

Minutes of the meeting of  
The Weigh & Tolls Committee held at  
**The Fellowship Hall (side entrance)**  
**West Street, Yarm TS15 9BT.**  
**Date: Tuesday 14th November 2023**  
**Time: 7pm**  
Members of the public were invited to  
attend the meeting  
**Juliet Johnson, Proper Officer to YTC**



Yarm Town Council  
Town Hall  
High Street  
Yarm  
TS15 9AH

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## Weigh and Tolls Committee

### MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Cllr John Coulson (voted to Chair); Cllr Steve Atkinson; Cllr Yvonne Pybus;  
Cllr Pam Smailes (Vice Chair); Cllr Marje Blair; Cllr Barbara Wegg;  
Cllr Philip Addison; Cllr Joyce Hardy; Cllr Robert Wegg;  
Town Clerk; 9 members of the public.

**1.0 Notice of Meeting** - public notice of the meeting was 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** - Vice Chair, Cllr Smailes did not take the Chair and stated that she wished to be an observer. Following a vote **Cllr Coulson** took the Chair.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Smailes **SECONDED:** Cllr Blair **AGREED**

**3.0 Apologies for Absence** - apologies were received from **Cllr Peter Monck**.

**4. Code of Conduct | Declarations 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

**4.1** No declarations of interest or requests for dispensation were received.

**5. Confirmation of Minutes:**

- a) To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting of the Weigh and Tolls Committee (10.10.23)

**5.1** *[N.B. The minutes of the meeting were not confirmed until the YTC meeting that followed]*

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

## 6. Events Update

**6.1 Yarm Fair and Ridings** - **The Clerk** updated the meeting that : all letters and resident car passes had been distributed by YTC including help from Cllrs Hardy, Pybus and Blair; the ridings ceremony had ran smoothly (despite the fact the YTC would still like a vehicle to be allowed through ISAG - independent Safety Advisory Group); Tees Valley Mayor, Stockton Borough Council (SBC) Mayor and Mayoress, Showmen's Guild Chair, heritage actor presenting as Georgian Clerk/ Bailiff, coach horn player and Revrd. Darren Moore had all been present alongside YTC Chair and very many guests to complete the current version of the Ridings; the storm had caused the Friday Fair to be cancelled - creating much work for the Guild and the Clerk assisted with social media regarding this; the storm had also affected attendance at the Ridings Reception - Guild members had to attend to businesses affected by the storm elsewhere and a number of illness absences were reported resulting in low numbers but a well received event and excellent catering; a number of issues had been raised regarding SBC Enforcement actions which will be looked at during evaluation as will the issue of a deadline for YTC receiving the letters and passes to distribute which had been really problematic for the Showmen's Guild and YTC; the Methodist Church has been thanked for providing an excellent alternative operational base.

**6.2 Remembrance Sunday** - **The Clerk** put all necessary programme arrangements in place coordinating with the churches, RBL, musicians and event infrastructure manager and communicating with potential wreath layers known to YTC, along with the Lieutenancy Office. Boss Events coordinated all the major infrastructure arrangements including the series of complex temporary road closures and following this year's plan introduced by SBC for a clearway around Bridge Street, West Street and Bentley Wynd. Thanks are due to Boss Events for good management of all event processes. A few vehicles had parked in West Street; the Clerk confirmed letters had been hand delivered to all residents and the SBC signage had also been placed; evaluation would reveal any points for improvement and an assessment as to how the clearway had worked (avoiding the congestion issue of last year). The Memorial Service saw the debut of a new local cornet player (aged 11). Numbers in attendance are currently estimated to be 1- 1.5k.

**6.3 Christmas Lights Switch-On** - **The Clerk** briefed Councillors re. arrangements in place for Sunday 3rd December, working with Boss Events (who lead on infrastructure, whilst the Clerk leads on programming). Details include bookings with: Aycliffe and Brancepeth Brass Band, the Choir of St Mary Magdalene, local singers (TBC), Tom Rolfe Panto, AJ young people's performing arts and The Christmas Blessing. A lit up Gingerbread house will be placed on site and a volunteer Father Christmas and helper have been identified. Activities and a few stalls are still to be confirmed as soon as possible.

### **6.4 Proposal for 'Christmas Eve on Yarm High St' Event (£2-3K contribution)**

**Cllr Addison (& Cllr Coulson)** proposed that 'Christmas Eve on the High Street', not currently budgeted for, should be contributed to in the sum of £3k in the context that Yarm Business Forum (YBF) contribute up to £2k with additional funding (sum unknown) from Ward Councillors. Discussion included: purpose of the event e.g. boosting Yarm High street as a destination and valued asset, free professional entertainment for families (noting some might not afford panto tickets for children), benefit to small local businesses (High Streets struggling nationally); impact of the event - positive feedback, expectations/ impetus from previous years including Facebook comments, ambience, positive community atmosphere & uplift. **Cllr Smailes** suggested a choir performance as an alternative. **The Clerk** confirmed Cllrs could choose this option if preferred. Local musicians had been involved previously (raising significant sums for local charities) and 'small group' choirs (max 4-5 people) could be included. The situation as regards 'larger group/choir singing' as had emerged from the original 'Carols on the Cobbles' event was recapped (i.e. ISAG required removal of parking spaces the night before to safely accommodate a choir performance / gathering for carols - undesirable for Yarm businesses and also defeating part of

the object of the event etc.; this was how the 'pavement performances' idea had emerged i.e. not requiring ISAG approval or removal of parking spaces and meeting expectations for 'something christmassy' in the high street, instead of Carols on the Cobbles which has now merged with the Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On event, 3rd December).

**Cllr Addison** proposed that £3k be spent on 'Christmas on the High Street'; **Cllr RWegg** requested clarity on the proposed source/affordability of the funding. **Cllr Addison** stated he felt this was affordable from reserves (and referenced that high costs of two By-Elections had just been avoided); **the Clerk** estimated that the general reserves position at 'end of year' was currently forecast at @ £65k (hopefully including £10k underspend against budget) - **Cllr Addison** concurred as lead Councillor for Finance. It was agreed that 'Christmas on the High Street' should go ahead (noting that the preferred/appropriate date this year might be Saturday 23rd December as many businesses might be closed on Sunday 24th December).

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

## **6.5     Approach to Events Planning**

**Cllr Blair** proposed an earlier and more strategic approach to event planning than had occurred this year to give the Clerk further opportunity for advance planning and clarity as regards Councillor's wishes. **Cllr Addison** suggested that the admin support budget could be utilised for mail drops associated with (e.g.) the Fair & Remembrance; several councillors felt they would help out to avoid this cost. **The Clerk** suggested that a more strategic approach could be achieved through identifying social/headline priorities for key directions of work as part of budget planning (*process to be referenced as part of YTC agenda to follow*); a list of pre-agreed dates for Leisure and Culture meetings (related to run-in times for the events calendar) would also help and ensure proposals could then be agreed in better time.

## **7.     Finance**

**To authorise payment of the accounts (Weigh and Tolls)**     - **Cllr Addison** asked the meeting to note the payments listed (market tolls and broadband) and asked the Council to approve these.

**PROPOSED:**     **Cllr Addison**                      **SECONDED:**     **Cllr Smailes**                      **AGREED**

## **8.     Town Hall Heritage Centre Project**    - **Cllr Monck**

### **8.1     General Update on Build Project & Key Risks     &     8.2     Engagement Update, Fit-Out of Ground Floor Main Exhibition Space, Upper Floor Development, NLHF Bid & Launch.**

In the absence of **Cllr Monck**, The Clerk (in role as YTHHC Development Manager) updated the meeting on the following:

- a) progress as to the Main Exhibition (MROsier with Mediale) recapping the issues caused by the electricity metre delay (subject of 031123 EGM) , the launch now being 18th January '24 instead of 23rd of November;
- b) fitting of the electricity metre will now take place on 27th November (brought forward from the company's offer of early 2024) with building handover taking place on December 4th;
- c) removal from temporary office would then take place on the afternoon / evening of December 4th;
- d) main exhibition (ground floor) fit-out would then take place from 5th December onwards, with the community built replica of the prehistoric canoe arriving on 5th, for a blessing ceremony with the community makers and primary school children taking place on 6th December ;
- e) cleaning and conservation prep of artefacts is being organised (currently stored at Preston Park Museum);
- f) text and signage is underway along with work by other fit-out contractors who have worked to reschedule preparations due to electricity metre delay (i.e. exhibition designers, AV production, AV installation, heritage and arts PR etc.);

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g) the upper floor exhibitions, scoped and specified by members of The Friends of YTHHC, are also being prepared; these include a sample section of the 8 panel permanent exhibition (Yarm at Play) detailing historic leisure pursuits including the Fair and personal recreation (material collated by Jo Faulkner following development sessions); Teesside Archeology are also involved;

h) not all 8 sections of the permanent upper floor exhibition will be completed for opening (and require ongoing community participation) but the upper floor will also open with a temporary exhibition(s) - the Development Manager is working with Wharton Construction, the Friends group and local photographer to develop this: 'The Renovation of Yarm Town Hall and Heritage Centre' (detailing trades, key milestones and challenges involved) as well as the project that is 'The Recreation of Yarm's Prehistoric Canoe' (that was found when the viaduct was built - circa 1852).

**9. To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda - none currently identified.**

**10. To confirm the date/time of the next Weigh and Tolls Committee meeting: 7pm, 12th December 2023**

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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.

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