

Minutes of a meeting of  
Yarm Town Council held at

**Challoner House,  
Challoner Rd.,  
Yarm, TS15 9DS.**

**Date: Tuesday, 9th July 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

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 (Chair); Cllr Steve Atkinson (Vice Chair); Cllr Philip Addison; Cllr Marje Blair; Cllr John Coulson (from 7.40pm); Cllr Joyce Hardy; Cllr Peter Monck; Cllr Yvonne Pybus; Cllr Pam Smailes; Cllr Barbara Wegg; Cllr Robert Wegg; Rate Payers Rep - Karen Shields; Clerk; 8 members of the public.

**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** - Verbal apology for absence was received at the meeting from Cllr R.Wegg for **Cllr B.Wegg**.

**4.0 Code of Conduct | Declaration of Interest | Dispensation**

a) To record declarations of interest from members of any item to be discussed

**Cllr Monck** declared a prejudicial interest in matters relating to St Mary Magdalene Church and Churchyard (being a Church Warden). **Cllr RWegg** declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 10.3.

b) To consider, vote upon and record any requests for dispensation - no requests 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 11th June 2024 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Newcombe; SECONDED: Cllr Blair; AGREED** (Cllrs Atkinson & Monck Abstained as weren't present)

**5.2 Yarm Parish Assembly (Town Meeting)** held on Tuesday 18th June 2024 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting.

**Cllr Hardy** stated that questions from the public (and responses to these) were missing from the minutes and should be added (the context of this being the Parish Assembly was referenced). It was agreed that this content would be added by **Cllr Smailes** (who'd taken the minutes for the Parish Assembly) and the resulting minutes presented for approval at the next meeting.

**5.3 Yarm Cemeteries Committee** held on Wednesday 19th June 2024 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting. **PROPOSED: Cllr Newcombe; SECONDED: Cllr RWegg AGREED**

**6.0 Clerk's Report: Matters Arising** (DOCUMENT REFERS)

The spreadsheet of Matters Arising and resulting actions was discussed by the meeting and updated.

**7.0 Council Finances**

**7.1 To authorise payment of the accounts - Accounts Payable** (DOCUMENT REFERS) - **Cllr Addison / Clerk**

(includes Weigh & Tolls) - **Cllr Addison** presented the payments list and the Clerk listed the additional payments that arrived since the list had been circulated, namely: **£1,737.19** for Play Inspections (annual) including full ROSPA assessments; grass cutting (part of contract) **£1002**; cutting back of problematic area of shrubbery (Willey Flatts) **£180**; **trimming of trees and bushes overhanging Grammar School Lane (from allotments) £175**; cutting back of trees and bushes along the cemetery driveway and path - **£225**; **Cllr Smailes** requested that all the invoices on the list of payments be passed to her and this proceeded. The list of accounts payable was proposed and approved.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Monck SECONDED: Cllr Newcombe AGREED**

**7.2 Bank Reconciliation** (DOCUMENT REFERS) - **this was noted and agreed.**

**PROPOSED: Cllr Monck SECONDED: Cllr Newcombe AGREED**

**7.3 Income and Expenditure Report** (DOCUMENT REFERS) The meeting noted the report.

**7.4 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024: Update**

**The Clerk** confirmed that this year's submission and required notices in the public domain had been made (e.g. Exercise of Public Rights & the posting of the unaudited accounts). This year YTC has been selected as part of the sample for Intermediate Audit. 3 key assurance statements were made against which evidence has been supplied. We are waiting to see if further information is required.

**Cllr Monck** (previous Chair) stated that he would like his Chair's annual honorarium of £50 to be paid to this year's charity DEBRA UK (the butterfly skin charity).

**8.0 To Review and Consider the Correspondence List - Cllr Monck** queried a communication regarding YTHHC which was replied to.

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

A member of the public (**MP1**) remarked on how the High St floral hanging baskets looked great. **MP1** also wanted to object to the later item whereby it seemed that members of the public might be stopped from speaking at meetings. **MP2** asked whether anything had been achieved to repair the holes and deterioration to Clapham Rd. - this has been going on for 18

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months. It was suggested that a letter to each of the 3 Ward Councillors at Stockton Borough Council should be sent from YTC. Cllr Atkinsons and Newcombe stated that the matter had been chased. **ACTION:** **Clerk** to chase further.

## 10.0 Policy and Resources:

### 10.1 Weigh and Tolls Matters and Events

**10.1.1 Events Update** - Cllr Smailes informed the meeting that an informal meeting had been held and further ideas developed. The Riding of the Fair will be the next event. A proper 3 course civic meal for 25 people was proposed (utilising last year's contractor). A 14 seater bus has been booked to go round the boundaries (carrying YTC / dignitaries). The invitation list would consist of the usual Showman's Guild attendees; Mayor & Mayoress (SBC); YTC Councillors (not plus 1); the Rate Payer's Rep and partner; the town's 3 Reverends from each church (plus partners). It is understood that the Ridings will be on Saturday 19th October 2024.

As regards other events, Cllr Smailes would like golden curtains in the windows of the Town Hall and poppies for Remembrance day. Christmas and other events would be discussed once The Ridings arrangements were in place.

The meeting went on to discuss the grants given to Schools for Summer Fairs (i.e. instead of being used for the usual Yarm Gala). Cllr Blair raised the matter that at Yarm School she understood it cost £18 for an armband for children to access all the inflatables - this was too expensive for families (£2-3 entrance fee and £3 for a cupcake, example of prices understood to be in operation); Cllr Newcombe commented that YTC logos were very visible; it is understood that the Layfield event was £3.50 entrance fee. Councillors discussed the need to receive feedback from the 4 benefitting schools/ organisations as had been agreed in the letter offering support.

**ACTION:** **Clerk** will ask the benefitting schools / organisations for evaluations showing beneficiaries.

### 10.1.2 Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre : Update

- Cllr Monck updated the meeting re. YTHHC progress. The next two sections of the upstairs exhibition are nearly ready to install (with display cases). The Friends group are making progress on formalising & becoming a charitable trust. A website is being commissioned (as per a brief & agreed by the previous Chair). A Holocaust Memorial Day event (25th January) was suggested including a talk (hopefully a shared arrangement with SBC who are hosting an evening talk). A gazebo outside the Town Hall was suggested to promote remembrance/awareness (the Green Howards were involved in the repatriation of Belson); a Yorkshire Regiment parade could also be proposed. Discussion took place re. Finance that would be needed for this. YTHHC Development Manager added that the major heritage walk of Yarm had now been formulated (details to be completed) along with a working group focusing on the 200th S&D Railway Anniversary - the building/impact of the viaduct being a key theme.

- The Events Committee at YTC are also working on the potential for 200th Anniversary of the S&D Railway events (Cllr Coulson is in contact with the George and Dragon pub); proposals involving schools are being developed.

## 10.2 Cemetery Report (CEMETERY ITEMS WERE DEFERRED UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING IN Cllr B Wegg'S ABSENCE)

**10.2.1** General Update (including update on Chapel locks and security advice) - Cllr RWegg gave an update on fitting some new bolts to the chapel doors and conducting maintenance on locks and keys. The sequence of locks and doors to be used to enter and leave the chapel provide increased security. The Clerk had asked a locksmith to view arrangements and he concurred with what is now in place and can fit appropriate additional measures.

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**Cllr Atkinson** reported on progress. Confirmation is awaited re. The CIC Ltd by guarantee status from Companies House (one query received and answered immediately). Two weeks ago the new Yarm Bowling Club committee met: the website is nearly completed and has been established for free thanks to committee contacts; all committee members have email addresses linked to the website; the emails and website are all activated once the CIC is confirmed, this can't until notification from Companies House (& company number) is received; a bank account can then be opened).

Over £1000 has been saved on marking out and numbering the green by the group & Cllr Atkinson doing this themselves - the group is pleased with the results. The funds for the bowling club currently held by YTC will be passed over once the CIC is up and running. The club will then be able to operate independently. Membership fees for the current year will be all year round (play can take place due to an all weather pitch). The fee is £20 up until 31st March 2025 (comparative nearby fees are circa £40-70). The new season will begin in April 2025. All members will be able to access the club to bowl at any time as soon as the CIC number is received - there will be no need to staff the club; many bowling clubs work on this basis.

#### **10.5 To clarify and agree process and procedure to receive questions from the public during YTC Ordinary meetings (proposal that public questions must be given to YTC in writing prior to the meeting)**

**Cllr Coulson** stated he believed fully in participation by the public in YTC meetings. However, YTC has suffered over the years with difficulties caused during meetings. Cllr Coulson proposed that members of the public submitted any question in writing to the Clerk 7 days prior to the meeting. This would then give the opportunity to determine whether the question was related to YTC business or contained a hidden agenda for disruption or personal attacks. This would apply to the middle section of the meeting where public questions are presented. The end / second session of questions would remain as it is i.e. to apply to what has been discussed during the meeting. Cllr Coulson stated that questions submitted in writing 7 days prior to the meeting is the same practice as conducted at SBC and is therefore recommended. **Cllr Coulson** proposed that this practice be adopted. Cllr Coulson also pointed out that questions could also be submitted without attending the meeting.

**Cllr Blair** stated that she disagreed with this proposal of 7 days notice and questions in writing as councillors are here to represent people and this proposal made things more difficult and potentially 'muzzled' people. **Cllr Smiles** suggested that as we are a small council and as long as people stick to the agenda they have a right to speak. **Cllr RWegg** suggested YTC try what Cllr Coulson proposed for 6 months and then review the matter. The Clerk presented various options including examples from other Councils. **Cllr Atkinson** spoke about using knowledge for the Chair to control any issues at meetings and perhaps try this approach and then review in 6 months. **Cllr Newcombe** suggested, as a separate matter, it was good to encourage members of the public to submit queries in writing if they couldn't attend. **Cllr Coulson** proposed that questions be submitted in writing by noon on the day of the meeting (in respect of the first /middle session of public questions offered at YTC meetings). Cllr Addison requested a recorded vote.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Coulson                      **SECONDED:** Cllr Wegg                      **The motion was not upheld.**

**(FOR: Cllrs Coulson and R.Wegg; AGAINST: Cllrs Blair, Atkinson, Hardy, Pybus, Newcombe, Smiles, Monck & Addison; NO ABSTENSIONS)**

#### **10.6 Update on water bowser (unfit for purpose) and discussion re. next steps**

**Cllr Smiles** asked if the bowser in question (purchased but not used) was going to be sold / had been sold and whether it was noisy or not. **Cllr Pybus** felt that, given the noise already on the High St (early mornings) this would not be a significant factor in YTC using it; **Cllr Coulson** felt that fumes from the engine would be inappropriate re. food and outdoor areas of

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cafes, smoking etc. It was suggested that the bowser should be started up to test it. It was discussed that YTC really had wanted a bowser with the same spec as the previous model owned (i.e. electric battery). **Cllr Newcombe** stated that the bowser needed a different nozzle for watering. **Cllr Hardy** asked that the Clerk be asked to speak on the matter. **Cllr Smailes** stated that she had heard it was noisy and wanted to know if it would be sold. **Cllr Newcombe** said that a loss would be made if sold.

**The Clerk** recapped the background to owning the bowser: February 2023 the Clerk had reminded Cllrs that hanging baskets (purchase of and watering) needed to be placed on the agenda; Cllrs confirmed that they wished the person who had watered the baskets previously continue under contract; end of March/April 23 the previous waterer gave notice not to continue; 67 hanging baskets had been ordered (following 3 quotes, April 23); 2nd June 23 an EGM was held as quotes had been obtained for watering and had come in well over budget (circa £10k and £11k, which included the provision of the companies' own bowser equipment for watering) and the hanging baskets were now ready and waiting at the nursery to be installed (noting hanging baskets were installed this year on 1st June); at the 2nd June 23 EGM motion was passed for a) a new water bowser to be purchased (given YTC's old bowser was unlikely to function for the 2023 season and been repaired frequently over the years) and b) for the Clerk (backed by a working group) to find a cheaper contractor solution for watering the baskets ASAP (various suggestions at the EGM had been followed up e.g. approaching voluntary sector groups, window cleaners, odd job contractors etc.); the then Chair (Cllr Monck) and the Clerk researched purchasing a new bowser immediately on the day of the EGM; the Clerk stated the circumstances that led to the purchase of the recommended bowser that has not been used yet, including attempting to buy the same model as the previous battery operated bowser. A contractor to water the baskets in 2023 had been identified and the new bowser totalled circa £5,500 (ex VAT) - thus YTC had saved circa £4,500 on the cheapest quote for watering that year (i.e. from a company supplying their own bowser) but YTC is left with an unused new water bowser. **Cllr Newcombe** suggested that there had been several much cheaper quotes for watering than the £10k and £11k than those the Clerk had quoted; the Clerk stated that Cllr Newcombe had been a member of the public at that time and had not been at the EGM on 2nd June (only the 2 quotes were received). The supplying company for the new bowser promised to take it back as the small print in the manual suggested it is not fit for purpose in the context our specification had detailed (but has not done so). In the end, the old bowser managed to service the 2023 season of watering (with frequent repairs by the waterer) but has now been scrapped. Cllr Atkinson has looked at the spec for the new bowser and confirmed it is suitable for watering flowers. The meeting resolved that the new bowser should be tested (noting that work noise should not disturb people in a residential area prior to 8am) and a resolution could be made by YTC if they felt that, in terms of Health and Safety and insurance consideration, the bowser could be put to use (regardless of the operating manual small print). During this item the Clerk produced and referenced the specification and quotations / research conducted prior to the purchase of the new bowser, June 2023. **AGREED**

**10.7 Proposal for purchase of new printer and copier (including A3) -** **The Clerk** presented options for acquiring a new printer (including A3 function and other functions) from a local supply company (based on a 60 month hire package, including servicing, repairs, call out and ink). The equivalent cost of purchasing a copier / printer was considered (e.g. equivalent cost of 34-42 months of the hire package options). Further information regarding (e.g.) print runs and ink should be sought regarding the quotes currently received and further comparative quotes will be sourced for the options presented. A maximum '60 month' hire budget was agreed based on the highest cost option circulated (DOCUMENT REFERS), with the final proposal presented to Council in September.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Newcombe**

**SECONDED: Cllr Blair**

**AGREED**

**(Cllrs Coulson & RWegg left the meeting at 8.35pm)**

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**10.8 Camera doorbell and door handle for the Town Hall** - **Cllr Newcombe** proposed a camera doorbell should be purchased for the Town Hall at the cost of circa £130.

**PROPOSED:** **Cllr Newcombe**                      **SECONDED:** **Cllr Addison**                      **AGREED**

**10.9 Role of the Rate Payer's Representative: Discussion** - **Cllr Newcombe** suggested that the RPR, Clerk and Chair met to confirm the role. The RPR could be a point of contact if people didn't (e.g.) wish to contact a councillor or attend meetings and potentially bring questions. The RPR could also be invited to Events meetings.

**10.10 Summer Trail Leaflets: Request for Support from Yarm Business Forum (£100)** - **Cllr Newcombe** presented the proposal from Yarm Business Forum which requests £100 support for leaflets detailing the Summer Trail for children, where elements of the trail will be found by children in shop windows throughout the High St. **Cllr Atkinson** suggested the project fitted well for consideration for funding being local and specific to Yarm (as opposed to charity requests from outside the area). The trail will include Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre too.

**PROPOSED:** **Cllr Newcombe**                      **SECONDED:** **Cllr Hardy**                      **AGREED**

**11.0 Planning & Environment:**

**11.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists** - **Cllr Monck** gave an update as to outline planning proposals coming in for the opposite side of Green Lane / Yarm Playing Fields for a retirement village and supporting infrastructure services. There is already planning permission for 500 houses. This application is an amendment to include the care home and shops (a medical centre is included). **Cllr Monck** will circulate further information when obtained. The extension of licence at The Keys (for events) was discussed. An objection is to be raised as to noise disturbance for residents (noting that the deadline for comments has passed).

**11.2 Latest Play Area Reports & Issues** - **Cllr Monck** asked the Clerk to speak on this item. SBC have been asked to provide quotes on the current repair issues that need attention and these are awaited.

**12.0 Adjournment and Final Questions from the Public** - the RPR noted that she had not received papers for this meeting; recommendations were offered for other sources of quotations for printer/copier suppliers. A member of the public made an enquiry about the Code of Conduct - acquiring a copy and what it contained. The Clerk offered to send a copy on supply of an email address and also referenced that these are available on the website.

**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** - archiving of documents on the YTC website seems to be confusing. **The Clerk** will look into this.

**14.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda (Cemetery Items deferred)**

**15.0 To confirm the date, time and location of the next YTC meeting (Challoner House): 7pm, 10th September 2024**

**16.0 Confidential Items** - **N/A.**

**ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 9th JULY 2024**

**YARM TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS (inc of VAT, if applicable)**

**MEMBERS APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID FOR BY DIRECT DEBIT**

**Stockton-on-Tees BC Market Toll Rates 1.07.24 £96.00 d/d**

**Stockton-on-Tees BC Willey Flatts cleaning £1,057.48 d/d**

**Virgin Media Town Hall Wi-Fi 1.07.24 £72.00 d/d**

**EE Mobile & telephone 17.06.24 £9.90 d/d**

**Barclays Bank Charges June 24 £0.00 d/d**

**Stockton-on-Tees BC Cemetery rates. 1.07.24 £42.00 d/d**

**Google G Suite 1/7/24 £72.00 d/d**

**British Gas Allotment hut electricity 28/6/24 £50.41 d/d**

**MEMBERS TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS PAID BY CHEQUE OR BACS**

**Town Clerk June salary - BACS**

**HMRC Tax & NI for June - BACS**

**Cllr S Atkinson Morley Carr Bowling Green numbers £25.93 BACS**

**Grass cutting 24th and 25th June £1,002.00 BACS**

**Grass cutting 10th and 11th June £1,002.00 BACS**

**EDF Electric costs for TH 2/5 to 1/6 £300.70 BACS**

**Northern Counties Allotment Management course for £50.00 BACS**

**Allotments Association Cllr Addison**

**Repairs to allotment gate & chapel £576.00 BACS**

**Cornerstone I T support June £99.96 BACS**

**Cornerstone Cloud hosting I June £24.00 BACS**

**Cllr B Newcombe Morley Carr Bowling Club table adjusters £15.50 BACS**

**Internal audit services £300.00 BACS**

**Bowlswsear 3 x Scoreframe £345.00 BACS**



**Bowlswsear 14 Delivery mats & 12 indoor jacks £465.00 BACS**

**Bowlswsear 3 X Scoreframes £345.00 BACS**

**Cllr B Wegg 2 x Bolts (crossways) for Chapel doors £5.00**

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

**Cornerstone Website hosting fee July £24.00**

**Town Clerk June Overtime (@16 hrs) -**

**(tax element @20%; NI calculated at next payroll)**

**INCOME TO YARM TOWN COUNCIL**

**Funeral Services Cemetery fees £1,125.00**

**YTHHC Donations £25.01**

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.