

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of FULL COUNCIL meeting held on MONDAY, 30TH NOVEMBER 2015 at 7.00pm in the MAIN CHAMBER, THE GUILDHALL, BARNSTAPLE.

Present: Councillors Mrs V Elkins (Chairman), S Upcott, Mrs V Monk, F Vernon, A Windsor, Mrs S Haywood, I Roome, Mrs J Hunt (Vice-Chairman), C Haywood, M Chamings, Ms N Haywood, F Jefferies, Miss M Lovering, I Williams, M Kennaugh, G Langford, and A Rennles.

Also in attendance, Mr W Austin (Town Clerk), County Councillor J Mathews, County Councillor B Greenslade, and five members of the public.

TC77 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence, as recorded on the attendance sheet were received from Cllrs J Phillips, Mrs E Davies, J Carter, Mrs J Wilsher, Mrs A Dawson and L Dawson.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Mrs J Wilsher be granted a leave of absence, to be reviewed after six months.

(NC)

TC78 DISPENSATIONS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Mrs S Haywood, I Roome and Mrs J Hunt, as members of North Devon Council, declared dispensations under Standing Order 64 to discuss and vote on any item on the agenda unless the item refers to the financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

Cllr Windsor declared a personal interest in item 9 on the agenda (minutes of Finance & General Purposes), as a relative of a supplier to whom payment had been made.

Cllrs Mrs S Haywood, Mrs J Hunt and Ms N Haywood declared personal interests in agenda item 9 (minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee), as relatives of an honorary member of the Showmen's Guild. Cllr C Haywood declared a personal interest in the same item, as an honorary member of the Showmen's Guild.

TC79 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th November 2015 be received and approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

(15, 1abs)

TC80 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor, Cllr Mrs V Elkins, reported that she had attended 16 engagements since the previous meeting, including the Children's Remembrance Service and Remembrance Sunday. She thanked councillors for their attendance at these events.

She also reported on her attendance with the Deputy Mayor at the start of Ricky Knight's charity cycle ride to Paris on 18th December. She further reported on attendance at the Launch of the Reserves on 18th December, the 'Thank You' evening for green area sponsors on 25th November, and the Very Big Quiz on 18th November. She thanked members for their attendance at this event which had raised £2,500 for the Mayor's charities.

She reminded members of the forthcoming Christmas Fayre and Carol Service on 3rd December 2015. Members should be robed by 6.20pm.

TC81 PRESENTATION BY BARNSTAPLE BUILDINGS PRESERVATION TRUST

Jonathan Rodney- Jones, Steve Pitcher, and John Alexander of the Barnstaple Buildings Preservation Trust presented to councillors on a potential use for the Oliver Buildings as a creative, cultural and heritage facility. The presentation described the buildings and their context, the history of their use, and their recent listing. The proposal was for cultural, commercial and entertainment/leisure uses related to the creative industry, to include low cost accommodation. The challenges included funding, planning, and agreement with the developer. There would be an immediate requirement of an estimated £200,000 to improve the outer shell of the building. Funding opportunities and similar examples elsewhere were described. The group advised it was looking for support in principle, inclusion in any future vision for the town, help with publicity, and the nomination by the Council of a trustee to the Preservation Trust.

Members discussed the following:

- The estimated cost of the work on the outer shell, which was considered low
- The timescale for the project, which the Trust estimated at five years
- The need for flood prevention measures
- The need to consider this proposed project alongside other possible avenues that may emerge
- The need for any low cost accommodation to be available to local residents
- The structural soundness of the buildings

The Mayor thanked the Trust for their attendance and presentation.

TC82 REPORTS FROM DEVON AND CORNWALL CONSTABULARY

Apologies were received from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, who had submitted a written report that was circulated prior to the meeting. A copy is appended to these minutes.

Members considered the report, and expressed particular concerns about the issues of homelessness and shoplifting.

RESOLVED: That the report of Devon & Cornwall Constabulary be noted.

(NC)

TC83 REPORTS FROM DEVON COUNTY AND NORTH DEVON COUNCILLORS

Cllr Mathews reported on:

- Complaints about trees overhanging residential properties in Eastern Avenue
- An overspend on the County Council's People's Scrutiny Committee
- Solar panels at the Civic Centre, which he reported were only available to registered charities and were old and costly to repair
- Trees in Hollowtree Road which were due to be addressed by the District Council in December
- A report from District Cllr Brailey, which commended the Town Council on its Remembrance activities, greater partnership working for devolution, a higher priority for the A361, the future of the Oliver Buildings, the Heritage Centre, and the Police budget

Councillors expressed concerns about the County Council overspend, the removal of solar panels from the Civic Centre, the state of the trees in Eastern Avenue.

RESOLVED: That a request be made for details of the cost of repairing the solar panels at the Civic Centre, and the payback period for these costs.

(11, 3abs)

Cllr Greenslade reported on:

- The high cost of care for children
- The Chancellor's decision not to cut tax credits and Police funding, which he welcomed but warned that details would still need to be seen
- The importance of the lobbying that had resulted in proposals being worked up for the A361
- A cut of 80% in local government funding since 2010, and the potential impact on Council Tax
- The likely lengthy timescale for devolution
- The Housing and Planning Bill and concerns about its provisions for the sale of social housing
- Proposals for Police Commissioners to be allowed to run Fire Services
- The need for a study and investment in flood alleviation
- Stalled sites working groups, set up by NDC but which Cllr Greenslade considered could be run by the Town Council

Councillors expressed concern about the right to buy provisions.

RESOLVED: That the reports be received and noted.

(NC)

TC84 REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

No reports were tabled for consideration.

TC85 REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Planning and Transportation Committee of 5th November 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning and Transportation Committee meeting held on 5th November 2015 be received and the resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted.

(NC)

Heritage, Culture & Community Committee of 12th November 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Heritage, Culture & Community Committee of 12th November 2015 be received and the resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted.

(NC)

Staff Committee of 17th November 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Staff Committee of 17th November 2015 be received and the resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted.

(NC)

Planning and Transportation Committee of 19th November 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning and Transportation Committee of 19th November 2015 be received and the resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted.

(NC)

Finance and General Purposes Committee of 23rd November 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23rd November 2015 and the resolutions contained therein be adopted.

(NC)

TC86 NOMINATIONS TO BARNSTAPLE MUNICIPAL CHARITY AND NEWPORT CHARITY

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Mrs Davies and Langford be nominated as Town Council representatives to the Barnstaple Municipal Charity.

(NC)

RESOLVED: That Cllr Kennaugh be removed as a Town Council representative to the Newport Charity.

(NC)

TC87 QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from members of the Council under Standing Order 26, or public registered electors in the town under Standing Order 83.

TC88 MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the following matters be taken in the absence of Press and Public (Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 as the items contained exempt information as defined by Standing Order 81(a) and 81(e).

(NC)

TC89 REVIEW OF STAFFING

The Town Clerk presented a report on the outcomes of the recent review of staffing.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Town Clerk be noted.

(NC)

The meeting ended at 9.07pm.

Chairman.

Signed

Dated

Police Update For North Devon Town Council - November 2015

Crime Summary

Offence Group	Year Compared To Same Period Last Year 29/11/2015	Last 28 Day Comparison till 29/11/2015 Previous Year
Violence Leading To Injury	Down -10.9 (220 recorded)	Up +23.5% (21 recorded)
Violence Without Injury	Up +16.5% (261)	Up +43.8% (23)
Burglary Dwelling	Down -23.9% (51)	Down -77.8% (2)
Burglary Non Dwelling	Down -30.6% (84)	Down -60.0% (6)
Vehicle Offences	Down -17.3% (139)	Down -61.5% (5)
Shop Lifting	Up +16.9% (346)	Up +81.8% (40)
Criminal Damage	Down -9.7 % (374)	Down -48.1% (14)
Other Theft	Down -9.0% (333)	Down -3.8% (25)

Comments & Trends

Violence with injury overall continued to decline with a slight increase this month noticeably nine offences in the last week showing a spike in the otherwise low figures for this time of year. Violence without injury continues to rise in Barnstaple sector as well as adjacent sectors but there is no pattern or series of identifiable crimes. This means these cannot be attributed to specific individuals or locations but continues to be monitored closely.

Shop lifting also continues to rise and a shop lifting operation consisting of plain clothed and uniformed officers took place on Thursday 26th November. Further operations will be conducted over the period of late night shopping as we approach Christmas where resources allow. The majority of the increase can be attributed to known repeat offenders and we are batching offences for those individuals with the hope of achieving stiffer sentences in court. We also continue to work on issues of housing and addiction surrounding those individuals to prevent the need or desire to commit theft.

Community Matters

We continue to have concerns over the increased number of homeless persons presenting in the Town Centre of Barnstaple. Whilst the majority of the individuals are well known to us and have been habitual rough sleepers in Barnstaple and adjacent towns we have recently seen a migration of a number of rough sleepers from Exeter. Nothing has specifically changed in Exeter or Plymouth in respect to provision or the approach of either council or police but we are looking closely as to the reasons why they have re-located to Barnstaple. Provision in Barnstaple and indeed the neighbouring authorities is not as advanced or as comprehensive as that in Exeter or Plymouth. We have held meetings with the council to look at a joined up approach to tackle this issues making sure there is the balance between

provision and support for rough sleepers whilst preventing antisocial behaviour such as begging and littering. It is important that the public recognise the chaotic lifestyle of these individuals. If they wish to support them by offering them money or goods they would be better placed giving such donations or items to recognised organisations such as The Freedom Centre.

Operational Concerns:

Devon & Cornwall Police are waiting to see the detail of the results of the announcements made by the chancellor concerning police budget. Whilst this is obviously good news the force is still working hard to try and manage the level of cuts already implemented and to make the savings already outlined before the prospect of the further cuts came into play. This means that whilst we may be afforded a little breathing space it's clear that the future of our Police Community Support Officers and Neighbourhood Teams is by no means assured.