

## Taunton Charter Trustees

Thursday, 27th August, 2020,  
6.00 pm



Somerset West  
and Taunton

[SWT VIRTUAL MEETING WEBCAST LINK](#)

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**Members:** Francesca Smith (Chair), Sue Lees (Vice-Chair), Lee Baker, Chris Booth, Simon Coles, Caroline Ellis, Marcia Hill, Richard Lees, Libby Lisgo, Derek Perry, Martin Peters, Hazel Prior-Sankey, Federica Smith-Roberts, Alan Wedderkopp, Danny Wedderkopp and Brenda Weston

### Agenda

**1. Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Taunton Charter Trustees**

To approve the minutes of the previous meetings of the Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> April and 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

(Pages 5 - 16)

**3. Declarations of Interest**

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors and Clerks of Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.)

**4. Public Participation**

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak

before Councillors debate the issue.

### **Temporary measures during the Coronavirus Pandemic**

Due to the Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will holding meetings in a virtual manner which will be live webcast on our website. Members of the public will still be able to register to speak and ask questions, which will then be read out by the Governance and Democracy Case Manager during Public Question Time and will either be answered by the Chair of the Committee, or the relevant Portfolio Holder, or be followed up with a written response.

#### **5. Petitions**

To receive any petitions from residents of Taunton containing over 200 signatures in accordance with Standing Order 30.

#### **6. Motions to the Charter Trustees**

To consider motions in the order in which notice has been received.

#### **7. Communications**

To receive such communications as the Mayor may desire to lay before the Charter Trustees.

#### **8. To answer questions under Standing Order 8**

A Charter Trustee may ask the Mayor any question upon an item which is under consideration by the Charter Trustees. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion. The person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer but shall give an explanation for declining to do so. An answer may take the form of :-

1. A direct oral answer; or
2. Where the desired information is contained in a publication of the Charter Trustees, a reference to that publication; or
3. Where reply to the question cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated to Charter Trustees.

#### **9. To receive and consider reports, minutes and recommendations of the Standing Committee (if any)**

#### **10. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**

This item is to approve the Annual Governance Statement for submission to the Charter Trustee's external Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP.

#### **11. Accounting Statements 2019/2020**

(Pages 17 - 18)

(Pages 19 - 28)

This item is to approve the Draft Accounting Statements 2019/2020 for submission to the Charter Trustee's external Auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP.

**12. For Information - Research into the effect of any potential Government Unitary Orders on the Unparished Area of Taunton**

This item has been requested by the Mayor to discuss the implications and potential effect on the Unparished Area of Taunton and subsequently the Charter Trustees for Taunton of any unitary order made by central Government and any preparations needing to be made in advance of said Order.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'James Hasset', is positioned above the printed name.

**JAMES HASSETT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by taking part in the Council Meeting during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Following Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will be live webcasting our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, but you can also access them on the [Somerset West and Taunton webcasting](#) website.

If you would like to ask a question or speak at a meeting, you will need to submit your request to a member of the Governance Team in advance of the meeting. You can request to speak at a Council meeting by emailing your full name, the agenda item and your question to the Governance Team using [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

Any requests need to be received by 4pm on the day that provides 2 clear working days before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting itself). For example, if the meeting is due to take place on a Tuesday, requests need to be received by 4pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

The Governance and Democracy Case Manager will take the details of your question or speech and will distribute them to the Committee prior to the meeting. The Chair will then invite you to speak at the beginning of the meeting under the agenda item Public Question Time, but speaking is limited to three minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes and you can only speak to the Committee once. If there are a group of people attending to speak about a particular item then a representative should be chosen to speak on behalf of the group.

Please see below for Temporary Measures during Coronavirus Pandemic and the changes we are making to public participation:-

Due to the Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will holding meetings in a virtual manner which will be live webcast on our website. Members of the public will still be able to register to speak and ask questions, which will then be read out by the Governance and Democracy Case Manager during Public Question Time and will be answered by the Portfolio Holder or followed up with a written response.

Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: [www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](http://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please email: [governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk](mailto:governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk)

**Taunton Charter Trustees - 29 April 2020**

Present: Councillor Francesca Smith (Mayor)

Councillors Sue Lees (Deputy Mayor), Lee Baker, Chris Booth, Caroline Ellis, Richard Lees, Libby Lisgo, Derek Perry, Martin Peters, Hazel Prior-Sankey, Federica Smith-Roberts, Alan Wedderkopp, Danny Wedderkopp and Brenda Weston

Officers: Jo Comer, Marcus Prouse and Kate Murdoch

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm)

**60. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Simon Coles.

**61. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Taunton Charter Trustees**

(Minutes of the meeting of the Taunton Charter Trustees held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 had been circulated with the agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Taunton Charter Trustees held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

**62. Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr L Baker	All Items	Cheddon Fitzpaine & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Booth	All Items	Wellington and SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Ellis	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Lees	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Lees	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Perry	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Peters	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Prior-Sankey	All Items	SCC & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Cllr A Wedderkopp	All Items	SCC & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Wedderkopp	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted

63. **Public Participation**

The Clerk advised the Trustees that no members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

64. **Petitions**

The Clerk advised that no petitions had been received.

65. **Motions to the Charter Trustees**

The Clerk advised that no motions to the Charter Trustees had been received.

66. **Communications**

The Mayor of Taunton had advised within the Agenda pack of a few key events she had attended since the last meeting of the Charter Trustees;

- Holocaust Memorial Day Service at St Johns Church
- Tour of St Margaret's Hospice
- Performance of School of Rock by students of Castle School
- Showmen's Guild Western Section Annual Luncheon
- Polish Saturday School of Jan Brzechwa 10th Anniversary Party
- Celebration of the Taunton Toads and Cheque Presentation Evening at the Museum of Somerset
- Taunton Thespians production of Deathtrap
- Lunchtime Concert at St Mary Magdalene Church by the Chamber Choir of Madeira The High Sheriff of Somerset's Service to Celebrate Volunteering at Wells Cathedral Legal Service at Wells Cathedral
- Meeting Jason and Sharon Bailey who repaired the Vivary Park Gates
- Virtual opening of Sherford & Wilton Community Store
- The Mayor to update the Charter Trustees on the monies raised by the Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir at their Patronage Concert back in February
- The Choir presented the cheque to the Mayor and the Chair of SWT via Zoom

The Mayor advised Councillors at the meeting that there was shortly to be a piece on BBC Somerset about the Twin Towns as she had written to both the Mayor of Konigsutter and Lisieux expressing solidarity with them in the current Coronavirus pandemic affecting the world. The Mayor had received a response

from the Mayor of Konigslutter and they had also sent their best wishes to the Town.

Councillor Alan Wedderkopp thanked the Mayor for opening the Pop-up Shop in Wilton and Sherford, and thanked the rest of the Charter Trustees for their support in providing the start-up funds from the Unparished fund which allowed it to be set up quickly and efficiently.

**67. To answer questions under Standing Order 8**

No questions were asked under Standing Order 8.

**68. To receive and consider reports, minutes and recommendations of the Standing Committee (if any)**

The Clerk advised the Charter Trustees that two decision forms had been included in the Agenda for their information following the Standing Committee's meeting at the end of February and the urgent sign-off of funds for the Community Shop at the end of March.

Cllr Lisgo highlighted that several of the grants that had been awarded in February were for events happening this year, which clearly due to the pandemic were not going to take place. It was worth re-iterating that the Charter Trustees would be unable to support these events on an annual basis due to the financial position of the body in the next year and how expectations of groups were managed.

Cllr Smith-Roberts stressed that there needed to be a follow-up as to whether the successful bidders grants were now going to be used and their plans going forward, as there were several organisations in the area struggling at the moment to obtain funding in the current pandemic situation.

*The Clerk stated that he would re-establish contact with the successful applicants and seek information as to their intention with their events in 2020 and report back to the Charter Trustees.*

In relation to a bid that had been taken to the February meeting, Cllr Weston had recently discovered that within the adopted Taunton Town Centre Action Plan 2008 funding for the enhancement works at Whirligig Lane by the Borough Council had been mooted.

Councillor Booth requested information as to whether there were any bids awaiting decision?

*The Clerk advised that there were a couple of bids waiting and a virtual meeting would be looked to be set up.*

**69. To make appointments to the Standing Committee**

The Clerk advised that the latest advice received from the Association of Charter Trustee Towns this afternoon was that as Charter Trustees were not specifically referred to in the Coronavirus legislation they were not covered as a Parish Council and so an Annual General Meeting (AGM) would have to take place this year, which was not the expectation when the Agenda had been published, and this item would have usually been taken to the AGM.

