

Freedom of Information request received from Mr. J. Forshall and acknowledged by email on 4th June 2021.

1. The letter sent to Castle Street residents refers to members of the public making complaints to Bampton Town Council about the traffic problems on Castle Street. How many complainants were there? Who were these complaints made by? Upon what dates were they made and where?

This letter refers to concerns of residents of Castle Street and does not mention complaints. As can be seen from the minutes it is not possible to name those who have voiced concerns about the traffic issues in Castle Street. The Clerk does not record or report names – data protection.

All concerns were made at public time allowed at the Council meetings. Standing Orders 3 (d), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j) & (k).

Since the inception of this Council in May 2019, the following has all been recorded in the minutes, published monthly on both the Council website and the town website.

- i. Standing orders suspended for a parishioner to speak with reference to the traffic on Castle Street.
Speed and the increase of traffic both up and down Castle Street; a car has been damaged twice whilst parked. If there is a major incident on the M5, satnavs send the traffic through Bampton. Cllr. Moore will convey these concerns to Cllr. Colthorpe. Evidence, take a photo of poor driving, large lorries on pavements. Cllr. White considers residents of Castle St need to get together to make a case.
Parishioner thanked for joining Council and bringing this to our attention. November agenda.
Standing orders resumed. **Minutes 7th October 2020 page 25.***
- ii. Parishioner brought up the problem of the traffic in Castle St., having set up a camera to retrieve evidence in the past couple of weeks. Huge trucks are seen coming over the pavement. Stated that he is becoming genuinely frightened coming out of his own front door. Counting over 20 lorries a day.
Cllr. L. Bull agreed and evidence is being photo collected – requested Cllr. Colthorpe’s advice. Cllr. N. Bull indicated that children are being encouraged to walk up Castle street pavement to access the new play park.
Cllr. Whiteway commented. Cllr. L. Bull would like a traffic consultant to come and see what is going on.
Cllr. Colthorpe responded – there have been complaints about the traffic in Castle Street for a long time. The safety officer has attended and not been convinced there is a problem. It is a road and traffic are allowed to use the road.
Parishioner has brought this to Council so they are aware of the problem and aware of the issue, something has to be done.*

Cllr. Williams – asked if any of the various councils have a responsibility if there is an accident.

Cllr. White – has also noticed how many vehicles are mounting the pavement, which is a narrow strip.

Cllr. Fouracres requested to know if it is Highways responsibility.

The responsibility is with the driver of the truck and the truck owners.

Cllr. Colthorpe will ask Highways again to take a look at this problem.

Cllr. Hopkinson noted that lorries and the parking problem co-exist.

If double yellow lines are both sides of Castle Street, the traffic would just move faster.

Cllr. Fouracres – thanked everyone for their input. Minutes 2nd December 2020 page 31

iii. Parishioner regarding the traffic issues in Castle Street. He considers that if nothing is done in due haste there will be a fatality. He read a statement to Council.

Parishioner informed that he has written to the Roads Policing Unit in charge of roads about Castle Street, and the damage done to the road, homes and cars from large vehicles. He welcomes the Council's efforts to take this forward.

Cllr. Colthorpe invited to reply. This is not the first time she has been asked and indeed raised the Castle Street problems with Highways. After the December meeting she spoke again to the local highways officer - proposed he would visit again and hopefully bring the highways safety officer. Cllr. Colthorpe will contact him again to see if he has been able to visit the area and come back to Council with an update as soon as possible.

Minutes 13th January 2021 page 35.

2. That same letter refers to “discussions with residents” which apparently took place before the appointment of the traffic consultant. What were the dates of these discussions? Which residents were consulted and where did those discussions take place?

**Discussions with residents refers to those who attended Council meetings.
Dates as above.**

3. Which member/s of BTC initiated the move to raise the matter of traffic on Castle Street?

The Council as a corporate body, has brought the matter of the traffic on Castle Street to every council meeting as a separate agenda item from January 2021 to June 2021 inclusive.

4. Does the Chairman or any other members of Bampton Town Council have any commercial interests in, on or near Castle Street, whether in their own right, by marriage or close familial relationship.

No members of Bampton Town Council have any commercial interests in, on or near Castle Street.

5. If the above is the case, why did they not recuse themselves from the matter and in any further discussions and why did they not mention those interests at the start of last night's meeting, when asked to do so?

The matter of traffic issues in Castle Street or anywhere else in the parish of Bampton is not a disclosable interest.

6. Do any of the above individuals sit on the BTC Traffic and Highways Sub Committee set up to look into the matter or are involved in discussions about it?

There are 3 councillors who have taken part in discussions as a part of the sub-committee, namely Cllr. Fouracres, Cllr. N. Bull and Cllr. T. Williams.

7. Did any councillor or others with business interests take part in the appointment of the traffic consultant?

Full Council agreed to appoint a traffic consultant.

8. Was the contract of employment/engagement of the traffic consultant put out to tender? When did such tendering process take place? When was the consultant appointed?

There is no requirement for a tender process unless the value is £25,000 or higher.

Financial Regulations Section 11 "Contracts" (h) refers below -

When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £500 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 quotations. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.

The quotation process was done by email request to 4 different companies who claimed they could produce a Transport Advisory Note (TAN). Only 1 replied. Minutes 3rd February 2021 agenda item 9, page 40. (see below).

"9) Castle Street traffic issues – to engage a traffic consultant.

County Cllr. Colthorpe has responded to Council as a visit was made to the site early in January. Speed is not considered to be an issue but HGV's are. The current suggestion is that there

could be some parking restrictions which would leave more space for commercial vehicles to come down without using the pavement.

Cllr. Fouracres proposed that Council should go ahead with a private traffic consultant. Cllr. White considers this would give an independent view without the bias. All agreed by show of hands.

NB Castle Street road had been eroded exposing a pipe – Highways responded immediately and covered the pipe today.”

9. What was the brief to the traffic consultant? Please supply a copy of this and put it on the BTC website.

This is the email brief sent to 4 companies, namely Jon Pearson Ltd; LVW Highways; Cobra TM; Avontss.uk. The first 3 were emailed on the 7th December 2020 and the last one on the 11th December 2020. There is no requirement to put a brief onto the website.

“Good morning,

Looking at your website, I wonder if you are able to help Bampton with a traffic problem.

Castle Street, one of the access roads to the town, is being used by larger than ever lorries, who have to drive onto the pavement. Cars are parked on one side of the road, making a narrow road even smaller. However if these are removed, traffic will move faster up and down this street.

Residents are increasingly concerned about safety of themselves and their children. We have asked Hlghways to look again at this road, but, it is a road and they are not being any too helpful.

Would consulting on this be within your remit? Please let me know.

Many thanks.

Penny

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Reply received from Jon Pearson 8th December 2020 by email.

“Hi Penny

This is something I could look at for you and perhaps suggest simple solutions? It may be that I could design a scheme which DCC would be happy with and may even implement? Happy to quote for the above but would need to be on an hourly rate plus expenses. First step would be to meet a selected group of residents/PC members on site to inspect and discuss. If this is the sort of thing you were thinking off, I can let you have a formal fee quote.

Cheers

Jon

Jon Pearson Ltd

Transport & Highway Consultant

07772 229492

01736 731551

www.jp-transport-highway-consultant.co.uk”

10. How much did the traffic consultant charge BTC and the taxpayers of Bampton for the report?

The cost of the traffic consultant in total was £650 nett. Reported in the minutes of 3rd March 2021 agenda item 13.

11. Why was the report of the Highways Consultant limited to Castle Street, rather than to other areas in Bampton where there are also problems with heavy good vehicles using the town? Has Bampton Town Council made any efforts to discourage HGVs from driving through the town when they do not have business in the town?

The Traffic Consultant’s report (not a Highways Consultant) was not limited to Castle Street.

It is not possible to know in advance if any of the HGVs accessing the town have business therein or not. Therefore it is not possible for the Town Council to take any action against any HGV which chooses to access the parish of Bampton.

12. Why has the traffic consultant’s report not been published in full? Please supply a copy of the report in full and publish it on the BTC website.

The report from the Traffic Consultant has not previously been published in full as Council were, and still are, concentrating on attempting a Castle Street solution. The report has now been published in full on the Council website alongside the minutes of June 2021. A copy is attached.

This FOI prepared by Mrs. P. Clapham BA(Hons) PSLCC, Clerk to the Council.
Sent by email 2nd July 2021.