



**Bradford on Avon
Town Council**



**LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD**

Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting of
BRADFORD ON AVON TOWN COUNCIL held
on Wednesday 21st July 2021 at 7p.m in St. Margaret's Hall

Attendance – Town Council

Cllr K Bessant
Cllr S Blackwell
Cllr D Garwood
Cllr S Gibson
Cllr A Kay
Cllr S McNeill-Ritchie
Cllr J Parker
Cllr T Trimble
Cllr K Vigar
Cllr J Vittles
Mrs S Bartlett (Town Clerk)
Mr I Brown (Director of Operations)
Ms S Hawkins (Accountant)

Apologies: Cllr E Franklin and Cllr A Potter

Chairman congratulated the Town Clerk and her team on acquiring the Local Council Award Scheme Quality Gold status for the council despite difficult working conditions. She was presented with a plant.

Before this item commenced the Chairman stated that she had a small introduction and would open it up to questions from the public before taking it to debate.

Cllr McNeill-Ritchie said that he was unhappy with the last minutes and that in his mind they did not correctly reflect the meeting. He said there were 45 minutes of debate missed. Chairman advised that he could have taken this matter up with the Town Clerk. He advised that he and another councillor could have asked for an Extraordinary Full Council meeting before this evening, as the Chairman has 7 days in which to call a meeting. He thought the Town Council should have made a decision at an Extraordinary Full Council meeting and advised Wiltshire Council whether the social distancing scheme goes or stays, irrespective of whether Wiltshire Council took any notice or not. Chairman explained that when the agenda papers were sent out on the 16th July 2021 she did not know at that time that Wiltshire Council would be making a decision the following Monday 19th July to remove the social distancing scheme, as no longer required. Cllr Trimble advised that he had given all members a chance to comment on the social distancing scheme. He had also invited Cllr McNeill-Ritchie to attend a meeting at Wiltshire Council with the Traffic Officer and other Unitary Councillors. Cllr Vigar said that we had a temporary scheme for social distancing and there was no legal basis to continue with it.

30. Declarations of interest

Cllrs Garwood declared a non-pecuniary interest as he lives in the town. Cllr Kay said so do all the other members.

31. Social Distancing Scheme

1. Another person spoke on behalf of Barney Weston from New Road. He said that Mr Weston seeks assurance from the Town Council that if another scheme is planned for New Road that suitable mitigation measures are incorporated. He would now like to plan his future life.

2. Stephanie Edwards said that she has heard that Wiltshire Council have received over 60 emails in support of the social distancing scheme. She thinks more statistics are required. She notes that many schemes in other towns have been well received. She does not think we should rip ours out and start again which will cost a shed load of money. Chairman advised that all the social distancing schemes will be removed in other towns, as they were not permanent but Temporary Traffic Regulations Orders (T.T.R.O.s). The way the system works is have statutory consultation to establish what you would like, design and a permanent solution.

3. James Sullivan-Tailyour said that as the current scheme is being removed why is item 4 here at all and to implement piecemeal changes when we have not yet had a consultation? Chairman advised that Whitehill's changes could be considered separately because they would not have any effect on the wider scheme. Chairman said she would discuss other changes in the town under item 4.

4. Ester Gordon-Smith said that she wrote to Highways to ask about our Temporary Traffic Regulation Order T.T.R.O and they wrote back and said it was valid until 17th August 2021 or 18 months. It's a shame now that Wiltshire Council have not asked if the Town Council wanted it to stay longer. Ester said that a T.T.R.O. cannot be made permanent, an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order can, the consultation for E.T.R.O. happens after the E.T.R.O. has been made and there is no requirement to wait for statutory consultation for a new thing to be put in. However, if we want a decent design that takes in account things like reducing through traffic through the town and problems at New Road and balancing the requirements of the people in Wine Street and Newtown, we will need Wiltshire Council Highways Department to undertake a design. The understanding I have from Wiltshire Council Highways Department that they take a design for us a design process should be based on some kind of consultation it may not be a formal consultation until an E.T.R.O. has been made. Why are we not pressing for a design to happen as soon as possible based on some sort of informal consultation from the town such that an E.T.R.O can be made in March, as a result of the consultation it is decided to keep some of the scheme it is not ripped out arbitrarily costing the taxpayer valuable money.

Chairman said this is what we are doing, and she was interested to learn about an E.T.R.O. from her. Ester said that Winsley had a E.T.R.O. which became permanent for their cycle route. The Chairman said that was delivered under a different tranche of finance for promoting cycling and walking.

Cllr Garwood asked when would the modelling actually start? Chairman replied that Wiltshire Council were looking at funding for this and that hopefully a joint consultation will start in the autumn.

5. Joe Viall from Springfield asked questions on the social distancing scheme and was told by the Chairman that the scheme was being taken out. He wanted to know which councillors to target and Cllr Kay took exception to his inappropriate questioning. She said she was an unpaid councillor and did not like his threat campaign. Cllr Garwood said that an unintended consequence from the social distancing scheme was that the traffic flowed very well. Joe said he was for a balanced system.

Cllr Vittles said that the town was split over the system and that we had to look at it constructively and Joe's comments were not relevant to anything. Cllr Trimble said that we would be modelling different scenarios of traffic calming. Cllr Kay said that pedestrian safety has always been the priority.

6. Elliott asked that when the traffic gets back to normal would the traffic during Covid be taken into account, as it was much lower then. He did not like the one-way system. Cllr Trimble said that during the Covid period, the traffic was 10% to 15% down measured by movements over the town bridge.

Cllr Kay said that she realised most people has had one or two vaccinations now and we were still in the middle of a pandemic with a third wave of 50,000 new cases per day. She realised that there was no legal or government requirement, but she encouraged everyone that we all still need to socially distance and carry on as we were to protect each other.

Chairman read out the press release that Wiltshire Council's Cabinet on Monday advised by Public Health Wiltshire for all social distancing schemes to be removed, starting with Devizes today, followed by Marlborough and other towns in Wiltshire, so it will be removed.

32. Requests to Wiltshire Council's CATG (Community Area Transport Group)

1. Paul Hayward from New Road said that prolonged exposure to noise generated by continuous fast-moving traffic is a known health hazard, disrupting sleep, causing stress, and in the long-term contributing to other serious conditions such as high blood pressure, stroke, and diabetes. I would like to suggest therefore the following matter be added to the final bullet point in item 4 on the agenda so that it reads as follows.

“..... to improve pedestrian safety, vehicle flow, air quality, and to reduce traffic volume and noise”.

He said that noise was the most disruptive element.

Cllr Garwood said that you can get noise cameras to record illegal exhaust systems.

Cllr Parker said she lives in a quiet area of Bradford on Avon; all you hear all day is the occasional work person. At night after 9pm she says it is noisy with cars and motor bikes. She did not know what could be done about this, as this is everywhere in the town.

2. Kate Nottage from Whitehill. In the meeting on July 6th the Councillors were very sympathetic to making a separate case for Whitehill from the social distancing one way system because our experience is that since the change of designation at the top of Whitehill to 'no entry' something completely unambiguous, the experience of being on Whitehill has been infinitely improved. The evidence that Whitehill was a rat run goes back many years before covid appeared on our horizon and our experience now is that things have been massively improved by having a simple designation of no entry at the top of Whitehill. Why can't you regard the consultation on this issue as starting today there is evidence for many years prior to Covid and our experience since social distancing is that no entry is a designation that works, so please don't extend the consultation way into the future, you don't need to just change the designation at the top of Whitehill, no drains required. Chairman said this scheme is much further ahead and that WC/CATG meets next Monday to discuss this.

3. Tessa Edgecombe said that as a resident of Market Street she thought a no right turn out of Newtown would be a good idea and she would like something done about speeding through Market Street. She said it will be dangerous for people trying to get in and out of their homes when the road goes back to two ways. She said she was not a nervous person, but she was quite anxious about this. People with pushchairs will be at risk too. She has had a couple of instances where vans driving at speed down the pavement all night. She could also hear the clunking off the pavement outside her door. She wants to know what will be done about it. Chairman said that the Highways Authority had thought about putting bollards on the pavement. Cllr Garwood said that bendy bollards have been added to Market Street to protect the shops. He said the pavement was not very wide, perhaps 2½' wide with front doors by there. He said that the pavement was cracked there. He would like Market Street added to the list.

4. Lindsey Flower from Whitehill said that her entrance was access only. She found motorists driving quickly in an area where they should not be. She was concerned for the children walking to school. She said that her next car will be a hybrid, and this will be a quiet electric car, so children will not be able to hear her coming and in roads like Whitehill that is quite dangerous scooting towards the main road and what with the camber on the pavement and no pavement at the bottom. She would like the councillors to support the no entry sign remaining.

5. Glenys Lunt from lower Woolley Street sees that lots of people here with their sob stories. Why a no right turn into Market Street, what was the rationale for that? Where is the traffic meant to go? Cllr Trimble says that more consultation needs to be done on this. Chairman said that the rationale for that came from some of the Newtown and Wine Street residents.

6. Peter Taylor from Whitehill. Access issues. People live on a hill and have steep driveways. They had a choice before which way to turn into their properties. He said there is a sub power station there, and parking for two cars, if double yellow lines were placed there for about 10 metres, that would give a turning circle. His question was will you take this on board?

7. Jerry Scott from Whitehill by putting to put the no entry access only road was constantly ignored, pedestrians going up to the schools, parking on the right-hand side have to go in the road to pass the parked cars Pedestrians will be killed and quieter cars will not help the situation. He has been jumping out of the way of cars long before Covid.

8. Gail Plant said that she questioned the last bullet point on item 4 she was concerned to see vehicle flow included. In the KERB Report from 2019 that Cllr S McNeill-Ritchie Chaired, it said that we need to find a deterrent to through traffic. Chairman and Cllr Bessant said that pollution levels were reduced because traffic is moving rather than being stationary. Cllr Kay said that the producer of pollution is the car and that we need to reduce the traffic. She suggested 20mph across the town even on 'A' roads. We have a 13th Century bridge and we need to reduce speed with smiley faces. Cllr McNeill-Ritchie said that if you sort out the traffic volume and the rest will follow.

Cllr Trimble said that improving vehicle flow means making it slower and steadier.

9. Maxine Harraway from Wine Street. She said that children have to walk up Wine Street with no pavements on either side. At the moment there are no cameras or fines imposed. She said it should be no access from the top of Wine Street and no access to the town centre. If no right turn put in place, then we would need lower speed limits on Wine Street as it is very dangerous.

10. Ester Gordon-Smith said under whose powers would the additional signage be placed some sort of e.d.i. signs should not block pushchairs or wheelchairs on narrow pavements or be a problem for cyclists.

11. Paige Balas from Newtown if no turn down Market Street, then cars will back up and idle in Newtown and the streets nearby.

Cllr Parker would like Trowbridge Road taken into consideration too as it is quite narrow. She said there had been a death there in the past. She has seen people with their Zimmers in the road by the railway bridge.

Cllr Trimble said that 'except cyclists' should be included on the motion.

Cllr Bessant said on Trowbridge Road and every time she walks into town a vehicle mounts the pavement. She said that 20mph should be for the whole town not just the town centre.

Following the Full Council meeting on the 6th of July 2021 and considering the points raised in the debate. It was proposed by Cllr Trimble seconded by Cllr Vigar and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED:** that Bradford on Avon Town Council recommends that Wiltshire Council's Community Area and Transport Group (CATG) be asked to: -

(i) Consider implementing a permanent 'no entry' (except cyclists) at the top of Whitehill and examine mitigation measures for some residences where this might raise access issues.

After further discussion, Cllr Gibson proposed, Cllr Vigar and with 9 in favour and 1 abstention, it was **RESOLVED:** -

(ii) To consider the design and implementation of measures to reduce rat running on Wine Street and Newtown with the possibility of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order.

And that the Town Council:

(i) After discussion it was decided to not pursue the signage for social distancing in the town, as not enforceable.

Cllr McNeill-Ritchie proposed, Cllr Kay seconded and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED:**

(ii) Reiterates its commitment to holding a consultation in the autumn on a future scheme to reduce traffic volumes through the town in order to improve pedestrian safety, vehicle flow, air quality, and noise reduction, throughout the whole town.

33. Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

After discussion, it was agreed that all Councillors and Officers attend the first meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to update the Neighbourhood Plan. At a date to be agreed in August, the Town Council's Planning Consultant will come and brief councillors and Officers on the way forward to update the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Vigar reported that she had a contact in the town who could help with the ecological impact.

The meeting closed at 9.02p.m.