

## BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Full Council meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 7.00pm By Video Conference Call.

Present: Cllr A Rennles (Town Mayor) in the Chair.

Councillors: V Monk, V Elkins, I Roome, R Knight, J Phillips, J Carter, M Lovering, L York, P Leaver, A Shah, S Yusef, T Clarkson, V Nel, J Slee, R Mack, J Coates, J Orange, G Marchewka & E George.

In attendance: Mr Robert Ward (Town Clerk)  
Inspector A Wills (Devon and Cornwall Police)  
S Petters (Assistant Town Clerk)  
One member of public

TC068 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Wilsher (health) reasons were considered and approved by councillors. (NC)

Apologies also received from Devon County Council - Cllr J Mathews

TC069 Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllrs I Roome, J Phillips, M Lovering, L York, R Mack & J Orange as members of North Devon District Council, have a dispensation under SO66 to discuss and vote on any item on the agenda unless the item refers to a financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

TC070 Minutes of the last meeting

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020, are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (NC)

TC071 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor recently attended the funeral of Keith Abraham, a generous supporter of local groups and individuals across Barnstaple and the local area. He was also an active town and district councillor and ex-mayor of Barnstaple.

The Barnstaple Almshouses have a vacancy for another Town Council representative trustee, this will come up at one of the meetings in the new year.

The Mayor will be recording a Christmas greeting video on Friday.

The Mayor wanted to pass on his thanks to all the Town Council staff for their hard work, particularly over the last year.

TC072 Report from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

A Police report was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting (Appendix One).

Inspector A Wills reported that the local overall recorded crime is down year on year, by 31.9% of our current volume since 2018 during the reported period.

The data relates to Barnstaple Sector – Including Landkey, Swimbridge, Bishops Tawton, Gunn, Goodleigh, Bratton Fleming etc.

We have experienced an increase in non-dwelling burglaries. These are not identifiable as a clear trend. Violence (both injury and non-injury) is down.

Trafficking of drugs is up, which is positive as this is an offence which is identified by Police Proactivity.

Retail crime is down.

The Police would wish to see an increase in reported offences where they are frequently domestic in nature and subject of historic under reporting.

This period has been historically unprecedented due to the pandemic.

**RESOLVED:** That the reports from Devon & Cornwall Police be received and noted (Appendix One). (NC)

TC073

Reports from Devon County and North Devon District Councillors.

### **Devon County Council**

Cllr J Mathews

- Report provided in advance of the meeting (Appendix Two).

### **North Devon Council**

Cllr Mack

- Two sleeping pods have been provided near the town centre to support rough sleepers, more locations are being sought.
- Nearly thirty staff have been required to isolate as a result of Covid-19 infections. This has had a significant impact on the ability to carry refuse collections.

Cllr I Roome

- North Devon Council still has discretionary business grants available.
- Waste and recycling is being promoted over the Christmas period to encourage residents to reduce black bin waste, there is normally a spike in black bin waste at Christmas.
- There will be a consultation for the Devon Carbon Plan in January.

**RESOLVED:** That the reports from the County and District Councillors be

TC074 Committee Minutes

Committee	Date	Page Numbers
Planning & Transportation	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2020	041 to 042
Finance & General Purposes	26 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	043
Planning & Transportation	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	044 to 047
Staffing Committee	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	048 to 049
Finance & General Purposes	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2020	050
Planning & Transportation	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	051 to 052

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Committee meetings and the resolutions contained therein be received and adopted in accordance Standing Order 24. (NC)

TC075 To consider reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies and determine any actions arising.

Cllr R Knight reported

**Tarka Line Forum** – held its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November, minutes circulated to Councillors, key points raised:

- Improving journey times
- The gateway to Barnstaple
- Reopening platform 2 to enable an early train to be stabled in Barnstaple.

**The Bridge Trust** – still not been able to meet.

**RESOLVED:** To note the Councillor reports. (NC)

TC076 Committee Membership

No changes this meeting.

TC077 **RESOLVED:** To note that the Town Council Office, Barum House will be closed from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December and reopen on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021. (NC)

TC078 Motion from Cllr York on Anti-Social Parking on Barnstaple's Residential Roads

The motion was raised following concerns raised by residents about how some drivers park when dropping children at school, attending doctors' surgeries and parking for work where the provision does not provide for the numbers of employees at the location.

It was agreed that this has been a long-term complex problem that does not have a simple solution.

After a wide-ranging discussion, in line with SO31, it was **proposed** to refer the motion to the Planning & Transportation Committee for consideration. (NC)

TC079 **RESOLVED:** To note the Notice of Conclusion of Audit for 2019-20 and express the Town Council's thanks to the Finance Officer and Town Clerk for their work in achieving this. (NC)

TC080 Questions – Standing Orders 25 and 85

No questions had been received from members of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 25, or from public registered electors in the town in accordance with Standing Order 85.

Meeting closed at 19.46pm.

Chairman.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

DRAFT

## APPENDIX ONE

### **Police Report for Barnstaple Town Council**

Meeting Monday 14th December 2020 at 7pm

The Neighbourhood Team continue to focus substantial resourcing on the Town Centre area which remains the subject of a current Problem Solving Plan (PSP) focussing on the issues brought about by the Street attached community including Street Drinking, Begging and associated Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

You may be aware that over the last couple of months we focussed our efforts on Boutport Street around the junctions of Bear Street and Joy Street due to Street Drinkers congregating on public seating in this area with easy access to off licence premises. We engaged the local business community providing them with ASB Diaries to document and record incidents and describe those involved. As a result of community engagement, high visibility policing and enforcement action, we and importantly the business community have seen a significant improvement in this area.

More recently we have been paying particular attention to the locations of Holland Walk and the Cattle Market toilets. Holland Walk attracts members of the street attached community who beg in this area, presumably due to the high footfall coming into town from the Cattle Market carpark and the lack of CCTV coverage. On occasion this has attracted a number of people and there has been some low level ASB. I have met with and discussed the CCTV coverage in this area and a blind spot in relation to the cattle market toilets with the Town Centre Manager and proposed some changes/upgrades for consideration in upcoming CCTV works. Again, we are engaging with the business community in this area to address these issues.

Begging has historically been a bit of a controversial issue in part due to it being a wider social issue than pure enforcement and pressure from some quarters to de-criminalise it as an offence. However, it remains a criminal offence. Public opinion also appears divided when we do engage with people who are begging with some people encouraged to see action being taken and others feeling that the Police are unnecessarily persecuting these people. However, what is clear from our time engaging with people begging in the town is that a number have housing and are in receipt of benefits. I do not feel that this is a position which we should be tolerating and therefore we are going to be focusing on these people in the weeks to come to try and educate them against this activity. If this does not work then we will begin to gather evidence with a view to considering enforcement action.

#### **Tap for North Devon**

The good news in relation to the begging situation is that on Friday 11th December 2020 we saw the launch of the Tap for Devon campaign. This has seen two pay points introduced in the windows of Boston Tea party (junction of Tuly Street and Holland Walk) and Tesco Express, High Street with another machine planned for the window of Banbury's and a podium style machine in Green Lanes shopping Centre. These machines will see donated funds split between charities, Freedom Centre and Encompass both of whom work with members of the street attached community. I hope that this will be a really positive move in starting to educate the public that handing money to people on the street really isn't a good way to help them.

## **Rough Sleepers**

The last update I received from North Devon Council indicated 12 rough sleepers for North Devon. Of these 9 were in and around the Barnstaple area but only 2 of these were in the immediate Town Centre area.

## **Serious incident Bear St. 26th October 2020**

You will be aware of a serious incident in Bear Street on Monday 26th October 2020 during which 2 men received significant injuries as a result of being stabbed. The suspect was arrested at the scene and the investigation is ongoing. What I can say by way of hopefully reassuring you to some extent is that this incident did not involve any of the street attached community from whom you may normally have concerns about in this area. Also, that this was not just a random attack so there is no reason to believe that the community are at any ongoing risk as a result of this thankfully rare and isolated incident.

## **Criminal Behaviour Order**

In November we successfully applied for and obtained a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) on a prolific shoplifter, Patricia McCarthy. This effectively precludes her from entering the town centre, save for attending professional appointments, confirmed in writing. This is a bit of a success story and we have a couple of further CBO applications in the pipeline.

## **PSPO**

The lack of a PSPO has hampered us somewhat in recent weeks in terms of being able to enforce people drinking in the street however I understand that the PSPO was signed off at full council on 25th November. We await the erection of appropriate signage from NDC in order to assist our ability to enforce the new PSPO.

## APPENDIX TWO

Devon County Council

Councillor John Mathews has sent his apologies for the meeting. His report for the meeting is as follows:

I have a meeting with Cllr David Knight NDC member for Longbridge on Wednesday re parking issues in Sticklepath.

They are in Westfield Avenue junction Sticklepath Hill, and Bickington road.

I have been approached by a resident about parking at the junction of Wrey Avenue and Sticklepath Hill.

I have been able to inform the resident that I have already secured Double Yellow lines, No Waiting Anytime, to be implemented in the next financial year.

I have sent the resident a copy of the proposal. I have also secured an extension of the Residents Parking on 'Middle Sticklepath 'Hill, .

At present it is not Any Time , but time/date specified. It will now be at Any Time.

This should be implemented financial year 21/22. Residents who have contacted me have a confirmatory E Mail.

This will bring these residents in line with those at the bottom of the hill in Signal terrace. The Yellow lines in Wrey Avenue may well be done in this financial year.