The Charter Trustees were advised they could make appointments at this meeting or wait until the AGM.

**RESOLVED** that the Charter Trustees deferred this item to the next meeting of the Charter Trustees (Annual General Meeting).

#### 70. **Taunton High Street Fund bid and Community Infrastructure Levy allocations**

The report sought input from Chartered Trustees on the allocations of Community Infrastructure Levy funds held in the Taunton Unparished Area Fund, to support Somerset West and Taunton's Future High Street Fund bid for Taunton. The Taunton Unparished Area fund currently held £107,062.74 in CIL funds and it was proposed that these funds be committed to support key projects in the Taunton Future High Street Fund bid.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and asked questions which included:-

- Clarity was sought as to what allocation would be most favourably looked upon by Central Government?
- *In the bid the Charter Trustees support will be mentioned. The main measure of assessing the bid would be Value for Money, and 99 other Local Authorities were still in the process so it was going to be competitive.*
- Some concern was raised about whether the whole amount of CIL monies from the Unparished Area should be allocated towards this bid, and a third option of allocating only 80% was discussed.
- The Multi-Purpose Venue was an interesting proposal, however it was felt there was not enough detail yet on what this looked like.
- There had been discussions on how these funds should be used prior to the creation of the Charter Trustees. The cycling groups in Taunton had been expecting this to come forward following those discussions.
- It was stated that more Community Levy Infrastructure funds that will continue to accrue from the Unparished Area.
- It was perceived that the benefits of the cycling improvements would be felt across a wider cross-section of Taunton than the multi-purpose venue.
- Clarity was sought as to the differences between the different pots and whether all of these were projections or actualised?
- *This money would be in addition to the Strategic pot allocated by the District Council. The SWT CIL allocations were still projections which may not come to fruition if lower housing completions came forward, whereas the UPA CIL pot was funds already in.*



- The improvements in cycling would also provide benefits to pedestrians including those that have disabilities.
- Concern was raised over a link route behind Vivary Park not being covered by these improvements.
- *Officers had worked with the County Council on a cycling infrastructure plan and this would be checked that this link route had been identified.*
- Concern was raised that the funding towards cycling routes would not capture the public's imagination as much as a Venue.

**RESOLVED** that the Charter Trustees for Taunton supported the allocation of the current amount in the Taunton Unparished Area Community Infrastructure Levy fund of £107,062.74 towards the Town Centre cycle/pedestrian improvements in the Taunton Future High Street Fund bid.

#### 71. **Alderman Spear's Contribution to the Mayor's Christmas Fund**

The report introduced by the Clerk set out an introduction to the charitable fund 'Alderman Spear's contribution to the Mayor's Christmas Fund' and sought a steer from the Charter Trustees of Taunton on the future management of the fund going forward for future years.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and asked questions which included:-

- Views were expressed that the size of the fund meant that it was a small amount of funds that required a cumbersome amount of administration, and may be better off managed by the Somerset Community Foundation with a request for a focus on the Taunton area suggested.
- The paperwork involved in passing this over to the SCF and the Deane Dragons Fund was felt not too be a complicated process.
- Some felt to be in the spirit of the intention of the creator of the fund to keep it and keep it related to the Unparished Area of Taunton and the Mayoralty. There were charities working in the area such as the Women's Refuge and the Food Bank that would be important and within the remit of Alderman Spear's Declaration of Trust.
- It was clear of the intention of Alderman Spear that this was to be administered by the Mayor of Taunton for the relief of the poor and needy at Christmas time in Taunton.
- It was suggested that the generosity of Alderman Spear should be commemorated with a plaque in Taunton.
- It was suggested that the fund was initially kept with the Charter Trustees for a period of perhaps two years, with a view to revisiting the decision to ensure that the fund was still receiving applications and the cost involved in administering the fund.
- It was considered that the decisions over the future of the Trust were for the Mayor of Taunton and not the wider Trustees for Taunton to decide.
- It was suggested that the Mayor of Taunton could potentially look to seek donations to the Christmas Fund and increase the impact of this funding.

- Concern was raised around drawing down the balance of the account in one year, and it was suggested this was levelled out across a couple of years.
- *The advice that we had seen from the Charity Commission recommended expending the built up funds but this would be double-checked.*
- It was suggested that the Covid-19 situation may mean that 2020 would be an appropriate year to dispense all of the current funds.

