**Written Submissions to Barrow Borough Council’s Community Governance Review (21 February to 14 April 2022)**

**Transcripts of submissions**

1. I am in receipt of your consultation document regarding the creation of a Town Council for the unparished area of Barrow-in-Furness in relation to the CGR.

However, the document that you have sent details a map of the unparished area of Barrow that I find impossible to determine where the boundaries, that it defines, actually are.

I am assuming the area details the area covered by Barrow Borough Council but on the assumption that you thought it necessary to show a map of the Unparished area of Barrow surely it should be clear to see what this area consists of, and not some undefined meaningless lines. Please provide me with a clear map detailing the boundaries to which you are referring in the document or an explanation to which the area consists.

1. You need to forget the idea of a Parish Council this work should be left in the hands of Furness Council no need for further cost leveled at the Barrow public.
2. I have read the details on the website and letter. The financial details only describe how much it will cost for each household. What are those costs paying for?

The online form allowing a response about the “Town Council” doesn’t work. I will be making a formal complaint both to my local councillors and to our MP. Since this is a legal review process you ought to do it properly, or you will be heading for a judicial review!

1. Good evening this e mail is in reply to letter regarding above subject as a resident of barrow I see no need for a town council as it seems it only incur more costs on top of the increases we already face as working people ..fuel etc
2. Many people in this town do not pay council tax as they are on benefits so it will not affect them as usual working people will bear the brunt .So I really do not want a town council after the boundary move .
3. Dear Sir / Madam,

I have received the letter in the post today regarding the reorganisation of local government.

I do not agree with Barrow needing a Town Council with an additional cost and an increase to out Council Tax. All our bills are increasing at present therefore; the timing of this is very poor. People of this town are struggling enough without further increases to bills to pay for a Town Council. These are my views on the subject.

1. In considering the above I do not see an advantage to the house holders of Barrow in creating another layer of Government. The various "Positions" that are drawn to our attention in your letter ie. Manage allotments, Manage the Market etc etc could be dealt with by one person given authority to make decisions. Thus then my view is that there is no need for another "Town Council".
2. I think creating a Barrow Parish and asking more money from people who are already suffering major costs of living increases via existing taxes and inflation is total lunacy. This is the worst possible time to be asking this and personally I think the funds would not be spent wisely and would create more higher paid jobs for a few who don't know how to deliver and get paid for failure.
3. I Strongly support the idea of creating a Town Council in the Unparished area of Barrow in Furness.
4. I thought I would write to you as you requested with my views on the above consultation. I have tried to frill the survey in with the ridiculously long web address but to no avail and it may actually be incomplete on the letter you sent out. However this should not take long.

Having lived in this town all my life, I have never seen the town so depressingly bereft of life. With the majority of the shops in Portland Walk now empty, Dalton Road and others in a disgraceful state and therefore lacking visitors and the normal footfall. I do wonder what exactly this town council does especially when inside contacts say that to get anything changed in council is ridiculously difficult, because the council is full people who do not like change. I say to the people of Barrow you will never get another opportunity like this, to get rid of this inept group of people( who themselves canvassed for election) and the organisation that surrounds them.

Who knows, we may not be any better off with the new arrangements, one thing is for sure we cannot be any worse off. I say pack your bags, empty your desks and go( the politest term I can find), you are a drain on our resources and to add insult to injury you have the audacity to tell us how much you would ask us to pay for extending the car crash that is Barrow council .Hang your heads in shame and when you f\*\*k off take Cumbria County council with you .They claim to maintain our roads, whilst shunning any real responsibility for the daily damage caused by potholes, that providing they repair with five days of THE PUBLIC reporting them, they can claim to have kept their end of the bargain and therefore hardly ever if never will pay out genuine compensation claims through their insurers. Just one aspect.

I suppose as usual this will be blamed on the Tories, the problem is this council is Tory led but the rot set in years ago under labour councils so on this occasion it appears you will have to find someone else to blame for lack of budget. Try doing that in the senior levels of the commercial world and see how long you last. Looks like you might have to now.

1. Re: Survey about potential Town Council for Barrow

Like everyone else, I guess, I received your letter in the post concerning the possibility of electing a Town Council for the "unparished" area of Barrow. I went online to look at the survey and the questions and found it totally inadequate. So, for that reason I have not yet completed it. I may still do so before the deadline but it all depends on what further information is forthcoming. When I say the survey is "totally inadequate" I should add that it is highly compromising; for example, there is a two-way yes-or-no question as to whether I would wish for a Town Council to be elected! Whoa, there! What about an "it all depends" option and a chance to state some views? Yes, it really does "all depend"! There is no way I could just say "yes" or "no" without much more information. On paper, my answer could well be "yes" but it really does "all depend" - - - especially as you mention in the letter that the creation of such would mean an increase in Council Tax on hard-pressed citizens. To illustrate my point, our Council Tax already contains a substantial figure for a Police Commissioner. God help us! I don't know about you but it strikes me that this rather anonymous "police commissioner" is non-existent as far as I can see in terms of usefulness. Whoever this Police Commissioner is that so much money is directed towards him/her strikes me as being money for nothing, and whichever mystery individual holds this post needs to look themselves in the mirror and question their own morality in taking money for being worse than useless and non-existent.

Thus, having said all that, would our extra Council Tax simply mean more money into the pockets of those elected for likewise being worse than useless? Believe me, I am not the only one who resents our Town Council for having very highly paid bureaucrats who tick the boxes and pocket the fat salaries but fail to truly serve our town. Trust me, I am Barrow born-and-bred and love my home town but I am also ashamed of it as well.

Here's a couple of examples for you - - - the litter on our streets is a diabolical disgrace. Would a Town Council sort that and sort if efficiently and fast? Yes, yes, yes, I do of course realise that this problem is primarily the fault of too many dirty, slovenly, disgusting and uncivilised people who think it's okay to drop stuff on pavements. But, very sadly, given that that is the ugly nature of too many disgusting people and a fact of life that is difficult to eradicate then the Council has to counter it by cleaning up. There is no other easy option as long as disgusting individuals still roam our streets. I know of retired locals who go round with pickers and black bags tidying their areas. My admiration and respect for these people is overflowing but the fact remains that they should not have to do your dirty work for free. God bless them but you as a Council seem happy to use, and rely on, such spirited individuals. It should not be like that. I have on a couple of occasions had the role of ferrying visitors around our town, including Americans and people from the south of England. I have felt great shame to pass along streets with litter everywhere. How can you as a Borough Council say you serve our beloved Barrow when you do not counter this? I imagine there are many highly paid employees in Barrow Town Hall and if they were paid just a bit less (whilst still earning a relative fortune in salary) that money saved could be used to employ street cleaners. WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GET THE STREETS CLEANED AND WILL A TOWN COUNCIL ATTEND TO THIS AS A MAJOR PRIORITY? I imagine you will cringe at the prospect of slightly lesser salaries amongst your "elite" to pay for this but you will be happy to snigger and smirk in your well-paid jobs whilst saintly retired locals go round and do it for nothing. Here's another one - - - the old "House of Lords" building near Ramsden Square. Oh I know you will say it is a listed building and that may be true. And I know that because it might be a listed building it might take longer to resolve the problem but we are now talking about a period of what, six or seven years, since it burnt down. Again, what an eyesore and right there in the heart of town. Ramsden Square can look so beautiful with the flowers in season but only yards away there is that eyesore. What are you doing about it? Really, what on Earth are you doing about it? It is utterly and completely unacceptable and unforgivable. WILL A TOWN COUNCIL ATTEND TO THIS AS A MAJOR PRIORITY?

I just want to feel assured that a potential Town Council will not be akin to a quangocracy where we have highly paid people doing diddly squat, sitting in a committee room debating whether to have another debate to debate a debate. You people in the Town Hall are supposed to be responsible for our town and its reputation but it strikes me that as long as you get your salaries you bear no pride or loyalty towards Barrow-in-Furness.

Here's one final point and I do apologise beforehand because I am unsure if this is one for you - - - recently, engineers were uprooting the pavements along Oxford Street to lay what I believe are Broadband cables. Those paving flags were replaced with what are evidently smaller paving flags with the consequence that the smaller replacements have left sizeable gaps by the forecourt walls. Are these going to be filled and concreted because at present they are just sizeable gaps? As I said, this one might not be for you and apologies if that is the case but if it's not your responsibility (perhaps Cumbria County Council???) then can you at least please tell me who to approach about getting these gaps filled? Why should I (or the many others affected) have to expend cost and effort in buying concrete and filling these gaps ourselves? Please advise. (Oh, and by the way, don't get me started on the matter of how many cracked and unsafe flags there are on our pavements . . . )

1. How can you expect people to pay £300 a year on top of council tax. The more layers of administration you put it gives the least benefit. Your reasons for creating Barrow Parish will not fix the pot holes, drug problems, town with no shops and only encourage an excuse for another high paid beurocrate wanting to con the public and fill his pockets on top of what we already pay for in out taxes.. Barrow Bid team is a joke. Buy more pianos and let barrow suffer more from political indignity and an increase the jobs for the over paid clowns who are politically motivated to butter thier own bread.. It stinks on ice.
2. Regarding the creation of a Barrow Town Council is this just an under hand way of fleasing more money out of people? I do not want a penny of my money going to a Labour/ Communist Council member.
3. Definitely not required. Too expensive and duplicate of county cou cil. Only proposed to line pockets of councillors
4. Thank you for the update regarding the consultation on the creation of a Town Council. In my view this is completely unnecessary. It will lead to an inevitable increase in costs and duplication of administration. In the present economic climate this is completely unacceptable. Council tax payers need to see better value and less waste. An example being the recent invoice for the garden waste club, which was sent out twice due to incorrect information the first time. I estimate the cost to be at least £1 per letter to approximately 4000 customers. Previous administrative changes ie the role of Police and Crime Commissioner have simply resulted in increased costs with no benefit to the wider public. Can I also suggest that if the changes go ahead savings are made by doing away with the roles of the Chief Executive, Director of People and Places, and the Director of Resources as there will inevitably be a duplication of these rolls. We only need to pay once.
5. I would like to complete the survey relating to the establishment of a Barrow town/parish council. However I feel that I need more information so can you please answer the following questions either by email or phone (07729554739) as I am unable to make it to any drop in session.
6. What is the difference between, 'Parish' 'Town' 'Borough' and 'County' councils.?
7. Will there still be a Cumbria County Council?
8. Will there be parity across Parish/Town councils in regard to services/costs?
9. How do individual/council party political affiliations fit into new organisation?
10. How many councillors will there be on a Barrow Town council?
11. Will they represent different areas of the town.?
12. Who will elect them and how often?
13. How much will they be paid?
14. Will they have individual and different job descriptions/responsibilities.
15. Why has Barrow not had a Town Council?
16. I am against the creation of another layer of bureaurocracy as it will just layer more costs onto the council tax payers who I suspect will see little or no improvement to anything. The leaflet sent out lists a few services the council might provide all of which are currently funded so why are more funds needed? To pay for councillors expenses? As we already pay for these things can we expect a reduction in our council tax, I suspect not. To add additional costs to peoples lives at the current time is both un-necessary and immoral. The services mentioned in the leaflet include Promoting tourism - seriously , respond to planning - decision made by new council not local, caring for the civic regalia - stick it in a museum, run festivals - Barrow Bid Team conflicts? ...

While trying to find out more about this, of which there is very limited information, I came across a FAQ on the council site which raises a couple of questions:-

How much may a town council for Barrow cost? The FAQ lists two amounts for band D houses at £20 and £40, a significant difference, whilst the leaflet only mentions the lower rate. So unless someone takes the time to investigate they will be left with the impression it will be a £20 rate. No where does it state that this value is not fixed for 2023 and I believe the this inference is at best misleading. The link given in the FAQ to more "financial details" opens a word document with virtually no additional information. Where is all this money going?

 If Westmorland and Furness Council decides not to create one or more new local councils,will that be the end of the matter? My interpertaion of the response to this question is that there could be bi-anual consultations until the "right" decision is reached at and a council is created. There is no mention that electors have the option to disolve the council if they prove to be ineffective and not value for money. Is this the case? I could go on but I suspect this already has a resolution and the consultation is only playing lipservice to the 2007 act. I also suspect that the rate will be higher than the £20 suggested or will increase significantly over the comming years. Look at Daltons.

Once again I would like to reiterate my oposition to a Barrow parish council.

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