



Carnforth Town Council

Minutes of meeting held on 17th January 2024 at 6:30pm at Carnforth Civic Hall

Present: Councillors Grisenthwaite (Town Mayor); Gardner; Laurence; Parker; Richmond; Roe, Smith and Turner.

In attendance: Councillor Louise Belcher (part)

24001 Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillor Bromilow and Jones (unwell) and Councillor Hanna (another commitment) and accepted. Apologies also received from County Councillor Phillippa Willaimson

24002 Declaration of interests and dispensations: Declarations of interest relating to connections with local organisations were made and accepted.

There were no declarations of interest or request for dispensations specifically relating to items on the agenda for this meeting.

24003 Urgent Business: Councillor Smith requested that there be a discussion on the latest position with the whereabouts and plans for the Carnforth Station Clock.

On the advice of the Town Clerk, it was **RESOLVED that the issue be discussed at the end of the meeting and that the press and public be excluded in accordance with Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.** At this point, Councillor Roe, a trustee of the Station Trust, requested and was granted a dispensation to enable him to be in attendance and to comment on discussions relating to this matter.

24004 Minutes: Subject to a minor amendment, it was **RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of Carnforth Town Council held on 20th December 2023 be approved.**

24005 Adjournment for public discussion and information only updates:

- 1) **Public Discussion:** There were no members of the public in attendance.
- 2) **Councillor & Clerk updates / matters:** The Town Mayor and Councillors reported on a range of actions and activities in the last month including:
 - a) Attendance at community events and the civic funeral of Councillor Paul Gardner;
 - b) Outstanding planning enforcement matters;
 - c) Ongoing issues and action relating to the heating system at Crag Bank Village Hall;
 - d) A pre-planning engagement forum to consider a proposal connected to the Barnfield development site adjacent to the Porsche garage;



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- e) A request to allow allotment holders from around the Lancaster District to visit Carnforth Highfield Allotments and share experiences, and;
- f) The award of web design and hosting to Netwise UK Ltd and a recommendation that Carnforth Town Council changes its domain name to:
carnforthtowncouncil.gov.uk

- 3) **Reports of Ward Councillors:** Ward Councillor Belcher reported on recent planning applications and Lancaster City Council Planning Committee decisions. She also offered her support to any representations relating to 1 and 2 Station Buildings Carnforth. (Councillor Belcher then left the meeting)
- 4) **Reports from outside bodies:** Councillor Parker reported on a recent meeting of the Carnforth Chamber of Trade including details of their Annual Meeting and a planned 'Expo' on 23rd March 2024 at the Royal Station Hotel.

It was then **RESOLVED that reports of Town Councillors, the Town Clerk & Outside Bodies be noted and that Carnforth Town Council approves a gov.uk domain name**

24006 Budget Outturn 2023/24 & Proposed Budget and Precept 2024/2025: The Town Clerk in his role as Responsible Finance Officer presented a report on the outturn for the financial year ending 31st March 2024 and the recommended budget and precept for 2024/2025. The report outlined the work carried out by the Finance & Governance Committee including submissions from other committees and the Town Council's plans for the next financial year and beyond and associated opportunities and risks.

Councillors were asked to note that:

- the proposed precept, whilst representing a significant increase in percentage terms, would mean that for the majority of properties in Carnforth (Bands A – D) the amount payable would be between £1.34 and £2.00 per week; and;
- that in order to keep the tax burden as low as practicable, the proposed Reserves for 2024/2025 represented a risk that there would be insufficient funds available for any significant unforeseen calls on the budget.

The recommendations of the Finance and Governance Committee were:

- a) **Carnforth Town Council considers the draft budget statement and determines whether to make further changes or approve a precept of £182,052 for 2024/2025;**



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- b) A target level for General Reserves of £25,000 is endorsed and that for 2024/2025 all other earmarked reserves are subsumed within this amount;
- c) Subject to a) above the Town Mayor signs the formal demand to Lancaster City Council and that this be submitted by 9th February 2024 for the approved precept for the financial year April 2024 to March 2025;
- d) A communications strategy is developed to support the budget and precept determined by Carnforth Town Council for the financial year 2024/2025, and:
- e) That during 2024 / 2025 the Council develops its approved Capital Strategy and plans for a three-year planned programme

There followed a detailed discussion and Councillors asked several questions.

It was then RESOLVED:

- That the Finance & Governance Committee and Town Clerk be thanked for their work on producing a balanced budget given the many challenges facing the Town Council and the local community, and
- That the opportunities and risks as outlined be noted and that the recommendations of the Finance & Governance Committee be approved in full.

24007 **Planning applications & statutory consultations:** Councillors considered the following planning applications and road traffic orders:

Application No:	Description
	No planning applications to consider
Traffic Regulation Orders:	
	Highfield Road – 12 th January 2024 09:30 to 15:30 to allow telegraph pole renewal works to be carried out
	Borwick Lane, Warton – 25 th January 2024 09:30 to 15:30 to allow telegraph pole replacement works to be carried out

After discussion it was **RESOLVED that the traffic regulation orders be noted.**

24008 **No. 1 & 2 Station Buildings:** The Town Clerk reported on actions taken following concerns raised by Councillors, residents and local businesses in relation to 1 and 2 Station Buildings, Warton Road following high winds. The nearby Conservative Club had contacted Carnforth Town Council asking for its support in ensuring that these buildings are made safe.



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Councillors were advised that the Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service and Lancaster City Council had been alerted immediately and action taken to remove any immediate dangers.

It is understood that Lancaster City Council is currently working with the owner of 1 Station Buildings.

It was noted that emergency works had been carried out in 2019 to make 2 Station Buildings safe.

After a number of comments it was **RESOLVED that Councillors and the Town Clerk be congratulated on their prompt action and that Lancaster City Council be invited to the next meeting of Carnforth Town Council to provide an update on actions being carried out to make the buildings safe.**

24009 Planning Authority Decisions: Councillors considered the up-to-date position on decisions of the planning authority (Lancaster City Council) on planning applications previously deliberated by Town Councillors.

Four planning applications are awaiting decision and one had been permitted.

It was then **RESOLVED that the update on the planning authority's decisions be noted.**

24010 Town Development & Planning Committee: Councillor Parker reported on the recommendations, updates and actions arising from the meeting of the Town Development & Planning Committee held on 8th January 2024, including:

- 1) Urgent business relating to dangerous buildings at 1 and 2 Station Buildings, Carnforth;
- 2) Invitation from Lancaster City Council to a pre-engagement forum;
- 3) Consideration of temporary road closures and planning applications;
- 4) Budget monitoring and planning;
- 5) Updates on events planned in 2024 including Carnforth Fringe; D-Day 80 commemorations and War Memorial Centenary;
- 6) Road safety matters.

After some comments. it was **RESOLVED that the report, actions and recommendations of the Town Development & Planning Committee be noted and approved.**



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24011 Property & Environment Committee: Councillor Richmond reported on the recommendations, updates and actions arising from the meeting of the Property & Environment Committee held on 9th January 2024, including:

- 1) Possible provision of scaffolding to carry out works to the Market Street Clock;
- 2) Environmental matters including proposal for the maintenance of trees and planters on Ashtrees Way transferring to Carnforth Town Council;
- 3) Public realm updates;
- 4) Occupancy rates and other performance indicators relating to community assets;
- 5) Ongoing heating problems and update on the feasibility study at Crag Bank Village Hall;
- 6) Budget monitoring and planning

After some comments. It was **RESOLVED that the report, actions and recommendations of the Property & Environment Committee be noted and approved.**

24012 Finance & Governance Committee: Councillor Grisenthwaite reported on the recommendations, updates and actions arising from the meeting of the Finance & Governance Committee held on 10th January 2024, including:

- 1) Five recommendations to Carnforth Town Council relating to the Budget Outturn 2023/24 & Proposed Budget and Precept 2024/2025 (Agenda item 24006 refers);
- 2) Bank reconciliation and budget monitoring as at 31st December 2024 (Month 9);

After some comments and questions, it was **RESOLVED that the report, actions and recommendations of the Finance & Governance Committee be noted.**

24013 Payments for Authorisation: Councillors considered an updated list of payments awaiting authorisation.

After comments it was **RESOLVED that payments as set out be authorised.**

24014 Correspondence: Councillors considered correspondence received in the last month.

It was then **RESOLVED that** the correspondence be noted.

24015 Items for next Agenda: Any further updates from Lancaster City Council on 1 and 2 Station Buildings, Carnforth



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24016 **Date and time of next meeting:** The next meeting of the 'ordinary' Town Council will be held on **Wednesday 21st February 2024 at 6:30pm at Carnforth Town Council offices.**

The meeting closed at 8:15pm

24017 **Exclusion of Press and Public:** It was **RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business, on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of that Act**

24018 **Carnforth Station Clock:** Councillor Smith raised several matters relating to the Station Clock that were discussed in some detail.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Bales".

Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JM Grisenthwaite".

Chair

Date: 17th January 2024