

Minutes of the April 2024 meeting of Yarm Town Council

held at Challoner House

Challoner Rd. TS15 9EL

Date: Tuesday, 9th April 2024

Time: 7pm

Members of the public were invited to
attend the meeting

SIGNED: Juliet Johnson, Proper Officer to YTC



Yarm Town Council
Town Hall
High Street
Yarm
TS15 9AH

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YARM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

(incorporating Weigh & Tolls)

PRESENT: Cllr Pam Smailes (vice Chair); Cllr Philip Addison; Cllr Steve Atkinson; Cllr John Coulson; Cllr Joyce Hardy; Cllr Brian Newcombe; Cllr Yvonne Pybus; Cllr Barbara Wegg; Rate Payers' Rep Karen Shields; Town Clerk/Proper Officer

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 - Cllr Smailes took the Chair

3.0 Apologies for Absence - Cllr P.Monck (Chair) sent apologies due to illness; Cllr Marje Blair sent apologies due to illness; Cllr B Wegg gave verbal apologies for Cllr RWegg at the meeting. Stockton Ward Cllr A. Sherris sent apologies.

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 Cllr B Wegg declared a non pecuniary interest as regards item 10.3

5.0 Confirmation of Minutes

To approve the minutes of the previous meetings:

5.1 Yarm Town Council (incorporating Weigh & Tolls) held on Tuesday 12th March 2024 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

PROPOSED:

Cllr Newcombe

SECONDED:

Cllr Smailes

AGREED

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6.0 Clerk's Report: Matters Arising (DOC REFERS) - The Clerk presented the new format for matters arising and the reasons for this (a spreadsheet detailing actions completed and actions outstanding - in short, a clerk's update was recommended as good practice (avoiding re-discussion of agenda items, previously taking too large a part of the meeting) but currently review of matters arising was now too short, with little review, as raised by Cllr Atkinson. The Chair took the meeting through matters arising (spreadsheet updated accordingly)

7.0 Council Finances

7.1 To authorise payment of the accounts - Accounts Payable (DOCUMENT REFERS) (includes Weigh & Tolls)

Cllr Addison presented the payments list, explained the payments to the YTHHC Development Manager and asked that an additional payment of £65 for IT anti-virus be approved. Cllr Smailes requested copies of the invoices listed for the event management contract (a number of late invoices that are part of the contractual agreement were presented late). The invoices in question relate to the 23/24 budget and do not affect the 24/25 budget. Cllr Smailes requested copies of the breakdown of these invoices (**Clerk to circulate**). **The payments list (and additional item of £65) was approved.**

PROPOSED: Cllr Coulson SECONDED: Cllr Atkinson AGREED.

A discussion took place as to financial information published, including the suggestion that accounts payable should be published within the minutes. The Clerk recapped that the full Income and Expenditure included the most information, that this was published quarterly under financial information (following a similar previous discussion by council) but, in response to the latest request from **Cllr Smailes** the information has now been moved to be with the minutes. The Clerk clarified that small councils followed different rules to YTC (in relation to the example of a nearby small council being given) and that it is possible some Cllrs are recalling when YTC was a small Council and that she understood what was being done currently is appropriate. **Cllr Atkinson** stated that YTC should publish what is appropriate for the size of council - **the Clerk** stated that she will double check again. The Clerk requested Cllrs' view on transferring funds to the PSDF dividend account; there was general agreement that funds should be transferred as per previous levels. The **Clerk** suggested that Cllrs may wish to review banking arrangements given one of the main reasons for having the current bank was due to its presence on the High St (no longer the case).

7.2 Bank Reconciliation (DOCUMENT REFERS) - Cllrs noted the bank reconciliation statements.

7.3 Income and Expenditure Report (DOCUMENT REFERS) - Cllrs were asked to approve the Income and Expenditure reports. The Clerk asked Cllrs to note the last page which showed the setting up of a new Cost Centre and code for the Yarm Bowling Centre start-up money that had been gifted.

PROPOSED: Cllr Addison SECONDED and AGREED

7.4 Transfers of Funds (Reserves) - 2023 - 2024 (DOCUMENT REFERS)

- **Cllr Addison / Clerk** presented the end of year Transfers Report, detailing Earmarked and General reserves and movements from and to the 23/24 budget (as per agreement).

