



Carnforth Town Council

Minutes of meeting held on 19th January 2022 at 6:30pm at Carnforth Council Offices

Present: Councillors Smith (Deputy Mayor); Gardner; Grisenthwaite; Jones; Parker; Stretch; Turner; Watkins and Watson

In attendance: Bob Bailey, Proper Officer and one member of the public

22001 Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillors Betley; Branyan and Bromilow.

22002 Declaration on interests and dispensations: Councillors Grisenthwaite and Smith requested and were granted dispensation in relation to Planning Application: 21/01566/FUL and Councillor Gardner on any discussion relating to Carnforth Railway Station.

22003 Urgent Business: Ward Councillor Taylor was welcomed to the meeting following his recent election to Lancaster City Council for the Carnforth and Millhead Ward. The Proper Officer requested articles for the *Carnforth Express* by end of business on 28th January.

22004 Minutes: It was **RESOLVED that, subject to a minor amendment, the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17th December 2021 be approved.** The Proper Officer provided an update on actions set out in the Minutes not otherwise covered on the agenda.

22005 Adjournment for public discussion and information only updates:

1) **Public Discussion:** The landlord of The Canal Turn presented a letter that he had sent to Punch Inns Limited regarding a commercial dispute with them and the perceived impact that this would have on the business, staff and the local community. Councillor commented on the matters raised and following the advice of the Proper Officer, questions, it was **RESOLVED that the Town Council remains impartial on the matters raised, subject to advice from Lancaster City Council, but hopes for a quick resolution in the interests of the local community and staff employed at The Canal Turn.** Councillors were advised that if they comment individually as a resident of Carnforth it should be made clear that their views are not that of Carnforth Town Council.

2) **Councillor updates / matters:** Councillor Smith reported on a positive recent walkabout with residents and City Council officers on issues raised at Gummers Howe / Highfield Road and that agreed actions will be monitored and reported.

Councillor Grisenthwaite reported that there had been no communication between Homes England and Carnforth Rangers Football Club on a possible solution to break the apparent impasse and lack of progress in relation to development on Lundsfield Quarry. Lancaster City Council are unable to provide information on when a planning application for the site would be submitted. Councillor Smith commented on the initiative for Community Led Housing that may be relevant to any subsequent consideration in relation to Lundsfield Quarry.



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ACTION: Proper Officer to arrange a meeting with Homes England and Carnforth Rangers Football Club to be facilitated by Carnforth Town Council.

Councillor Gardner followed up on a request to source a memorial stone following the death of Councillor Armstrong. **ACTION: Proper Officer to source a carved memorial stone/ceramic in memory of Councillor Armstrong.**

Councillor Turner reported that he had made safe a further section of the fence at Crag Bank Village Hall that had become unsafe. It was reported that quotations had been obtained and on the authority of Councillors, in line with Standing Orders, arrangements made for the fence to be replaced urgently. **ACTION: Councillor Turner to remove the existing fence prior to a replacement being installed.**

Councillor Grisenthwaite reported on ongoing discussions with Lancaster City Council's Steet Naming Officer on streets on the Scotland Road development to be named after three men on the monument in the War Memorial Gardens. There has been a positive response on social media to the idea and directly from families whose relatives are named on the War Memorial. In due course, the naming of these streets will be formally celebrated with an event where living relatives will be invited to attend.

- 3) **Reports of Ward and County Councillors:** Councillors Guilding, Taylor and Yates reported on their activities in the last month and relevant matters from Lancaster City Council, including;
- a) A Gummers Howe walkabout with Town Councillors and City Council officers identifying matters raised by residents and actions required;
 - b) Attendance at Christmas events and meetings of community groups;
 - c) Attendance at committees of Lancaster City Council;
 - d) A range of issues raised by residents;
 - e) County Council funding to support individuals / organisations dealing with mental health issues;
 - f) Support for the Friends of Crag Bank Park and development of the play area;
 - g) Outstanding planning enforcement matters;
 - h) Eden Project North planning application;
 - i) Scotland Road development;
 - j) Station car park charges and parking;
 - k) Graffiti on Scotland Road, Bridges and the Railway club;



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County Councillor Williamson provided an update on plans for a 'county deal' that will see local powers take control of regional funding and decision-making around the economy, transport, jobs, skills and the environment. Leaders of all 15 council's in Lancashire have worked on the plans which are now being discussed by individual councils before a mandate for the deal is considered at an Extraordinary meeting. An agreed 'deal' has the '*...potential to transform our county and make a huge difference to the lives of our residents*'. It was also reported that County Council are in the process of finalising its plans and budgets for 2022/23.

Lancashire County Council are part of the 'Flood Hub' that brings together key agencies / authorities and other organisations / stakeholders to deliver an integrated and collaborative approach to managing flood risk and the County Council's Cabinet will be considering a proposal to improve a culvert on Back Lane to mitigate flooding. Councillor Smith commented that a planning application had recently been considered that might have an impact on the studies to be undertaken by the County Council. **ACTION: Proper Officer to send details of the planning application to County Councillor Williamson,** There will be another Town & Parish Council forum in March around highways matters and a charter between Lancashire County Council and Town/Parish Councils. All County Councillors have been allocated a small budget to support local community projects and talks with Northern Rail about new signage at Carnforth Railway Station are ongoing.

The lights on the path from Tesco's in Carnforth to Crag Bank have been repaired and a meeting involving Town Councillors has been arranged to discuss the A601(M) project. Councillor Williamson supported a request to re-visit traffic management and air quality matters now that the Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan is ready to be formally submitted.

- 4) **Reports from outside bodies:** Councillor Parker reported on a recent meeting of Carnforth Business Network who have now reverted back to their former name of Carnforth and District Chamber of Trade. Morecambe Town Council has enquired about the Carnforth Wednesday Market and its effect on trade and footfall as they plan to hold a quarterly artisan market. The outline plans for the weekend of the Queen's Jubilee was discussed and the Chamber agreed that their contribution would be a 'Jubilee Window Competition'. They will continue to be present at planning meetings for the whole weekend. The Chamber have sent an article for the next edition of the *Carnforth Express* to the Proper Officer. It was then **RESOLVED that the reports of Town, Ward and County Councillors and Outside Bodies be noted.**



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22006

Finance & Governance Committee: Councillor Grisenthwaite reported on the recommendations and actions arising from the meeting of the Committee held 10th January 2022, including:

- 1) Recommendation to redesignate the post of Civic Hall Manager to Facilities Manager with effect from 1st December 2021 at the reported hours per week and pay scale and that the post to be independently evaluated;
- 2) Recommendation that the council accepts the revised offer for Zoom Conference Software with immediate effect;
- 3) Bank reconciliation and Summary of Receipts & Payments as at 31st December 2021;
- 4) Payments List recommended for approval as presented by the Proper Officer.

After some comments and questions it was **RESOLVED that the Finance and Governance Committee report recommendations and actions, including Payments List, be approved subject to an additional payment for unpaid window cleaning being added for authorisation.**

22007

REVISED ESTIMATES 2021/22 & DRAFT BUDGET & PRECEPT 2022/23: Councillor Grisenthwaite outlined the work of the Finance & Governance Committee over the last couple of months on reviewing estimates for 2021/22 and developing a budget and recommended precept for 2022/23. The point was made that the Council had achieved much in 2021/22 despite it being another untypical year with challenges arising from the ongoing implications of the coronavirus pandemic and an unplanned decision taken by the Town Council to take on the operation and management of Crag Bank Village Hall from June 2021. Councillors were advised that the budget had been prepared on a '*continuation of services*' basis with an increase broadly in line with inflation of 5%. It was acknowledged that the recommended budget has not been amended to reflect the potentially significant increases in energy costs from April that have recently been reported.

The Proper Officer was then invited to present his report covering revised budget estimates for 2021/22 and a draft budget for 2022/23.

The Council were asked to note that payments for 2021/2022 are estimated to be £54,030 in excess of the Precept for the year (£85,599) mainly due to the Council's decision to take on Crag Bank Village Hall and investment to secure the long-term viability of this highly valued community asset. There had also been additional costs following a decision to run the first ever Carnforth Street Festival last August but robust risk assessments and sound financial management means that the Council's plans for 2021/22 are still expected to be achieved.



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The budget recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee estimates a net budget (Precept) requirement of £92,213, representing an increase on the previous year of £6,614. However, the Finance & Governance Committee recommend a Precept of £90,000 with the balance (£2,213) being met from Reserves. The Proper Officer had advised that whilst the Council could determine to do this it is only sustainable in the short-term to reduce any unforeseen risks.

It was reported that with a small increase in the Tax Base for 2022/2023 a Precept of £90,000 equates to an annual Council Tax bill on a Band D property of £54.54 - an increase on the previous year of £2.62 (or £0.22 per month).

Given the improvements that the Council has made in its planning and budget management arrangements, the Finance & Governance Committee supported the Proper Officer's recommendation that draft budgets covering the Council's plans over three financial years be put in place setting out the Council's '*direction of travel*' and so that resources can be focused over a longer period of time.

Turning to the Council's Reserves, the Finance & Governance Committee recommended that existing earmarked Reserves be retained (albeit at adjusted amounts) and that General Reserves equivalent to three months operating costs be achieved within the next three years. The planned budget presented by the Proper Officer also set out the short and longer term projects that had been previously identified by Council and the estimated carry forward at the end of 2021/22. Councillor Grisenthwaite commented on quotations previously commissioned for replacing heating at the Council venues and the need to seek expert advice on bidding for external funding, and possible borrowing, to fund these important projects. Councillors asked several questions on the budget, reserves and energy costs and it was then unanimously **RESOLVED to approve the recommendations of the Finance & Governance Committee, that:**

- 1) the draft outturn for 2021/2022 and budget for 2022/2023 be approved;**
- 2) the Precept for 2022/23 is set at £90,000 and notified to Lancaster City Council;**
- 3) a target level for General Reserves of £32,500 to be achieved within three years is endorsed;**
- 4) the Council develops plans and budgets for the three year period 2023 / 2024 – 2025 / 2026 together with any Earmarked Reserves over that period and;**
- 5) the Council commits to its longer-term projects and plans and develops risk management and delivery strategies and budgets accordingly**



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22008 **Planning applications & statutory consultations:** Councillors considered the following planning applications and road traffic orders:

Application No:	Description
21/01452/FUL	Removal of external walls and windows to side elevation to create covered external area, installation of windows & doors, installation of cladding to front, rear and side elevations, to facilitate use of rear unit as a café/restaurant, erection of a bin store & installation of package treatment plant – Lake Coast & Dale Leisure, Scotland Road, Carnforth LA5 9RF: Recommendation: Support in principle - add comments on mitigating impact on local air quality and opportunities to improve bio-diversity through tree planting
21/01538/FUL	Erection of a two-storey side extension, erection of single storey front & rear extension & erection of new boundary wall and gates – 178 Lancaster Road, Carnforth LA5 9EF Recommendation: Support in principle - comments on the use of sustainable materials in line with objectives set out in the Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan
21/01566/FUL	Demolition of existing conservatory to the rear & the erection of a single storey extension to the rear elevation & a first floor extension to the side elevation – 114A North Road, Carnforth LA5 9LX: Recommendation: Support in principle

Councillor Smith reported on each planning application outlining the conclusions and recommendations of the Town Development and Planning Committee, After some observations and comments, it was **RESOLVED to approve the recommendations of the Town Development & Planning Committee as set out.**

22009 **Planning Authority Decisions:** Councillors considered the up-to-date position on decisions of the planning authority (Lancaster City Council) on planning applications previously considered. It was noted that two planning applications had been permitted and five are awaiting decision. Councillors commented that there had been a reduction in the number of undecided planning applications indicating that the backlog was being addressed by the planning authority. It was then **RESOLVED that the update on the planning authority's decisions be noted.**



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22010

Property & Environment Committee: Councillor Watson reported on the recommendations and actions arising from the meeting of the Committee held 4th January 2022, including:

- 1) Quotations to be sought to remove and replace fencing around Crag Bank Village Hall;
- 2) Replacement of/alternatives to the wall heaters in the room used by Crag Bank Under 5's to be considered as part of the project to replace the heating for the whole building;
- 3) Proper Officer to make enquiries with a view to responsibility for lighting adjacent to Ashtrees Surgery being established;
- 4) Removal of ivy on Carnforth Civic Hall;
- 5) Painting of the lobby at Crag Bank Village Hall over the February half-term;
- 6) Ongoing review of storage at Crag Bank Village Hall;
- 7) Portable Appliance Testing of all electrical assets to be completed by 31st January 2022;
- 8) Inspection and testing of fire extinguishers and fire safety at Crag Bank Village Hall;
- 9) Projects in 2022/23

There were no questions and it was **RESOLVED that that the report, actions and recommendations of the Property & Environment Committee be noted and approved.**

22011

Town Development & Planning Committee: Councillor Smith reported on the actions and resolutions arising from the Town Development & Planning Committee held on 10th January 2022, including:

- 1) Action being taken to repair the clock at the 'Sizzle Inn';
- 2) An interesting presentation on Community Led Housing;
- 3) Consideration of proposed 5G upgrade to the Vodafone network and a recommendation that the Council makes no comment;
- 4) Updates and next steps on Committee actions;
- 5) Queen's Platinum Jubilee / Carnforth Big Weekend actions and planning update;
- 6) Update on signage at Carnforth Station Car Park;
- 7) Action to arrange a meeting with Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council on Highways and air quality matters;
- 8) Street naming on the Scotland Road development;
- 9) Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan which is now ready for formal submission to the planning authority and inspector subject to Town Council's approval,

Councillors noted that community led housing allows local people to manage projects to *'solve local housing problems, create affordable homes and encourage strong communities'*.



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It was felt that this could be considered alongside the implementation of the Carnforth Neighborhood Plan.

The Town Council expressed their pride in the quality of the completed Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan and congratulated the Working Group and Proper Officer, consultants and the local community on reaching this important milestone.

Councillors commented on the outline plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in Carnforth and it was pointed out that Leighton Hall will also be holding events over the same weekend.

ACTION: Proper Officer to liaise with Leighton Hall on Queen's Platinum Jubilee plans

After some comments and questions, it was then **RESOLVED that that the report, actions and recommendations of the Town Development and Planning Committee be noted and that the Carnforth Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents be approved and submitted to Lancaster City Council.**

22012 **Correspondence:** The Proper Officer presented the schedule of correspondence received and previously circulated to Councillors. It was reported that appropriate action had or will be taken by the Officers / Councillors / Committees to address matters arising from the correspondence received.

It was noted that the 'I'm a Councillor, get me out of here' exercise with the 1st Carnforth Scouts had been widely reported in the media, regionally and nationally. It was then **RESOLVED that the correspondence received be noted and that assigned actions be considered at each Committee meeting and reported to full Council as required.**

22013 **Items for next Agenda:** Councillors suggested that a report of the plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and an update on the Eden of the North project and the Town Council's strategy going forward be considered at the next meeting of Carnforth Town Council. Ward Councillor Guilding offered to report on the outcome of the planning application submitted by Eden which is being considered by the City Council's Planning Committee on 31st January.

22014 **Date and time of next meeting:** The next meeting of the 'ordinary' Town Council will be on **Wednesday 16th February 2022 commencing at 6:30pm.** The meeting closed at 8:05pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Biddle".

Clerk to the Council Date: 16th February 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. O. Branyan".

Chair:

Date: 16th February 2022