

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Annual Town Meeting of CARNFORTH

**Held in the Midland Hall of Carnforth Railway Station on Wednesday 27th April
2016 at 18:30**

ATTENDANCE:–

Name / Position	Organisation
Sharon Quinn	Councillor
Pat Wooff	Councillor
Bob Roe	Councillor
Roly Parker	Deputy Mayor
Malcolm Watkins	Mayor (Chair)
Paul Gardner	Councillor
Janette Gardner	Councillor
Liz Aspin	Councillor
Kath Bromilow	Councillor
Dougie Taylor	Councillor
Philip Charnley	Town Clerk
Mel Guilding	Lancaster City Councillor
Mary Stretch	Resident
Veronica James	Resident
David Wattam	Resident
Elaine Willacy	Resident
Hannah Parker	Scouts
Gerald Hoggarth	Resident
Caroline Charnley	Chamber of Trade
Lionel Sowerby	Resident
Alyson Gregg	Crag Bank Under 5s

Name / Position	Organisation
Jess Riches	Crag Bank Under 5s
Kirstie Banks-Lyon	Lancashire Police
Steve Bell	Lancashire Police
J Allan Ellershaw	Free Methodist Church
G Baxter	Salvation Army
Andrew Marshall	Salvation Army
Chloe Lambert	Salvation Army
Allan Rennie	2246 Carnforth ATC
Margaret Watkins	Salvation Army
Anna Jones	Attendee
Hannah Jackson	Scouts
George Wilson	Carnforth Cricket Club
John Reynolds	Resident
Owen Parker	Scouts
Jake Payne	Scouts
Sara Francis	Scouts
Matthew Wardle	Scouts
Garry Davis	Scouts
Elliot Mols	Scouts

1. The Town Mayor took the Chair and opened the meeting.

1.

2. Apologies for Absence were received from:

2.

Cllr Barbu (Prior engagement), Cllr Branyan (Work commitment), City Councillor Peter Yates (Prior engagement)

3. Minutes of Town Meeting, 25th March 2015

3.

Proposed: Cllr Wooff, Seconded: Cllr Taylor

By unanimous approval it was resolved to approve the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 25th March 2015.

4.

Report from Lancashire Constabulary

The meeting was attended by Inspector Kirstie Banks-Lyon and Inspector Steve Bell.

Inspector Banks-Lyon informed the meeting that funding cuts have continued but have not been as great as anticipated. A significant change is that there used to be two inspectors for Lancaster and Morecambe but now there will only be one for the whole area. There has also been a restructure of neighbourhood policing. There are now three police officers covering Carnforth and neighbouring parishes. The use of mobile technology has allowed officers to carry out necessary administrative work without needed to return to the police station. Every officer and PCSO has a mobile device which includes functions such as telephony, satellite navigation, email, internet, etc.

There were 282 crimes reported in Carnforth in 2014-15. Then number in 2015-16 has reduced to 251. Violent crime has fallen by a third to 61 in the current year. This is not reflected across the wider area of Lancaster and Morecambe where violent crime has risen. The PCSOs in Carnforth have done some very good work keeping up relationships with people in the town.

Inspector Banks-Lyon informed the meeting of the Early Action initiative where agencies work together to get involved with families from an early stage to try to prevent criminal behaviour.

Inspector Bell introduced himself. He will be taking over from Inspector Banks-Lyon in the Carnforth area. He invited anyone who has any issues they would like to speak about to get in touch with him.

Cllr Wooff expressed her appreciation of the work of the PCSOs in Carnforth.

Cllr Taylor asked about the continuing problem of cars parking on pavements in Carnforth and the danger this poses to wheelchair users and people pushing prams. In reply the meeting was told that the police cannot ticket cars parking in such a manner unless they are causing an immediate obstruction. The ticketing of illegally parked cars has been privatised and is not, in general, in the remit of the police. The PCSOs will be informed of this concern and will be asked to watch out for cars obstructing footpaths when on their beats.

Cllr P Gardner said that speeding and parking on pavements is a major concern in Carnforth. Inspector Bell would be very welcome to attend a meeting about road safety which will be on 1st June. Cllr P Gardner said he would like to have Mark Proctor, the Traffic Management Officer attend the meeting.

George Wilson said that motoring offences such as ignoring 20 mph speed limits and jumping red lights are a particular concern. In reply he was told that traffic officers are attempting to deal with such offences. It was noted however, that motorists behave very differently when they see a marked police car. It was noted that officers travelling in unmarked cars see different behaviour on the roads. With regard to the question of installing cameras at the junction of the A6 and Market Street, the meeting was told that this is not a police matter and would have to be organised by other means. Lancashire County Council have not installed any red light cameras in the county to date. For action to be taken in an area with regard to motoring offences there needs to be a pattern of accidents rather than just a recognised risk of their being incidents.

City Councillor Mel Guilding said that as the City Council Champion for the Disabled she has been working with the Guide Dogs Association to raise a petition for action to be taken about parking on pavements.

The police said they have been working with schools about issues such as pavement parking or parking on double yellow lines and the dangers that this poses. This helps engage with the people who are committing the offences. For example, people who park on zig zag markings outside schools have children.

City Councillors' Report

5.

City Councillor Mel Guilding noted that it has been a difficult time since she and Councillor Yates were elected as two other Councillors representing Carnforth have died. There is soon to be an election after which there will again be three councillors representing the town.

Councillor Yates is involved with the City Council Planning Committee and is also working on problems with potholes in the roads, traffic light issues and air quality problems.

With regard to the plan to build flats at the back of the Queen's Hotel on Market Street the meeting was told that the City Councillors have been concerned that there were no matters raised by the Highways Department at Lancashire County Council. It was noted that representations had been made the City Council by the Town Council and the Chamber of Trade.

The pedestrian crossing on Kellet Road has still not been installed. The latest update available from Lancashire County Council is that the work will be carried out in July after the schools have broken up for the summer holiday.

Councillor Guilding is involved with many organisations such as Galloways and the Autistic Society, amongst others, in her role as Champion for the Disabled. She has identified a problem for partially sighted people in that there is a lack of tactile paving in the area.

The City Councillors have been working with Town Councillors Paul Gardner and Bob Roe around the problem of the loss of buses. It was noted that buses from Silverdale to Carnforth are now running.

The Canals and Rivers Trust and Lancashire County Council Highways Department are aware of the leak in the canal which is causing flooding on the A6 between Carnforth and Bolton-le-Sands. They are treating this matter as a high priority.

Town Council Report – Town Mayor

6.

The May 2015 election introduced three new councillors to Carnforth Town Council. These are Councillor Rico Barbu, Councillor Janette Gardner and Councillor Dougie Taylor.

There were no nominations for the Crag Bank ward and so the Town Council advertised for people to be co-opted onto the Town Council to represent Crag Bank. After interviews Councillor Liz Aspin, Councillor Larry Branyan, Councillor Kath Bromilow and Councillor Sharon Quinn were selected.

You will see that Town Councillors now wear identity badges when carrying out their duties.

The dynamics of the Town Council has changed with the influx of 'new blood' with one of the new Councillors, Rico Barbu, being elected as the chair of the Tourism

Committee. Older hands Councillor Paul Gardner and Councillor Bob Roe have been chairs of Finance and Governance Committee and Asset Management Committee respectively.

The Civic Hall Committee became the Assets Management Committee and the Finance Committee became the Finance and Governance Committee to more reflect their roles.

One of the first activities of the year was to meet with the new councillors and to share with them the roles and responsibilities of Town Council membership.

The first Mayoral engagement was to join staff at Tesco in a litter pick around the store area and along the canal bank. In this the Mayor was assisted by the Town Clerk.

Mr and Mrs Lund came to the Town Council to share their idea for a Roots, Shoots and Leaves project similar to the Incredible Edibles schemes operating in other towns. The start of this scheme can be seen in Ashtrees Way. We trust that they are able to spread this idea further across the town.

Thanks is given to Reverend Bob Neale for the use of the Congregational Church and to Major Angela Tucker, my own chaplain, for arranging the Civic Sunday service. The town's uniformed organisations provided a guard of honour and the occasion was attended by the Mayor of Lancaster Councillor Jon Barrie.

June and July saw the introduction of guided walks starting from the War Memorial Gardens. Further walks have been organised for this summer.

The Mayor attended a number of events across the town during the year:

- The opening of the refurbished Reeds Rains offices in Market Street
- An activity session organised for the Fire and Rescue Service Cadets in the Fire Service training yard.
- The AGM and sports day for 1st Carnforth Scouts.
- The presentation evening of the Carnforth Air Training Corps
- The Festival of Remembrance at Our Lady of Lourdes on 6th November.
- 27th June was Armed Forces Day when thanks were given for the activities of the nation's armed forces.
- 22nd July saw the introduction of the idea of Community Health Champions by Dr. Andy Knox.
- The Service of Remembrance was held at the War Memorial Gardens and was well supported by the uniformed organisations and the public. This is a tribute to Carnforth. Thirty wreathes were laid by many different people and groups.
- Lancashire Day was celebrated on 27th November with the help of the town crier of Blackpool Barry McQueen. This was also an opportunity to dedicate benches given in remembrance of Councillor Frank Barton who had served Carnforth with distinction.
- The Christmas Lights Switch-on organised by the Chamber of Trade was again a great success. The Town Council purchased some additional lights and provided a Christmas tree.
- The Community Carol Service at the War Memorial Gardens on Christmas Eve is growing in popularity and it was great for the Mayor to be able to support the event.

- The Mayor attended the Christmas Fete organised by the Congregational Church.
- At the Trussell Trust collection week at the Tesco supermarket the Mayor was able to give a full trolley of food to the trust on behalf of the Town Council.
- The Christmas Tree Festival at Carnforth Station featured trees supplied and decorated by a number of local organisations. One young lady came to the event dressed as a Christmas tree.
- The Mayor visited North Road Junior School for the presentation of Dr What and Dr When.
- The Mayor attended the Christmas presentation by the Carnforth Choral Society at Christ Church, Broadway.
- The Mayor made the presentation of prizes at the North Road School Rotary Music Competition.
- The Mayor attended the opening of the permanent David Lean exhibition at the Station Heritage Centre when the High Sheriff of Lancashire, Amanda Parker, cut the ribbon.
- The Town Council has purchased a plaque to mark the location of the first Salvation Army Hall in Carnforth. The plaque is at the end of Ashtrees Way and the Mayor, Town Councillors and the Town Clerk joined members of the Salvation Army at the unveiling.

The Town Council is looking to create an Emergency Plan. The Council became aware that there is no such plan to deal with an emergency in Carnforth. A task group will present its findings shortly.

The Town Council is working the Lune Rivers Trust to make the lower reaches of the River Keer more accessible to walkers and tourists. A boardwalk is to be installed to provide access amongst the reeds and out onto the shore near the racing car circuit. A display board will be erected about the fauna and wildlife in the area.

In the near future the Town Council intends to look at the idea of neighbourhood planning. This would give all the residents of Carnforth a say in what they would like Carnforth to look like in the future. This is in terms of businesses, shops, housing and green spaces.

The Mayor has had the opportunity to share some of the aspirations of the Town Council with Mrs Vicky Michael, the Head Teacher of Carnforth High School and shared thoughts with some of the pupils at the school.

The Town Councillors all wish to be ever more professional in their work for the town and are undertaking training to help in that aspiration. Several will attend training for new councillors. A number have attended training on planning and local council finance.

The Mayor thanked the Councillors and the Town Clerk for their hard work and support over the last 12 months. He reminded the meeting that the Councillors are all volunteers and receive no remuneration for their efforts.

Report of the Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee – Cllr P Gardner

Cllr P Gardner thanked the members of the committee for their support over the year.

The committee has changed from being the Finance Committee to the Finance and Governance Committee to reflect the increased needs resulting from budget cuts at higher tier councils.

A summary of accounts was provided to the meeting and Cllr P Gardner noted that the Town Council is fortunate in having a good start in having carried forward some money from last year. No money is put aside as a reserve.

The Civic Hall is improving in terms of the amount of usage of the hall. The income of the Civic Hall does not meet its expenditure needs and is subsidised by the Town Council.

Other money received by the Town Council last year was largely interest.

Further information about the Town Council's finances is available on its website. Work continues to be carried out to make financial information clearer and easier to follow.

The balance of money carried forward is lower by approximately £10,000 compared to the previous year. This is pleasing as the money has been spent on improvements around the town. All expenditure is underpinned by governance controls such as insurance, risk assessment amongst other measures.

There is a Community Benefit Fund which is provided by AGR. This is not the Town Council's money and is simply administered by the Town Council. The Council wants to invite the town to decide on what the money should be used for. The amount of money is approximately £3,000 per year.

A budget summary was provided to those present. After seven years of not altering the level of the precept the Town Council resolved to increase it by 10% for 2016-17. This is around £1 per dwelling and increases the amount of money received by the Town Council by £3,000.

It was pointed out that £10,000 of the capital expenditure is for essential repairs to the War Memorial statue.

The Town Council is a living wage council and ensures that it pays all of its employees at least the living wage.

Broadband has been installed in the Council Offices so members, officers and visitors may use the internet. It is intended that this should cut items such as printing costs.

The Town Council's budget is created on a pessimistic basis. The lowest envisaged levels of income and the highest envisaged levels of expenditure are used.

Assets Management Committee Report – Councillor Bob Roe

The Assets Management Committee was formed from the Civic Hall Committee. It has meant that the control of all the Town Council's assets are the responsibility of a single committee.

The committee is responsible for the War Memorial. The statue has structural problems and will need to be removed and repaired. At the same time issues with the plinth will be addressed. It is anticipated that the work will take 9-10 weeks to complete. Once the work has been carried out it should last for at least 50 years.

The allotments have been taken back from Lancaster City Council. The Town Council has replaced the fencing around the allotments which was in a poor condition.

The Asset Management Committee is responsible for the floral displays which have been located on railings in the town.

A number of Town Council noticeboards have been repaired, replaced or installed. Bus shelters have also been repaired. It is planned that a number of parcels of land around the town are taken into Town Council control to make them more attractive for local residents.

A number of new benches have been installed around the town which have been paid for thanks to past savings.

The number of bookings in the Civic Hall is at level where the schedule is nearly full. However, it is not anticipated that the hall will ever be fully self-financing. A number of refurbishments have been carried out. Such improvements will continue.

The Asset Management Committee will continue to rejuvenate, repair and improve the town.

Tourism Committee – Councillor Parker on behalf of Councillor Barbu

The Tourism Committee has worked to create a number of initiatives during the year, these include:

- Organised guided walks
- An annual leaflet of events in the town
- Working with Mr and Mrs Lund on the Roots, Shoots and Leaves project.
- Floral displays
- Organised a summer gardens competition
- Restored the cobbled lane behind Carnforth Bookshop
- Organised the Christmas House lights competition
- Helped with the Christmas lights
- Worked on the project to make the River Keer more accessible
- Repainting of the Canalside playground
- A Brief Encounter based trail of artworks is planned
- Offering businesses the opportunity to put publicity on floral displays.

George Wilson enquired if it was known who owns the cobbled lane behind Carnforth Bookshop. In reply he was informed that enquiries had not discovered an owner but none of the surrounding land-owners own the land.

Reports from Representatives of Local Groups:

7.

1. 1st Carnforth Scouts

A number of Scouts were at the meeting. They introduced themselves and told the meeting about activities they had taken part in over the last year. They also said what they were looking forward to as scouts over the coming year.

The Carnforth Scouts are the fastest growing group in the Lonsdale area and have 37 more members this year. There is a waiting list to join which is caused by a shortage of adults.

The Mayor presented the Scouts with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for their work over the last year.

2. Dr Knox – Community Health Champions

The aim is for Carnforth to become the healthiest town in Lancashire. There have been meetings with over a thousand people. The town needs to live well as a community in terms of physical, mental and social health.

The Mayor presented Dr Knox with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for his work over the last year.

3. Reverend Allan Ellershaw – Free Methodist Church

Reverend Ellershaw told the meeting that his vision for the Free Methodist Church is to be out in the community and support people who go to the church and those who do not alike. A listening service has been set up in Ashtrees Surgery where people can come and talk about their problems without necessarily having any sort of solution presented. It is about a society which is healthy, not abusive. The Free Methodists meet in many places and have a planning application which is to create a new location near The Carnforth Hub.

The Mayor presented Reverend Ellershaw with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for his work over the last year with a local food bank.

4. Salvation Army

Major Angela Tucker thanked the Town Council for its support and money which helps the community.

Recently the Salvation Army held a community day. Part of the day involved giving away food such as burgers. It was surprising how people did not want to just take the food and wanted to pay something for it.

The Mayor presented Andrew Marshall with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for his work over the last year with the Cellar Club.

5. Air Training Corps

The Commanding Officer of Carnforth ATC, Allan Rennie informed the meeting that the local unit is now starting to expand with thirty cadets and more regular attendance. Last year four cadets had flying scholarships with one getting a scholarship this year. At the annual inspection the unit always gets top scores for how it is run.

The Mayor presented the ATC with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for its work over the last year.

6. Carnforth Cricket Club

George Wilson of Carnforth Cricket Club informed the meeting that there are now three senior and two junior teams. Last week 40 junior members attending. The club is prospering. The Town Council were thanked for their donation towards new practice nets which are now in use.

The Mayor presented Carnforth Cricket Club with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for its work over the last year.

7. Crag Bank Under 5s Nursery

The Mayor presented Crag Bank Under 5s Nursery with a certificate of recognition from the Town Council for its work over the last year.

8. Mrs Mary Stretch

Mrs Stretch thanked Carnforth Town Council for their help to resolve problems caused at her home due to flooding. Her home may now be repaired. Mrs Stretch extended particular thanks for the efforts of Cllr Paul Gardner in helping her.

9. Chamber of Trade

Caroline Charnley, Chair of the Chamber of Trade spoke about how businesses in Carnforth are holding their own but trading conditions are difficult. The weather has not helped being unseasonably cold. The Chamber of Trade would like to communicate how many different independent retailers there are in Carnforth. It is intended to promote this in the coming months. Carnforth is lucky to have three supermarkets but there is a challenge to get people to visit the other shops. There are not many empty shops in Carnforth. The Chamber of Trade will be organising the Christmas lights switch-on again this year. Each year an effort is made to make the event better. This is especially true with regard to entertaining the queue of children waiting to meet Father Christmas. There will be a summer arts festival on the first Saturday in August which will feature local artists and live entertainment.

10. Carnforth Heritage Centre

In excess of 50,000 people visit Carnforth Station's Heritage Centre each year. Cllr Wooff received a Town Council certificate of recognition on behalf of the centre for its achievement in attracting so many visitors. Cllr Wooff said that the Centre makes efforts to encourage visitors to visit the rest of the town.

Close

1. The Mayor thanked all the speakers and guests and the residents for attending.

The meeting closed at 20:10