

ATHERSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

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DOCUMENT	MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
VENUE	North Warwickshire Borough Council, Council House, South Street, Atherstone, Warwickshire, CV9 1DE
DATE AND TIME	Wednesday 21 June 2023 7.00pm
IN ATTENDANCE	Town Councillors: Chambers, Jones, Barnett, Wright, M Short, G Short, Wilkinson, A Wickham-Young, Forwood, Evans, Smith, Collins Borough and County Councillors: Cllr N Dirveiks, Cllr D Clews, Cllr R Jarvis, Cllr R Taylor, Cllr D Reilly, Public: L Donnelly (Atherstone Partnership) Police: Police & Crime Commissioner P Seccombe, N Tipton, PCSO Scott, Inspector A Wiggin
APOLOGIES	Councillors: Pickard, County Cllr M Singh
CHAIRMAN	Cllr Barnett
CLERK	Deputy Clerk Sally Oldham Odette Ghent Town Clerk, also in attendance

Item			Notes
1.	APOLOGIES		
	Noted		
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, DISPENSATIONS FOR DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST, DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY		
	Cllr Evans declared an interest in Dickens.		
3.	PUBLIC SESSION (maximum 30 minutes)		
	A resident reported daily anti-social behaviour and drug related issues and feels they are in a vulnerable position. PSCO Scott arranged to meet the resident.		
	Borough Councillor Ray Jarvis asked what are the intentions of the new Council, in respect of using the proceeds from the sale of the Old Mortuary towards the Cemetery extension. It was confirmed as yet, the new council have not had time to discuss this in detail but are aware the funds must be used for capital projects.		
	Borough Councillor Denise Clews reminded Council it is the Armed Forces Day on Saturday 24 June 2023; the Clerk will post this on ATC Facebook page.		
	P12 06/23		

will

	<p>Borough Councillor Rachel Taylor reported she had attended an Amateur Dramatics Society event at OSCA a building owned by ATC, she asked ATC if they would consider installing air conditioning as the heat level in the building is high. Cllr Wright suggested they apply for grant funding.</p> <p>Laura Donnelly reminded Council she has previously asked what ATC Social Media Plan was, it was confirmed this will be looked at.</p>		
4.	<p>REPORTS FROM POLICE, COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS as per written reports.</p> <p>The Police & Crime Commissioner Philip Seccombe attended the meeting along with Neil Tipton Head of Media and Communications for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire. Questions to them were sent in advance – see appendix A at the end of the minutes for the questions and answers.</p> <p>Cllr Chambers asked what involvement the Police have with Cohort 4, who support women with domestic abuse they are a local charitable organisation and have reported there is not much active contact with the police. Inspector A Wiggin confirmed she was not aware of Cohort4, WCC police use Safeline, Refuge and Victim Support, information will be sent to the police re Cohort4. Inspector A Wiggin explained where there are high risk cases, high levels of violence or incidents a case management plan is created. Where there is Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) in place, the SNT may visit to provide support.</p> <p>Cllr Chambers asked on what basis does Atherstone get priority over other areas. Inspector A Wiggin confirmed she is in charge of the four areas in North Warwickshire and added that Atherstone have the advantage of the Rural Crime Team which adds an additional 4 staff.</p> <p>Boxing Club, Inspector A Wiggin confirmed she has tried hard for the Boxing Club to continue but they need a premises as the fitness club where it was held has withdrawn their facility. For it to be re-established it needs support of the Force for it to continue as it also needs Public Liability Insurance. The club has not functioned for 3 months following the departure of PC Walton but there are still 2 police staff qualified coaches to deliver the activities once a premises is found. It was agreed to suspend the meeting to allow Borough Councillor Ray Jarvis to speak proposed Cllr Barnett seconded Cllr Wright. Cllr Jarvis was under the assumption the facility was still available and will speak to Inspector Wiggin outside of the meeting about this.</p> <p>P13 06/23</p>		

m. h. Burt

Cllr D Clews asked the PCC what is the criteria for awarding grants that he says he has available as applications made have been declined. An example given a recent application for a Speed Gun for Sheepy Road was turned down.

The PCC replied he cannot fund Speed Guns in every area but advised there are Laser Speeds Guns in Rugby that were purchased on the basis that they can be loaned out to Speed Watch Groups to use he will look into this as Cllr D Clews advised these were also turned down.

Borough Councillor Rachel Taylor reported she was staggered with the low numbers of reported drug issues in Atherstone and feels since the pandemic people appear less able/willing to speak in person to people about this.

The PCC confirmed the following methods of reporting to the Police.

By telephone:

Dial 999 in an emergency. That means if an incident poses a danger to life, or involves the use, or immediate threat of use, of violence, there is serious injury to a person or serious damage to a property. Equally, use 999 if the crime is or is likely to be serious and is in progress, or an offender has just been disturbed at the scene, or an offender has been detained and poses, or is likely to pose, a risk to other people. For road traffic collisions, use 999 when there is or likely to be serious personal injury or the road is blocked and there is dangerous or excessive build up of traffic.

