

Minutes of the February '23  
Yarm Town Council Ordinary Meeting  
held at  
**The Fellowship Hall (side entrance)**  
**West Street, Yarm TS15 9BT.**  
**Date: Tuesday 14th February 2023**  
**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 photographed.

## YARM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

**Cllr John Coulson (Chair)**

**Cllr Patrick Morton**

**Cllr Alan Moffitt (Vice Chair)**

**Cllr Chris Neil**

**Cllr Philip Addison**

**Cllr Pam Smailes**

**Cllr Peter Monck**

**Cllr Robert Wegg**

**Clerk / Proper Officer**

**5 members of the public were present including 1 member of the press.**

**1.0 Notice of Meeting** - it was confirmed that public notice of the meeting had been given in accordance with schedule 12, paragraph 10 (2) of the LGA 1972.

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

**3.0 Apologies for Absence:** **Apologies were received from Cllr Ian Carter and Ward Cllr Sherris.**

(verbal apology for Cllr Barbara Wegg was given at the meeting by Cllr RWegg).

**4.0 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



gambons) might be a priority for the LevellingUp Fund consultation that has just taken place (i.e. there would be no point in creating other river improvements with the fund if this fundamental risk is not addressed). This letter has also been copied to Ward Councillors and to the MP's office.

**6.3 Civility and Respect Agenda (including Training)- Cllr Coulson; The Clerk** reminded Cllrs of the part day conference that is taking place in March (email refers) and that any Cllrs wishing to attend should let her know asap (currently Cllr Addison and the Clerk are attending). The Clerk has reviewed the contents of one of the previous round of training sessions which looked at a range of behaviours that can constitute bullying, harassment, intimidation and/or create a toxic work environment and would bring this to a future meeting.

**6.4 High St Benches Refurbishment** - **Cllr Carter** is progressing this project with a group of volunteers and based on the audit of benches that Cllr Carter and the Clerk created at the end of last summer, the worst benches are being prioritised. The next 2 for work are those outside the Black Bull pub.

**6.5.1 Tree Survey: A&B Category Work - Update** - **The Clerk** updated the meeting re. progression of the arboricultural contract. All Category A work (and trees in St Mary Magdalene churchyard) is now complete. Those prioritised were the dead Ash tree on the corner of Willey Flatts and the dead Fir at St Mary Magdalene. All category B work would be completed by mid March (in the context of legislation relating to nesting birds). Cllr RWegg queried which trees were being tended to in the Rookery. **The Clerk** offered to re-send the map as regards the Rookery trees requiring attention.

**6.5.2 The Clerk** suggested Cllrs may wish to consider the marking of YTC trees with the relevant survey numbers for easy identification and reporting if problems occurred in between regular tree works/surveys contracted.

**6.6 Parking Spaces at Yarm Chapel** - **Cllr Moffitt** updated the meeting that 6 spaces had been cleared by removing overgrowth within the trees (right hand side of the driveway). Discussion centred around the need to scope and cost the project further (including what might be underneath the spaces cleared) prior to commencing (noting that weed prevention membrane would be needed).

**6.7 Provision of High St parking space designated for Police Vehicle** - **Cllr Carter: item carried forward.**

**6.8 Issues relating to West St Car Park Entrance & Traffic on West Street** - **Cllrs Carter & Moffitt**

**Cllr Moffitt** stated that the matter is not resolved although YTC has received an email from SBC who gave an update on actions relating to some of the issues. Confirmation has been received that a mirror opposite Westgate was not permissible as Highways perceived this would be a greater hazard. Parking is still occurring on the paved areas that form the entrance to the new car park. YTC had requested bollards / flower tubs to prevent this (pavement parking causing accessibility issues). The speedwatch group is awaited (Ward Cllr Sherris is leading on this). Completion of the long stay car park has been held up (i.e. completion of the perimeter wall to allow other spaces to be used) as further quotes for a higher wall had to be sought in order to achieve best value ( the original wall being deemed too low and subject to a new planning recommendation). **ACTION: Clerk** - further updates would be sought re. all issues

**6.9 Tomb at St Mary Magdalene - Survey result & options (DOCUMENT REFERS)** **Cllr Moffitt / The Clerk** presented the options as regards the damaged tomb in St Mary Magdalene churchyard and the stonemasons key comments following the survey (document refers). In short, the choice was a) to fully restore the tomb at a cost of approximately £6,000 +VAT or b) whilst keeping within the churchyard all displayable parts of the tomb and place the tomb top slab (still intact) onto the



it wasn't feasible; **Clr Monck** confirmed that heritage organisations / specialists had been consulted. **Clr Monck / the Clerk** had raised whether a lift could be fitted at every project meeting and it had been confirmed to YTC by the specialists involved that a lift was not feasible. Points were made regarding this: 1) the ground floor would now become a functional space for all - previously there was no access to any part of the Town Hall for anyone with a major physical mobility issue or in a wheelchair and the ground floor not usable space for any public; 2) the 'without walls' approach (described in the Weigh & Tolls meeting) was important because it meant whilst the Town Hall was a hub for activities, outreach and education projects would happen in a range of places (as appropriate); 3) any items that are upstairs (major items being part of the downstairs exhibition) can be brought to people. The Clerk can see people in the downstairs space or wherever mutually agreeable. **Clr Coulson and Moffitt** explained the difference between the issues of fitting a lift in a domestic situation as compared to the constraints of a listed heritage building and it was reiterated that YTC ideally wanted a lift.

**9.2** The second member of the public to speak asked about why only Yarm School was involved in the time capsule for the Heritage Centre (referenced in Weigh & Tolls). It was explained that it had been an extremely last minute idea from a member of the Friends of YTHHC group so the Council had the choice to act upon it or not do it at all (Yarm School had been quickly involved as **Clr Monck** had a direct link with the Head of History in order to ensure input from at least some young people). There had not been time/staff resource to set this up as an 'all schools' project (other aspects of engagement work will concentrate on other schools).

## **10.0 Policy and Resources:**

**10.1 Cemetery Report - Clr Moffitt** updated the meeting as regards the development of the parking spaces at Yarm Cemetery (see matters arising) and also that quotes for achieving an eco toilet were being sought.

**10.1.1 Proposal to Join the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM - £95 per annum, inc. specialist advice & support)** - **Clr Moffitt** updated the meeting as to the cemeteries' management training he and the Clerk had undertaken over 3 weeks. Some additional procedures and systems need to be set up. During the course, it had been advised that all councils with a cemetery should be a member of the above organisation and **Clr Moffitt** proposed this (at the cost of £95 per year).

**PROPOSED: Clr Moffitt**

**SECONDED: Clr Addison**

**AGREED**

**Clr RWegg** asked about ivy removal on the allotment side of the cemetery drive wall. This, along with pointing work, will be looked into.

**10.2 Allotments Report (inc. update on show trophies)** - **Clr Coulson** explained that there was currently no further update on the last meeting (key members of YCAA had been unavailable over the past period)

**10.2.1 Clr RWegg** raised a non-pecuniary interest on the point that **Clr Monck** was about to raise - **Clr Monck** raised the matter of the sign on the Allotment Hut door (i.e. re use by members of YCAA) - **Clr Coulson** referred **Clr Monck** to the statement above (10.2).

**10.2.2** It has been arranged for the Allotment Show trophies to be collected (as per question from a member of the public at the last meeting).

**10.3 Motion to approve Leisure & Culture Committee proposals for a Coronation Event - Clr Monck**

**Cllr Smailes** gave a summary from the working group re. the above: a community fun day for all the family, an old fashioned event celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III including traditional sports (egg and spoon, sack races, coconut shy etc), children's events and fun fair rides, bouncy castle, fairground food and refreshments, tea and cake, a Royalty Exhibition, charity stalls, local schools involvement, display vehicles from Fire & Police Services, a climbing wall and live entertainment from Aycliffe and Brancepeth Brass Band and Claire Louise, vints working to make it a low budget event. **Cllr Monck** reported that an application had been made to Awards for All (£6.5k) bage singer. Food donations will also be collected from those attending and redistributed back to the community. Everyone in the Fellowship Hall (in partnership with YTC) and that if this was successful it would be possible to avoid spending YTC money. A donation of £500 had been received from The Keys and the Newcastle Building Society and Whartons (contractor for YTHHC) had also been approached. **Cllr Moffitt** queried as to why the funding submission had been in the name of the Fellowship Hall and that this might look odd if YTC is leading this event so care should be taken not to compromise YTC (including for other bids). **Cllr Monck** clarified that the bid was made from the Fellowship Hall in partnership with YTC. A reminder was made that any funding bids made involving YTC should be advised to the Chair and Clerk / Responsible Finance Officer beforehand. Care should also be taken as regards co-ordinating requests for funding / contributions given the variety of projects underway by YTC (including YTHHC) i.e. so that we are not duplicating approaches and are supporting each other in our endeavours.

**10.3.2 The Clerk** clarified that Boss Events had just notified infrastructure costs (e.g. stewards, gazebos, pagoda, toilets, PA system etc) as costing circa £12k but being reduced to £5.5k by Boss Events approaching SBC to: waive the charge on the TTRO (worth £2k); allow Boss Events to conduct the land survey needed for non-pre approved event sites (worth £2-4k). In addition Boss Events would provide deckchairs (as used at Gala), Event Safety Officer & programme co-ordinator on the day, mark out sports tracks/pitches and give free transportation/collection of furniture all free of charge. Boss Events require all details from the working group for the site plan etc, by the end of this week (17.2.23) to prepare ISAG submission (first week of March). Confirmation for event go ahead has not yet been received from SBC in respect of the application the Clerk had to make re. holding an event on a non pre-approved site.

**10.3.3** The Clerk briefed the working group that as regards people hosting free activities and collecting 'tips' (as described by Cllr Smailes), a similar approach had been taken at the Christmas Lights Switch-on with those hosting activities collecting tips which, after the Christmas Lights switch On (e.g.) they had chosen to donate to a charity (this had been Corner House, YTC's Charity of the Year). However, if collections are made in the name of a local charity and labelled as such, a licence is required.

**10.3.4 Cllr Addison** raised the issue of purdah (the pre-election period leading up to local elections on 4th May). The event being publicised as per the Fellowship Hall led application may help the position. **The Clerk** briefed the meeting that she would go through purdah guidance at the next meeting and pass on any briefing received. The Clerk concurred with **Cllr Moffitt** that the purdah period should not affect the usual operation of the council; a number of Clerks have already requested guidance from NALC re. Coronation events during purdah.

**10.4 Morley Carr Bowling Club: Handover Update** - In accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960, it was proposed that, by resolution, this item should be discussed in the confidential section of the meeting given the nature of commercial and legal factors that need to be discussed.

**10.5 Requirement for Photo Identification in Order to Vote at the Upcoming Local Elections** - **The Clerk** briefed the meeting as to this new government requirement and confirmed that she was sharing all information coming from SBC (on social media) regarding this (other outlets later on) and asked that Councillors also share the information and remind residents of the photo ID requirement. The Clerk will be sending out further information.

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**10.6 Requirement to move the May 2023 Weigh & Tolls and YTC Ordinary meeting due to the timing of the elections -**  
The Clerk informed the meeting that the day of the election (4th May) did not allow time for the YTC Ordinary and Annual Meetings to be called legally (for the second Tuesday 9th May). **Cllr Coulson** proposed that the meeting be moved to the third Tuesday.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Coulson**

**SECONDED: Cllr Addison**

**AGREED**

**10.7 Signage for Parking - Yarm High Street** - **Cllr Coulson** raised an issue (also raised by the RPR K.Shields) that the signs indicating available car parks in / off of Yarm High Street need improving. The issue being that potential visitors may have passed through the High Street without having been able to identify a parking space and then continue on out without stopping (there being no easy turnaround point). Signage is needed in key points in advance of the High St at both North and South ends. **Cllr Monck** referenced that this issue had been included in the recent High St consultation by SBC.

**ACTION: Clerk** to further raise the issue of parking signage & YTC's suggested solution with the SBC Levelling Up Fund Consultation Team.

**10.8 Discussion: Closed Churchyard Trees & Category C Redwood Tree nr. Entrance** - **Cllr Monck** confirmed that a faculty had come through (diocese approval / requirement) for the necessary arboricultural work in St Mary Magdalene Church yard which had been applied for in advance; the arboriculturalist's survey had been shared with those church wardens. **The Clerk** confirmed that this faculty application (made by the church wardens) had included a category C tree (s) that were not included in the Council decision for work (category A&B only) and that the faculty had been applied for after this Council decision but somehow named the wrong trees. **Cllr Moffitt** emphasised that YTC held the authority and carried the costs of maintaining the churchyard and therefore should have been properly consulted so as to avoid this error/miscommunication.

**ACTION: Clerk** to contact the Church, correct the position and ensure future practice as regards churchyard matters.

**10.9 To select a Grass Cutting Contract: Quotations Received**(DOCUMENT REFERS) - As for item 10.4, it was proposed that, by resolution, this item should be discussed in the confidential section of the meeting given the nature of commercial and legal factors that needed to be discussed.

**10.10 Construction Work at Yarm School: Erection of a Crane** - **Cllr R Wegg** detailed that a crane involved in construction work at Yarm School would overhang the allotments when not in use and that allotment holders should be informed of this and reassured that it would not be active if over the allotments.

**10.11 Request for funding for Medics Provision (£200-£300) - Yarm Fun Run (Lions)** - **Cllr Coulson** briefed the meeting that, given the Gala won't be happening, the Yarm Lions are now short of the medical support they normally share with us (paid for by YTC). **Cllr Morton** asked if this could be combined with the Coronation event in May. The representatives for the Lions confirmed that this did not give enough time for planning and that the event areas involved would also clash. **Cllr Coulson** proposed that YTC support this cost (confirmed as **£150** by representatives present).

**PROPOSED: Cllr Coulson**

**SECONDED: Cllr Moffitt**

**AGREED**

**11.0 Planning & Environment:**

**11.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists**

- **Cllr Monck** briefed the meeting on 2 applications out for consultation. Although previously refused (ref. 21/2925/FUL ) the Mount Leven Farm 215 dwelling houses has been re-presented with amendments i.e. now including more bungalows. It was suggested that YTC's previous objection be resubmitted

**ACTION:** **Cllr Monck** to review the statement to be made with the Clerk.

**11.2** Land east of 15 Busby Way - Cllr Monck advocated that YTC object to this application on the basis that although described as a 'footpath' the plan shows an area the size of a road (and an area that is clearly marked out as a hammerhead for cars). This would appear to be a 'preamble' to a road link with the Mount Leven development (as referenced at 11.1 above) and this is a residential area that would be disrupted by this development.

**PROPOSED:** **Cllr Monck**

**SECONDED:** **Cllr Addison**

**AGREED**

**11.2 Latest Play Area Reports & Issues: Update**

- **The Clerk** will forward latest reports as they arrive and attend to any immediate medium high risk issues as far as possible. Still sorting additional repairs person for larger repairs. Gardener has addressed the graffiti.

**11.3** **The Clerk** reminded Cllrs of the need to make discuss / make decisions regarding hanging baskets (under the planning and environment heading). **Cllr Smailes** stated this should be put on the agenda earlier i.e. before Christmas. **Cllr Moffitt, Addison and Coulson** suggested we were in plenty of time. **The Clerk** reminded councillors that it is their role to raise items on the agenda at any point they chose. **Cllr Coulson** proposed (following suggestion by Cllr Smailes for red white and blue colours) that hanging baskets should be mostly red, white and blue but with a few other colours **AGREED**. The current watering contract should continue for another year - **AGREED**.

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

**12.1 Feedback on items to date & proposed new items**

- Facebook features were identified as: work on True Lovers' Walk and the up and coming Coronation Event. The Clerk will be featuring notices as regards photo ID required for voting.

**13.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda**

- Notification of transfer between funds - **Cllr Addison**; Motion to move the public session to the end of the YTC Ordinary meeting - **Cllr Coulson**

**14.0 To confirm the date and time of the next YTC meeting: 7pm, 14th March 2023.**

**Cllr Coulson** will be calling an Allotments Committee prior to the next monthly Ordinary YTC meeting.

**14.1** It was agreed to waive Standing Orders in order to continue the meeting beyond 9.30pm.

**AGREED**

**14.2** In accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960, it was proposed that, by resolution, press and the public shall be excluded for two items due to its confidential nature (i.e. given commercial and legal factors that need to be discussed) - LGA Act 1972 schedule 12 paragraph 10(2)(e).

**PROPOSED:** **Cllr Coulson**

**SECONDED:** **Cllr Moffitt**

**AGREED**

**15.0 Confidential Items**

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



## 10.4 Morley Carr Bowling Club: Handover Update

**10.4.1 The Clerk** reported that councillors appointed to consult on this felt that alternative quotes should be found. These were being sought against the brief discussed (establishing the nature of taking on the building i.e. what land / premise is included, lease or freehold, that any building faults / issues would be repaired by the developer within a set number of years - as specified - and for YTC to have sight of the results of the relevant searches undertaken for the facility to be constructed.

**ACTION:** Clerk obtaining quotes (up to the threshold specified by councillors, dispensation given to the working group, as specified at the last meeting, re. choice of solicitor to handle and to progress)

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Moffitt

**SECONDED:** Cllr Coulson

**AGREED**

**10.9 To select a Grass Cutting Contract: Quotations Received (DOCUMENT REFERS)** - **The Clerk** suggested Cllrs may wish to review this at a brief EGM instead of discussing at this point. The meeting continued to discuss & select. **The Clerk** confirmed that a proper specification for this work had now been created and presented, the quotations and accompanying information as submitted by company A and company B were against this specification issued. A third company had not been able to quote this year but would like to be considered another year. In total 6 companies had been asked to quote including the current provider. Discussion took place as to the submissions, prices and risks (points raised by Cllr Morton). **Cllr RWegg** commented that the 'blind quotation' process (i.e. not knowing who the companies were) made things difficult; Cllr RWegg declined the offer by the Clerk to go through processes that he had concerns regarding. A decision was taken to appoint company A (with the conditions advised and discussed), including a review at the end of 1 year.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Moffitt

**SECONDED:** Cllr Coulson (3 abstentions)

**AGREED**

In accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960, press and the public shall be excluded for this item due to its confidential nature. LGA Act 1972 schedule 12 paragraph 10(2)(e)

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.