PROPOSED: Cllr Newcombe SECONDED: Cllr Atkinson AGREED

8.0 To Review and Consider the Correspondence List (DOCUMENT REFERS) - The Correspondence List was noted.

9.0 Adjournment and Questions From the Public - The Chair adjourned the meeting for questions from the public.

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A member of the public (**MP1**) wished the meeting to note thanks to Ward Cllr Sherris as regards addressing the problem of potholes along Green Lane and also Cllr Couslon in respect of addressing the problematic gully of stagnant water (hazard to school pupils using the path along this route), as the matter was now sorted. **Cllr Pybus** raised the issue of speeding along Green Lane which still needed to be addressed and Cllr Coulson (speaking as Ward Cllr) stated that he would continue to raise the issue. **MP2** wished to comment on the issue (referenced under matters arising) as regards soiling of the High St (which included a discussion as regards management of dogs). Stating that a greater problem was the number of men openly urinating in areas around the High St at the end of nights out; this should be addressed not only as a soiling issue but also as a public decency issue - an increasing problem that isn't being tackled. **MP3** raised the issue of flood waters coming down Sheepcote Hill and what might be done.

10.0 Policy and Resources:

10.1 Weigh and Tolls Matters and Events

10.1.1 Events Update - **Cllr Smailes** tabled a paper detailing a number of grants that she had discussed with a Leisure and Culture working group that could be gifted to 3 primary schools and Challoner House in order to support summer events and also save money instead of organising Yarm Gala. Children's parties could also be achieved with the budget available along with Christmas Lights Switch-On and other events. A bus for dignitaries to deliver the Riding of the Fair from had also been identified; savings could also be made. A question was asked as regards what had happened to remaining wine from the Ridings and the launch of YTHHC. **The Clerk /Cllr Addison** gave the figures of items remaining which are audited each time; **Cllr Addison** confirmed that he had funded the drinks up front for both occasions; the remaining amounts were his property which he had donated to Yarm Fellowship Hall. **Cllr Coulson** suggested he could donate what was remaining to this year's Ridings - **Cllr Addison** declined. **Cllr Pybus** suggested a collecting box at the Ridings for the Council's proposed Charity of the Year (DEBRA). The Clerk requested that a cllr(s) worked with her to agree what the package was for this year's charity of the year (which she had done previously for Cornerhouse). **Cllr Addison** requested that **Cllr Smailes** put together costings for the various event ideas so that Council could formally agree exact proposals and expenditure. The Clerk confirmed that Remembrance was already costed (and was standard each year), that papers for new proposals could be circulated in advance.

10.1.2 Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre (inc. further completion of upstairs exhibition [£800] - DEFERRED)

The **Dev. Manager** gave summary feedback in Cllr Monck's absence. There are approaching 3.5k visitors, 25 friends and volunteers, and quiet and busy visitor days. Group visit opportunities are being developed e.g. Veterans' Breakfast Club visited (having been involved in developing part of the display re Tom Brown). Layfield Primary visiting in two weeks time. Coordinating/lead head teacher for Primary schools in Yarm is working as part of the friends group - plans are underway to expand this work but this means supporting volunteers and developing skills to lead this work. Circa. £4.5 - 5k has been spent on the Dev Manager role for YTHHC (since July '22) but over 6k cash/in kind contributions has been raised; major fundraising hasn't begun yet nor the NLHF bid submitted (NLHF having asked for i) this to be phased given that YTC has not received this amount of money before; ii) bid is being re-positioned under their new grant regime headings).

Exciting items have been gifted e.g. Civil War related. One part of the Dev. Manager job is to support the Friends group to learn about composing exhibition materials and events. Further themed temporary exhibitions are planned along with completion of the remaining 7 themes on the upper floor. YTHHC is not just what happens within the building - a series of 'Walks and Talks' are being planned - 'without walls' programme (a further example being displaying the Bier at the Chapel). Yarm at War & Heritage of Faith are the next 2 sections of the upper floor displays to be completed. The website brief is to go out (as previously discussed within YTHHC budget, one of the Friends having offered to deliver for an honorarium); a

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member of the Friends suggested the Easter Heritage Trail (which the Chair sanctioned a small amount of expenditure for). The idea for a young Friends group and a Yarm board game to add to resources came from a mother and daughter visiting YTHHC.

10.1.3 ITEM DEFERRED - Heritage Centre Development: temporary continuation of contract

10.1.4 ITEM DEFERRED - Christmas Lights Enhancement: Town Hall Proposal (options: £1.5k to £7.5k)

10.1.5 Window Washing - Yarm Town Hall - Cllr Smailes. The Clerk confirmed that the previous window washers had started back (once a month at £30; previously £25 but now includes large ground floor arched windows). Council may wish to review arrangements. Comments were made that the current arrangement might continue.

10.2 Cemetery Report

10.2.1 General Update - Cllr B Wegg has confirmed that the Chapel will be open every month on the 1st of the month (excluding Christmas and New Year). An approach has been made by someone who wants to run yoga retreat sessions from the Chapel and a reduced fee should be charged (e.g. £10 per hr) given the need to encourage use of the venue. Cllr Addison queried Health and Safety requirements of the building for what the enquirer wishes to do. Cllr B.Wegg suggested that the hirer would have their own risk assessment. The Clerk suggested that YTC should be satisfied that this meets all requirements and that Cllr BWegg and the Clerk should review the hirers compliance prior to this going ahead. Cllr Smailes suggested a one way system for entering and exiting the Chapel grounds by vehicles. Discussion suggested that more use should take place; **The Clerk** reminded Cllrs of a resolution for lunchtime Chamber Concerts that had been passed. **MP3** suggested that the hire fee of £10 per hr was too low given that a publicly funded venue was being used for private profit. **Cllr Atkinson** suggested more information should be sought and then a fee decided. **Cllr B Wegg** will communicate a charge of £10-£20 following discussion with the hirer to set this up and then an agenda item to review. It was proposed that the hirer be charged £20 per session for a period of 3 months.

PROPOSED: Cllr Smailes

SECONDED: Cllr Newcombe

AGREED

The Clerk gave feedback on the cemetery valuation that had to be returned to HMRC and the statistics that this required including future estimated burials. Information included: 2.41 acres already used of 2.6 acres; on average 11.33 burials over the last year representing a fall from 14 in the previous 3 yrs; estimated acres required for burials in the next 10 and 15 years have dropped due to (e.g.) increase in cremations and burials added to existing (family) graves.

ACTION: Clerk to add to existing stake signs to indicate a traffic one way system.

10.2.2 Discussion: Cemetery Gates - Cllr Pybus stated that the Cemetery gates have been broken for a long while and that people have commented that the cemetery is being used at night for inappropriate purposes. It was proposed that the gates should be fixed. Previous discussion was recalled in that the costs for this were large and prohibitive when last looked at and the decision had been to leave them as they are. Comment was made that the cemetery could be accessed even if the gates were closed. **Cllr Newcombe** suggested that the gates could be fixed easily and cheaply. **Cllr Addison** pointed out that an amount for this had not been included in this year's budget. Closing and opening the gates would have to be worked out including publication of opening and closing times. **The Clerk** appealed for any contacts for suitable contractors re. repairing the gates.

ACTION: Estimates to be sought

10.3 Allotments Report

10.3.1 General Update(inc. allotments cemetery dividing wall & spital gate work). The Clerk gave a quick summary of a meeting with Chair of Allotments and members of YCAA which including an overarching list of shared priorities for the next year; examples within this included improved image and

identity for the allotments (focusing on site management - the Clerk has in place a work programme of practical tasks shared between the two organisations according to role/capacity); the issue of problematic structures on plots - a legacy from the past; a priority focus on the Worsall / Upper allotments for improvements; YCAA wishes to strengthen as a community organisation). Comment was made as regards YCAA strengthening in terms of being more representative as a committee (problem with recruiting membership from the Upper allotments). In short, there were significant crossovers in what YTC has already mentioned as priorities and what YCAA identified. YCAA wish to introduce a simple Welcome sheet to add to the pack of info provided for new tenants (YTC and YCAA jointly show new tenants around wherever possible). The Chair had approved expenditure to purchase a new notice board for Worsall/ Upper Allotments. Remainder **DEFERRED**.