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, you can use the textphone service 18000 or text police on 999 if you've pre-registered with the [emergencySMS service](#).

If you're a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can call [999 BSL](#) to use a remote BSL interpreter.

For all **non-emergency contact** with Warwickshire Police by telephone, please call **101**. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use the textphone service on 18001 101.

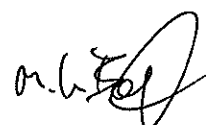
Online:

Online contact with the police is dealt with in exactly the same way as non-emergency 101 phone calls. Visit www.warwickshire.police.uk and click the 'Report' button to report an incident or make contact online.

Crimestoppers:

You can also contact Crimestoppers to anonymously report a crime or suspicious behaviour. Call 0800 555 111 or go online at <http://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

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Cllr Jarvis challenged the PCC regarding the long wait times when calling 101, recent figures reported 8 minutes but the reality is much longer.

The PCC replied that the wait time is not acceptable as the target time is 4 minutes and part of the PCC element in the Council Tax increase for 2023/24 is to recruit 15 new call handlers, also looking at innovative ways to improve the 101.

Cllr Jarvis also mentioned the Warwickshire Police website are advertising a route into the Police that does not require a degree. The PCC confirmed this is a pilot scheme to attract people to apply, for example people coming out of other Forces like the Army.

Cllr A Forwood reported misleading information when reporting percentages on crimes.

PCSO Scott reported the following incidents in the last month.

6 x Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

13 x theft (10 shop theft) 5 of which were one individual that has been arrested and served a Community Protection Notice. (CPN)

2 x car theft

4 x damage

4 x violence (male arrested with the help of the CCTV)

10 x domestic

Reports of ASB via the CCTV, the SNT have visited 22 homes for youth ASB.

The local SNT had a meeting with Staffordshire Police to try and work together to protect the borders, Staffs police are very envious of the CCTV arrangements in Atherstone.

Good news, a cannabis grow in long Street has been shut down.

There have been regular school patrols at TQEA.

Eviction with the help of NWBC housing

Drug dealer's car recovered

Trading standards recovered counterfeit tobacco from a shop in Long Street.

Homeless male remanded.

Prolific shoplifter arrested with the help of CCTV and issued a CPN.

There are a few Graffiti tags appearing in the town, these will be cleaned up with the help of the Community Payback Team.

Retail radio is being promoted in the Town.

The Junior PCSO scheme at Outwoods School has now finished which the children really enjoyed.

Borough Councillor Rachel Taylor praised the regular Social Media posts by the SNT.

Bin thefts, PCSO Scott confirmed the Arcade bins have now been security marked, the vehicle involved in the theft was identified via CCTV and the registration number will be flagged on ANPR.

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The incident regarding a damaged bin at St Marys Play area, the offender has been identified with the help of CCTV and investigations are ongoing.

PCSO Scott mentioned the possibility of having extra pedestrian railings installed at both the traffic lights and on the opposite side of the entrance of the TQEA school. His concerns are the kerb stones are failing and children are at risk of falling into the road, this would also discourage parents from stopping on the road to drop children of which causes a safety issue.

This has been echoed by Head teacher Neil Harding saying when students are not able to use flooded pathways, they take risks walking on slippery kerbs at the edge of a very busy road which is an accident waiting to happen, in his view.

Standing orders were suspended to allow Cllr Jarvis to speak.
Proposed Cllr Barnett seconded Cllr Wright.

Cllr Jarvis mentioned the £100k of 106 money that will be available relating to the proposed extension to the school. Apparently £70k is to create safety zone outside the school, which mentions 20mph, railings. Cllr Jarvis and Cllr Singh are in communication with WCC to ascertain the priorities for the money available, and if need be, to guide that money into the most needed areas.

Cllr Chambers proposed a letter is written to WCC expressing the concerns raised, seconded Cllr Forwood.

County Councillor report:

Dropped kerbs - In response to Cllr Pickard's question last month, Cllr Singh confirmed WCC are already proposing a series of drop crossings for wheelchair or motorised wheelchairs from St Georges Road to the shop area on Lister Road also into main town to Long Street. A drop crossing on Sheepy Rd outside the cemetery has been completed. The above works are due to go to contractors this month. If there are any other particular locations requiring drop kerbs to contact Cllr Singh.

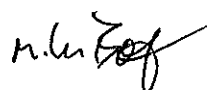
Question from Cllr Chambers regarding concerns raised by residents about the weeds and overgrown vegetation on several roads, including Meadow Street and the Coleshill Road. brambles are now spreading out across pavements which could scratch youngsters in prams and obscure street signs.

Cllr Singh confirmed these roads are the responsibility of NWBC. The Borough Councillors for the ward are Cllr N Dirveiks and R Taylor.

Cllr Singh has spoken to NWBC Streetscape who have confirmed this is in hand and will be completed shortly within their schedule of works.

