

Minutes of the January 2024 meeting of  
Yarm Town Council held at  
**Challoner House**  
**Challoner Rd., Yarm TS15 9EL.**  
**Date: Tuesday 9th January 2024**  
**Time: 7pm**  
**(immediately following Weigh & Tolls)**  
Members of the public were invited to  
attend the meeting



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 (09.01.24)

#### PRESENT:

**Cllr Peter Monck (Chair), Cllr Pam Smailes (Vice Chair), Cllr Philip Addison, Cllr Steve Atkinson, Cllr Marje Blair, Cllr Joyce Hardy, Cllr Brian Newcombe, Cllr Barbara Wegg, Cllr Robert Wegg, Rate Payers' Representative - Karen Shields, Town Clerk / Proper Officer.**

**1.0 Notice of Meeting** - public notice of the meeting was given in accordance with sched. 12, para.10 (2) of 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 YTC/Ward **Cllr John Coulson** and **Ward Cllr Andrew Sherris**.

**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

**4.1 Cllrs B&R Wegg** declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10.2. **Cllr Monck** declared a non-prejudicial interest in matters relating to Yarm Parish Church and Yarm Cemetery (in relation to owning a grave deed).

**5.0 Confirmation of Minutes - To approve the minutes of the previous meetings:**

**5.1 Weigh and Tolls Committee** held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting. The minutes were approved (subject to amends voted upon and agreed during the Weigh & Tolls Meeting).

**5.2 Yarm Town Council** held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting. The minutes were voted upon and agreed (subject to the amends listed below which were voted upon and agreed):

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Item 4, Cllr Monck declared a Nonpecuniary interest as Churchwarden for Yarm Parish Church and a non-pecuniary interest in Yarm Cemetery, as a grave owner; Item 7 (Finance), The Chair reported that the Development Manager YTHHC (Juliet Johnson) Salary is paid through Tax Assist with the income tax and national insurance paid. The Chair also stated that the Development Manager has payslips that confirm this. Item 11 Planning, a correction is to be made - the minutes should read: planning permission for 111 High Street is still awaiting a decision; as regards 145 High Street, the original plan for the rear development was withdrawn in 2021, leaving the front part ongoing and that work is now in progress. 10.2.1 Allotment Transfer Requests. Minutes should read 'Cllr Monck will make a decision on the most suitable person to agree a transfer after a site visit'. 11.2 Play Equipment: Cllr Monck explained that there are two swings to be installed on Willey Flatts, due to be actioned by the Clerk.

Cllr Addison requested an amend as regards 7.1, i.e. there is not a debit set up to repay HMRC as this was not the situation; the figure for the general reserves estimate given was **circa £75k**. Under Item 9, Cllr Addison requested that normal practice was not to give names/initials for members of the public who spoke; under 10.4 Cllr Addison's contribution should not be highlighted in bold and there was no recorded vote so names should not be listed; Cllr Addison also requested that his initial error in voting was corrected and did not need including in the minutes. The above amends were proposed and agreed:

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Monck

**SECONDED:** Cllr Addison

**AGREED.**

## **6.0 Clerk's Report: Matters for Information (carried forward: December 2023 - EMAIL REFERS; January 2024)**

**The Clerk reported (as per email) on:** **1. CCTV** Willey Flatts, complete and running; **2. Reinstatement of Swings etc.** Now CCTV in place, repair person will now install these; **3. Clapham Rd Holes** - minor work was apparently actioned 20.10.23; SBC state road is in poor condition & will re-inspect shortly to see what else can be done as interim; **4. Network Rail fencing** - 3rd enquiry sent; no reply as yet; perception is that they will argue it's their land and safety is their only consideration. Will update if/when get further; **5. Leaf Clearance & Hedges**- this has been done on Green lane (where were blocking drains) and overhanging branches (Conyers hedge) which were cut last week); one of the houses (corner) has been required by SBC to also cut back overhanging branches; leaves also cleared from Worsall roundabout footpath to High St. **6. Update on Utility Contracts** - challenges progress: have to pay full water bill as it is for run off / sewerage provision which, it is argued, continued during renovation year; success in challenging £1,500 electricity bill for Town Hall - this has been credited; **7. Plans for additional path nr Station** - this would run (opposite Conyers & Old Dairy) along to the station and be part of the new cycle link to the new puffin crossing - delayed until next summer, awaiting agreement with developer; **8. Allotments** - approx. 26 on the waiting list; 4x requests for transfer to one plot now actioned and agreed by the Chair(Brickyard); review of Allotment Rules and Regulations overdue - initial informal meeting to be held with YCAA re. potential list of amends needed - one example issue is management/monitoring of structures on allotments; allotment rolling tasks list created after walkabout circulated - status on a couple of items awaited from YCAA (re their role in general site maintenance - may need help as volunteer hrs a problem; reminded Chair of YCAA to come back to us about location and consequent type of solar light required at Worsall Rd (visit pending); - 2x Notices to Quit issued according to YTC Councillors Rules (following advisory / template sought from NAA legal - nothing on file at YTC from the past) - query from Clerk as to whether to progress one of the Notices to Quit (due to specific circumstances) is raised on the agenda later; offer of doing Pest Control withdrawn by YCAA (a training course had been identified) - still potential to attend and reminder sent to YCAA; **9. Cemeteries** Cemetery Fees Comparator underway; 2x Ashes burials have taken place this month; several monument applications have come in. 1x deed transfer underway (and 1 complete under the new system following training): request made of local handy person re. disposal of natural debris that can be placed behind the 'soil gate' until collection; all our events gear (following rationalisation of this) has managed to fit into one cupboard of the Chapel following moving out of office premises and back to the Town Hall; few items in the second cupboard - unwanted picture frames will disappear (as per note to Cemetery

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Committee); **10. Proposal for Defibrillators to be installed at all future development sites as part of the planning agreement** - SBC have stated that: a) there's probably only one further site that's open for development / part of the Local Plan (opposite Tall trees / West of Morley Carr) where this could apply; b) the option could therefore be to propose this as part of borough-wide policy throughout Stockton; **11. Thanks Steve**, re Yarm Sign inspection and straightening; will attend with cleaning gear asap; **12. Transfers Between Accounts** - SEE LATER ITEM; 3 Councillor signatures urgently required for transfer of majority of funds from dormant account to others now obtained; **13. Soiling of High St** being monitored given areas/ significant problems missed; SBC aware and Ward Cllr Sherris has followed this up (significant issues on 23.12.23 and over Christmas holiday period, revealing areas regularly missed/not attended to - specifics have been given to SBC).

**Cllr Pybus** added to the report re. soiling of the High St., that there can be a problem around Pizza & Co. premises.

**Cllr RWegg** offered to attend the pest control course if YCAA no longer wished to take this task on (to save budget).

## 7.0 Council Finances

7.1 **To authorise payment of the accounts** - Accounts Payable (DOCUMENT REFERS) **Cllr Addison** asked the meeting to note (previously approved) the Wave water bill for the Town Hall had to be paid (following challenge due to absence from the building). The meeting approved the accounts to be paid.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Addison                      SECONDED: Cllr Pybus                      AGREED**

7.2 Bank Reconciliations were noted by the meeting (DOCUMENT REFERS)

**PROPOSED: Cllr Addison                      SECONDED: Cllr Monck                      AGREED**

7.3 The Income and Expenditure Report was noted by the meeting (DOCUMENT REFERS)

**PROPOSED: Cllr Addison                      SECONDED: Cllr Monck                      AGREED**

7.4 **Transfers between accounts** (from December agenda). **The Clerk** updated the meeting as to need for transfers between accounts (e.g. £26k from PSDF) prior to receiving funds from an account no longer used.

7.5 **Draft 1 for discussion: 2024/2025 Budget Setting & Process/ Timescale Reminder** (DOCUMENT REFERS) - **The Clerk** reminded the meeting of the budget setting process, timescales and requirements for setting the precept request (the funding we ask for from Stockton Borough Council-SBC). Suggestions for savings or additional spend to be considered were again requested. The Clerk informal meetings (e.g. leisure, cemeteries, allotments) to consider the budget and feedback from these so a draft 2 can be produced (further individual comments could also be included); a chairs' of committees meeting could then also be held (as previously) to support the process. A further EGM on the budget will take place.

7.6 **YTC Insurance Update** (inc. Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre) - **The Clerk** briefed the meeting that she'd negotiated for the Town Hall (on completion of refurbishment) to be returned to within the overarching YTC insurance policy (during refurbishment it had to be separate as the renovation was valued at more than £350k). Following the initial request, the insurance adviser had suggested the terms had changed for the overarching insurer and that YTHHC might need to now be insured separately (circa. £3,100k); this had been avoided but there was a cost to reinsure YTHHC back within the original policy of £450 - a vote was taken as to whether to go ahead with this cost:

**PROPOSED: Cllr Monck                      SECONDED: Cllr Blair                      AGREED**

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## 8.0 The Correspondence List was reviewed and considered (DOCUMENT REFERS)

Achieving a credit as regards two long standing electricity bills for the Town Hall was noted.

## 9.0 Adjournment and Questions From the Public

9.1 (deferred from previous meeting) Letter from resident: comments and proposal as regards Yarm Fair

(DOCUMENT REFERS) - The meeting confirmed that YTC did not, at this time, want to take the resident's suggestion further as regards Yarm Fair at this time. **ACTION:** The Clerk will write to the resident.

A **member of the public (MP1)** asked about the opening of YTHHC - the date was given. **MP1** also asked about alterations to the High St and observed that the bus stops are not long enough to receive both the 6 & 7 buses as they arrive, causing a hazard for people. Would this be dealt with in the planned work to the High St and when would this be happening ?

**ACTION:** Clerk to feedback this concern to SBC and find out what the timescale is now predicted to be for the planned Levelling-Up Fund works.

## 10.0 Policy and Resources:

10.1 **Cemetery Report - Cllr B Wegg** updated the meeting: the cemetery is looking tidy, the wooden cross near the chapel has been secured into the ground, the chapel has been cleaned inside and out.

**ACTIONS:** there is a tree overhanging from the allotments, the path could do with a clean and the flat roof appeared to be leaking again. There was discussion regarding storage of the remaining sorted 5% of the YTC events and other equipment (95% has been disposed of by the and previously reported on moving out of and back into the Town Hall; the remainder is largely what is needed and items the Clerk needs help identifying and decision whether to keep or not - a note had been sent to all councillors regarding this temporary position re storage in the chapel cupboard, inc. intended disposal of picture frames).

**ACTION:** Cllrs to help identify unknown items, storage to be found at the Fellowship Hall and other storage solution to be agreed.

## 10.2 Allotments Report

10.2.1 **General Update-** The Clerk reported that a number of transfers had taken place, new tenants had viewed and were taking several allotments that had been freed up following transfer ads. There are approximately 26 people on the waiting list and 2 vacant allotments (Brickyard) awaiting tenancies. There are several management processes underway at the top allotments and rumour that one allotment had been left had caused the tenant a problem - the shed then having been broken into. One eviction is in process but the Clerk requested Cllrs consider a second where a Notice to Quit had been issued in line with YTC required policy but exceptional circumstances had now been notified by the tenant (response having not been received to any of the series of management letters or rent request prior to this). The circumstances were discussed and Councillors agreed that the Notice to Quit be rescinded and that a final opportunity to cultivate the allotment should be given (with reinspection April/May to ensure 75% cultivation). **Cllr Pybus** offered to help and gather others to assist the tenant to get back on track.

10.2.2 **Proposal to prioritise development needs at top allotments (Allotment Fund Reserve) - Cllr Pybus** reported that she wished to consider this proposal further following discussion and a re-arranged site visit.

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10.3 **Approval of the agreement for Transfer of Equity in respect of Morley Carr bowling facility** (deferred from previous meeting - clarity required) - the meeting agreed that they were happy to go ahead based on documents circulated.

10.4 **Discussion: proposal that Weigh and Tolls meetings be reduced to one a year** - **Cllr Newcombe** proposed this on the basis of more streamlined meetings (e.g. not needing to re-agree items from Weigh & Tolls in Ordinary YTC) and less confusing for the public; the historical significance of the meeting could be maintained by holding one a year. **Cllr Monck** felt the deed of gift regarding the Town Hall on the cobbles meant the Weigh & Tolls meeting had to continue. It was suggested requirements of the deed might be met by inclusion in the YTC Ordinary meeting agenda as a specific item. Copy of the deed is held at the Town Hall. Weigh & Tolls to be incorporated within Ordinary YTC meetings (a recorded vote was requested).

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Newcombe                      **SECONDED:** Cllr RWegg                      **AGREED**

**[FOR: Cllrs Newcombe, RWegg, BWegg, Smailes, Blair, Hardy, Pybus, Atkinson    AGAINST: Cllrs Monck & Addison]**

10.5 **Proposal to agree additional funding for enhanced Christmas Lights 2024** - **Cllr Blair** suggested that a seasonal message on the Town Hall in lights should be considered as part of the 2024 budget.

**ACTION:** Example costings to be sought.

Further discussion suggested that YTC needed to identify storage for such equipment and existing needs (and this related to the following item).

10.6 **Proposal for High Street hanging baskets to be artificial flowers (2024)** - **Cllr Pybus** advocated that artificial flowers were of such quality that they might replace natural flowers and save huge costs for watering. Further discussion included: suggestion of artificial topiary balls on every other lamppost in between natural flowers; three options can now be considered: full quota of natural flower hanging baskets; alternate artificial topiary balls (which could also have LEDs) in between natural hanging baskets; artificial flowers in all hanging baskets.

**ACTION:** Costs and examples for all 3 options can be sought.

10.7 Use of remaining allotments development fund: prioritisation of top allotments (previously discussed at 10.2.2)

10.8 **Use of Play Equipment budget (inc background information)** - The meeting was updated as regards the previous allocation from Ward Councillors budget which has been specified by war Councillors as for Snaith's field but could be used for outdoor exercise equipment (for adults and children) or specifically children's play equipment. Suggestion was made that CCTV should also be fitted at Snaith's Field if new equipment was to be purchased.

10.9 **Clarity from individual councillors re. Meetings Summons format** - **The Clerk** confirmed that currently she understood that Councillors welcomed having their meeting summons electronically. Some councillors wished to collect paper copies / have paper copies ready for them at the meeting. The Clerk asked Councillors to reconfirm arrangements with her re. paper copies (particularly if understanding is different to as noted here).

## 11.0 **Planning & Environment:**

11.1 **Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists** - **Cllr Monck** updated the meeting as regards: application for 7 Dwellings, Land West of 27 High Street TS15 9BW (23/2231/FUL) and suggested this should be objected to given access and

other issues (general agreement); a planning decision is pending as regards 111 High St (dental surgery); electricians are being replaced on West Street and work is pending to prepare for work on the floodgates.

**11.2 Latest play area reports & issues** - The Clerk confirmed the swings are due to go back in now repairer has returned and CCTV active.

**12.0 Adjournment and Final Questions from the Public** (Clerk to write to resident re. Yarm Fair - as per para 9.)

**13.0 Facebook & Website** - The meeting was asked to offer any content for the website, facebook posts and any info re. Councillors biographies and photos to populate the Councillors' page on the website.

**14.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda** - none currently

**15.0 To confirm the date and time of the next YTC meeting: 7pm, 13th February 2024**

**The meeting closed at 21.33pm.**

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.



ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 9TH JANUARY 2024

WEIGH & TOLLS COMMITTEE (inc of VAT

MEMBERS APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID FOR BY DIRECT DEBIT if applicable)

Payments by Direct Debit		£	£	
Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	Ref
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Market Toll Rates 1/01/23		£96.00	d/d
Virgin Media	Town Hall Wifi 1.01.23		£38.40	d/d

YARM TOWN COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS

MEMBERS APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID FOR BY DIRECT DEBIT DEBIT

Payments by Direct Debit		£	£	
Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	
EE	Mobile & telephone 19.12.22		£30.04	d/d
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Cemetery rates. 1.01.23		£38.00	d/d

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Google	G Suite	£84.32	d/d
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WEIGH AND TOLLS  
COMMITTEE

MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT BY CHEQUE OR BACS

Payments by Cheque or BACS

YARM TOWN COUNCIL

MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID BY CHEQUE OR BACS

Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	
	December salary		£1,800.39	BACS
HMRC	Tax & NI for December		£910.01	BACS
Contractor	Face painting Xmas lights		£225.00	BACS

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MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT BY CHEQUE OR BACS

Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	
Drakon Heritage & Conservation	Conservation consultancy		£330.00	BACS
Puffin Fabrication	YTHHC - Bespoke Museum Cases		£609.00	BACS
Contractor	YTHHC-Bespoke12 faced Disply Brds		£400.00	BACS
Town Clerk	XmasonHighSt - Artists Expns/Accom		£128.00	BACS
Town Hall Development (Mngr)	End of Sept - November		TBC	
Mediale	Final Overrun/Addtional Payment  (YTHHC Fit-Out/Exhbtn&AV Installtn)		£7,500.00	BACS

## INCOME

Various	Income from Xmas lights - Fair Rides	£100.00	100137
Coun P Addison	Repayment of overpayment	£32.10	100138
Barclays	Loyalty Reward	£1.17	d/c
Allotment holder	Allotment rent	£35.00	d/c
Yarm Fellowship Hall	Insurance 3 months (July - Sept 23)	£189.00	d/c