

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of Planning & Transportation Committee meeting held on Thursday 28th May 2020 at 7.00pm by Video conference call.

Present: Cllr A Rennles in the Chair.

Councillors: J Carter, P Leaver, V Nel, A Shah, R Mack and G Marchewka.

In Attendance: Robert Ward (Town Clerk)

PT001 Apologies for Absence

None received

PT002 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr R Mack: as a member of North Devon Council has a dispensation to discuss and vote on all items on the agenda unless the item refers to a financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

PT003 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes from the meeting held on 5th March 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(NC)

PT004 Deposited Plans

04.1 71315

Type: Appeal for Full

Location: 10 Rock Avenue, Barnstaple EX32 9AP

Proposals: Extension to dwelling together with retention of an off-road parking space

Recommend: Application not available to review so deferred to a future meeting

(NC)

PT005 To consider and discuss the Barnstaple Traffic COVID measures as proposed by Devon County Council Highways

Councillors considered proposals made by Devon County Council and North Devon Council in response to the recent Government Guidance for promoting Cycling and walking. The guidance published on 9th May by the Government gives new statutory guidance for highway authorities regarding the urgent need to reallocate road space towards pedestrians, cyclists and 'active travel'.

The proposal for Barnstaple includes:

- Temporary pedestrianisation of The Strand, Cross Street, Butchers Row, Lower Boutport Street and part of Queen Street between 10am and 4pm.
- Measures on The Longbridge A3125 in Barnstaple in order to improve the footpath and cycle path provision, particularly in light of the current closure of the Iron Bridge to Rock Park.
- Installation of cycle racks in town and at outlying business parks.

Councillors made the following comments on the proposals:

The Longbridge A3125

- How would priority be managed if the lanes were shared between cyclists and buses?
- What happens about emergency “blue light” services if they need to cross the bridge, particularly considering the impending police station move to Seven Brethren?
- If buses are allowed why wouldn't taxis also be allowed?
- If the bridge is not completely closed to vehicles not sure how safe distancing will be managed.
- The potential impact on other areas of the town if the bridge is closed, in particular traffic through Braunton Road, Newport, Taw Vale and Eastern Avenue.
- Concerns as to what impact this would have on town centre businesses.
- With the Iron Bridge closed provision does need to be made on the Longbridge.
- This is a real opportunity to make a difference to pedestrian and cyclist access to the town centre and to try it for a period of time to better understand the impact that could be achieved, so why wouldn't we try it?
- How long would the trial be for?

Councillors were also asked to consider measures for safe distancing as the Town Centre shops are allowed to reopen as announced by Government.

Councillors made the following comments on the proposals:

- Signage in the town centre should be more advisory and softer rather than insisting on one-way traffic for pedestrians, being prescriptive may not help.
- The use of planters to divide the High St may help, barriers were felt to be to much and would probably not work.
- The proposal for a one-way Holland St / Gammon Walk was felt to be unlikely to work as it is too far round for pedestrians to make the diversion.
- Councillors have concerns about people queuing to enter shops in the narrower parts of the town centre and how this will be managed.
- Councillors were unsure about what is proposed for the reopening of the Pannier Market, it was suggested that maybe it could be opened up with tables and chairs / benches for people to take drinks and food to sit and shelter.

Councillors asked if they could continue to be kept informed of progress and decisions.

PT006 Reported Concerns – None received

Meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Chairman.

Signed:

Dated: