

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of The Town Council Meeting
Monday 19th July 2021 at 7.00pm
The Guildhall, Butchers Row, Barnstaple

Present: Councillors:

Cllr A Rennles (Town Mayor & Chairman), V Monk, A Windsor, I Roome, J Hunt, R Knight, J Phillips, J Carter, M Lovering, A Shah, S Yusef, R Mack, J Coates, J Orange, M Fowler & G Marchewka.

Also in attendance:

Mr R Ward (Town Clerk),

Cllr C Leaver (Devon County Council)

Insp. A Wills (Devon & Cornwall Police)

L Clarke (ND Journal)

Members of the Public:0

38. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllrs V Elkins (Transport), J Wilsher (Health), L York (Health), P Leaver (Work), V Nel (Work) J Slee (Work) & E George (Maternity) reasons were considered and approved by councillors (NC).

39. Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllrs J Hunt, J Phillips, 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.

Cllr I Roome as a member of Devon County 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.

40. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 7th June 2021, are approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman. (NC)

41. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor wore his robe and chains for the first time this year in a meeting to say thank you and farewell to his previous Mayor's Cadet, Hope Covey last week. The Mayor will not be appointing a cadet for this year due to the current uncertainty about whether events will be proceeding.

Unfortunately, the children's fair will not be taking place in Rock Park this week due to operational difficulties for operator.

The Mayor is looking forward to supporting the Britain In Bloom judging this Wednesday and wishes the Barnstaple in Bloom team all the best for this the first year since the relaunch. He asked for his thanks to be passed on to everyone involved in the great effort and evidence can be seen around the town of what a success it has been.

42. Report from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Insp. Wills presented his report (attached at appendix one).

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

Devon County Council

Cllr C Leaver presented her report (attached at appendix two)

Cllr I Roome

- Is going to be meeting with the local Highway Officer next week to better understand the issues in his ward.
- He asked all councillors to read the recently published Ofsted report into Devon County Council Children's Services.
- The planning consultation (Ref: 73665) for the old laceworks on Derby Road is currently running and ends on 13th August, details can be found on the North Devon County Council website.
- Following the successful purchase of Mannings Pit he will be meeting with the group to talk to them about the next steps.
- The Devon County Council Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) is considering the frequency that traffic Orders are processed in order to reduce costs. Currently this is undertaken annually but the proposal is that would happen every two years.

North Devon Council

Cllr J Hunt

- At the recent Strategy & Resources Committee the decision to sell part of the land at Westacott Park for an access road to the new development was turned down.
- The next North Devon Full Council meeting is this Wednesday relocated to the cemetery to enable social distancing.

Cllr Phillips

- Is on the Devon County Council Joint Audit Committee. It has been highlighted that there is a shortage of trained auditors, an option being considered is to employ apprentices to fill the gap.

Cllr Lofthouse (report by email)

- Cllr Knight and I have met with SWW and DCC re the flooding in Lower Sticklepath in 2020. We are expecting a public report later this week on the position so far. We will, with officers, pursue an action to try and prevent this situation happening again.

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

44. Committee Minutes

Committee	Date	Page Numbers
Planning & Transportation	27 th May 2021	011 to 012
Planning & Transportation	17 th June 2021	019 to 020
Planning & Transportation	8 th July 2021	021 to 023
Finance & General Purposes	12 th July 2021	024 to 025

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

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

Cllr A Windsor

- The Davey Trust have this year had a significant number of grant requests, more than the available funds. Both he and Cllr Elkins are planning to stand down as councillors at the 2023 election and Cllr Coates has agreed to shadow them for the next couple of years to ensure that representation is continued into the future.

RESOLVED: That the reports from the representatives to outside bodies be noted. (NC)

46. A presentation from North Devon Council on the potential future development of Seven Brethren.

Deferred to a future meeting.

47. Update from the Town Clerk on the current progress being made towards Barnstaple Fair for 2021.

Currently no site has been allocated for this year's Barnstaple Fair, the fair will be arriving eight weeks today. The Seven Brethren site is currently being used for the Covid vaccination and testing centre, there is also the compound for the new leisure centre which takes part of the space, but it is in their contract to clear this space for the fair. There is a reluctance to make any of this site available because of the potential impact on the covid testing and vaccination centres, particularly if there is an increase in cases in the coming weeks.

Other options being considered are the Cattle Market car park or Queen Street car park, Devon County Council have declined a request for the use of the Civic Centre car park.

The decision currently sits with North Devon Council and the three possible options are all still being considered.

The Showman's Guild are being kept informed of the process.

48. A motion from Cllr R Mack to ban the giving of live pets (predominantly goldfish) on any Town Council land or events.

Cllr Mack presented his motion and it was discussed by councillors and support was given by Cllr Knight.

Cllr Phillips proposed the following amendment to the motion:

That this Council requires all, legal entities, wishing to use any Council property, be it physical or otherwise to comply with current UK legislation on animal cruelty and to follow any guidance issued by the RSPCA or any nationally recognized organisations providing guidance upon this matter.

Cllr Mack declared that he was happy to accept the amendment.

RESOLVED: to approve the amended motion. (NC).

- 49. A motion from Cllr Rennles to ask for information about what is proposed to manage the boats and other debris on the Taw riverbank between the Long Bridge and Rock Park Iron Bridge.**

RESOLVED: To send a letter to North Devon Council asking for an explanation of what is currently proposed to manage the boats and debris on the Taw riverbank between the Long Bridge and Rock Park Iron Bridge (NC).

- 50. A request from the Mayor, Cllr A Rennles that the RAF Community Plate (Standing Order 97) be presented to all the people of Barnstaple for their efforts during the Covid pandemic 2020-2021.**

RESOLVED: To approve the request and note that the presentation of the plate will take place at the North Devon Museum on 30th July where it will be displayed (NC).

- 51. 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 8.12pm.

Chairman.

Signed:

Dated:



Police Report for Barnstaple Town Council

Meeting Monday 19th July 2021 at 7pm

The crime data for Barnstaple Sector for the rolling month until 15th July 2021 is as follows:

Offence	Recorded Crime Current Period	Recorded Crime Previous Period	Recorded Crime same period 2019	Recorded Crime % Change 2020-21	Recorded Crime % Change 2019-21
Violence with Injury	43	29	41	48.3%	4.65%
Public Order Offences	27	22	21	22.7%	22.22%
Possession of Drugs	10	15	17	-33.3%	-70.00%
Shoplifting	24	5	22	380.0%	8.33%
Trafficking of Drugs	4	2	4	100.0%	0.00%
Stalking and Harassment	19	26	19	-26.9%	0.00%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	9	4	3	125.0%	66.67%
Robbery	2	1	4	100.0%	-100.00%
Violence without Injury	51	45	47	13.3%	7.84%
All Other Theft Offences	21	11	20	90.9%	4.76%
Criminal Damage	50	32	28	56.3%	44.00%
Possession of Weapons	1	2	3	-50.0%	-200.00%
Burglary Dwelling	11	5	4	120.0%	63.64%
Arson	0	2	2	-100.0%	%
Other Offences	4	5	5	-20.0%	-25.00%
Theft from the person	0	0	1	%	%
Rape	7	3	2	133.3%	71.43%
Other Sexual Offences	11	9	16	22.2%	-45.45%
Vehicle Offences	16	4	6	300.0%	62.50%
Bicycle Theft	4	3	10	33.3%	-150.00%
	314	225	275	39.6%	12.42%

It can be seen that relative to the same dates in 2020, there has been an apparent 39.6% in overall crime. This particularly elevated increase is due to the peculiarity of the Lockdown (movement, gathering and nonessential retail) restrictions last year providing a statistical 'base effect', skewing the figures away from historical norms. Nevertheless, the past month has been noticeably busier in terms of overall demand as the movement restrictions have ended, gathering restrictions have become more limited, and non-essential retail and most other services have opened. We have also policed the Euros, with the additional demand that has entailed. Commencing today with 'Freedom Day' we expect the evening and night-time economy reopening to lead to increased demand. Our licencing officer and those from North Devon District Council are actively engaged with licences to seek and ensure compliance, and an awareness of the likely risk of overly exuberant patrons.