**RESOLVED** to formally request to SWT to approve the transfer of the responsibility for the Alderman Spear's contribution to the Mayor's Christmas Charitable Fund to the Charter Trustees for Taunton to enable the current and future Mayors of Taunton to carry out the original aims of the Declaration of Trust.

**RESOLVED** that the relevant support officers (Democracy and Governance Specialist and Civic Specialist) be added as additional signatories to the Endowment Fund and linked Bank Account.

## 72. **Standing Committee Bid Criteria Documentation**

The Clerk advised that copies of the documentation had been circulated with the Agenda. The documents had been discussed with the Standing Committee and he had worked with the Chair, Cllr Lisgo, to improve the forms and ensure the relevant questions were asked and the required information was provided in advance of the presentation at Committee.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and asked questions which included:-

- It aligns the bid process for this grant with other grants/areas of Somerset West and Taunton Council.
- Cllr Weston detailed some suggested amendments, which she would send to the Clerk after the meeting to make the necessary changes.
- Concern was raised around criterion being too prescriptive, and each application should be judged on its own merits.

**RESOLVED** that the Standing Committee Bid Criteria Documentation be approved for use by applicants to the Standing Committee of the Taunton Charter Trustees Small Grant Scheme in the 2020/2021 municipal year.

## 73. **Annual General Meeting 2020**

The Clerk had included a brief report in the Agenda papers based on advice from the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) on the government regulations made in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, which seemed to indicate that the Charter Trustees had a choice as to whether to hold an Annual Meeting in 2020, usually a mandatory requirement.

The Charter Trustees on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 had officially nominated Cllr Fran Smith and Cllr Sue Lees to serve as Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Taunton respectively for the 2020/21 Municipal Year and so it was not expected that these positions were to change.

The Mayor of Taunton had received an email from the Chair of the Association of Charter Trustees Towns and Charter Trustee Councils (ACTT), Cllr Jim Anderson, which stated the following;

*“Charter Trustees are required by Regulation to meet and appoint a Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the coming year within 21 days of the Annual Meeting of the parent authority. No exemption to these Regulations were specifically mentioned in 2020 Coronavirus Act.*

*If a parent Authority chooses to postpone their AGM till 2021, the Charter Trustees are not required by Regulation to elect a Mayor until a period 21 days after that 2021 AGM. The incumbents can remain in post.*

*I’m not aware of many local Authorities (with Charter Trustee arrangements) planning to hold an AGM under ‘lock-down’ conditions - the Coronavirus Act 2020 clearly allows them either hold or not hold such a meeting - and so our Executive advice is that your ‘public’ Mayor Making should only take place at a time when the public can attend, and in the meanwhile their incumbents terms be extended.*

*You will be aware that the Coronavirus Act 2020 proceeded swiftly through Parliament without detailed scrutiny - this was necessary but sometimes some consequences, interpretations and clarifications were overlooked. The mandate to close Cemeteries is one such example and regrettably another is the omission of Charter Trustee bodies from the lengthy list of ‘authorities’ that are permitted to postpone or otherwise conduct public meetings in the absence of the public.*

*The Association has enlisted the help of an MP to determine how autonomous Charter Trustee bodies are; Anthony Martin ACTT Hon Sec is seeking similar advice direct from MHCLG, and until and unless a clear instruction emerges from the Government the ACTT advice to Charter Trustee bodies must be to postpone their usual planned activities for safety and public health reasons without attempting to second guess the date for any lifting of public meeting orders.*

*The most challenging set of circumstances for a Charter Trustee body is the situation where the parent Authority has, via Teams, Skype, Zoom or some other means a plan to conduct the 2020 AGM in the lock-down or Social Distancing period that we are currently in. Unless a clear exemption is issued by MHCLG, or clarification of the terms of the Coronavirus Act, then you will be obliged to conduct some similar kind of Charter Trustee meeting within 21 days in order to fulfill your Regulatory requirements. Various options exist to do that, but all of them will require the robing, speeches and general (and sometimes grand and exclusive) procedures of your historic public meetings to be delayed by weeks or months until it is safe to do so. Your ‘Regulatory’ meeting will need to merely be the formal proposition of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, a vote and then close meeting. In that way you will have fulfilled Regulatory requirements without placing your colleagues and residents in danger.”*

The crux of this advice meant that the Charter Trustees as a body were not specifically referred to in the legislation and so an AGM will thus have to take place. Somerset West and Taunton Council had confirmed they would be holding

their AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and so the Charter Trustees would be required under the current law to hold an AGM in the 21 days afterward, but this would be a brief meeting and take a straightforward appointment of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

74. **Community Governance Review Update - Standing Item**

The Clerk to the Trustees advised that there were no substantial updates to bring to the Trustees, but that Somerset West and Taunton Council was still on track to complete the review by mid-2022.

(The Meeting ended at 8.15 pm)

## Taunton Charter Trustees - 9 June 2020

Present: Councillor Francesca Smith (Mayor)

Councillors Sue Lees (Deputy Mayor), Lee Baker, Chris Booth, Simon Coles, Caroline Ellis, Marcia Hill, Richard Lees, Libby Lisgo, Derek Perry, Martin Peters, Hazel Prior-Sankey, Federica Smith-Roberts, Alan Wedderkopp and Brenda Weston

Officers: Jo Comer and Marcus Prouse

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm)

### 1. **Election of Mayor Of Taunton**

Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey proposed and Councillor Libby Lisgo seconded:-

"That Councillor Francesca Smith be elected Mayor of Taunton for the ensuing year".

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Francesca Smith be elected Mayor of Taunton for the ensuing year.

Councillor Smith made the declaration of acceptance of office, thanked Councillors for their support and would arrange to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### 2. **Deputy Mayor of Taunton**

Councillor Simon Coles proposed and Councillor Chris Booth seconded:-

"That Councillor Susan Lees be elected Deputy Mayor of Taunton for the ensuing year".

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Susan Lees be elected Deputy Mayor of Taunton for the ensuing year.

Councillor Lees made the declaration of acceptance of office, thanked Councillors for their support and would arrange to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### 3. **Apologies**

No apologies had been received and all Charter Trustees for Taunton were present.

### 4. **Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr L Baker	All Items	Cheddon Fitzpaine & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Booth	All Items	Wellington and SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Ellis	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Lees	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Lees	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Perry	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Peters	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr H Prior-Sankey	All Items	SCC & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr F Smith-Roberts	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Cllr A Wedderkopp	All Items	SCC & SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Wedderkopp	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	SWT	Personal	Spoke and Voted

## 5. **Communications**

The Mayor of Taunton wished to communicate some thoughts on her previous year in holding the office and also looked forward to the following year.

Despite the lockdown effecting events recently, there were still events carrying forward virtually which was pleasing to see and she hoped there would still be an opportunity this year to proceed with many of those that had been planned and raise much needed funds for charities. It was especially pleasing to be able to still make decisions and help with the establishment of the Wilton and Sherford Community Shop at such speed. The Mayor was Patron of the Taunton Heritage Trust and attended a meeting that morning, and it was wonderful to see the work they had done to protect and support their residents in the Almshouses in the Town and through their charitable funding.

The Mayor wished to thank the staff supporting the Charter Trustees of Taunton during the pandemic and dealing with the new challenges around ways of working. The Mayor also wished to thank all those who had supported her chosen charity for their generosity in their support over the past year, Somerset Neonatal Unit, which would continue to roll over into the next year and be gifted to them at the end of the 2021 Municipal Year.

## 6. **Appointment of Members of the Standing Committee 2020/2021**

The purpose of the item was to appoint Charter Trustees, from nominations received from each group, to serve on the Standing Committee for the year 2020/2021. The proposed 'Powers and Duties' of the Standing Committee were set out in the attached document to the Agenda.

If the Committee allocated politically proportionally as per the Standing Orders there would be 6 Liberal Democrats and 1 Labour seat, though it was always within the gift of the political groups as to whether they took up their full entitlement.

**RESOLVED** that the following Councillors were appointed to the Standing Committee of the Taunton Charter Trustees for 2020/2021;

- Councillor Chris Booth

- Councillor Simon Coles
- Councillor Sue Lees
- Councillor Libby Lisgo
- Councillor Derek Perry
- Councillor Martin Peters
- Councillor Alan Wedderkopp

7. **Any items which the Mayor considers to be urgent business**

The Mayor of Taunton advised that they had no urgent business to consider.

8. **Dates of future meetings**

The Clerk to the Charter Trustees for Taunton advised of the dates of meetings for the 2020/21 Municipal Year that had been identified in the meetings diary.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and asked questions which included:-

- Councillor Smith-Roberts drew the Charter Trustees attention to a survey that she had been made aware sent to every Town and Parish Council in Somerset by the County regarding the Future of Local Government in this area, and asked the Clerk to confirm if this survey had been sent to the Charter Trustees?
- *The Clerk confirmed that he had not seen it.*

**RESOLVED** that the dates for future meetings of the Charter Trustees for Taunton were agreed as follows;

- 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020
- 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020
- 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

**RESOLVED** that a special meeting of the Charter Trustees to be called to discuss the survey recently sent by Somerset County Council to all Towns and Parish councils in Somerset regarding their unitary proposals before its closing date for response on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 at 5pm.

(The Meeting ended at 6.53 pm)



**Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**

We acknowledge as the members of:

*THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR TAUNTON*

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
		✓	<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

*27/08/20*

and recorded as minute reference:

*N/A*

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk



**Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)**  
 Authority web address

*somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/your-council/charter-trustees/*



**Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for**

**THE CHARTER TRUSTEES FOR TAUNTON**

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	0	0	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	0	0	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	0	132,936	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	0	63,500	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	0	69,436	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	0	69,436	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	0	142,958	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.  N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.
		✓	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

*MR*

19 08 20

Date

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



## CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

Name of smaller authority: Charter Trustees for Taunton

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): \_\_\_\_\_

**On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:**

Commencing on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

and ending on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must commence on or before 1 September 2020).

We have suggested the following dates: Monday 15 June – Friday 24 July 2020. The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Tuesday 1 September – Monday 12 October 2020.)

Signed: MR

Role: MARCUS PROUSE - SPECIALIST - DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

**This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review:**

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Part 3 and other requested documentation – this form is not for publication on your website.



## Bank reconciliation – pro forma

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It **must** be the column headed “Year ending 31 March 20xx” in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are on the receipts and payments basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that un-presented cheques should be entered on a negative basis.

Name of smaller authority: The Charter Trustees for Taunton

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Financial year ending 31 March 20xx                      20

Prepared by (Name and Role): Marcus Prouse - Specialist Governance and Democracy

Date: 10/08/20

	£	£
<b>Balance per bank statements as at 31 31/03/20</b>		
account 1	69,436.0	
account 2		
account 3		
account 4		
[add more accounts if necessary] account 5		
account 6		
account 7		
account 8		
		69,436.0
Petty cash float (if applicable)		-
Less: any un-presented cheques as at 31/3/xx (enter these as negative numbers)		
item 1		
item 2		
item 3		
item 4		
[add more lines if necessary] item 5		
item 6		
item 7		
item 8		
		-
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/xx		
		-
<b>Net balances as at 31/3/20 (Box 8)</b>		<b>69,436.0</b>





**Explanation of variances – pro forma**

Name of smaller authority: **The Charter Trustees for Taunton**

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue** highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input, <b>DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES</b>	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	0	0	0	0		Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	First year of establishment was 2019/20.
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		First year of establishment - Charter Trustees cannot precept and so a budget was set for them for 19/20 by the District Council, of £46,983.00. They were also transferred the balance of a Special Expenses precept pot to run a small grants scheme of £85,952.16
3 Total Other Receipts	0	132,936	132,936	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	Charter Trustees cannot precept and so a budget was set for them for 19/20 by the District Council, of £46,983.00. They were also transferred the balance of a Special Expenses precept pot to run a small grants scheme of £85,952.16
4 Staff Costs	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		Staff Costs were paid for by the District Council for 19.20
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		None
6 All Other Payments	0	63,500	63,500	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	Total spend by the Charter Trustees for 19/20 including grants and mayoral spend.
7 Balances Carried Forward	0	69,436			YES	<b>VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED</b> <b>EXPLANATION REQUIRED ON RESERVES TAB AS TO WHY CARRY FORWARD RESERVES ARE GREATER THAN TWICE INCOME FROM LOCAL TAXATION/LEVIES</b>	Explanation of earmarked spend/allocated grants detailed in reserves tab. This funding/underspend to be returned to the District Council to administer for 2020/21 and future years.
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	0	69,436				<b>VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED</b>	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	0		0	0.00%	NO		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable





20575.66

General reserve

20575.66

Total reserves (must agree to Box 7)

69436