

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of The Town Council Meeting
Monday 7th June 2021 at 7.00pm

The Pannier Market, Butchers Row, Barnstaple

Present: Councillors:

Cllr A Rennles (Town Mayor & Chairman), V Elkins, V Monk, J Hunt, R Knight, J Phillips, J Carter, J Wilsher, M Lovering, L York (Deputy Mayor & Vice-Chair), P Leaver, A Shah, S Yusef, R Mack, J Coates, J Orange & E George.

Also in attendance:

Mr R Ward (Town Clerk),

S Petters (Assistant Town Clerk)

R Richardson (Events & Communications Officer)

Cllr C Leaver (Devon County Council)

SJ Mackenzie-Shapland (North Devon Council)

L Clarke (ND Journal)

Members of the Public:5

18. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllrs A Windsor (Transport), I Roome (Work), T Clarkson (Personal), V Nel (Work) & G Marchewka (Work) reasons were considered and approved by councillors (NC).

19. Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllrs J Hunt, 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.

Cllrs J Hunt, J Phillips, M Lovering, L York, R Mack & J Orange declared an interest in items 22 and 31 and abstained from voting as both items related directly to North Devon District Council activities.

20. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held on 4th May 2021, are approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman. (NC)

21. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor expressed his sincere thanks to Cllr Val Elkins for her support over the last 2 years in her role as Deputy Mayor. He went on to wish Cllr Louisa York best wishes for the coming year as the new Deputy Town Mayor.

The Mayor distributed Barnstaple Shillings to the local Almshouses, a commemorative greetings card has been created to go with the shilling for each recipient, the second year this has taken place.

The second river clean took place a couple of weeks ago with the Fire Service using the operation as an opportunity for training and to get out some trolleys that were too stubborn at the last attempt.

Rowland's Fair is arriving in Rock Park this week for ten days.

As the lockdown continues to release, we are seeing more Mayoral events coming into the diary and we hope this continues.

22. Update from North Devon Council on the potential future development of Seven Brethren.

Ms Mackenzie-Shapland (North Devon Council) updated the Town Council, the original proposed scheme that was consulted on in 2020 has been reduced from 245 units to 180, a mixture of town houses and apartments across the old leisure centre site and the car park. The plan is that a new long-stay car park will be provided first.

It is expected that a planning application will be coming forwards within the next month and Ms Mackenzie-Shapland explained that she would be happy to return to a future Town Council meeting with their consultants to help answer any questions.

RESOLVED: To note the update (10 For: 5 Abstentions)

23. Report from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

None received.

24. Reports from Devon County and North Devon District Councillors.

Devon County Council

Cllr C Leaver

- She hopes to attend all Town Council meetings and wanted to acknowledge that her predecessor ex-Cllr J Mathews will be a hard act to follow.
- Devon County Council's first full council meeting was convened at the Sandy Park, Rugby Club in order to enable them to meet in person.
- It is currently expected that the Rock Park Iron Bridge will be repaired and open by the start of the new school term in September.

North Devon Council

- None received.

RESOLVED: That the reports from the County and District Councillors be noted. (NC)

25. Committee Minutes

Committee	Date	Page Numbers
Environment Committee	26 th April 2021	102 to 104
Finance & General Purposes	28 th April 2021	105 to 107
Planning & Transportation	29 th April 2021	108 to 110
Planning & Transportation	13 th May 2021	05 to 07
Finance & General Purposes	24 th May 2021	08 to 10

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

26. Committee Membership

The Town Clerk reported the following changes to committee memberships:

Cllr I Roome to come off Heritage and Environment Committees.

Cllr V Nel to come off Heritage Committee.

Cllr S Yusef to join Heritage Committee.

RESOLVED: To agree these changes to committee memberships (NC).

27. To consider nominations to outside bodies:

There is currently a Town Councillor vacancy on the Barnstaple Almshouses. No nominations have been received so suitable person, possibly not a councillor still needs to be found.

RESOLVED: To agree to note the vacancy (NC).

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

Cllr R Knight reported that The Bridge Trust have met recently via video conference. A new Chairman has been elected, Mrs S Hayward and the current Chamberlain will be leaving soon.

RESOLVED: To note the Councillor reports (NC).

29. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020-21 – Annual Governance Statement

The Town Clerk summarised a report circulated with the agenda, setting out the requirements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2020 to 2021. The submission draft of the AGAR had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Members considered the report, the requirements in respect of internal control, and the draft Annual Governance Statement included in the draft AGAR, and

RESOLVED: That Barnstaple Town Council has reviewed its system of internal control in the year ended 31 March 2021 and considered any findings (NC).

RESOLVED: That Barnstaple Town Council approves the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2021 as shown at Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (NC).

30. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020-21 – Accounting Statements and Submission Draft

The Town Clerk summarised a report circulated with the agenda, setting out the requirements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020-2021 in respect of the accounting statements, public consultation, and submission to the external auditor. The draft AGAR had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Members considered the requirements and the draft AGAR, and

RESOLVED: That Barnstaple Town Council has considered the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 as shown at Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (NC).

RESOLVED: That Barnstaple Town Council approves the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 as shown at Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (NC).

RESOLVED: That Barnstaple Town Council authorises the Chairman to sign the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 as shown at Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (NC).

RESOLVED: That Barnstaple Town Council approves the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 for submission to the external auditor (NC).

31. To consider and respond to the North Devon Council consultation on the request to purchase land at Westacott for access road and upgraded play area.

Cllr V Monk read the following statement.

This proposal causes us great concern because of the potential effect on the Whiddon Valley estate and Whiddon Drive.

The additional traffic that will be created by 149 extra houses will be detrimental to the people who live here already, adding noise, pollution, disruption and potential added danger.

There is also the potential that the further 820 houses planned for Westacott, Application 65448, could be joined to this road and increase the problems further.

Whiddon Drive is busy enough already with significant congestion at peak times, please do not add to this disruption to the current residents' lives.

Barnstaple Town Council requests that North Devon Council does not proceed with the sale of the land.

This response is consistent with the Town Council and Landkey Parish Council replies to the planning consultation for the development in February 2017.

It was also requested to add to the statement from the Town Council that councillors believed that the decision whether to proceed with the sale of this land should be considered by the full North Devon District Council rather than a committee as they understand the current proposal would be considered.

RESOLVED: For the above to expressed to North Devon Council in response to the consultation. (10 For: 5 Abstentions).

32. To receive an update with regard to the proposed High Street footpath resurfacing.

The Town Clerk read the update received from Devon County Council

The plans for the High Street in Barnstaple are currently on hold, a reduction in funding from central government has meant that all works programmes have been greatly reduced this year, it is unclear if this level of funding will increase in the next few years so at present cannot say with any certainty when the works will progress.

RESOLVED: To send a letter from the Chairman to Devon County Council expressing disappointment that the scheme will not be proceeding (NC).

33. To approve the proposal for Ex-Town Councillor Mr Bruce Vernon to be made an Honorary Burgess of the town of Barnstaple (Standing Order 98).

The Mayor explained that ex-Cllr Bruce Vernon had been a long standing, well respected councillor of the Pilton Ward who was an astute person who took time to listen to people, support local residents and volunteered to help the Town Council.

The presentation to Bruce will be made by The Mayor and Cllr V Elkins.

RESOLVED: To approve the making of ex-Cllr Bruce Vernon an Honorary Burgess of the Town of Barnstaple (NC).

34. A motion in support of the people affected by the recent outbreak of violence in the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict that commenced on 10 May 2021.

Cllr S Jusef spoke in favour of this motion.

The Town Council is very concerned about the disproportionate impact on children and other vulnerable people and urges all those involved to show restraint, maintain the ceasefire and to continue to allow the necessary aid and support to be provided to enable these people to rebuild their lives.

RESOLVED: To support the motion presented by Cllr Yusef (NC).

35. Motion in support of breastfeeding (attached).

Cllr M Lovering presented the motion attached (Appendix one) and added:

'I want to reassure the Town Council that this proposal is not intended to be solely advocating breastfeeding. People will have their own opinion on this and that is not the debate; but rather the promotion of making women feel comfortable enough to do whichever they choose.

Too many women feel uncomfortable with their choices and are often consigned to dirty and unhygienic places to feed their babies. We want Barnstaple to show the public that we are forward-thinking and inclusive and that signage in our public buildings and spaces will reflect that.'

RESOLVED: To support the motion presented by Cllr Lovering (NC).

36. RAF Community Plate (Standing Order 97)

Nominations for the Community Plate need to be with the Town Clerk by 19th June for presentation to the next Town Council meeting.

RESOLVED: To note (NC).

37. 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 8.26pm.

Chairman.

Signed:

Dated:

Appendix One

Motion to Barnstaple Town Council in support of Breastfeeding.

The Equalities Act 2010 states that it is discrimination to treat a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is legal in public places such as parks, sports and leisure facilities, public buildings, theatres, cinemas, and public transport. Breastfeeding is the most natural way of understanding and satisfying a baby's needs.



The advantages of breast feeding for mother and baby is officially recognised by healthcare organisations all over the world. Breastfeeding can reduce the incidence of many infant illness and chronic diseases, so it eases the needed for health care. UNICEF and WHO (The World Health Organisation) recommend exclusive breastfeeding from birth to until 6 months old.

The Town Council has declared a climate emergency and to cut plastic waste. Breastfeeding will cut down the need for plastic bottles, teats, and formula packaging. Most formula powders need to be mixed with boiled water or heated and is expensive. Breast milk needs no plastic, no preparation and is free. Breast milk changes as a baby ages so a baby gets the nutrition it needs. Amazingly the composition of breast milk changes when a baby is ill, the levels of immunity-boosting cells rise rapidly when a baby is unwell.

Our towns can often seem like uncomfortable and uninviting places to breastfeed.



Breast feeding women are still facing an everyday battle because others around them feel uncomfortable. If a woman feels unsafe or fears disapproval when breastfeeding she is likely to stop breast feeding, resort to formula feeds or find a safe place. Women have resorted for many years to breastfeeding in public toilets which is uncomfortable and unhygienic for mother and baby.

We need to learn how to react and respect this very natural process and lead the way to welcoming breastfeeding into society. If the Town Council promotes breast feeding is welcome within the town it will promote women to feel safe. By promoting breastfeeding, it will help others to realise that breastfeeding is a normal everyday activity mums need to do.

1. I am asking this council to address this situation by letting the public know that breastfeeding is welcome in their public buildings and parks.
2. I am asking for this council to display signage within all their public buildings like The Guildhall and Castle Centre.
3. I would like a statement on the council website stating breastfeeding is always welcome in our open spaces like Rock Park and The Square and I would like to see signage within these areas.



Thank you.
Councillor Mel Lovering