

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of

Yarm Town Council to be held at

**The Fellowship Hall**

**West St., Yarm TS15 9BT**

**Date: Tuesday, 14th May 2024**

**Time: 7pm**

Members of the public are invited to  
attend the meeting

**SIGNED: 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

### (incorporating Weigh & Tolls)

**PRESENT:** Cllr Brian Newcombe (appointed Chair); Cllr Steve Atkinson (appointed Vice Chair); Cllr Philip Addison; Cllr Marje Blair; Cllr John Coulson (left at 19.40); Cllr Joyce Hardy; Cllr Peter Monck; Cllr Yvonne Pybus; Cllr Pam Smailes; Cllr Barbara Wegg; Cllr Robert Wegg; Rate Payers' Representative - Karen Shields; Town Clerk / Proper Officer. Cllr Andrew Sherris - 4 members of the public including 1 member of the press.

**1.0 Notice of Meeting** - it was confirmed that public notice of the meeting has 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 - N/A**

**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

**a) Cllr Peter Monck** declared a prejudicial interest in relation to matters respecting St Mary Magdalene church and churchyard and a non pecuniary interest as regards ownership of a grave deed at Yarm Cemetery. **Cllrs R & B Wegg** declared a non pecuniary interest in relation to item 10.3.; **b) No requests for dispensation** were received.

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

**5.1 Yarm Town Council (incorporating Weigh & Tolls)** held on Tuesday 9th April 2024 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

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**PROPOSED: Cllr Monck                      SECONDED: Cllr Atkinson                      AGREED**

5.2 **Yarm Town Council E.G.M** held on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

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

**6.0 Clerk's Report: Matters Arising** (DOCUMENT REFERS). **Cllr Newcombe** took the meeting through the programme of matters arising and this was updated accordingly, confirming items completed (and therefore to be removed) or the status of the task to be updated.

## **7.0 Council Finances**

7.1 To authorise payment of the accounts - Accounts Payable (DOCUMENT REFERS). **Cllr Addison** requested that 4 payments to be made that had come in since the papers were issued be added: flooring for the Bowling Club £1,600; fitting of the flooring of the Bowling Club £1,750; legal fees for the handling of transfer of equity re the Bowling Club - £711.20; grass cutting contract (all 4 sites) - £1,002. The payments list was voted upon and approved.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Monck;                      SECONDED: Cllr Atkinson;                      AGREED**

7.2 Bank Reconciliation (DOCUMENT REFERS) - **Cllr Addison / Clerk**: The statement was noted.

7.3 Income and Expenditure Report (DOCUMENT REFERS) - **Cllr Addison / Clerk** The income and expenditure report was noted by the meeting. **The Clerk** pointed out that currently bowling club expenditure was coded within general expenses (under cost centre 270) until a new code was set up and that the SBC Monitoring and Call out agreement (re the Town Hall alarms system) had been miscoded as a Willey Flatts CCTV item in error (to be amended).

7.4 Timetable for Submission of AGAR 2023-2024 (Annual Governance & Accountability Return). **The Clerk** informed the meeting as to the timetable for the above including: internal audit, approval in June (ordinary meeting or by EGM), submission to the external auditors (by the end of June), posting of the Notice of Appointment of the Date for the Exercise of Public Rights, Commencement of the Exercise of Public Rights (which must include the first 10 days of July 2024) & publication of the unaudited AGAR, and publication of the conclusion of audit and audited AGAR.

**8.0 To Review and Consider the Correspondence List** (DOCUMENT REFERS) - Noted. No queries.

**9.0 Adjournment and Questions From the Public** - The meeting was adjourned for question from the public.

**9.1 A member of the public (MP1)** requested warning signs be placed in areas of hogweed growth that YTC is responsible for (hogweed has now been treated/poisoned which takes some time). **The Clerk** has already requested these. **MP2** stated that further hogweed growth had been identified up near Fishponds, near the bridge at the rail station and along the Conyers pathway nearby. **KShields (RPR)** suggested that SBC be made aware of tree overgrowth along Conyers path which is causing pupils to step into the road and be at risk. **Cllr Newcombe** stated that SBC required 3 letters before they would respond to this. **MP3** asked about signage for the public toilet in Yarm as this wasn't visible. Speaking as Ward Councillor, **Cllr Coulson** identified that the signs had been placed. Discussion suggested that the sign on the door of the library corridor that leads to the public toilet still needs to be larger and better placed. **Ward Councillor Coulson** gave an update on the bleed kit which has been placed on the side of the Town Hall adjacent to the defibrillator. **Cllr Monck** stated that access to the kit is similar to the defibrillator - phone number to call and pass code.

## **10.0 Policy and Resources:**

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## 10.1 Weigh and Tolls Matters and Events

10.1.1 Events Update - **Cllr Smailes** stated that the Clerk had forwarded letters to all the schools and the community centre that were to receive donations for summer events which included a request for a post-event evaluation from each recipient. **ACTION:** **Cllr Pybus** will send the Clerk the contact for the Challoner House donation. **Cllr Wegg** will send the Clerk the contact for the Levendale donation.

(**Cllr Coulson** left the meeting at 19.40)

### 10.1.2 Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre : Update

**Cllr Monck & YTHHC Development Manager** reported on two visits to the heritage centre - school trip (Layfield School) and the Veterans Breakfast Club. Visitor numbers are being added to as is membership and diversity of the volunteers and Friends group. The first of a series of Walks and Talks organised by the Friends has been arranged for 1st June, focusing on Yarm Hero (The Soldier with the Silver Nose) - Tom Brown. The Friends group will be meeting to finalise the constitution and plan further 'Walks and Talks' in the series (including the full Heritage of Yarm walk, a draft version of which has been developed by YTHHC Friends with 38 reference points, including taking people to the chapel and the bier). Donations are still being made including a recent offer of funds to develop the Tom Brown theme (sum to be confirmed). Two members of the Friends group (Helen Owen and Carole Jones) are developing costume resources for children related to the Vikings, following research by Helen. Pieces of pottery and similar have been donated in relation to the viaduct repairs, given the large amount of pieces found (majority of which goes straight to Tees Archaeology for assessment and cataloguing). The pieces at YTHHC are available for people to handle. **Cllr Monck** commented that he hoped the original Iron Age canoe might be re-uncovered (foundations of part of the 16th Century Hope House have been found along with a Mediaeval wall).

### 10.1.3 Christmas Lights Enhancement: Town Hall Proposal (options: £1.5k to £7.5k) (DOCUMENT AND PICTURES REFER)

**Cllr Blair** presented her research, options and the comparative quotations received by the Clerk as regards the proposal to enhance Christmas Lights in the High St with a Merry Christmas from Yarm sign/s (and accompanying emblem/s) on the Town Hall. **The Clerk** confirmed an estimated cost of fitting as up to £100 (received from a regular contractor for similar YTC jobs). **Cllr Smailes** proposed that a sign and emblem for one side of the Town Hall should be tested first, prior to purchasing both sides. **Cllr Atkinson** proposed the North side emblem (snowflake and sign stating 'Merry Christmas from Yarm' should be purchased as per the Company A quotation (total £1,390 to come from Town Hall Development budget).

**PROPOSED:** **Cllr Atkinson**

**SECONDED:** **Cllr Monck**

**AGREED**

## 10.2 Cemetery Report

10.2.1 General Update - **Cllr B Wegg** reported that Yarm Cemetery was currently looking nice and that people from out of the area were just discovering it. The driveway trees need cutting back (given sudden rapid growth) but shrubs should be allowed to regrow in the areas that were provisionally created in the hope that parking spaces could be achieved. **Cllr Pybus** reported that there had been a complaint that a vase had been stolen but it had actually been disturbed by squirrels/rabbits trying to eat the flowers. A discussion took place regarding the need for those placing flowers in the cemetery to leave the cellophane around them to help deter the wildlife eating them.

**ACTION:** **Clerk** to make a facebook post re recommendation to leave cellophane around flowers when placed

10.2.2 Discussion: Display of Bier - Options and Issues - **Cllr Pybus** briefed the meeting regarding her concerns about the bier that is in the chapel (it is understood to be 1700s and only a few left in the country). Many years ago she had asked a cllr that the bier be placed in the heritage centre if it was ever achieved. Cllr Pybus feels that the chapel can't be left open

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for people to use for fear of the bier being stolen or vandalised; **KShields (RPR)** asked if there was an option to leave it where it is but secure it. **Cllr Newcombe** suggested that an assessment be made answering 3 questions: can the bier be moved (i.e. to the top floor of the Heritage Centre); would it physically go into the top floor of the Heritage Centre; if it can be moved, should it be moved. **Cllr Monck** proposed that an expert object conservation opinion be sought as to the options & assessment. **Cllr Atkinson** stated that the option of developing a mezzanine platform for the bier at the chapel could be investigated (i.e. at a high level so as to not take up floor space). **Cllr Blair** commented that considering dismantling a 1700s object such as the bier should not be considered. **The YTHHC Development Manager / Clerk** reminded the meeting of the professional conservation considerations and a conservation company that might be consulted to offer ideas / comment on the various options identified and what might be best. It was proposed that a local person (name specified) who had skills in engineering (re wood and metal) be asked to look at the bier to see if it could be dismantled. **Cllr Atkinson** stated that a professional conservation company should then be brought in to make an assessment if it is deemed the bier can be dismantled and put back together. **PROPOSED: Cllr Smiles; SECONDED: Cllr Atkinson; AGREED**

**ACTION:** **Clerk** to action the above re local person to assess whether it is possible to dismantle the bier.

**10.3 Allotments Report - Cllr Monck.** - **The Clerk** gave an update as regards allotments. All 101 plots are now taken after a busy period of transfer, people leaving and new tenants from the waiting list taking up tenancies. A number of people on the waiting list have been delayed in replying to the offer of a plot, some then refused plots and as a consequence have been either removed or dropped to the bottom of the waiting list (as per policy). A watch is being kept over a number of allotments where some tenants appeared to be absent or struggling to keep up with cultivation and maintenance at this time of year. Initial phone calls / enquiries are made and help and/or dispensation can be offered where appropriate. YCAA have created a sign for the gate and have helped with other matters (e.g. corrected unsecure tap at far end of Brickyard allotments) and tackled the hogweed that appeared at the entrance gate. Initial introductory meeting to be arranged between Clerk and new Chair of YTC Allotments and YCAA Chair and Secretary.

**10.4 Yarm Bowling Club: Update.** - **Cllr Atkinson & Cllr Newcombe** reported on progress at the Bowling Club including: 2 well attended open days for interested people to register; the fit out of the centre (new safety floor complete, burglar alarm installed and green markers fitted); the acquisition of £2.5k from Taylor Wimpey in lieu of the initial cleaning machine recommended (which was not suitable for the type of green we have)- the correct equipment can now be purchased; the club's green is cutting edge so is quite an unknown and approval is being sought for this to be included for certain levels of leagues (Bowls England) where most other artificial greens are excluded - the Yarm green is recognised as a superior kind of artificial surface not yet tested or approved; the Management Committee is formed (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary Assistant Secretary and 4 officials) ; the new committee has already been active (e.g. sweeping out gutterings and fitting markers, achieving a saving of £200+; the main challenge has been researching the correct type of organisational structure and appropriate legal entity to take the club forwards e.g. unincorporated company, incorporated company, company limited by guarantee, community interest company, charity etc etc - the Clerk arranged liaison with Catalyst who has been helpful and Cllr Atkinson has researched a number of possible models; a CIC by Guarantee (Community Interest Company) has been decided upon (40 pages of articles of association) and Cllr Atkinson will be making the application to Companies House for this, achieving a company number for the club to be registered and established; the guarantee for this type of CIC is achieved by the committee members paying £1 (this works as long as the CIC operates within the law, ensures individuals aren't personally liable for insolvency/debts and makes the Club an entity within itself) ; the Directors of the CIC will be the committee members but all general members will have voting rights; sponsorship opportunities are being investigated; it is hoped to have bowling activity in place by this summer so that submissions for participation in local leagues might be achieved by November; Yarm Bowling Club can run its own leagues but there is wider scope if the club

joins in with others; feedback on the cutting edge artificial bowling surface to date is that it out performs other (similar) surfaces.

#### **10.5 Confirmation of Hanging Baskets Arrangements**

- **Cllr Newcombe** stated that the hanging baskets are being hung on Sunday the 2nd June. The Clerk has arranged for the usual removal company to transport the hanging baskets from the nursery to the High St on the morning of the 2nd June and confirmed the different types of tasks involved in installing the baskets if Cllrs wished to help. **Cllrs Atkinson and Hardy** confirmed that they would assist **Cllr Newcombe**.

#### **11.0 Planning & Environment:**

**11.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists - Cllr Monck** is keeping an eye on planning lists as they arrive. An extension being made to a building / residency along Worsall Road has been noted. **Cllr Hardy** referenced the extended period to comment that has been offered by SBC Planning re. No 69 High St (Eastry House, ex 'The House' premises) and that the proposals looked stunning.

**11.2 Latest Play Area Reports & Issues - The Clerk** confirmed that she had ordered some Dly WetPour surface and **Cllr Newcombe** has repaired some small areas of damage (saving over £1,000, given guarantee running out). The Clerk is chasing repairs to play equipment in respect of the latest play reports but that there was currently a shortage of people available to do this (as discussed with a neighbouring authority), the current repair person being overstretched; it may be possible to contract SBC again; medium - high risk issues are the priority.

**12.0 Adjournment and Final Questions from the Public.** The meeting was adjourned for any further questions from the public. **MP1** asked what was 'heritage' about the 'Merry Christmas from Yarm' sign that had been agreed, stating she felt it was tacky and not in-keeping with a heritage building. **Cllr Atkinson** commented that he'd discussed with the Clerk that the Heritage Centre and Yarm Town Hall, whilst occupying the same building, are two different entities - the Town Hall having a distinct role at the centre of the High St. Cllr Blair stated that the proposal offers a bright welcome to Yarm given the disappointment in the existing Christmas lights that had been expressed to her; the proposal has been carefully researched and discussed by Council. **MP1** asked if YCAA had insurance to deal with hogweed on the allotments and whether it was environmentally appropriate to have cellophane left in the cemetery (referring to the recommendation to protect funeral flowers from being eaten by animals). **Cllr RWegg** confirmed that he would be involved in clearing up any cellophane left behind. **Cllr Atkinson** stated that a balance is to be struck that demonstrates consideration for those grieving along with environmental concerns; biodegradable cellophane would be recommended (e.g. in the Clerk's social media post previously agreed). **Cllr Pybus** commented that most families would remove cellophane and flower remnants once finished. **MP2** asked YTC to exercise extreme caution when considering moving and / or dismantling the bier and recommended reference to Durham University Museums. **MP2** also referenced how the valuable and important 15th Century altar screens at St Mary and St Romuald (Yarm Catholic Church) were protected and on display in situ (as per recommended practice). **The Clerk/ YTHHC Development Manager** confirmed that YTHHC had established contacts with Durham University Museums, so councillors also had the option to request comment from them as regards the bier.

**The Clerk** stated that she had received a letter from a member of YTHHC Friends regarding the bier that she had been asked to read to Council when there was to be a vote on the destination and future of the bier. The Clerk stated that she would keep the letter until that time.

**13.0 To agree any content for the YTC website and requests for Facebook features - The Clerk** suggested that the website needs updating as a result of the Annual Meeting and as observed by Cllr Hardy (some of the content is out of date)

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- not an urgent priority. A Cemeteries tab could be added (taking the place of the 'Chair's Blog' tag which isn't used). Councillors agreed that this should be done. Cemetery flowers posts will be made re. remaining in (biodegradable) cellophane.

**13.1 Feedback on items to date & proposed new items.** A post recommending flowers placed at Yarm Cemetery should remain in (biodegradable) cellophane in order to hopefully deter the wildlife from eating them.

**14.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda - Cemetery Fees Update (Cllr Addison).**

**15.0 To confirm the date and time of the next YTC meeting (Challoner House): 7pm, 11th June 2024**

**Cllr Monck and Cllr Atkinson** gave their apologies for the June meeting.

**The meeting closed at 8.25pm.**

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.

