

Minutes of a meeting of  
Yarm Town Council held at  
**Challoner House, Challoner Rd., Yarm, TS15 9DS.**  
**Date: Tuesday, 11th February 2025**  
**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 Brian Newcombe (Chair); Cllr Steve Atkinson (Vice Chair); Cllr Philip Addison; Cllr Marje Blair; Cllr Joyce Hardy; Cllr Yvonne Pybus; Cllr Pam Smailes; Cllr Barbara Wegg; Cllr Robert Wegg; the Clerk; 7 members of the public.**

**1.0 Notice of Meeting** - it was confirmed that 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 - N/A**

**3.0 To Receive and Approve Apologies for Absence - The Clerk** confirmed that apologies had been received from YTC **Cllrs Peter Monck and John Coulson**. The meeting approved these apologies. Apologies were also received from the **RPR Karen Shields** and **Ward Cllr Sherris** (SBC - Stockton Borough Council).

**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

**Cllrs. B & R Wegg** declared a non pecuniary interest in item 10.3 (all matters relating to the allotments).

**5.0 Confirmation of Minutes**

**To approve the minutes of the previous meetings:**

**5.1 Yarm Town Council (incorporating Weigh & Tolls)** held on Tuesday 14th January 2025 and approve their signature by the Chair of the meeting. The minutes were approved.

**6.0 Clerk's Report: Matters Arising** (DOCUMENT REFERS). No matters were raised or discussed.

**7.0 Council Finances** (includes Weigh & Tolls)

**7.1 To authorise payment of the accounts - Accounts Payable** ((DOCUMENT REFERS) - **Cllr Addison** requested that the meeting approve an additional item that had come in after the publication of the Accounts Payable - a

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£60 payment for replacement of a paving slab at St Mary Magdalene following storm damage (caused by fallen part of a tree). The Accounts Payable were approved.

**7.2 Bank Reconciliations (DOCUMENTS REFER) - The Clerk** confirmed that the NS&I bank reconciliation sheet was presented given that the annual statement had been received including interest. The Bank Reconciliations were noted.

**7.3 Income and Expenditure Report (DOCUMENT REFERS) -** The report was noted and approved.

**7.4 To Receive and Note the Interim Report of the Internal Auditor (DOCUMENT REFERS) - The Clerk** presented the Internal Auditor's interim report and explained the scope of the audit. The Auditor has reported that all is in order and there are no recommendations. The report was accepted by the meeting.

**PROPOSED: Cllr Addison                      SECONDED: Cllr Atkinson                      AGREED**

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

**9.0 Adjournment and Questions From the Public - The Chair** adjourned the meeting for questions from the public. A member of the Public (**MP1**) asked for tree guards to be fitted around the fruit trees that had been planted as a community orchard. The example was given of wrought iron guards (@£59.99 each), information about which had been sent to the clerk today and circulated to councillors. There are an estimated total of 15 trees - the cost of the suggested guards therefore being circa £900. MP1 also then suggested plastic guards (5 for £1.99) that could be sourced as an interim measure. The Chair proposed that he would source and fit the plastic guards in the interim (SEE APPROVED PROPOSAL UNDER 'Planning and Environment'). Chicken wire mesh tubes might later be constructed to protect the trees.

**MP2** proposed a community growing space to include a community orchard to be developed on a piece of land (or the allotments). She referenced the need for understanding food sources, affordable and healthy food being available and the need for children and intergenerational learning to create better understanding of growing and food. The Clerk referenced the Community Orchard that had been planted at the allotments but that the allotment community organisation struggled for volunteers to maintain this and that this might be of interest given it was planted with heritage fruit trees. **Cllr Pybus** proposed that she would take **MP2** to view the community orchard at the allotments and see if an adjacent area might also be a community growing area.

**10.0 Policy and Resources:**

**10.1 Weigh and Tolls Matters: Events and Heritage Centre**

**10.1.1 Events Update**

a) **80th Anniversary of VE Day** (inc. draft budget) - **Cllr Smailes** gave details from the recent Events Committee regarding plans for the VE Day 80th Anniversary. She proposed that bunting decorate the south side of the Town Hall to the War Memorial along with a VE day flag; the knitters will also be decorating the area and RBL will be holding a service at the Memorial (the Anniversary date is 8th May 2025). Cllr Smailes proposed that a Tea Dance would also be held (built around an older people's group that meets at the Methodist Church). The event would be open to all, be based in the Methodist Hall, there would be a singer specialising in vintage songs and possibly dance demonstrations from local dancers; this would also happen 8th May, 1- 3.30pm. **The Clerk** queried the date as it had been previously minuted (at the 2nd October Events Committee) that the Tea Dance would be on 10th May (Saturday afternoon). **Cllr Smailes** stated that the event should happen on the day of the Anniversary, 8th May (Thursday afternoon).

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b) **YTC Events Committee Railway Bi-Centenary Proposals** - (Silhouettes in business/shop windows (schools); Celebratory Lampost Banners)

**Cllr Smailes** proposed that High Street banners should be created to celebrate the bi-centenary featuring 'Rocket' (possibly 4 at the entrance points to the town) to temporarily replace some of the existing banners during the anniversary year. **Cllr Smailes** stated that she was also arranging for schools to create silhouette cut-outs of 'Rocket' to decorate shop windows. She noted that Preston Park and Friends of YTHHC are delivering lots of activities to celebrate the bi-centenary.

**ACTION:** **Clerk** to cost production and installation of the banners.

### 10.1.2

a) **Yarm Town Hall Heritage Centre (YTHHC): General Update & Security SLA** - **The Clerk** asked the meeting to approve the renewal of the YTHHC Security Service Level Agreement with SBC (Stockton Borough Council), which covers the alarm system, panic buttons and call-out. The cost is circa £280. This was agreed (the main update regarding YTHHC was about the Railway Bi-Centenary Plans, and is as follows)

b) **Rail Bi-Centenary Programme Update: Friends of YTHHC** - **Cllr Hardy** briefed the meeting about the Friends of YTHHC programme which is confirmed as: 2x guest speaker sessions with Chris Lloyd to be held at the Cleveland Bay pub - the first of these evenings will also include 'The Big Fat Railway Lovers Quiz' - a trial run of a family friendly quiz; a series of heritage walks following the Stockton and Darlington route and linking in Yarm (e.g. the meeting at the George and Dragon); completing the permanent exhibition section at YTHHC about rail history; a temporary exhibition - 'Difficult Decisions and Great Days Out' (people will participate in creating the exhibition by sharing memories of train journeys); there will be model railway layouts hosted at St Mary Magdalene Church, along with children's artwork; educational resources are being created including working models that demonstrate the physics principles of the steam engine; a book is being created with a local author/illustrator about Yarm and the history of the railway written by and for primary children; on the anniversary of the 1st passenger rail journey (27.09.25), there will be street theatre (including local drama students) and a band entering the High St interacting with people as if they have just experienced that journey; St Mary Magdalene Church will be hosting a service to celebrate and give thanks for the creation of the passenger railway (evening of 27.09.25).

**10.2 Cemetery Report** - General Update - **Cllr B Wegg** reported that the chapel had been open on the 1st of February and that this was successful with 1 couple staying for a whole hour (a donation of £10 had been received). A Cemetery Committee meeting is being called for 1pm on 19th February. It was noted that the electrical box at the chapel contained water - the source of this is not known; electricians at the chapel will not currently be used. **ACTION: Cllr Wegg** will put up a warning sign (that electricians - e.g. switches & plugs - should not be used).

**10.3 Allotments Report** - General Update - **Cllr Pybus** reported that the Allotments have seen the largest turnover experienced in recent history over this winter. 4 Vacancies at Worsall (Upper) Allotments are being filled along with 7 at Brickyard. 2 plots are under management currently. On 18.02.25 a list of repairs is being completed. The water is currently turned off due to potential for frozen pipes (there was brief discussion regarding the need for insulation of the toilet at Brickyard Allotments; a member of the public suggested adding a compost toilet. Cllr Pybus suggested drilling holes in the container up at Worsall (Upper) Allotments (with vent covers) so that the Town Hall Christmas Lighting Sign could be stored there.

**10.4 (Deferred from 14.01.25) Request for Support from Yarm Fun Run: £1,000 for Medals/Trophies**



If the plastic tree guards aren't successful, chicken wire cages were proposed as a popular solution. MP1 reminded the meeting and MP2 that there are 5 apple trees in front of Highfield Care Home (that people access for fruit).

**11.0 Planning & Environment: - Cllr Monck**

**11.1 Matters Arising: Planning Applications & Lists - no matters were raised (in Cllr Monck's absence).**

**11.2 Update: Latest Play Area Reports & Issues - no issues were raised by the meeting.**

**11.3 Contracts & SLA Renewals: Update** - The Clerk briefed the meeting regarding the following contracts and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that need to be renewed: grass cutting, hanging baskets, tree surgery, cemetery waste SLA.

It was agreed that: the contract for grass cutting from 2024 should be continued for 2025 along with the 2024 tree surgery contractor (as comprehensive quotation processes had been undertaken in 2024); the cemetery waste SLA with SBC will be renewed; hanging baskets should be requested from the previous year's supplier (although some felt this supplier might not be able to help this year). **ACTION: Clerk to email previous year's supplier re. Hanging Baskets.**

Discussion was held regarding general gardening and, in particular, High Street planters which it was generally felt needed overhauling. **The Clerk** circulated images of flower planters as the matter had arisen at the Events Committee and new planters had been suggested.

**ACTION AGREED:** Clerk to contact Catalyst and schools to see if there is a project for voluntary groups/individual schools to adopt and maintain individual planters (YTC providing the funding for the planters to be properly planted).

It was reported that drugs paraphernalia is being found at Willey Flatts playing field and that drugs can be smelt on walk throughs at certain times. Discussion took place as regards the places where this occurs. It was agreed that **Ward Councillor Sherris** should be approached as regards removal of the bench where groups gather to take drugs. It was also agreed that if SBC are unable/unwilling to remove the bench then YTC is requesting that YTC have it removed. There was further discussion regarding the problem of the stream being blocked with rubbish.

**12.0 The Chair adjourned the meeting for questions from the public.** MP1 suggested a meeting with the Wellness Centre as regards volunteers and groups that might like to care for the town's flower tubs.

**13.0 To agree any content for the YTC website and requests for Facebook features** - Cllr Pybus and the Clerk referenced the need to advertise on social media to refresh the waiting list for Allotments as this was now almost cleared.

**14.0 To receive items for information and consideration for the next agenda** - no items currently

**15.0 To confirm the date, time and location of the next YTC meeting (Challoner House): 7pm, 11th March 2025.**

The meeting closed at 20.12pm.