

Minutes of the Meeting of Thirsk Town Council held on Monday, 19 September 2016 at Thirsk and Sowerby Town Hall

Present: Cllrs: D Adamson (Chairman), J Bell, H Dalglish-Brown, D Duffey, J Fisher, W Gibson-Brown, C Hesmondhalgh, F Roberts, J Watson

Apologies: Cllrs: D Jackson (Holiday), A Trueman (Holiday)

In attendance: District/County Cllr: G Dadd

C593 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

C594 Police Report

PCSO Laws reported the crime figures for Thirsk for the previous two months. These included a number of offences of nuisance, criminal damage, theft, violence, auto crime and burglary.

Cllr Gibson-Brown noted that boy racers continued to cause a nuisance in the Market Place during the evenings. PCSO Laws advised that the police were aware of the matter and that CCTV monitoring was taking place.

C595 Reports on Matters Relating to Thirsk

(a) NYCC

Cllr Dadd reported that a recent review of the North Yorkshire Pension Fund had shown the fund to be adversely affected by a predicted slowdown in investment growth.

Cllr Dadd advised that he was aware of a rumour that Sowerby Household Waste and Recycling Centre was going to close. He stated that this was untrue and the only change he was aware of was that Yorwaste had been awarded the contract to operate the site.

(b) HDC

Cllr Hesmondhalgh requested Cllr Dadd to explain the reasoning behind HDC's decision not to exempt the new community managed library from paying business rates. Cllr Dadd explained that HDC's policy was to discount business rates by 80% for charitable organisations such as the library but not to offer a 100% exemption for reasons of encouraging other businesses as well as cost implications for the Council. He noted what the total cost would be for the additional business rates relief in respect of the libraries in the Hambleton area and considered that the matter should be examined in this particular instance.

Cllr Watson reported that a decision had been made to charge householders £35 per year for collections of green waste commencing in April 2017.

C596 Open Forum

Resolved: that standing orders be suspended

Cllr Hesmondhalgh introduced Mr Gavin Bannister, one of the Long Street Community Gardeners, who attended the meeting to give an update on the condition of the trees in the wooden boxes on Long Street. Mr Bannister reported that so far seven diseased trees from the 19 boxes had been removed and that a further six trees were diseased, dead or stunted and therefore needed to be removed. He advised that the trees were affecting the quality of the planting in the boxes and requested permission to remove all remaining trees. Town Councillors acceded to the request. The Clerk suggested that residents of Long Street be advised of the

reasons for removing the trees and it was agreed that an explanation could be included in a leaflet which would be distributed to residents prior to the summer planting being removed. Cllr Hesmondhalgh advised that a meeting of the Long Street Community Gardeners would be held in the near future. Councillors congratulated Mr Bannister on the success of the summer planting and thanked him for all his hard work.

Resolved: that the Town Council agrees to the remaining trees in the wooden boxes on Long Street being removed.

C597 Minutes

C597(a) Town Council Meeting held on 15 August 2016

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 15 August 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C597(b) Matters Arising

C587(c) Transforming Our Communities Consultation

The Clerk advised that he had not received an invoice for costs incurred in connection with the public meeting on 25 August 2016 which had been organised by the Lambert Hospital Action Group. Cllr Watson indicated that she would make enquiries.

C587(f) Footpath/Land between Fairfield and Darrowby Close

The Clerk reported that he had examined the footpath and land between Fairfield and Darrowby Close and noted that the Town Council currently cut the grass on one side of the footpath but not the other side, despite both areas being County Council land. He advised that he had arranged for the grass to be cut on a one-off basis and that he considered it was appropriate for the Town Council to cut both sides of the footpath in future. The additional cost would be £15 per cut. Cllr Watson suggested that the Town Council review its grass cutting schedule for the next financial year at the precept meeting.

C590 Reports from Members/Representatives

The Clerk reported that he had contacted Mr S Fisher, HDC Licensing, following two incidents of rowdy behaviour on pavements adjacent to licensed premises. He stated that the licensing department was aware of issues concerning the Blacksmiths Arms but unaware of the incident outside the Royal British Legion/World of James Herriot. The Clerk advised that he had updated Mr Fisher with details of the concerns raised and that he would contact the police to request an increase in the number of officers on duty on race days in future.

The Clerk advised that he had contacted NYCC's Public Rights of Way section concerning the reopening of the public footpath adjacent to the new development in Ingramgate and that a response was awaited.

C598 Committee Minutes and Reports

C598(a) Planning Committee held on 15 August 2016

The meeting received the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 15 August 2016.

Resolved: that the Minutes be received and noted.

C599 Burial Board

Cllr Adamson reported that it had been necessary to carry out a number of works at Cemetery Lodge before handing the property over to a tenancy management agent. The work included replacing a number of windows which it was hoped would be

completed quickly. In addition, the stone pillars at the entrance to the cemetery had had to be removed for safety reasons and work to build new pillars was ongoing.
Resolved: that the applications for memorials for Barbel James, Robert Ralph Metcalfe, Rita Penty and Sheila Ward be approved.

C600 Correspondence/Items Raised

C600(a) York Disabled Workers Co-operative

The meeting received a letter dated 15 August 2016 from the York Disabled Workers Co-operative seeking a donation towards its running costs and requesting that the Town Council consider the organisation as a supplier of garden furniture and timber products.

Resolved: that the letter be noted.

C600(b) Sutton Bank A170 Annual Maintenance

The meeting received an email and attachment dated 19 August 2016 from North Yorkshire County Council advising of the closure of the A170 Sutton Bank for its annual inspection and maintenance works.

Resolved: that the email and attachment be noted.

C600(c) RAF Linton-on-Ouse Notification of Night Flying

The meeting received an email dated 24 August 2016 from RAF Linton-on-Ouse advising of a period of night flying from 5 to 22 September 2016.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C600(d) Magna Carta Plaque

The meeting received an email dated 25 August 2016 from Mr David Tucker attaching a suggested format for a Magna Carta plaque.

Resolved: that a quotation be obtained for the supply of a Magna Carta plaque as per the format suggested by Mr Tucker.

C600(e) Invitation to St Mary's Church

The Clerk reported that an invitation had been received from Mr Michael Armstrong for Town Councillors to view the clock mechanism at St Mary's Church.

Resolved: that Cllrs Adamson, Bell, Gibson-Brown, Roberts and Watson accept the invitation to view the clock mechanism at St Mary's Church.

C600(f) Thirsk Library Business Rates

Cllr Hesmondhalgh reported that following HDC's decision to charge the community managed library 20% business rates as from April 2017 Sowerby Parish Council had indicated they would cover half the cost on the basis that the Town Council also paid half. Cllr Adamson suggested that a decision be deferred until the Town Council's Finance meeting and that a letter be sent to HDC's Chief Executive requesting that consideration be given to allowing 100% relief on business rates for the library.

Resolved: that the Town Council write to Hambleton District Council's Chief Executive requesting that consideration be given to allowing 100% relief on business rates for the community managed library.

C600(g) Tesco Bags of Help

The Clerk reported that he had received an email dated 9 September 2016 from Mr Paul Varney, Programme Manager, Tesco advising that the Tesco Bags of Help grant scheme was now permanently open to receive applications from community groups and that grants would be awarded to successful applicants each month.

C600(h) Explorer Scout Unit

The Clerk advised that he had received an email dated 16 September 2016 from Mr Alex Hockin of the Explorer Scout Unit based in Thirsk requesting to use Castle Garth for the purpose of setting up a fundraising stall and to teach the Explorers

about community involvement. Town Councillors discussed the request but considered that there were other locations which may be more suitable.

Resolved: that Mr Hockin be advised to contact Hambleton District Council to request permission to set up a charity stall in Thirsk Market Place.

C601 Finance

Resolved: that the accounts for payment as at 19 September 2016 be approved and cheques signed.

C602 Reports from Members/Representatives

Cllr Roberts reported that new windows had been fitted at the front of the Town Hall though work on some side windows still needed to be completed.

Cllr Watson reported that the Royal British Legion Band would be taking part in the Last Post Ceremony at The Menin Gate in October and Town Councillors noted the requirement to cover the cost of a wreath for the event.

Cllr Watson reported that she had received a complaint that a tree belonging to a property in Fairfield was leaning over and possibly obstructing a footpath. She indicated that she would investigate the matter.

Cllr Watson reported that Barclays Bank had indicated that a credit card for use by the Clerk would be delivered within the next few days. She suggested that the matter be left in abeyance as far as the Assistant Clerk was concerned.

Cllr Adamson reported that the Co-op was relaunching a membership scheme which would help boost the Clock's funds and that the Clock had been shortlisted to receive a sum of money from Tesco's Bags of Help initiative.

Cllr Gibson-Brown reported that she had put up a number of notices in Mill Gardens giving advice on feeding the ducks.

C603 On-Going Items

Nothing noted.

Part II

Resolved: that in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the discussion of confidential business

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.