10.3.2. ITEM DEFERRED - Proposal for site repairs and maintenance budget for YCAA (max.£1k budget total)

10.3.3 Storage on Allotments - Cllr Smailes introduced this item and Cllr Newcombe briefed the meeting as to storage (Clerk already has chairs stored in the tea cabin at Brickyard); further space is available at the allotments to solve YTC storage problem temporarily. Cllr Newcombe expressed concerns as to how storage space at Worsall/Upper allotments was being used e.g. as personal storage. This would be looked into.

10.4 a) Yarm Bowling Club: Update - Cllr Atkinson gave an update as to the extensive work that he and Cllr Newcombe have undertaken to get the Bowling Club running. Names have been added to the original spreadsheet created by the Clerk, a large email group list now exists including people wishing to play, learn to play, help out and be part of the organising committee. The first open day was successful (including rescuing hedgehogs - exit slopes have now been made). 4 sets of keys now exist. Research as to the type of playing service installed has taken place and also as to whether this can be approved by Bowls England (which will open up certain league games and affiliation) - if the surface can be approved this can affect who wishes to become involved. The surface we have is very cutting edge and possibly is a new type of artificial green that possibly hasn't been considered / requested for approval yet elsewhere. Contacts have been / will be further established with local leagues. Another open day is due on 13th April. The professional green cleaner offered by Taylor Wimpey is not recommended for this type of green (Clerk liaising with Taylor Wimpey) - right equipment is being researched. It has been discovered that a real grass green would have cost £thousands for YTC to maintain per annum.

b) Discussion and consideration of quotations for bowling club fit-out item - DOCUMENT REFERS

The Clerk presented quotations received by intruder alarm companies (and emphasised the due process for a simple written specification to be sent prior to companies sending information). Cllr Smailes asked why we couldn't just fit an alarm. Following discussion the meeting voted on and chose Company 1 to provide the alarm system - the wired option with no maintenance package yet.

PROPOSED: Cllr Newcombe

SECONDED: Cllr Smailes

AGREED.

c) ITEM DEFERRED - Discussion and consideration of quotations for bowling club flooring

10.5 a) Watering of Hanging Baskets - Cllr Smailes reminded people of the purchase of hanging baskets and stated that she and other councillors had spoken to people who could water the hanging baskets.

b) Consideration of Quotations for Watering Hanging Baskets (DOCUMENT REFERS) - The Clerk has gone out for quotes given the timescale as this wasn't on the last agenda. The Clerk presented the results from seeking quotations. Cllr Smailes stated that she'd identified someone who could water the hanging baskets for £12 per hour 3x per week including a contingency of £500 for if the weather becomes hot; a local person, willing to do the work and has their own water bowser.

Cllr Smailes asserted that the council could not pay £30 per hour as previously - the Clerk confirmed that this was incorrect and that this sum had never been paid. The Clerk requested that Cllr Smailes forwarded any information on potential contractors as the process was now confused - Cllr Smailes agreed to do this. The Clerk will pull all information together as far as possible so that due process could be followed and a contractor selected. A discussion was held regarding problems with a new bowser that had been supplied not fit for specified purpose and has not been collected. This will be returned.

10.6 Discussion: School Partnerships - Cllr Smailes stated that she had covered this item which was in relation to event plans and proposed funding.

10.7 ITEM DEFERRED Terms of Reference - Clerk quickly briefed the meeting that this was important to be considered and acted upon re. documenting and agreeing scope and limitations for *all* committees and working groups and had been referenced in recent training for Councillors. The Clerk suggested that not having these properly documented for all committees / working groups was sometimes the source of disagreement and misunderstanding re delegations etc.

11.0 ALL ITEMS DEFERRED -Planning & Environment:

11.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists - Cllr Monck ; 11.2 Latest Play Area Reports & Issues (including annual ROSPA reports - DOCS REFER)- Clerk; **11.3 Maintenance of general tubs and planters** (YTC owned, High St Area) - Cllr Monck; **11.4 'Trees on Tees' - Community Forest Funding, Grants & Free Trees - Cllr Monck; 11.5 Environmental Fair (SBC)- Cllr Monck.**

As regards item 11.2 the Clerk asked Cllrs to give attention to the Annual ROSPA Reports - she has initially actioned all medium to high risk issues for a schedule of repair (including replacement matting). The lifespan assessment for each item is better than expected i.e. over 10 yrs.

12.0 Adjournment and Final Questions from the Public - MP2 raised the issue of Giant Hogweed appearing at the edge of one play area. Care for Your Area has been alerted and awareness of this means that action will be taken and the matter followed up. Skew Arch Bridge environs and the footpath from Worsall Rd. through to Snaith's Field also had a few patches of Hogweed starting to grow. **ACTION: Clerk** to follow-up treatment of Hogweed

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

13.1 Feedback on items to date & proposed new items - YTHHC Friends will be creating a few Facebook items.

14.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda - Cllr Addison wished for there to be consideration of the offer of a Beacon for 80th Anniversary of DDay from SBC and in particular, consideration of a donation to the local RBL for an 80th Anniversary of DDay Remembrance event.

15.0 To confirm the date and time of the next YTC meeting (Fellowship Hall): 7pm, 14th May 2024

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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ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 9th APRIL 2024				
YARM TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS			(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 1.04.24		£97.07	d/d
Virgin Media	Town Hall Wi-Fi 1.04.24		£72.00	d/d
EE	Mobile & telephone 16.04.24		£9.12	d/d
Barclays	Bank Charges Feb 24		£13.74	d/d
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Cemetery rates. 1.04.24		£42.73	d/d
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Cemetery wate collection April		£31.88	d/d
Google	G Suite		£90.00	d/d
British Gas	Allotment hut electricity 29/3/24		£33.15	d/d
YARM TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID BY CHEQUE OR BACS				
Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	
Staffing	March salary		£2,185.63	BACS
Dev Mangr YTHHC	Jan 24 (£500.00 -20% tax)		£400.00	BACS
HMRC	Tax & NI for February		£760.83	BACS
Cllr S Atkinson	Morley Carr locks and keys		£80.45	BACS
Contractor	Ridings performance		£75.00	BACS

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Contractor	Repairs to churchyard path		£90.00	BACS
EDF	Electric costs for TH 1/2 to 1/3		£327.97	BACS
Event Management	Fee for October 23 to January 24		£5,280.00	BACS
Event Management	Costs for Remembrance Sunday		£1,962.00	BACS
Event Management	Costs for Xmas tree lighting		£4,958.40	BACS
Event Management	Fee for February and March 24		£2,640.00	BACS
Cornerstone	Cloud hosting fee for March		£24.00	BACS
Town Clerk	Office Supplies		£21.96	BACS
Town Clerk	Easter Heritage Trail		£18.00	BACS
MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT BY CHEQUE OR BACS				
Cornerstone	Service	Sub Total	Total	
Cornerstone	3 year anti virus licence		£65.00	BACS
Stockton BC	Town Hall monitoring (annual)		£282.53	BACS
Cornerstone	Cloud hosting		£24.00	BACS
YTHHC Dev Manager	Jan(£1,122-£50.00) Extend Hrs(46.75) for			
	fitout, exhibitions, launch&opening - 20% tax		£497.60	BACS
INCOME TO YARM TOWN COUNCIL				
Allotment holders (1)	Allotment rent		£35.00	d/c
Allotment holders (1)	Allotment rent	35.00		
Various donations	Donations to the YTHHC	32.80	£67.80	100143
Various donations	Donations to the YTHHC	31.40		
Allotment holders (1)	Allotment rent	35.00		
Co-op Funerals	Cemetery fee	225.00		
C M'cGinley	Cemetery fee	500.00	£791.40	1001145
Taylor Wimpey	Morley Carr: Bowling Club Contribution		£10,000.00	d/c
Barclays	Loyalty reward		£0.79	d/c
Barclays Reserve a/c	Loyalty reward		£1.46	d/c
Yarm Business Forum	Contribution to 23rd Dec event		£2,000.00	d/c
Public Sector Dep Fund	Interest		£172.61	d/c
NSI	Interest		£147.81	d/c

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