<b>ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 14th MAY 2024</b>				
<b>YARM TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS</b>				<b>(inc of VAT if applicable)</b>
<b>MEMBERS APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID FOR BY DIRECT DEBIT</b>				
<b>Payments by Direct Debit</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
<b>Creditor</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Ref</b>
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Market Toll Rates 1.05.24		<b>£96.00</b>	d/d
Virgin Media	Town Hall Wi-Fi 1.05.24		<b>£72.00</b>	d/d
EE	Mobile & telephone 16.05.24		<b>£9.84</b>	d/d
Barclays	Bank Charges Mar 24		<b>£12.49</b>	d/d
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Cemetery rates. 1.05.24		<b>£42.00</b>	d/d
Stockton-on-Tees BC	Cemetery wate collection May		<b>£31.88</b>	d/d
Google	G Suite		<b>£90.00</b>	d/d
Anglian Water	Allotment water		<b>£35.14</b>	d/d
Anglian Water	Allotment water		<b>£10.68</b>	d/d
British Gas	Allotment hut electricity 29/4/24		<b>£35.28</b>	d/d
<b>YARM TOWN COUNCIL</b>				
<b>MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID BY CHEQUE OR BACS</b>				
<b>Creditor</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Town Clerk	April salary inc £443.52 overtime		<b>£2,352.05</b>	<b>BACS</b>
HMRC	Tax & NI for April		<b>£506.87</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Contractor	Grass cutting 15th & 16th April		<b>£1,002.00</b>	<b>BACS</b>
IT Support	IT support April		<b>£99.96</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Sole Trader	Furniture for Bowls Club		<b>£360.00</b>	<b>BACS</b>
EDF	Electric costs for TH 1/2 to 1/3		<b>£315.51</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Town Clerk	Flowers for Councillor	50.00		
	Office Supplies	22.46		
	YTHHC Supplies	38.40		
	Open day refreshments bowl club	14.95	<b>£125.81</b>	<b>BACS</b>
IT Support	License and Web hosting fee for April		<b>£24.00</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Contractor	Supply and fit AW11 to clock		<b>£7,458.00</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Contractor	Supply and fit PAR to clock		<b>£2,125.20</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Town Clerk	Expenses, YTHHC, Allotment, paper		<b>£15.48</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Cllr S Atkinson	Bowling club supplies		<b>£94.38</b>	<b>BACS</b>
Security Services	Security: YTHHC Launch		<b>£218.88</b>	<b>BACS</b>

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Contractor	Grass cutting 29th and 30th April		£1,002.00	BACS
Soft Surfaces	5 repair kits for play equip floors		£229.80	BACS
Royal British Legion	Donation to D Day		£100.00	134
Cllr P Smailes	7 topiary balls		£257.57	135
Cllr R Wegg	Training travel costs		£34.40	
<b>MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT BY CHEQUE OR BACS</b>				
<b>Cornerstone</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Cllr P Addison	Office supplies	85.39		
	2rolls chicken wire allotments	84.00		
	Cemetery water	50.38	£219.77	
Wave	TH water charges for 24/25		£1,868.01	
IT Contractor	SSL and Hosting May		£24.00	
IT Contractor	IT support May		£99.96	
Friends of Layfield School	Grant towards school event		£1,200.00	
Yarm Primary School	Grant towards school event		£500.00	
Levendale School	Grant towards school event		£1,200.00	
Challoner House	Grant towards community event		£1,000.00	
Insurance Broker	Insurance cover for June 24 to May 25		£7,502.47	
Stockton BC	Cleaning for Willey Flatts field, total for			
	24/25 is £3204.86 over 10 months.			
	(£2,670.72 ex. VAT).April and May,			
	at £320.45 x 2		£640.90	
Stockton SBC	Play Area Inspection - £1,447.66			
	(including Annual ROSPA & Life Expectancy)			
	Payment for x2 months + ROSPA (£129.89) +			
	Life Expectancy Reports (£80)		£457.44	
Contractor	Bowling Club Flooring		£1,600.00	
Floor Fitter	Bowling Club Floor Fitting		£1,700.00	
Legal / Solicitor	Transfer of Equity Fees - Bowling Club		£711.20	
<b>INCOME TO YARM TOWN COUNCIL</b>				
Yarm Fellowship Hall	Insurance for Oct 23 to Mar 34		£423.48	d/c
Allotment holders (2)	Allotment rent		£70.00	d/c
Allotment holder	Allotment rent		£35.00	d/c
Stone Mason	Cemetery fees		£275.00	d/c
Stone Mason	Cemetery fees		£50.00	d/c
Funeral Services	Cemetery fees		£225.00	100147
Various	YTHHC donations		£13.84	100147
Allotment holder	Allotment rent		£35.00	d/c
Barclays	Bank interest		£0.60	d/c
Public Sector Dep. Fund	Interest for April		£128.47	d/c

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