive & Town Clerk David Bell

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the **Amenities and Events Committee** held on **Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7pm** in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP.

Present: Councillors; Hussey, Richter, and Williams.

Apologies: Councillors Baker (Chair), Bulmer, J Kenton, Shortland & Watson (Vice Chair)

In Attendance: Chief Executive & Town Clerk (CE&TC) David Bell, Kevin Dyer Deputy Town Clerk & Operations Manager, Beverley Newman Democratic Services Officer (DSO)

Public Participation Time

No members of the public were in attendance.

Given the absence from this meeting of both the Chair & Vice Chair the first order of business was to elect a Chair for the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Hussey Seconded: Councillor Richter
Unanimous

Resolved: Cllr Williams to chair this Amenities and Events meeting

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Minutes

Section 1 – Standing Items

2025/01 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received by Cllrs Baker, Bulmer, J Kenton, Shortland and Watson

Proposed: Councillor Hussey Seconded: Councillor Richter
Unanimous

Resolved: Amenities & Events Committee accepted the apologies.

2025/02 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations made.

2025/03 **Committee Meeting Minutes**

To approve the Minutes of the meetings on 12th November 2024,

Proposed: Councillor Williams Seconded: Councillor J Richter
For: 2 Abstain: 1

Resolved: Amenities & Events Committee accepted the minutes of 12th November as an accurate account.

Section 2 – Items To Note

2025/04 **Fingerpost Signage**

Chard Town Council is currently waiting for Somerset Council to confirm the licence requirements.

2025/05 **Cemetery**

The survey in January 2025 has been received. It includes 87 “fails” and these matters are being progressed by the Operations Manager. CTC has received two quotations for gates and railings, both of which are over budget. Further details are being sought and will be reported in due course. The Operations Manager gave a comprehensive oral update.

2025/06 **Amenities & Guildhall General Updates**

The Operations Manager provided a wide-ranging list of projects and work streams that were currently being processed by the Amenities and Guildhall teams.

The Chair thanked the Operations Manager for providing all the updates and all staff for their hard work and progress. It was further acknowledged by the Amenities & Events Committee that the Events booklet looked very impressive.

Section 3 – Items for Discussion & Decision

2025/07 **Preserving and Developing Services Currently Provided By Somerset Council - Bath Street Toilet Block**

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The CE & TC provided a detailed account of discussions to date between CTC and Somert Council, highlighting both the complexity of the situation and some potential outcome scenarios.

Proposed: Councillor Williams Seconded: Councillor Richter
Unanimous

Resolved: Amenities & Events Committee agreed CE&TC should continue discussions with Somerset Council to explore all options and report back.

2025/08 **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the A&E Committee will be on **Tuesday 10th June 2025** in The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP commencing at 7pm.

There being no other business the Chair thanked those present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20.20

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Amenities and Events Committee** held on **Tuesday 17th June 2025 at 7pm** in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP.

Present: Councillors; Baker (Chair), Bulmer, Hussey, O'Brien, Shortland (Vice Chair) and Williams.

Apologies: Councillors A Kenton, J Kenton, Hassan & Webb.

In Attendance: Chief Executive & Town Clerk (CE&TC) David Bell, Tim Bickham Events Officer, Kevin Dyer Deputy Town Clerk & Operations Manager, Beverley Newman Democratic Services Officer (DSO)

Public Participation Time

No members of the public were in attendance.

Minutes

Section 1 – Standing Items

2025/09 **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies were received by Cllrs, A Kenton, J Kenton, Hassan and Webb

Proposed: Councillor Williams Seconded: Councillor Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: Amenities & Events Committee accepted the apologies.

2025/10 **Declarations of Interest**
Cllr Bulmer made a Pecuniary declaration of interest in relation to Agenda item 2025/16 due to his position in the Chard Rotary Club.

Councillor Baker asked the Committee members if they were happy to consider agenda item 2025/16 last given the declaration from Councillor Bulmer to prevent stopping and starting the meeting. The Amenities & Events committee members agreed to this change of agenda order.

2025/11 **Committee Meeting Minutes**
To approve the Minutes of the meetings on 11th March 2025,

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Bulmer

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Unanimous

Resolved: Amenities & Events Committee requested Councillor A Kenton be included in the apologies, that brief explanations were provided for agenda items 2025/05, 2025/06 & 2025/07 and the amended version be brought back to the next scheduled Amenities & Events meeting being 15th July 2025.

Section 2 – Items To Note

2025/12 **Chief Executive & Town Clerk Updates**.
No updates were provided by the Chief Executive & Town Clerk at this time as all relevant information was contained in the Operations Manager Updates & Briefing Report and the Events Officer Updates.

2025/13 **Operations Manager Updates**
The Amenities & Events Committee noted the Operations Manager Updates report. Comments were made on the following items:

Cemetery
Committee discussed the future works required on headstones and commented on an 'excellent piece of work' in relation to the additional graves that will now be able to be accommodated due to the cemetery extension works.

Hanging Baskets
Committee all agreed this initiative was a really good idea and a potential way forward for the future. The Chair further stated the feedback he had received from the public helped to restore a sense of pride in the town.

Flooding
The Committee Chair acknowledged the Operations Manager's perseverance which has led to successful discussions with Scout Group and Bowles Club.

Jocelyn Park Changing Rooms –
A meeting was held between Chard Town Council, Chard United and Wayne Mears Builders to discuss the pathway ahead. An oral update was given.

Allotment Clean Up and Plot Clearance
Due to the demands on the Council Amenities Team we are not where we need to be with plot clearance, however time will be invested in allotments in June and have a forum meeting at the end of the month.

Allotment Clean up happened in May, which was great and benefits the allotments. This is done around Easter and not in our busiest time of year.

Bath Street Toilets
The Chief Executive & Town Clerk gave an additional update on this item explaining that discussions held today with Somerset Council were very positive conversation and centred around how quickly the facilities could be opened. It was suggested by both parties to enter into a Gentlemen's Agreement. This being the preferred vehicle to get things started over either a Licence or lease. The Chief Executive & Town Clerk confirmed further discussions were required to agree the consent of a Gentlemen's agreement.

Proposed: Councillor Hussey Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
Unanimous

Resolved: For the Chief Executive & Town Clerk to continue with discussions with Somerset Council to expedite the opening of these facilities.

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Committee wished to express their sincere thanks to the whole Amenities team for their hard work and achievements during this period.

2025/14 **Events Officer Updates**

The Amenities & Events Committee noted the Events Officer Updates report. The following comments were made:

The Committee Chair commented there had been a noticeable increase in the number of events being held and thanked the Events Officer for this achievement.

Cllr Bulmer wished to pass on positive feedback he had received form his constituents regarding the Oasis concert who thought the concert was excellent.

Committee all agreed the VE Day events were a real success and credited the Events Officer for achieving this especially in the light of last minutes changes that were required.

Section 3 – Items for Discussion & Decision

2025/15 **Amenities/Parks and Cemetery Mess Room Update**

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Shortland
Unanimous

1) **Resolved:** To allow Officer time to be spent investigating the use of current Council land to be converted into a new Mess area and work yard/depot using price option 2 of the Operations Manager Briefing Paper £145,590 allowing a further 15% as contingency.

2025/16 **See page 4**

2025/17 **Holcombe Play Park and Bike Dirt Track**

i) Play Equipment

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Hussey
Unanimous

Resolved: To seek permission from Mr Sulley to install new play equipment at Holcombe Park & obtain 3 quotations for the design installation and consultation and for these works to be paid using all available 106 monies. To bring all 3 quotations back to Amenities & Events Committee for consideration.

ii) Dirt Track

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Williams
Unanimous

Resolved: To seek permission from Mr Sulley to install at Dirt Bike Track at Holcombe Park and if permission granted obtain 3 quotations for installation and consultation and for these works to be paid using all available 106 monies. To bring all 3 quotations back to Amenities & Events Committee for consideration.

2025/18 **Ashcroft Park Disabled Equipment Update**

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Proposed: Councillor Williams Seconded: Councillor Bulmer
Unanimous

Resolved: To look into purchasing specialised disabled equipment for Ashcroft Park, by 3 quotations for the design installation and consultation and for these works to be paid using all available S106 monies. To bring all 3 quotations back to Amenities & Events Committee for consideration.

2025/19 **Hep B Injections**

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Shortland
Unanimous

Resolved: To request Officer research the legal requirements and processes on this matter and report back to Amenities & Events Committee with a plan of action once all the relevant the information has been procured.

Councillor Bulmer left the meeting at 21.10

2025/16 **Rotary Club and Peace Garden**

Proposed: Councillor Baker Seconded: Councillor Shortland
Unanimous

Resolved: Chard Town Council to work in partnership with Chard Rotary Club using the garden adjacent to the old office to create a peace garden

2025/20 **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the A&E Committee will be on **Tuesday 15th July 2025** in The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP commencing at 7pm.

There being no other business the Chair thanked those present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.20

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ALLOTMENT EVICTION AND APPEALS – POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Allotment tenants should have clear and fair published policies for dealing with matters such as lack of cultivation of plots. These policies should clearly state the timescales involved, the appeals process and that consideration will be given to mitigating circumstances such as illness or injury of the plot holder.

Inspection
Any officer or agent of the council or land owner shall be entitled at any time when instructed by the council to enter and inspect the allotment garden.
Inspections on allotment sites will be held on a regular basis.
The inspections will look at the allotment licences as the criteria for identifying whether a plot holder is not complying with the rules laid out to them.
A photograph of the plot that is classed as contrary to the licence will be taken as evidence.

Enforcement – Improvement Letter
The first course of action if a plot is identified as not complying with their tenancy licence, will be an improvement letter.
This letter will detail the unacceptable criteria.
The plot holder is given 14 days to rectify the situation and/or explain satisfactory the reasons for the plots unacceptable condition.
The Operations Manager should be made aware of any special circumstances relating to a plot holder whose plot is unacceptable e.g illness. Any information gathered will be dealt with confidentially and each instance will be dealt with on an individual basis.
The Operations Manager will be authorised to make the decision on whether a Formal Waring Letter is issued.

Enforcement – Formal Warning Letter
After the rectification period and in the absence of an improvement or explanatory letter, a final warning letter will be issued, reaffirming the statements in the improvement letter.
The tenant must show an immediate improvement within 14 days of the date of the letter or an explanation as to why the improvement letter was ignored, failing which the licence will be terminated.
The Operations Manager will be authorised to make this decision on whether a notice to quit is issued.

Enforcement – Notice to Quit
If there is no immediate improvement or satisfactory accepted explanation within the time scale, a termination letter (Notice to Quit) will be issued to the plot holder. The plot holder will be given 14 days to remove any crops, tools and structures left on the site.

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In the event of a serious breach of the tenancy licence, the council reserves the right to serve immediate Notice to Quit, without progression through all stages as detailed in this procedure.

Appeals Process

A plot holder may appeal (in writing) against the termination within 14 days of the receipt of the termination letter.
The appeal should detail the reasons for the lack of improvement and reasons why the termination should be withdrawn.
The plot holder will retain ownership of the plot whilst the appeal is being considered.
The Amenities and Events Committee will appoint 3 members of the committee to act as the appeals panel who must make a decision and reply to the plot holder within 14 days of receipt of appeal.

There are three options for the appeals panel to consider-

1. The termination is upheld.
2. The plot holder is re-instated with a probationary period of 6 months, where any further breach of the Allotment Terms and Conditions will result in immediate termination with no right of appeal.
3. Re-instate the plot holder with no probation.

The appeal hearing should be minuted and circulated to both the plot holder and panel to ensure there is a record of the process.
The minutes will also be recorded as received at the next amenities and events committee meeting.

The decision of the appeals panel is final.
If a probationary period is agreed on, a review will be dealt with by the appeals panel and a decision will be made by the panel as to whether the conditions of the probationary period have been met. If there are no issues, the tenant will remain on the plot. If there are breaches of the conditions of probationary or tenancy agreement, the panel have a right to immediately terminate the tenancy with no further right of appeal.

V001 May 2025

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