Cllrs Jarvis and Singh cleaned up the area around the bus shelter and encouraged other Councillors to do likewise.

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	<p>It was suggested ATC write to NWBC Environmental Health and Licensing regarding the increasing amount of cigarette stubs on the pavements in the town. Cllr Singh has asked for a condition in the licence that the pavement outside pubs, cafe, takeaways should be kept clean at all times.</p> <p>Borough Councillor reports</p> <p>See appendix 2 for Cllr Taylor report with an update on item 4 Dangerous Road Junctions.</p> <p>Cllr Taylor also mentioned the re-opening of the public toilets, planning consent has now been granted, there have been some misleading reports on social media about this.</p> <p>The building has to be developed in accordance with the plans submitted, that includes a disabled toilet facility that is accessed externally not through the fast food café, however there are restrictions on the business opening hours of the café (not before 6 am or later than 11pm) but no planning condition requiring the facilities have to be kept open.</p> <p>Cllr Taylor brought up the importance of ATC having a Neighbourhood Plan as Atherstone is one of the few areas that has chosen not to have one and asked if it is something they will consider in the future to ensure more community involvement of planning conditions going forward.</p> <p>Cllr Taylor confirmed she very much wants to be the link between NWBC and ATC.</p> <p>Cllr Jarvis in response to Cllr Taylor confirmed the public toilet redevelopment is a private redevelopment with a public accessible toilet. He attended a recent meeting (Borough Cllr N Dirveiks also attended) regarding the toilets where the opening hours were discussed at length. It was agreed there is no limitation on the hours it can be open.</p> <p>Cllr Evans commented the public toilets previously had restrictions on the opening hours 8am to 6pm.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>ATHERSTONE PARTNERSHIP (AP) See appendix 3 for written report from AP. Cllr Barnett congratulated Laura Donnelly on her appointment as new AP Chair. Laura confirmed that communication is her passion and top priority and hopes to work closely with ATC to bring her knowledge and experience.</p> <p>Agenda item 19b was brought forward to discuss.</p> <p>P17 06/23</p>		

m.h. [Signature]

	<p>Agenda item 19b. Insurance for Pop ups hired from ATC, Cllr Evans confirmed the AP insurance renewal has increased by £500 in order to cover the individual limit of £1k per pop up as insisted by ATC. A pop up was damaged at an event in 2023 and AP insurance would not cover the cost of repair, the pop up was repaired by the supplier at a nominal cost of £50. Cllr Evans asked that rather than insisting on the individual limit of £1k per item if a disclaimer could be put in place that in the event of damage to them the hirer would cover the cost of replacement or repair. ATC would need to check this with their own insurance company, this item will add to July agenda for further discussion.</p> <p>The traffic management road closure training is due for renewal this allows trained volunteers to do road closures for events. The previously training in 2018 which lasts for 5 years included some volunteers from Warton/Polesworth and Coleshill, but ATC paid the full cost of this as part of the grant allocation fund.</p> <p>Written confirmation from the other Councils is required that they will cover the cost of volunteers taking part in the training from their area. Cllr Chambers has been looking into the cost of this, it was agreed that Cllr Evans and Laura Donnelly will organise the course. This will be discussed further at the July meeting.</p>		
6.	<p>Co Option to consider applications: South Ward</p> <p>There were two applications, details of which were shared with Councillors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr J Braithwaite proposed Sara Bishop seconded by Cllr Chambers, Cllr Jones proposed Joshua Wickham-Young seconded Cllr A Wickham-Young.</p> <p>A vote was taken which was won by Sara Bishop who was duly co-opted to South Ward Atherstone.</p>		
7.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF 16 May 2023</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Wright seconded Cllr Barnett Subject to typo change on P11.</p>		
8.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF 16 May 2023</p> <p>There were none.</p> <p>P18 06/23</p>		

9.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE EGM OF 1 June 2023</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Wright seconded Cllr Jones</p>		
10.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EGM OF 1 June 2023</p> <p>Cllr Chambers aired serious concerns that important points were omitted from the minutes and felt the dialogue regarding accuracy of minutes should be with the Chairman, and suggested the formal process should be Councillor comments should go to the chair to decide if changes are to be made.</p>		
11.	<p>INVOICES FOR APPROVAL AND CHEQUES FOR SIGNATURE</p> <p>Cheques:109500 to 109521 for approval.</p> <p>It was resolved to approve the cheques Proposed Cllr Wright seconded by Cllr Wickham-Young</p> <p>Cheques over £500 listed below.</p> <p>Wages £4,237.91 WCC £1,315.94 HMRC £4,109.24 BNP Paribas £541.20 Perennial Landscapes £2,227.20 N Taylor £3,000.00 WALC £1,440.00</p>		
12.	<p>Acceptance of Annual Governance Statement (section 1 of annual return)</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. Proposed Cllr Wright seconded by Cllr Wickham-Young</p>		
13.	<p>Acceptance of Statement of Accounts (section 2 of Annual return)</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. Proposed Cllr Wright seconded by Cllr Evans</p>		
14.	<p>Acceptance of Internal Audit and Review of Findings (section 3 of annual RETURN)</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. Proposed Cllr Wright seconded by Cllr M Short</p> <p>It was noted next year the Internal Audit should be carried out earlier.</p> <p>P19 06/23</p>		



15.	<p>Effectiveness of Internal Audit</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. Proposed Cllr Wright seconded by Cllr Evans</p>		
16.	<p>Acceptance of Completed Annual Return</p> <p>It was resolved to accept this. Proposed Cllr Wright seconded by Cllr Evans</p> <p>Notification of public rights It was noted the date of the notice will be Friday 23 June 2023 with the dates available for inspection of accounts being Monday 26 June 2023 to Friday 4 August 2023</p>		
17.	<p>PLANNING MATTERS</p> <p>a) Planning Lists – inclusive</p> <p>PAP/2023/0163 – 69 Croft Rd, work to 4 silver birch trees.</p> <p>PAP/2023/0216 – 24 Barsby Close, Atherstone. Work to trees in a conservation area.</p> <p>There was no objection to the above as long as out of nesting season.</p> <p><u>Council Training</u></p> <p>Suitable for new Councillors and Council Officers, this eLearning module includes a range of activities to help you develop your knowledge of Parish and Town Councils.</p> <p>b) Decisions: - See attached weekly lists and decisions</p> <p>c) Other Planning Matters</p> <p>Street naming Land adjacent 85 St Georges Road Atherstone</p>		
18.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.</p> <p>E26/27 Remembrance Parade. Cllr Wright declared an interest as an ex Veteran. It was agreed to set up a working group to discuss the arrangements for the 2023 parade proposed Cllr Jones seconded Cllr Wright</p> <p><u>Working group members:</u> Cllr Evans as chair plus: Cllrs Wright, Jones, Braithwaite, Wickham-Young Laura Donnelly (AP) Borough Councillors D Clews, Jarvis</p> <p>P20 06/23</p>		

m.h. Fay

	<p>E35 Open Spaces Consultation: Cllr Chambers reminded Council a response from ATC is required. Cllrs Chambers, Jones, G Short and Borough Cllr Taylor agreed to respond.</p>		
19.	<p>MARKET SQUARE</p> <p>a. Application to use the Market Square – Charity Beer Festival 17-20 August 2023 this was for information only. Cllr Evans declared an interest.</p> <p>b. Gazebos / Insurance – see agenda item 5 Atherstone Partnership where this was discussed.</p>		
20.	<p>ATC COMMUNITY GRANT FUND</p> <p>a. Charity Beer Festival 17-20 August 2023 (including 2022 feedback) This was approved proposed Cllr Wright seconded Cllr Wickham-Young Cllr Evans declared an interest.</p>		
21.	<p>FUTURE TOWN COUNCIL / MARKET EVENTS</p> <p>Cllr Evans asked ATC to consider future events that ATC can arrange it was agreed to defer this to July meeting.</p>		
22.	<p>WRITTEN REPORTS</p> <p>a. Town Clerk's Report - this was noted.</p> <p>It was agreed to change the direct debit for the two office mobile phones to ATC bank account as currently the Clerks pay for these personally and reclaim the cost.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Wickham-Young seconded Cllr G Short</p> <p>b. Deputy Clerk's Report - this was noted.</p> <p>c. Finance (Town Clerk) - this was noted.</p> <p>d. Town Councillors Reports – this was noted.</p> <p>e. Mayor's report – this was noted.</p> <p>f. Cemetery Reports (Deputy Clerk)</p> <p>P21 06/23</p>		

m. G. Taylor

Recent Burials in Atherstone Cemetery

B79 Ronald Luckman – re open to double depth
B281 Daniel Carty – preselect to double depth only.
B279 Dennis Wade – New triple grave
RCE1066 Veronica May Mansfield – re open to single depth
A568 Michael Smith - new ash plot
A528 Tina Simkiss – preselect ash plot.
A480 Royston Jesse Lewis – re open for ashes
N507 Josephine Carding – re open for ashes
B83 Brenda Lucy Knight – re open to double depth
A161 June Doreen Round – re open for ashes
B219 Margaret Bland – Re open to double depth

Recent Memorials

E1466 John Devine – headstone – out of parish.
A560 Peggy Ann Wood – Headstone
RCE838 Brigid Mary Feely - headstone

g. Allotment Report (Deputy Clerk)

Allotment judging will take place on July 11th 2023
It was noted that there are some aggressive bees at Merevale site.

h. Play Areas Report (Deputy Clerk)

A site visit to St Mary's Play area was carried out following a complaint from a neighbouring resident regarding overhanging trees. Cllrs Chambers, M Short, Forwood plus the Deputy Clerk attended, no further action required.

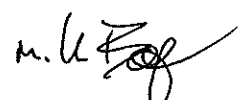
The overhanging trees in St Mary's Play Area from The Ratcliffe Centre, this is in hand WCC Cllr Singh.

The damaged bin caused by anti-social behaviour, see quotations agenda item 24a. The offender was identified with the help of CCTV and the police are making investigations.

i. Arcade report – (Town Clerk)

The front guttering appears to be blocked causing inside water damage to the front upstairs unit, this is in hand and will be cleared out.

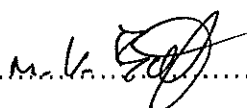
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	<p>PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL</p> <p>It was resolved that, under Section 100A of the local Government Act 1972, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted being.</p> <p>1. Employees, former employees and prospective employees, for e.g., salary of Clerk and Conditions and Terms of Employment.</p> <p>3. Details of the terms of contracts for the acquisition or disposal of property, or for the supply of goods and services.</p> <p>It is advisable in the public interest, as if members of the public were present during the consideration of such business, there would be.</p> <p>disclosure to them of exempt information under paragraphs 1 and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act, that the public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Barnett seconded Cllr Wickham-Young</p>		
23.	<p>MEREVALE ALLOTMENTS LEASE UPDATE.</p> <p>This is in hand ATC Solicitor advised the delay is with the trustees, contact will be made with Merevale Estates.</p>		
24.	<p>QUOTATIONS</p> <p>a. Vandalised litter bin St Mary's Rd Play Area – supply and installation.</p> <p>The quotes were approved.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr seconded by Cllr Wright seconded Cllr Wilkinson</p> <p>b. Lanyards for Town Councillors</p> <p>The quote was approved.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Wickham-Young seconded by Cllr Forwood</p> <p>c. Refreshments for Town Council meeting room bookings.</p> <p>This was not approved.</p>		
	<p>Cllr Chambers proposed to suspend standing orders and to continue the meeting after 9:30pm seconded Cllr Wilkinson</p>		
25.	<p>CCTV</p> <p>1. CCTV Camera 3 two quotes have been received awaiting further clarification from the contractor regarding the installation as requested by the owner of the premises.</p> <p>P23 06/23</p>		

m. h. Fog

	2. UKSPF Funding application – the application from ATC has been submitted to NWBC awaiting the outcome.		
26.	<p>EMPLOYMENT MATTER</p> <p>1) Full Council gives approval for the draft documents as circulated prior to the meeting as below.</p> <p>Shortlisting Matrix, Letter of rejection at shortlisting stage. Call for Interview Delegated authority given to the named Employment Committee to proceed with receiving and shortlisting applications, carrying out all aspects of the interview process and reporting back to a full council meeting with recommendations for appointing Town Clerk /RFO. The appointment only to be made by a vote at Full Council. WALC guidance and template documents to be followed wherever possible tailored to Atherstone Town Council. Reasonable budgets are set for expenses of hiring rooms for the purpose of shortlisting and the interview process (not to exceed £300) Proposed Cllr Jones seconded Cllr Wilkinson</p> <p>2) Approval was given to the temporary appointment of current Town Clerk to continue as RFO after 1 July 2023 until a replacement is recruited including the draft Contract and Job description. Proposed Cllr Chambers seconded Cllr Wickham-Young</p> <p>3) Recommendations for Temporary Casual Employee</p> <p>The role to be posted on ATC Facebook page closing date 2 July 2023 (delegate authority to the clerk for wording) - That the employment committee can review any applications when they meet for shortlisting the clerk role. - That the council grants the employment committee delegated powers to appoint someone for up to 18 hours a week at minimum wage on a fixed term contract until the end of August Proposed Cllr Wickham- Young seconded Cllr Braithwaite</p>		
	The meeting closed at 21:37pm the next meeting is the Annual Town Council meeting on Wednesday 12 July 2023		

Signed  Chairman of Atherstone Town Council

Appendix A

Questions to Police and Crime Commissioner

We have heard a lot over the last few years about the numbers of police recruits currently going through training, and how it is hoped that this will make a difference to on the ground police numbers once the first cohort completes training and enters active service. With regards to this, can the PCC clarify the following:

- Q1) How many trainees started training in the first cohort for Warwickshire?
- Q2) When will the first cohort graduate and be able to start active duty?
- Q3) How many of those who started the course are expected to see it through to completion?
- Q4) How do the numbers who started in subsequent years compare, and what is the planned intake going forward?"

Answers from the Police and Crime Commissioner

Successfully reached the 1,100 police officer target by end of March.

Focus is now on continued recruitment to maintain above 1,1000 and increase where possible as funding allows.

- The majority of new recruits come through the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship programme, which sees them undertake learning alongside active policing duties.
- The first PCDA cohort graduated last week and there are only small numbers who drop out across all intakes.
- Around 45% of the officers who have joined in the past 12-months are women, and just over 10% of all officers who have joined during this period identify as black, Asian, or are of mixed ethnic background.
- As the new officers take up their patrol policing posts, it has allowed the Chief Constable and area commanders to ensure that Safer Neighbourhood Team police officer posts are filled.
- Focus for recruitment is also on PCSOs and police staff to fill vacancies, which the current jobs market has exacerbated.
- Planned recruitment intakes in June (14 officers), September (48) and January/February 2023 (both 20).
- We average around 8-10 leavers across the force per month (across all ranks) and therefore the training programme is designed to maintain the overall number above the 1100 mark.
- There is also a range of access routes into policing, IPLDP+ graduate scheme to attract a range of individuals at different stages of life.

From Town Councillor Jacky Chambers:

Q5 What interest does the PCC take in or influencing priorities for the 10k allocation to NWBC on CCTV systems relative to need?

Answer from the Police and Crime Commissioner

- Our expectation is that plans for the funding must be supported by the wider CSP membership and we have asked boroughs and districts to provide information on how this funding will be spent, and the anticipated benefits that it will bring to local communities, prior to releasing the grant. We are awaiting that information from NWBC now that that we are past the election period and hope to be able to have confirmation of the funding in the near future.

Q6. What does the PCC think about comments by the Assistant Chief Constable at a multi- agency meeting re knife crime about Atherstone Ball Game?

Answer from the Police and Crime Commissioner

- Don't know what the comment was, so it is difficult to say. I understand there is a debrief meeting with the stakeholders of the Ball Game taking place next week.
- As a general observation, the Ball Game is a strong local tradition but it is one that does presents some tensions and challenges when considered alongside the desire to tackle violent behaviour and to direct young people away from violence.

Q7. Please could the PCC update the Town Council on what progress has been made with restoring police staffing numbers in our Safer Neighbourhood Team. Will the number of police available locally in our SNTs ever be restored to the former levels seen 10 years ago ?

More specifically could the PCC clarify :-

- a. How many of the additional 118 officers recruited through the uplift programme in Warwickshire have been made available to serve as "feet on the ground" in this area.
- b. If, as it appears there have only been a handful where exactly have the rest gone and on what geographical or crime data intelligence have these staff been allocated and distributed .

Answer from the Police and Crime Commissioner

- The SNT currently comprises 6 PCs and 7 PCSOS. They have one PCSO vacancy which is being recruited to. Would love to see numbers increase further, but we have to have the resources to allow that.
- Clarify that more than 300 officers have been recruited since 2016, with the Uplift programme coming on top of the posts funded through Precept increases.
- The new recruits are initially deployed to patrol policing teams responding to 101 and 999 calls so are all 'boots on the ground'. They are allocated by the Chief Constable to the Patrol bases at Bedworth, Rugby, Grey's Mallory and Stratford, with units from Bedworth having the remit to proactively patrol across the northern policing area.
- They are supplemented by Patrol Investigation Teams who carry out the investigation work.

Q7c) What level of SNT staffing does the PCC view as a minimum for a deprived market town- described by one source <https://crimeraite.co.uk/warwickshire/atherstone> as the “ most dangerous small town in Warwickshire , “and among the top 20 most dangerous town overall out of Warwickshire's 214 towns, villages, and cities “ ; a town where the crime rate is 9% higher than the national average and where the overall crime rate at 90 crimes per 1000 people is 34% higher than the Warwickshire rate of 67 per 1,000 residents. Are there any national minimum or comparative or service standards by which one could assess the staffing allocation to our safer neighbourhood teams .

Answer from the Police and Crime Commissioner

- The figures on Crimeraite.co.uk are presented in a very emotive way which is not particularly helpful - they seem to be geared towards selling security products off the back of it and use language to support this. For example, it says: In December 2022, Atherstone was the worst small town in Warwickshire for criminal damage and arson, with 4 crimes reported December 2022 was also a bad month for Atherstone residents, when it was Warwickshire's most dangerous small town for drugs, recording 1 crime.
- The crime data at the Warwickshire Insights website is a more reliable guide.
- The largest proportion of incidents relate to violence and sexual offences, the majority of which will involve some element of domestic abuse. On the one hand, we know these remain under-reported so an increase in reporting can be considered positive in some instances. On the other, this is why considerable funding and resource is now placed into tackling these offences and supporting victims in a way that simply was not the case a decade or more ago.
- It should be remembered that Safer Neighbourhood Teams are not tasked with dealing with the investigation of crime – that is the remit of patrol policing, CID and other specialist departments.
- SNTs are there to know their communities, build partnerships and to problem-solve longer term trends in crime and anti-social behaviour and issues of concern in the local community.
- Not aware of any national standards for allocating neighbourhood policing resources. With differing levels of officer numbers in each police area, it would be difficult to impose a minimum standard.
- In any case, deployment of police officers is a matter solely for the discretion of Chief Constables
- Some parts of the country, for example in Norfolk, have taken the decision to abolish PCSOs altogether – that's not something I would ever wish the Chief Constable to consider here, nor has it ever been suggested.
- Would love to be in a position to be able to see continued increases in numbers of officers in Safer Neighbourhood Teams but that requires the funding to be able to so.
- When Safer Neighbourhood Teams were first implemented in the early 2000s, there was ring-fenced central government funding for Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Now there is not.

Q8 Where in the overall priorities for policing and wider multiagency response does violence and sexual assault feature in Warwickshire and more specifically in North Warwickshire ?

What specific interest or commitment does the PCC have in reducing violence and sexual assault - crimes which appear to be on the rise in Atherstone.

Answer from the Police and Crime Commissioner

On violent crime:

- On 16 December 2022, the Home Office released the awaited statutory guidance in relation to the new Serious Violence Duty, which came into effect on the same day. This duty, which applies to a range of specified authorities in Warwickshire, requires them to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence and the causes of that violence, and to prepare and implement a strategy to do so.
- Whilst neither I nor my office are a specified authority and so are not a 'duty holder', it is necessary that as the 'local policing body' I work closely to oversee and support local implementation of the requirements. In advance of the arrival of the new duty my office worked closely with local duty holders, in particular Warwickshire County Council (WCC), to put the necessary governance and delivery arrangements in place to ensure the success of the initiative.
- Due to the work of partners in Warwickshire that has been led by WCC and actively supported by my office, we are in a strong place locally in relation to these Duty requirements. For example, the county already has in place a 'Serious Violence Prevention Strategy' and work is underway to finalise the delivery plan.
- In addition, my office has also secured funding from the Home Office to support implementation of the new Duty in Warwickshire and is working closely with local duty holders to ensure this funding is appropriately and effectively targeted.

On sexual assault:

- Violence Against Women and Girls a focus area of the Police and Crime Plan as part of the priority to keep people safe and reduce harm.
- Have worked closely with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and other partners in producing an updated 'Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy' for the county.
- Commissioned dedicated support services from Safeline, Refuge and Barnardo's, as well as providing funding to the Blue-Sky Sexual Assault Referral Centre.

Through Empower:

- New team of dedicated specialist detectives for high-risk domestic abuse and rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO). More detectives being recruited.
- The Online Child Sexual Exploitation Team has a significant uplift in investigative resources to ensure offenders are brought to justice and children continue to be protected.

Q9 When the PCC allocated £10 k as a one off to North Warwickshire in April this year , did the PCC have any views or expectations about how this money might be used and whether or not this money should ideally be used to enable CCTV systems to actively monitor and support crime prevention , detection and police response in local areas or was it just a " no strings attached " give away to Borough Councils.?

Answer from the Police and Crime Commissioner

- As part of my Annual Grants Scheme, I have made available one-off, in-year funding for 2023/24 only for CCTV provision, worth £10,000 to each district or borough. It is intended to allow Local Authorities to work with their CSP partners to enhance and maintain CCTV provision in their area, including systems and lighting, and enhanced staffing/patrols as part of any pre-planned CCTV-led operation. Award of the funding is subject to the usual terms and conditions we apply to all grant's awards.

Appendix 2 Borough Councillor report Cllr R Taylor agenda item 4

Councillor Keith Barnett	Atherstone South and Mancetter
Councillor Neil Dirveiks	Atherstone Central
Councillor Rachel Taylor	Atherstone Central
REPORT FOR ATHERSTONE TOWN COUNCIL	MEETING – 21 JUNE 2023

As Labour Councillors at North Warwickshire Borough Council, we are working together to represent residents in Atherstone and present this report for consideration at the next Town Council Meeting.

1. Parking

We attended the Town Council EGM and represented the concerns of residents in Atherstone Central in particular, we have also continued to be contacted and have visited a number of residents to discuss problems they have experienced with inconsiderate and sometimes illegal overspill car parking which has been reported to NWBC and the Police. The cost of parking in town is forcing some people onto the surrounding streets and continuing to cause problems. We will support the Town Council in their representations to NWBC and demand an urgent review of the charges for season tickets.

2. The state of our town – weeds and general maintenance

Hundreds of residents have reported on the Atherstone Peoples Forum a noticeable deterioration in the general state of our roads and footpaths around the town that is not so evident in other parts of the borough. Councillor Taylor reported the issue to the Director of Streetscape and the Chief Executive, and we have all been pleased to see work starting in the Market Square and the town centre. We will continue to monitor the situation and support any residents who want to help in any way.

We are pleased to report that a particularly unsightly landscaped area in Tannery Close has now been cleared following action taken by Councillors Dirveiks and Taylor and investigations are underway to look into removing dead birch trees. This has required co-operation between the Borough Council and Platform the neighbouring Social Housing Provider.

3. Toilets

The Planning Committee met earlier this week and it was decided to grant permission for a café with toilet facilities on the site of the old public toilets at the Bus Station. The opening hours for the toilets must be determined by Planning Conditions and also any sale or lease agreement to the operator must include enforceable covenants to ensure that the toilet facilities cannot simply be scaled back or withdrawn. We are continuing to make representations to the appropriate committees and officers to ensure that these facilities can be made available for as many hours as possible particularly for disabled residents and visitors.

4. Dangerous Road Junctions

Both Councillors Barnett and Taylor have reported dangerous vegetation obscuring visibility at the A5 roundabout at the Carlyon Road junction with the A5 and the junction off the A5 to Atherstone Railway Station. Whilst these are not Borough Council issues, we would hope they will be taken up by Warwickshire County Council and Highways England.

Cllr R Taylor gave an update at the meeting that she had heard from Highways England that its within their schedule to deal with the overgrown vegetation on the A5 from Grendon to Atherstone as you turn right on to the Merevale Road.

5. Atherstone Leisure Centre

It has been reported to us that the waiting list for children's swimming lessons is far too long with some children having been waiting for over six months and still not having any chance of access to swimming lessons. We are waiting for a response from Simon Powell about actions which can be taken. The underinvestment in the Leisure Centre has resulted in a number of recent closures. Things may well reach crisis point this year. It is still unclear going forward about a decision on the Local Authority Trading Company due to a recent court decision on VAT and we will need to ensure that we continue to do everything we can to secure the future of the swimming pool and leisure facilities in the centre of town.

6. General

Since the election there has been one meeting of the Council where Councillor Taylor nominated Councillor Dirveiks to serve as Mayor. Unfortunately, this was narrowly defeated. We look forward to a constructive working relationship with Atherstone Town Council. Please feel free to contact any of us for assistance or to discuss any issues affecting the town.

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Appendix 3

Atherstone Partnership Update – June 2023 General Update

We held our AGM and open meeting on Tuesday 6th June and were delighted by the amount of attendees and that we have started to build the new committee.

Stepping in as Chairperson is myself Laura Donnelly and Treasurer remains as Neil Dirveiks.

Secretary for the moment is Gary Chamberlain who stood in as the position to keep the committee in place, but it is with the understanding that we will be actively searching for a replacement for him as soon as possible.

We then took suggestions for our deputy Chair positions that will be discussed moving forward.

We had a few volunteers from the floor and the incumbent Heritage and Tourism Deputy Chair was also put forward as a continuation in her position.

AGM and open meeting minutes will be shared in due course. Chairperson Report I am really pleased to be able to step up into the Chairperson position for Atherstone Partnership, having worked closely with the group over time.

I am a local Atherstone resident who also has a passion for communication and genuinely cares for the area.

For the time being I can be contacted on my previous partnership email business@atherstone-partnership.co.uk I would like to flag a few concerns that residents have raised at various meetings, our business survey and will be reflected in minutes where applicable.

- Businesses in town and the lack of discounted parking permits meaning that some businesses may not be able to continue to have premises in town
- Residents and business owners noticing the somewhat dirty/unkept areas of the town and a worry on the reflection of the town with this
- The importance of events to bring people into town and therefore the support that is greatly needed for these to continue My plan is to see how we as the partnership can help towards these items, also utilising the IMP report as well. From the meetings, surveys and generally getting out and meeting people we are building our email database to around 100 people so far and our plan is to continue to build this. I would also be keen to understand on how Atherstone Partnership and ATC can work together across our social media platforms with shared plans and processes to ensure that we can reach as many local residents as possible. Job Fair Update We are really pleased that we received amazing feedback for the fair from local residents, employers and job seekers.
- We had 28 businesses attend on the day (including Aldi, Balfour Beatty, Army, RAF, Police, Stagecoach)
- We had over 200 attendees looking for work (with around 80 of them from the JCP)
- All business attendees have said they want to be informed of the next one and will come along
- Queen Elizabeth Academy brought 2 classes to attend the fair
- We know of at least one person finding a job from the event
- We will look to make this an annual event and look to grow it moving forward
- We printed around 2500 posters and 60 posters, and all were distributed. We contacted all the location colleges, schools and career advisors to advertise Social Media

Top line Results

General Posts Engagement: 1115

Reach: 13,530

Launch Video Engagement: 1736

Reach: 4142

Views: 1668

Heritage Week Working with Eddie Smallwood we are putting on a heritage week in Sep. 17th Sep – 24th Sep.
Eddie and Angie are working together to finalise the events which we will then look to advertise through the normal partnership channels.

We hope to share more around this as we progress forward. Dickens & Christmas Market We are looking to work with the Dickens committee to start to pull together plans for the next Christmas event.

We are assessing our options around fireworks and the use of the budget to cover these as they have gone up in price.

We will look into possible business sponsorship for these.

We had some really good interest from the open meeting around possible volunteers and event interest that we will be following up.

Next Steps

- Plans around the future of the partnership are being worked up, around the projects we want to work on and the events we wish to progress with.

We will at all points aim to engage with ATC and welcome the reps to be part of planning where possible.

- We will look to work with some of the organisations represented in the meeting around how we can help to promote their work through the Atherstone Partnership extended reach