

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (NOTES)**

8 APRIL 2024

ELECTORS PRESENT: Town Councillors; Ing, Chatterjee, Foote-Wood, Blake, Ewart, Thompson & four members of the public (Electors).

NON ELECTORS PRESENT: None.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the press.

OFFICERS: Mr Clark (Town Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr's Drew & Bigge.

In the absence of the Mayor, Cllr Ing agreed to Chair the meeting and discussions.

Two residents had submitted items they wish to refer – Transport issues, CCTV in the town and drugs. These are included in the notes at 2.

2. GENERAL DISCUSSION(S)

A resident spoke on the increasing amount of traffic through the town, especially HGV's. The latest figures for the County Bridge violations were distributed (Appendix A).

- Pleased the town council are taking the matters seriously to work together to reduce the issues
- The way forward was to continue to work collaboratively
- The early morning traffic along Newgate was referred too by Cllr Ing with agreement that the resident and Cllr Ing looking at recording this together to create a log of numbers and types
- The weight limit on the Abbey Bridge was discussed following the decision by National Highways to choose the 'Black Route' when the A66 is being upgraded.

Cllr Thompson referred to information obtained on the Abbey Bridge – it is inspected by engineers; weight limit restrictions would not be imposed on the bridge, and therefore the bridge will not be fitted with a camera.

- Would the council convene a further meeting with Durham County Highways
- Another resident present spoke on this subject, and referred to the anticipated increased traffic volumes when work begins on the A66 upgrade and the diversions that will direct traffic through the town.
- Reference was made to the combined authority North East Transport Plan which was said to include a proposed Barnard Castle by-pass. It was agreed the document should be obtained by the Clerk and pursuing this.
- A discussion took place on the state of the roads (pot holes/line markings) and pavement. Poor maintenance created flooding issues, not just on roads, but on the pavements where soakaway gulleys exist in the town.

Cllr Thompson referred to the alleys in the town that require cleaning.

- The Clerk referred to the Find and Fix Team (Civic Pride) due to carry out work in the town, but he was not aware the alleyways formed part of the planned works. He would look to see what could be done.

Cllr Thompson suggested creating a plan of identified issues from this meeting that can be referred and followed up

- A resident spoke on his disappointment that the Police were not in attendance to discuss anti-social behaviour and drug use. They felt that having CCTV in the town would deter/reduce anti-social behaviour.
- A general discussion took place on this subject with it being re-enforced that residents should report incidents to the Police. If they are not aware, then it didn't happen!
- It was agreed the Clerk would place a post on the councils social media pages on the various ways residents can report things to the Police.
- The issue of drugs, and drug taking had become a social problem everywhere and beyond what the town council could do.

Following the end of discussions, Cllr Ing thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed.