

From: David Bell <david.bell@chard.gov.uk>

Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 15:59

To: Alyson Garrett <aly.garrett@hotmail.co.uk>

Subject: RE: Health & Safety of the People of Chard [Hunt Proposals]

Dear Alyson,

Thank you for your email, excellent research and advice.

Clearly, the Town Council (as a corporate body) can neither support nor oppose the hunt per se. This reflects the need to remain neutral where it lacks statutory authority to intervene or where the issue (not just this one) is politically or ethically divisive and not directly related to our functions.

In this case, or similar activities, the Town Council has no specific legal mandate or responsibility, as perhaps it would if our land were being used.

Whilst individual Councillors and Officers are at liberty to express personal views (and in doing so make it very clear that they are acting as individuals) the body corporate must avoid adopting a position that could be seen as outside our remit.

Our corporate interest would be to seek compliance with any matters under our statutory or non-statutory obligations.

I am sure you are aware (as demonstrated in your excellent summary) that Statutory Obligations are legal requirements imposed by legislation and Non-Statutory are voluntary or other standards such as codes of practice.

Our main Statutory Obligations include meetings, civic functions, cemetery, etc.

After investigation, the points you make are vested in the statutory powers of the next level of council up from Chard, which is Somerset Council.

They are legally responsible for (for examples only) traffic regulation orders re road closures, public health matters, control of dogs on the public highway, street cleaning and similar matters. Road related matters usually come under the various paragraphs of the Highways Act. This Act is not capable of devolvement to our level of authority, as matters stand.

Whilst (technically) we could use TPCA, I agree that it is outdated, and it is more appropriate to civic and mayoral very short-term processional events but even these are now routinely covered by the Highway Authority (Somerset Council) by a TTRO.

Whilst this response seems to be passing matters on to another authority, I am keen to point you in that direction as it would be the appropriate course of action.

Regards,