

NOTICE OF MEETING

Minutes of the May '23 meeting of
Yarm Town Council held at
The Fellowship Hall (side entrance)
West Street, Yarm TS15 9BT.
Date: Tuesday 16th May 2023
Time: 7pm
**(NB followed Weigh & Tolls & the Annual Meeting held at
6.30pm)**

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

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 Peter Monck (Chair) | Cllr Joyce Hardy |
| Cllr Pam Smailes (Vice Chair) | Cllr Alan Moffitt |
| Cllr Philip Addison | Cllr Yvonne Pybus |
| Cllr Marje Blair | Cllr Barbara Wegg |
| Cllr Ian Carter | Cllr Robert Wegg |
| Cllr John Coulson | Karen Shields - Rate Payers' Representative (from 7pm) |
- Town Clerk/Proper Officer - Juliet Johnson
(11 members of the public were present)

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

3.1 Ward Cllr Sherris has forwarded apologies

4.0 Code of Conduct | Declaration of Interest | Dispensation

- a) To record declarations of interest from members of any item to be discussed
Cllrs R & B Wegg declared a non pecuniary interest in matters relating to the allotments.

Cllr Coulson declared that he is now a ward Councillor and would therefore potentially need to declare interests in this context in the future.

Cllr Monck (having become a Church Warden) declared a pecuniary interest in matters relating to the parish church and churchyard.

b) To consider, vote upon and record any requests for dispensation - no requests for dispensation were received.

5.0 Confirmation of Minutes

To approve the minutes of the previous meetings:

5.1 **Weigh and Tolls Committee** held on Tuesday 11th April 2023 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

An amendment was requested to record the minute’s silence that was held before the meeting began - **AGREED**

Approval PROPOSED: Cllr Monck; SECONDED: Cllr Addison AGREED

5.2 **Yarm Town Council** held on Tuesday 11th April 2023 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr Monck; SECONDED: Cllr Addison AGREED

5.3 **Yarm Town Council E.G.M.** held on Thursday 27th April 2023 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr Monck SECONDED: Cllr Addison AGREED

6.0 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous Ordinary YTC meeting, 11th April 2023:

6.1 Litter Bins and Trade Waste Bins : Current Position

The Clerk briefed the meeting as to why this is a regular item - monitoring dumping of rubbish on Low Church Wynd and in Central Street, compounding anti-social behaviour. Following a period of improvement discussion confirmed that the problem had re-emerged.

ACTION: Clerk to alert SBC departments.

6.2 River Walkways Partnership Project : Update

Cllr Moffitt briefed the meeting that the Environment Agency were needing to move some of the benches in the work that is commencing; they are digging out all floodgate foundations and there will be all new paths and rails in relation to the work that has to be completed.

6.3 Civility and Respect: update - **The Clerk** will circulate details of further training.

6.4 Benches Refurbishment & Requests for Benches

Cllr Carter reported on continued work: 8 benches refurbished to date in order of priority by the volunteers. Next priority group will be the benches at the wharf.

6.5 Tree Survey: update re. St Mary Magdalene position

Clerk reported that the Church had applied for a faculty on 3 trees that weren't part of the council's A&B category work that is now completed. YTC's arboriculturalist has confirmed that the 3 trees applied for under the Church's faculty are unlikely to become category A or B in the next 2 yrs. The Church may decide to pay for and complete this work themselves.

6.6 Use of Social Media by the Council (carried forward from previous meeting)

CLlr Smailes queried how posts were made on behalf of the Council (quoting a recent 'argument'). The clerk confirmed that she made the posts but would wait until all comments seemed to be completed and people had 'had their say' and then would take care to correct any misinformation with a simple factual statement if required, countering rumour/ inaccuracy politely (ref. to the ground floor exhibition for the Heritage Centre).

CLlr Carter queried why **CLlr Smailes** had made an internal email exchange public through Facebook (regarding a question he'd been asked by a member of the public as regards the knitting that appears in the High St). **CLlr Monck** closed the discussion stating that this shouldn't have happened and wouldn't in the future.

6.7 Morley Carr Bowling Centre

The Clerk reported that this was nearly concluded and a group of Councillors (CLlr Smailes, Monck, Addison and the Clerk) would review the agreement forwarded by YTC's Solicitor.

6.8 Heritage Mural: Update (inc. motion for YTC to apply for Planning Permission)

CLlr Moffitt proposed that planning permission be sought in advance of the above project (given that the owner of the wall in question had given permission).

PROPOSED: CLlr Moffitt **SECONDED:** CLlr Addison **AGREED**

It was confirmed that the financing of this project was still to be put in place (there might be some contribution from the Ward budget - to be agreed). A brief is to be compiled for 3 quotes to be sought - in short 'The Heritage of Yarm'. It was suggested that an alternative to a professional artist (artists) might be to approach the art college /colleges.

6.9 Hanging Baskets: Update

The Clerk confirmed that the current contract holder (year 3) had confirmed that he no longer wished to deliver this contract for summer '23. 3 new quotes urgently needed to be sought given the impending arrival of the hanging baskets.

(Other matters carried forward:; St Mary Magdalene Tomb; Keeping Yarm Safe & Police Parking Space; West St Traffic Issues; parking spaces at Yarm Chapel).

Night Market idea - Research: **CLlr Carter** is working with SBC markets lead to put initial arrangements in place; a Faculty needs to be applied for by YTC (the Church will not lead this) for the **YTC agreed approach re. the St Mary Magdalene tomb** - this will cost £300+; **parking spaces at the Chapel** - there is more involved in this project than originally thought which the new committee can take forward; **CLlr Coulson** will seek to take forward the West St traffic issues in his role as Ward CLlr.

7.0 Council Finances

7.1 To authorise payment of the accounts - Payments List Refers (16th May 2023)

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

Cllr Addison requested approval for the Payments List (including several new items: purchase of a Yarm Helmet replica - go ahead given by the chair - £283.86; YTC Insurance Renewal- £4,012.37); **the Clerk** is seeking to challenge several utility bills currently; approval of the Payments List was proposed.

PROPOSED: Cllr Monck

SECONDED: Cllr Moffitt

AGREED

7.2 Bank Reconciliations (DOCUMENT REFERS) - noted.

7.3 Income and Expenditure Report (DOCUMENT REFERS) - noted; **the Clerk** confirmed that these were placed on the website under finance (as people may search here for finance information rather than under minutes); **Cllr Smailes** suggested they should also be attached with the minutes; **Cllr Moffitt** recommended that the minutes referenced that finance information could be found under 'Finance'.

The Clerk / Cllr Addison asked Councillors to note in the report that money for the Town Hall refurbishment is paid across to SBC but then required portions are paid back to YTC in order to cover the exhibition/ fit-out development costs.

The second part of the Town Hall YTC contribution is due to be paid on receipt of SBC invoice.

8.0 To Review and Consider the Correspondence List (DOCUMENT REFERS)

8.1 Cllr Monck asked for information regarding a) A. Sherris noting a retirement - the Clerk confirmed that this was Ward Councillor Sherris requesting that YTC give a vote of thanks to **Cllr Marjorie Simspon** (recently retired from being a Councillor) for many decades of service; b) Eaglescliffe Parish Assembly - the Clerk reminded councillors that this invitation had been circulated.

9.0 Policy and Resources:

9.1 Cemetery Report

9.1.1 Request for a wedding at the Chapel (update on issues and agreement of a fee)

Cllr Moffitt updated Cllrs re. the above and presented information received which added to further options for being a licensed venue for legal marriages (other than the SBC licensing route of circa £1,300+ per yr.). One option being that those places that are not licensed for Anglican marriage (occasionally it is the case with school chapels, hospital chapels and cemetery chapels) can apply to the Archbishop of Canterbury for a Special Licence for a one-off ceremony (£325 - the couple apply and pay). The second option is that the chapel could become licensed by the Diocese of Durham (cost & process to be confirmed). The annually renewable SBC licence would involve inspection re. facilities (e.g. toilets, parking which are currently not available); the other licence options may provide a solution to these current challenges whilst facilities are developed as per Cllr Moffitt's development work proposals underway.

9.2 Allotments Report

Cllr Coulson asked that any votes taken regarding this section of the agenda be recorded votes. Cllr Coulson reported that fencing posts are being ordered, main growing season is underway and that all is well at the allotments.

9.2.1 Allotment Hut Usage (inc. background briefing by the Clerk) - **Cllr Coulson** proposed that this item be carried forward to the next meeting as this was a new council with new councillors and there is much background to be considered.

Cllr Monck, as Chair, concurred.

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

ACTION: Item carried forward.

Cllr Monck will be organising an Allotment Walk. All Councillors can attend. YTC has responsibilities as landowner. The purpose of the work is to see what work is going on, how things are developing / being managed and to raise any issues that need addressing. **Cllr Hardy** emphasised the need to focus on offering positive help rather than criticism. **Cllr Monck** will also be calling an allotment committee meeting (including YCAA). An issue has been identified regarding access issues caused by the kissing gate at the top allotments.

The Clerk gave a briefing re. number of allotments, tenants, waiting list and how the management process worked between herself and YCAA as regards any issues and avoiding plots falling fallow and the need to handle individual situations carefully given (e.g.) health and personal issues that may arise and how important allotments are to tenants. **Cllr Hardy** concurred with the importance of sensitivity, offering support (& gave an example from her experience) and how critical allotment tenancies were to people's lives/wellbeing.

Cllr Coulson asked the Clerk if there was any update regarding a scenario presented by **Cllr RWegg** at the last meeting involving a tenant of one of the disabled plots reporting concerning issues. The Clerk reported that she had discussed the matters raised with the tenant concerned: the tenant confirmed that there was no issue as regards access to facilities required, including the toilet (and the main hut but didn't wish to use it currently); the tenant prefers to use the hut nearest their plot for rest/tea etc.; the tenant could not recall the incident reported by Cllr Wegg i.e. being in extreme distress where access to the main hut was needed and could not be obtained; the tenant did not / does not feel pestered by members of YCAA (as was reported) and experiences good relationships with all at the allotments.

9.3 Yorkshire Day - Civic Celebration: Invitation

The Clerk reminded Cllrs of this invitation having been circulated and asked whether YTC wished a representative to attend (councillors to be reminded of the cost prior to deciding).

10.0 Planning & Environment:

10.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists

Cllr Monck briefed Councillors as to a new date being organised for the Mount Leven Farm 215 dwellings application being heard. A new inspector needs to be identified due to the previous appointee having a prejudicial interest.

Cllr Pybus raised the issue of a social media complaint regarding uncut grass around the cremated remains area in St Mary Magdalene Churchyard. The issue has been noted and the contractor contacted to address this as far as possible. It is understood that the grass was cut 2 wks ago as per plan. Issues include avoiding cutting tulips etc. planted in between memorials (these were deliberately left but now have died off leaving just long grass) and other items placed on/by memorial plates that shouldn't be, making grass cutting challenging on occasion

The Clerk asked Councillors if they wished a letter of support to be sent to SBC as regards the latest round of treescape funding (trees for the borough) and to ask where Yarm had benefited in the last round of the fund. **AGREED**

Cllr Carter informed the meeting of removal of trees temporarily along the riverside in order for the works to take place re. flood gates

10.2 Latest Play Area Reports & Issues: Update and Repairs Arrangements

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

The Clerk reminded the meeting of the need for residents to report incidents of ASB so that the case for CCTV at Willey Flatts can be developed and presented to the Surveillance Commissioner (national body). **Ward Cllr Sherris** has confirmed that site lines for placing CCTV at Willey Flatts in the most appropriate positions have been tested and prove practicable. Further updates awaited e.g. a timeline for installation.

Cllr Coulson reported on a range of anti-social behaviour occurring at Willey Flatts and has arranged a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner in the next few weeks. **Cllr Pybus** reported that she understands that people are coming from other areas to Willey Flatts and this was a major part of the problem. **Cllr BWegg** stated that some parents now saw the area as a 'no go' area for their children.

Cllr Coulson raised the issue of funding the maintenance of CCTV if it's installed. **Cllr Smailes** suggested that the ward councillor funding for play equipment be diverted to this (**Cllr Addison** said ward councillor permission would be required). **Cllr Pybus** has raised £600 towards CCTV.

Cllr Monck reported fire damage to swings on Snaith's Field. **Cllr RWegg** was present. **The Clerk** requested that councillors report damage to her ASAP if they come across it before she does. Play repairs being addressed and insurance being consulted (excess thresholds come into place). **The Clerk** reported that an adult had been caught using a swing as a dog chew. All issues are being followed up.

Cllr Coulson gave a vote of thanks to the Clerk for her past year's work and support of him and praised her work ethic and professionalism. A round of applause was received from public and councillors.

Cllr Monck stated that the Council should work together cooperatively with the Clerk and all should show respect to each other and move the Council forward from this point.

11.0 Adjournment and Questions From the Public

Member of the Public 1 (MP1): congratulated councillors on their election to office and quoted **Cllr Monck's** statement re. moving forwards and working together. MP1 expressed disappointment however, that councillors (independents) outside the majority group had been blocked from joining committees and that sadly this detracted from Cllr Monck's statement and did not seem like a new beginning or moving forward at all.

Karen Shields (RPR): made a plea for what is regarded as 'the golden quarter' for trading for businesses is exactly when High St regeneration will begin so it is hoped that there will be as little disruption as possible; planning permission might not be needed for the heritage mural on west street ref Planning & Development Order 1995 (section 2, sub section 6).

Member of the Public 2 (MP2): 2 issues - thanked the **Clerk & Cllr Coulson** for all their work & positivity to try and make possible a wedding at Yarm Chapel; expressed concern re confusion of reporting on Facebook regarding St Mary Magdalene overgrown grass issue. It has been said that a number of complaints had been made and that the social media comments were very subjective and overly harsh given the facts of the situation weren't known (now given at 10.1 above). Only 1 complaint had been made on Facebook (without finding out the facts first from YTC or the Church) and 4 others had agreed. There were 6 neutral comments. There were 21 positive comments then made about the churchyard & MP 2 would like this on record and that an opinion was stated rather than a complaint made. **Cllr Pybus** stated that 1 complaint was as important as 10 and she felt the comments to her were complaints.

The Civility and Respect agenda was raised (**Cllr Coulson** wishes to continue championing this and asked for new councillors to sign up to it). **Member of the Public 3** referenced a range of derogatory comments and behaviours by councillors at the

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

last meeting and before and wanted to know about training that would be undertaken regarding this and how councillors would be accountable for correcting these behaviours / issues. **Cllr Monck** confirmed that training is available for all councillors (Civility & learning as a new councillor) and encouraged all councillors to take part in this training (including himself). **MP3 and Cllr Addison** concurred that councillors are accountable to the electorate on this and other matters. **MP1** requested to know how many councillors have so far received Civility and Respect training (3).

Cllr Moffit informed the meeting that MP2 and partner are going to clean all the Yarm Chapel windows for free and thanked them for this.

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

The Clerk requested short biographies and pictures for Facebook for the new councillors (some councillors may not wish to include their photo).

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

Cllr Monck has presented 4 signatures for a motion to move the public session back to its original position on the agenda, prior to Policy and Resources. **Cllr Moffitt** stated that Standing Orders should be changed to keep the public session at the end of the agenda as this was a public request so that they could comment on any matter discussed within Policy and Resources where any queries they might have might be answered within this session and that to have questions prior to hearing what YTC had to say wasn't logical. **Cllr Coulson** supported this. **Cllr Monck** stated that historically the public session was prior to Policy and Resources and should therefore stay that way. Cllr Coulson asked how this was advantageous and Cllr Monck concurred there wasn't and withdrew the motion.

14.0 To confirm the date and time of the next YTC meeting: 7pm, 13th June 2023

Cllr Coulson handed **Cllr Monck (as Chair)** a confidential letter from the Clerk. **Cllr Addison** thanked the public for their attendance and participation.

Cllr Monck closed the meeting at 8.33pm.

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 APPROVAL 16th MAY 2023 MEETING

WEIGH & TOLLS COMMITTEE

MEMBERS APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS RECEIVED FOR PAYMENT

Payments by Direct Debit		£	£	
Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	Ref
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Market Toll Rates 1,5,23		£96.00	d/d
Virgin Media	Town Hall Wi-Fi 1.5.23		£38.40	d/d

Payments by Cheque		£	£	
--------------------	--	---	---	--

YARM TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

MEMBERS APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS RECEIVED FOR PAYMENT

Payments by Direct Debit		£	£	
Creditor	Service	Sub Total	Total	Ref
EE	Mobile telephone April		£1.70	d/d
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Willey Flatts Cleansing 1.5.23		£0.00	d/d

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

Cleveland Local Councils Ass	Membership fee 2023	£706.24	BACS
Scott Bros	Skip for allotments	£222.00	BACS
Mediale	First payment for Town Hall for fit out work	£19,816.80	BACS
Elder Lester	Rent for Reeds Mill for May	£400.00	BACS
Elder Lester	Rent for Reeds Mill for April	£400.00	BACS
Gallagher	Insurance cover for Town Hall during refurbishment works	£3,834.25	BACS
CLlr P Addison	Water at Cemetery £57.37 and printer hire for April £22.49 and 2 reams of paper £13.98	£93.84	BACS
SLCC	Annual membership fee	£236.00	BACS
Town Clerk	Office supplies	£19.71	BACS
Wave	Water rates for Town Hall 23/24	£1,542.85	defer
Gardening Services	Tidying up planters £50, Scholar`s Court £25 and Cemetery £65	£140.00	BASC
Gardening Services	Grass cutting Snaith`s Field, Cemetery,		BASC

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

	Enclosed Churchyard and Willey Flatts	£640.00	BASC
Town Clerk	Office supplies	£6.25	BACS
	Yarm helmet	£283.86	BASC
Gallagher	Insurance 23/24	£4,012.37	BASC
Income			
HMRC	VAT refund 1/1 to 31/3	£14,275.92	d/c
Stockton on Tees BC	Precept for 23/24	£139,961.00	d/c
Public Sector Deposit Fund	Interest for April	£258.89	d/c