Overall reported crime has increased by 12.42% (an extra 39 crimes in the month) relative to the same period in 2019, and we have experienced noticeably increased log demands for attendance. I am confident we have all observed high visitor inflows, which are of genuine benefit to local businesses, but which do place additional demand upon local services.

To respond to a question which has previously been asked, the data above refers to the reported date of the offences. For some crime types this results in an increased perception of recent offending. For example, 4 of the 7 Rape offences reported during this period are reported to have occurred more than a month prior to the date of report.

I would again raise the issue that there are some crime times which we would welcome increased reporting of, or are generated by a Positive and more robust police presence E.g. Rape, domestic assault (historically under reported), drug possession and supply (we know its out there its just a case of whether we find it), and public order offences (many of which are generated when officers take positive action to deal with police witnessed behaviour).

However, we have seen increased crime in some types which we are responding to. These include increases in vehicle offences, and burglary non-dwelling. An individual was charged and remanded to HMP regarding a dwelling burglary offence, since which we have no identified ongoing series. The burglary non dwelling offences are comprised of predominantly brute force attacks, similar to those which have also taken place in Braunton. There are ongoing lines of enquiry in relation to these matters.

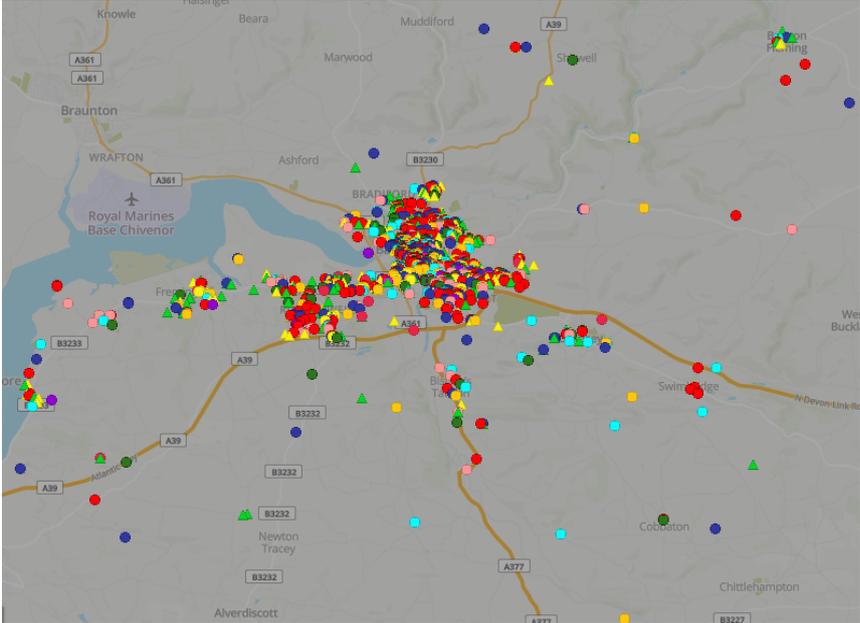
We experienced a series in which vehicle windows were smashed for items to be stolen in the Barnstaple, Fremington and Instow areas, and also the theft of a number of catalytic convertors. This is subject of ongoing local and Force wide investigation.

We have also focussed on town Centre ASB to include street drinking and drug consumption, begging and other associated nuisance. This included a day of action on 14/07/2021, along with proactive traffic enforcement concerning no entries and restrictions. We have impending prosecutions concerning persons of interests for dwelling house burglaries, high value thefts, and a Criminal Behaviour Order application. These seek to respond to ongoing crime and disorder involving specific individuals, alongside 4 others we have secured in the past 12 months.

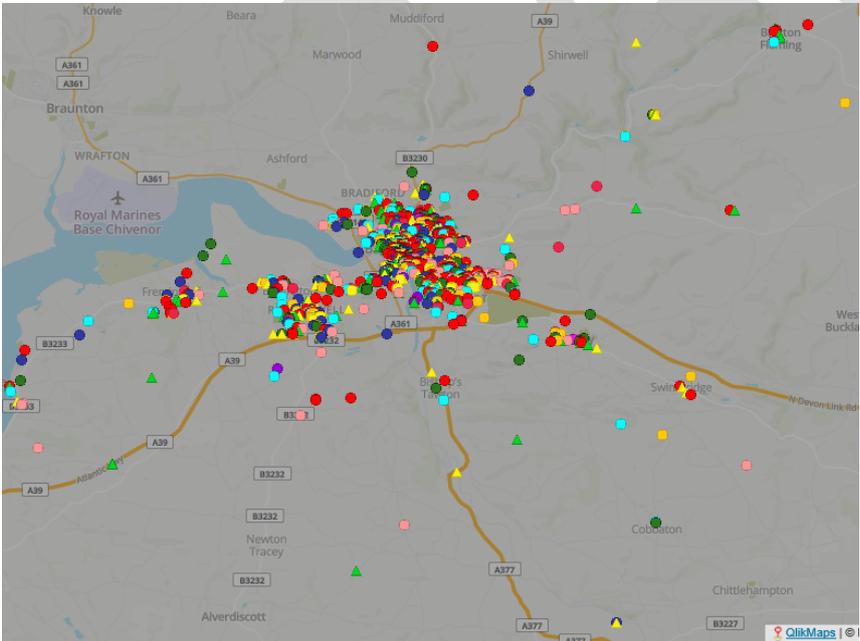
Summer Policing.

Seasonal demand pattern in Barnstaple sector during the summer period, in terms of locations affected are broadly consistent with other times of year, but the demand levels are greater.

To illustrate this, total crime trends for the period June to September inclusive, for the total of the past 3 years:



By contrast the distributions across all crime types for the October to May inclusive period of the last 3 years can be illustrated as follows:



We expect the next few months to be a period of increased demand, in particular associated with increased visitor numbers and the easing of restrictions.

Sincerely,
Inspector Andy Wills

Appendix Two

Barnstaple South Report, July 2021

Cllr Caroline Leaver, Devon County Council

1. Ofsted focused visit to Children's Services May 2021

What needs to improve in this area of social work practice?

- Making sure that decisions taken by the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) are acted on.
- Professional curiosity and the quality of assessments.
- How effectively plans drive progress for children.
- The quality of recorded management oversight and critical challenge.

Findings:

- Covid has been challenging but school attendance rates by children with social workers, and those with an education, health and care plan have been consistently above the national average
- Improvements identified by previous poor Ofsted reports have not really started yet. Recruitment and retention very big problem. The help and protection, care and support that many children receive is still poor. Work is on-going to improve the way MASH and Initial Response Teams work together. Home schooling monitoring systems are working well.
- Relationships with the Children and Family Court Advisory & support Service and the judiciary are much improved. Pre-proceedings are being used effectively to promote meaningful change in families.
- Placement stability remains an issue in the foster care service and some children face uncertainty over time.
- There are differences in practice and performance between teams, services and districts that contribute to the general lack of consistency in the quality of the help and protection, care and support that children receive. While improvements have been made to the way monitoring data is displayed and interrogated it is not clear how effectively that information is being used to improve the experience and progress of children.
- The quality and effectiveness of scrutiny and critical challenge provided by elected members and the corporate centre need to improve.
- Statutory partners are enthusiastic about the potential for safeguarding partnership arrangements to make a real difference. During the pandemic agencies were forced to find solutions and work together in a way they had not done before. With restrictions being reduced it is important that these new ways of working are not lost.

2. Full DCC meeting

Reports from committees and various motions. The motions of particular interest include:

- Investigation of how to implement Quiet Lanes and Home Zones Regulations 2006 – parishes may be invited to suggest roads suitable for inclusion in the scheme that limit the speed and size of large agricultural vehicles and HGVs in the interests of the safety of other road users – it is largely directed towards minor roads in rural parts of Devon, but it would be interesting to see how this applies to urban areas.
- Introduction of speed limits of 20 mph near schools to be included in Newton Abbot trial
- Calls for more action on having 20mph schemes without having to wait for the end of the Newton Abbot trial – to reduce carbon emissions, increase safety and support more Active Travel measures.
- Allied to the above, there is a motion suggesting that council consider diverting financial resources away from new road schemes and instead to re-invest funds in an improved network of non-vehicular routes to allow more Active Travel measures to be implemented.

Audit committee considered various reports including one of the External Audit Plan for DCC 2020/21. Two areas of significant weakness were found. 1 – the council's response to the January 2020 Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Care Services and 2 – the council's plans to reduce its SEND overspend.

3. COVID response Update

90% of adults in Devon have had first dose of vaccine. 70% of adults have had both doses. More than two thirds 18-24 yr olds have had their first jab

Despite the government relaxing rules on 19 July, health care, social services and many other areas of council and NHS services will continue with mask wearing and social distancing. Some restrictions will stay in place for visiting care homes. A survey of more than 17,000 users of GP surgeries found that 90% in Devon rated their service as good, despite demand having increased by 14%. Devon was rated above the England average in all categories.

Public Health England's weekly figures on the Delta variant shows increases across Devon. In North Devon the increase this week is to 94, up from 57 last week.

4. Traffic Orders Barnstaple (South)

- Temporary prohibition of cycling Sticklepath terrace (oneway) 23 – 25 August for works to manhole by Jurassic fibre.
- Temporary prohibition of through traffic on South Green, 23 – 25 August, Jurassic fibre

5. Traffic Schemes – go to [All proposed traffic schemes - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk)

- Consultation on **experimental E-scooter traffic** Regulation order opened 7 July and runs until 15 January 2022.
- Devon County Council (Various Streets, Devon) (Disabled Parking & Control of Waiting) (No.25) Amendment Order Devon County Council propose to make this under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 **for BARNSTAPLE Introduce Disabled Badge Holders Only At Any Time on a specified length of Bicton Street and Yeo Vale Road**. Statement of Reasons: The purpose of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order is to implement regulatory disabled bays that have been requested throughout the County, to remove

regulatory disabled bays no longer required and to adjust certain measurements in the Order so they correspond with existing on street road markings. Specifically, the Order if made will preserve or improve the amenities of the area through which the road runs.

6. Iron Bridge – Rock Park to Seven Brethren

DCC has appointed a contractor (Dyer & Butler) to develop a safe method to repair the defective piers in the river. Dyer & Butler have also appointed sub-contractors including a specialist in bridge rehabilitation. Initial work will involve further site visits and a new survey to check the condition of the piers and the river bed in order to decide on a method to make the bridge safe enough for the permanent repairs to be carried out. Once the contractor has proposed a method to make the bridge safe which is satisfactory to us, they will commence with the repair.

The aspiration is that the bridge will be re-opened in time for the new school term in September, however it is still quite early and there are still unknowns. Further updates when more detail is known.

7. Sign cleaning

- Community self-help - Cleaning of highway signs on the minor road network may be undertaken by Parish or Town Councils and community organisations through the Highways Self Help initiative, or more formally through a Road Warden agreement. DCC advise that those involved in organising the works should undertake a Highway Safety Awareness course or equivalent. The Highway Safety Awareness course is provided by DCC and is free of charge.
- If work is carried out on the live carriageway (open to traffic) then those carrying out the works must have undertaken their SWQR Unit 2 Signing, Lighting and Guarding qualification (or equivalent) at a ratio of 1:2 (one qualified worker to 2 unqualified). This is a two day course. DCC will provide free training for 3 representatives per organisation.
- If you'd like to carry out a self-help project and would like further advice call 0345 155 1004 or email hwaymain@devon.gov.uk
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/opportunities/highway-self-help>
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/opportunities/road-warden-scheme>
- Reporting - Any defective signs including those that are illegible and requiring cleaning can be reported online on the "Defective Road Markings and Signs" link on the Report It page. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/Safety-defects>
- A regulatory or hazard / warning sign that is obviously faded or covered in dirt or algae is a defect, and when identified through inspection or a public report will be cleaned or replaced in accordance with the Highway Safety Policy.
- Routine maintenance - Each Neighbourhood Team has a small revenue budget for sign maintenance. Cleaning of direction and information signs may be considered for this budget dependant on other priorities.

8. Pothole Repairs

- The stretch of road between the Halfords Roundabout and Barnhenge is schedule for carriageway repairs. At this point I do not have details of the timetable and will report back in due course.