

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Monday 22nd January 2024 at 7.00 pm
The Guildhall, Butchers Row, Barnstaple

Present: Councillors:

Cllrs V Elkins, J Hunt, J Phillips, L York, P Leaver, A Shah, S Jusef, J Coates, J Orange, Fowler, I Williams, L Dawson, G Kennedy, D Clayton, J Challis, K Stevenson, C Horrell, K York and M Pullen

Also in attendance:

R Ward, Town Clerk

Insp A Wills, Devon & Cornwall Police

Mr T Steer, Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance

Members of the Public: 0

Apologies for absence:

Cllrs V Monk, M Lovering, T Clarkson, G Marchewka and C Brown

100 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

Apologies and reasons for absence were received and approved. (NC)

101 To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests.

Cllrs J Hunt, L York, P Leaver, S Yusef, J Orange, D Clayton & K Stevenson 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.

102 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 8th January 2024, are approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairperson (NC).

103 The Mayor proposed a motion to change the sequence of the agenda items, this was seconded and approved (NC).

104 To receive a report (if any) from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Inspector A Wills provided his report to the Town Council in advance of the meeting and highlighted the following:

Recent overall incident demand shows a 15.1% overall reduction, this follows last month's circa 2% overall increase. Year on year there has been a reduction of 12.5% the total volume of ASB incidents has fallen by 26.4%.

An Anti-Social Behaviour Policing intensification period is planned for March and April. This will look to coincide with what is usually an increase in ASB as the warmer weather arrives and will also coincide

with the Easter holidays.

Concerns have been raised about roadworks to install pedestrian crossing at Cedars roundabout. This will be monitored, the job of managing the impact is with Devon County Council and their contractor.

105 To receive reports (if any) from Devon County and North Devon District Councillors.

Devon County Council

Cllr C Leaver reported:

- Link Centres, consideration of alternative forms of provision are being investigated, concerns are still being raised about the outcomes for service users.
- Devon County Council, budget, adult social care and children's social care budgets are currently overspent.
- Looked after children and special education needs a significant overspend.
- Devon County Council currently needing to find a £50 million saving across 2024-25.
- A consultation has been launched for the Braunton Road bus lane proposal, details can be found on the "have your say page" of the website.

North Devon Council

Cllr L York reported that a recent motion about the Bus Station, put forward by Cllr Maskell was withdrawn following the NDDC proposal to undertake interim works to reopen the waiting room with new toilets working with a commercial café provider.

Cllr J Orange left the meeting at this point.

106 Budget and Precept 2024-2025

Cllr J Phillips proposed that the budget for 2024-25 be approved, it reflects the need of the Town Council to continue to maintain services in the town, particularly when the principal authorities are still having to find savings and reducing their service delivery.

Cllr P Leaver expressed a concern that discussion need to be had with the Chief Executive of North Devon District Council about future asset and service devolution.

An approach has been made by NDDC to discuss the future funding of the Street Marshalls. Cllr D Clayton raised a concern that this could be seen as policing on the cheap and expectations needed to be managed if the Town Council did decide to contribute to the funding of the project.

Councillors thanked the Town Clerk and Finance Officer for their work in supporting Councillors in the preparation of this budget.

RESOLVED: That the proposed budget and precept for 2024 - 2025 be set at £1,364,646 an increase in the Council Tax on a Band D property of 40p per week (NC).

Cllrs Phillips and Jusef left the meeting at this point - 7.45pm

107 To receive and consider a motion for Barnstaple Town Council to join the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance.

The Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance is promoting a rail link between Bideford and Barnstaple. Cllrs L York, P Leaver and M Pullen, presented a report to the Town Council

RESOLVED: This council believes that such a link contributes to a sustainable transport strategy for the northern Devon area and resolves to:

- 1) To join the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance as a founding Member.
- 2) To call on other public bodies, voluntary and business stakeholders and others to support sustainable transport options for northern Devon and to take an active role in the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance.
- 3) To support an integrated sustainable transport strategy for northern Devon, including proposals to see Bideford fully reconnected to the national rail network, by 2040.
- 4) Include rail development plans and other sustainable transport plans in any future Barnstaple Town Council Neighbourhood Planning process.
- 5) Urge North Devon District Council's Local Plan Committee to reflect this desire in any plans they bring forward for public consultation.
- 6) To attend the inaugural meeting (hosted by Bideford Town Council) of the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance, and work with its other members to promote the reconnection of Bideford to the national rail network.

The Town Council approved the resolution with 1 abstention.

108 Mayor's Announcements.

The Mayor reported:

- Judging of the LiveWest Gardens Christmas decorations.
- Attended the Green and Blue and Youth Network meetings last week. Both of these are really useful groups for finding out what is happening local and to help members with signposting when issues for their clients arise.

Upcoming Barnstaple Town Council events

- The Mayor's Ball, Saturday, the 20th of April, The Barnstaple

Hotel, the theme for the event is Rosé and Diamonds.

- The licensing ceremony on the 7th February, for Rev. Benjamin Williams, the new Vicar at the Parish Church.
- Barnstaple Town Council, Meet and Eat Mondays 1.00 to 2.00pm every week at The Shambles, offering soup and tea.
- Volunteering opportunities event, 7th February at Devon Connect
- Repair Café has been really busy at The Shambles, next one Saturday 17th of February.
- Reminder that a representative from Southwest Water is attending the next Town Council meeting on the 19th of February, questions to the Town Clerk, by 26th of January.
- Please remember that your councillor Ward grants are still available to be allocated, up to £300, cut off for this financial year is mid February.

109 To receive and adopt the minutes of committees and the resolutions contained therein as shown below, and to consider any questions on reports contained in the minutes of committees, asked by members of the Council in accordance Standing Order 28:

The minutes and resolutions of the following committee meetings were received and considered and it was resolved to adopt them en-bloc (NC)

Committee	Date
Community Development Committee	23 rd November 2023
Finance & General Purposes Committee	11 th December 2023
Planning & Transportation	14 th December 2023

110 To consider reports (if any) from Town Council representatives to outside bodies and determine any actions arising.

Cllr L York reported that NDVS are currently working with several other local voluntary sector organisations on a project to develop a community hub. The project is called 'The Woodyard' based on a concept in the book The Long Call by Ann Cleaves.

Ann Cleaves is involved in the project and has made a cash donation to help get the project started and there will be an official launch of the in March.

Currently the group are looking at the Castle Centre as a possible location to base the project and the Town Clerk and Mayor have been attending their meetings.

111 Town Clerk's Report

The Guildhall external renovation starts on Monday 5th February and is expected to take about twenty weeks.

The colour scheme for the redecoration needs to be decided and a presentation of possible schemes prepared by the Heritage and Culture Manager was shown to councillors, it was explained that this was to stimulate discussion, a decision was not required at this meeting.

Colour samples will be made available by the paint supplier and Councillors expressed a general consensus for some potentially bold options including greys and reds.

Concern was raised about the potential for stronger colours, especially reds to fade because of the nature of the lime wash heritage paints.

ACTION: the Town Clerk to liaise with the contractor to get a range of paint samples, to support the decision process.

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Chairman.

Signed:

Dated: