

The July monthly meeting of  
Yarm Town Council was held at

**The Fellowship Hall**

**West Street, Yarm TS15 9BT.**

**Date: Tuesday 12th July 2022**

**Time: 7pm**

Members of the public were invited to  
attend the meeting

COVID Guidance at the time applied..

**Juliet Johnson, Proper Officer to YTC**



Yarm Town Council  
Town Hall  
High Street  
Yarm  
TS15 9AH

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted; the Chair will notify those present of this at the start of the meeting and ask whether they agree to be filmed, recorded or photograph

## YARM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

Cllr John Coulson (Chair)

Cllr Chris Neil

Cllr Philip Addison

Cllr Pam Smailes

Cllr Peter Monck

Cllr Barbara Wegg

Cllr Patrick Morton

Town Clerk / Proper Officer - Juliet Johnson

2 members of the public were present

**1.0 To appoint a Chairman in the absence of the Chair and/or Vice Chair - N/A**

**2.0 Apologies for Absence**

**2.1** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Moffitt, the Rate Payers Rep Karen Shields and Ward Cllr. Sherris

**3.0 Code of Conduct | Declaration of Interest | Dispensation**

- a) To record declarations of interest from members of any item to be discussed
- b) To consider, vote upon and record any requests for dispensation

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 – section 100A(4), members of the public (other than those prohibited from doing so) are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda

- 3.1 a) **Cllr Monck** declared a non-prejudicial interest as regards matters pertaining to the closed churchyard.  
b) No requests for dispensation were received.

#### 4.0 Confirmation of Minutes

To accept the minutes of the previous meetings:

4.1 **Weigh and Tolls Committee** held on Tuesday 14th June 2022 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Morton                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Addison                      **AGREED**

4.2 **Yarm Town Council** held on Tuesday 14th June 2022 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Addison                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Neil                      **AGREED**

4.3 **Yarm Parish Assembly** held on Tuesday 24th May 2022 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Addison                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Neil                      **AGREED**

#### 5.0 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous Ordinary YTC meeting, 14th June 2022:

5.1 **Litter Bins and Trade Waste Bins : Current Position** - ALL

**Cllr Morton** stated that he understood there was a new Enforcement Officer for Yarm (Stockton Borough Council - SBC) - short staffed previously; this role will also keep an eye / help manage the trade bins and parking situation.

5.2 **Mayoral Chain (quotations for update & badge)** - Clerk

**The Clerk** asked the meeting to note that she had circulated information about a suggested badge (instead of Chain) and Mayoral pins. No further action was proposed.

5.3 **YTC adopting a 'Charity of the Year': Brief to Advertise** - Clerk

Brief circulated. Responses awaited for Councillors to select a Charity of the Year at the next meeting.

5.4 **Worsall Rd. Roundabout: Update** - Cllr Smailes

**Cllr Smailes** referenced 2016 email from then Chief Executive of SBC suggesting YTC should look after the roundabout. The current position is that SBC have confirmed that YTC / a volunteer group can't alter structural aspects of the roundabout and that there were Highways & utilities issues which meant SBC had to lead this aspect.

**Cllr Fagan** confirmed that, as a project where SBC ward funding had been offered, the expectation was that a plan would be in place and executed by the Jubilee weekend. This had not happened. The 2016 ref. /information was useful but SBC should now take this back.

After further discussion it was proposed that the roundabout returned to SBC care.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Coulson                   **SECONDED:** Cllr Addison                   **AGREED**

**ACTION:** Cllr Addison (lead for finance) to return the ward budget funding provided.

**5.5 Ward Budget Funding: Spinner proposed for Willey Flatts**

SBC to confirm if room at Willey Flatts (i.e. without further expenditure to extend necessary tarmac area)

**5.6 River Walkways Partnership Project : Update** **- Cllr Moffitt**

This item was carried forward in Cllr Moffitt's absence.

**5.7 Flag Flying & Policy : update** **- Clerk/Cllrs Coulson & Moffitt**

The group has not scheduled to meet yet to review.

**5.8 Offer of a Memorial Bench for Cllr Alan Gallafant (from the family)** **- Cllr Moffitt / Clerk**

This item was carried forward in Cllr Moffitt's absence.

**5.9 Ward Councillor Request: relocate bench used for ASB**

(Sheepcote Hill, Lower Willey Flatts) **- The Chair**

No further action currently. There are practical complexities regarding moving it. The Chair will speak with Cllr Sherris. **Cllr Smailes** referenced a place that she thought might be appropriate.

**5.10 Councillor Vacancies - By-Election & Protocols** **- Clerk**

**The Clerk** briefed the meeting as to the above including what and how references could and could not be made on social media. **Cllr Monck** suggested that this was relevant to candidates, not the YTC meeting. **The Clerk** suggested that the information may be useful to him/ all Councillors in the future.

**5.11 Proposal for Memorial Bench for Vincenzo Serino** **- Cllr Moffitt**

This item was carried forward in Cllr Moffitt's absence. The Clerk understands that the family have not made further decisions regarding this.

**6.0 Council Finances**

**6.1 To authorise payment of the accounts**

6.1.1 Payments List Refers **- Cllr Addison**

A question was asked regarding the income figure for the Jubilee Gala - **Cllr Addison** confirmed that this would be about £900 - £1,000. Authorisation of the payments list was proposed.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Coulson                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Neil                      **AGREED**

**6.2 Income and Expenditure Report - June 2022 (DOCUMENT REFERS)**                      - Cllr Addison / Clerk

Cllr Addison briefed Councillors as to the significant cost of elections (this year's by-election and the election due next May), and asked that the meeting note the income and expenditure report.

**6.3 Bank Reconciliation (1st June 2022 - 4th July 2022)**                      - Cllr Addison / Clerk  
(DOCUMENT REFERS)

The meeting noted the reconciliations for 3 accounts.

**6.4 Update of YTC Building Valuations: Cemetery Chapel & Fellowship Hall**                      - Clerk / Cllr Addison  
(DOCUMENT REFERS)

Cllr Addison reminded the meeting that for insurance purposes up to date valuations were needed as they hadn't been done for a while. The Clerk had estimated the rise in cover needed with the broker and the information received now confirmed and clarified this position.

**ACTION:** Clerk to forward confirmed valuations to the insurance company.

**6.5 Proposal: Rural Market Town Group membership (£84.75 until March 2023)**                      - Cllr Addison  
- part of the Rural Services Network

Membership and payment of the subscription was proposed and agreed.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Addison                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Coulson                      **AGREED**

**7.0 To Review and Consider the Correspondence List**                      - ALL

**7.1 Cllr Monck** proposed that, as clerks had done in the past, the Clerk should bring/circulate evidence of all the communications on the list in case a Cllr wanted to inspect an item. The Clerk currently does this from memory.

It was suggested that in the past there may have only been a limited number of communications received.

The Clerk confirmed the criteria she used to compile the Correspondence List and asked if there were criteria she had not been made aware of. The list for June contained over 300 items (inc. commercial, sensitive, confidential information) so to sort/print this means significant time / resource / negative environmental impact (e.g. 300 copies x11 Cllrs). The Clerk offered to look at creating a live system in the future. Cllr Addison commented that the Clerk regularly forwarded important/urgent items to Councillors anyway. It was suggested the Clerk should continue with the current system.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Coulson                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Addison                      **AGREED**

**8.0 Adjournment and Questions From the Public**                      - Chair

**8.1** The Chair adjourned the meeting for questions from the public.

A member of the public raised a query regarding insurance and volunteers.

The same member of the public stated that (in relation to 7.1 above) in the past she'd understood that paper letters etc. had been lost and that continuing with technology was best.

A second member of the public raised the issue of whether when the Town Hall Heritage Centre was underway this would cause disruption to the traffic. Answer was given that SBC were looking at the work site proposals to address any issues.

The same member of the public commented that **Cllr Alan Gallafant** had done an excellent job of transforming the allotments community to a very positive atmosphere and warned against a return to a previous dreadful atmosphere.

**Cllr Fagan** commented on the excellent job Cllr Gallafant had done. reference was made to the community orchard and how this must be maintained with Yarm Community Allotments Association.

**Cllr Coulson** confirmed that he was committed to continuing Cllr Gallafant's work.

The second member of the public raised the issue of significant pavement clutter in the High Street re. A boards, advertising and other items. He briefed the meeting regarding a trip down the High St with his wheelchair-bound mother in law and that it had been a difficult experience and impossible to pass in some places. The Clerk and Cllr Fagan stated that whilst businesses obviously need to advertise and attract business, access for all using pavements could not be compromised.

It was confirmed that High St Audit work being led by the Rate Payer's Rep would continue to look at this.

## **9.0 Policy and Resources:**

[AMENDMENT TO MINUTES - REQUESTED AND AGREED 13.09.22]: *Prior to the Policy and Resources section of the meeting proceeding, Cllr Barbara Wegg stood and distributed packs of information (to Cllrs, press and public) to draw to the attention of Council facebook posts by Cllr Coulson that she regarded as disturbing. Cllr Coulson states that these posts were historic and prior to him becoming a councillor.*

*At the moment Cllr Wegg handed out these packs the Clerk stated that this was outside of proper procedure, drew the attention of Cllr Wegg/Cllrs as to proper procedure for presenting complaints or concerns and warned them against a) compromising the rights of individuals, themselves and the council and b) undermining / negating any such cause, concern or complaint that should be taken seriously by attempting to deal with it inappropriately. Cllr Fagan stated the need to respect proper HR practice / laws.*

### **9.1 Cemetery Report**

**- Cllr Moffitt**

#### **9.1.1 Response to request for Tomb Survey Quotation**

**- Clerk**

**The Clerk** confirmed the position (1 company quoted significantly lower than another and a 3rd company had not responded - DOCUMENT REFERS). Work could now progress.

**9.1.2 Cllr Monck** referred to general maintenance in the enclosed Churchyard that had taken place including leveling of the hedge and work to clear an overgrown tomb (Cllr Moffitt had been briefed/agreed). The arboriculturalist used by YTC have been asked to assess 4 trees which appear to be dead. This will be reported back to Council.

**9.2 Allotments Report** - Cllr Coulson

**9.2.1** Proposal: voting right for representative member of YCAA on YTC Allotment Committee - Cllr Coulson

The Allotments Committee had voted to support this (carried forward to a future meeting) and discussion took place regarding why a voting right might be needed.

**9.2.2** Discussion: right of access to the Allotment Huts - Cllr Smailes

**Cllr Smailes** queried who was allowed access to the allotment hut. Discussion ensued as regards the £3 per year required for membership of Yarm Community Allotments Association which runs the Allotment Hut (and has done in the past). £3 membership per year gives access to the hut (plus other benefits of membership including insurance, access to reduced cost items in the allotment shop, loan of tools etc.). Only 1 or 2 allotment holders have not joined.

**ACTION:** Cllr Wegg and the Clerk suggested that the wording on the hut notice could be reworded (it references 'welcome' but could be improved).

**9.2.3 Allotment Development Fund: discussion re. original purpose & usage** - Cllr Smailes

A discussion was held regarding the above. **Cllr Smailes** stated that she thought that the lease of the land - for £30k paid to YTC - involved a specific (binding) commitment to how this money was then spent. Further information is to be sought ( e.g. any documents held by YTC solicitors) as to whether the purpose of the fund was specified or agreed. The matter would be carried forward to a future meeting. **Cllr Neil** stated that he understood that he recalled it was for improving and maintaining the allotments.

**ACTION:** Clerk to seek further information.

**9.3 Briefing & Discussion following meeting members of the Ukrainian community** - Cllr Coulson

**Cllr Coulson** fed back on the above - a session he had found very inspiring.

**10.0 Planning & Environment:**

**10.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists** - Cllr Monck / ALL

**Cllr Monck** reported that the Environment Agency (EA) would be using the former Campbells garage site (corner of Bentley Wynd) as an equipment/vehicle compound as a base for their exploratory work as regards flood gate improvements. It had been stated that the riverside footpath from True Lovers Walk round to the bridge would be closed off whilst this work took place; the EA are placing notices to make people aware of this.

**10.2 Latest Play Area Reports & Issues: Update** - Clerk

**The Clerk** reported that she had actioned all repairs that were featured on the report as medium or high risk, given health and safety implications and, following Council instruction, included the removal of graffiti. Items such as 'loose tiles' which,

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although were represented as a comparatively low risk by SBC, she had actioned on health and safety grounds (i.e. to prevent becoming worse).

**11.0 To agree any content for the YTC website and requests for Facebook features**

**11.1** Feedback on items to date & proposed new items **- Clerk / ALL**

The Clerk reiterated guidance during an election period and gave examples.

**12.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda** **- ALL**

**13.0 To confirm the date and time of the next YTC meeting:** 7pm, 13th September 2022

A number of items of business were listed as needing addressing prior to the usual September meeting so an EGM would be called prior to September.

**14.0 Confidential Item(s)**

**14.1** Heads of Terms - Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre **- Clerk / Cllr Monck**

**The Clerk** briefed the Council as to the 3 options sought for completing the above. The Council confirmed the appointment they wished to make.

The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) - A body may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies.