

**Minutes of the Meeting of Thirsk Town Council
held on Monday, 15 January 2024 at Thirsk & Sowerby Town Hall**

Present: Cllrs S Ward (Chairman), S Holme, D Jackson, K Mountford, F Potter, B Smith, D Southward

Apologies: Cllrs D Duffey (Alternative commitment), A Naughton (Illness), A Trueman (Holiday)

In attendance: North Yorkshire Cllr G Dadd

At the beginning of the meeting the Clerk read out an email from Cllr Gibson-Brown in which she tendered her resignation from the Town Council.

C1488 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C1489 Police Report

There was no police representative in attendance. However, the police had submitted a report containing the crime figures for December 2023 which was circulated to Members.

**C1490 Reports on Matters Relating to Thirsk
North Yorkshire Council**

Cllr Dadd reported that there had been a change in the process of deciding planning applications at NYC and that in future he would become involved with some applications which were to be decided solely by an NYC officer rather than being considered by the Planning Committee.

Cllr Dadd noted that a road closure had been scheduled to take place from Wednesday, 17 January 2024 until Friday, 19 January 2024 which he believed was to deal with the drainage problems in Bridge Street.

Cllr Dadd gave an update in respect of the electricity charging points in the Market Place which had been out of operation for some time. He advised that the company which had installed the charging points had become insolvent and that it was not possible for another company to take over the maintenance and operation of the chargers. As a result, NYC was planning to procure an alternative supplier to install and maintain new charging units which Cllr Dadd warned could take some time.

Cllr Dadd indicated that NYC was likely to increase its council tax by an overall 4.99 per cent for 2024/2025 which he noted was below the current rate of inflation. He advised that the legislation which affected the funding for special educational needs and disability care had changed and was now extremely costly. He also advised that there was a proposal to reduce Councillors' locality budgets from £10,000 to £5,000. However, he noted that savings arising from the recent local government reorganisation were coming to fruition.

C1491 Open Forum

Resolved: that standing orders be suspended

A member of the public addressed the meeting about the poor service which he and his wife had received at Thirsk Railway Station recently. He advised that on the outward journey there had been a delay in the railway attendant assisting himself and his disabled wife across the tracks which meant that they almost missed their train. He stated that there had been a complete lack of communication on the return

journey and that, as the train had approached Thirsk, he had been told they would have to get off at Northallerton as nobody was available at Thirsk Station to assist. After exiting the train at Northallerton, he discovered that Northallerton Station was to close at 7.00 p.m. which meant that he and his wife had to wait for a taxi outside in the cold. He stated that Thirsk Station was a busy station but was not fit for purpose and was extremely difficult for anyone with a disability to access. Cllr Ward indicated that the Town Council was aware of plans to install a lift at the station. Cllr Dadd advised that funding had not yet been made available for the planned improvement works to go ahead but that he and the Town Council would continue to support and lobby for the improvements to be carried out as quickly as possible.

Resolved: that standing orders be reinstated

C1492 Minutes

C1492(a) Town Council Meeting held on 20 November 2023

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 20 November 2023 be approved as a correct record subject to an amendment in agenda item C1479 to alter “November 3023” to “November 2023”.

C1492(b) Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

C1493 Committee Minutes and Reports

C1493(a) Planning Committee – Minutes of Meeting held on 20 November 2023

The meeting received the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2023.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 November 2023 be received and noted.

C1493(b) Open Areas & Greens Committee – Minutes of Meeting held on 7 November 2023

The meeting received the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2023.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 November 2023 be received and noted.

C1494 Burial Board

Resolved: that the application for memorial for Robert Saunders be approved.

C1495 Correspondence/Items Raised

C1495(a) Public Footpath No. 10.150/35, Thirsk Hall Estate, Thirsk – Diversion Order 2023

The meeting received an email dated 14 December 2023 from Ms Suzanne Williamson, North Yorkshire Council, advising that the Diversion Order had been confirmed.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C1495(b) Local Plan Launch Event – 5 December 2023

The meeting received an email dated 21 December 2023 from Mr Matthew Lishman, North Yorkshire Council, concerning the Local Plan Launch event which was held virtually on 5 December 2023. Cllr Jackson stated that he would be interested to know if any Town Councillor had attended the event, which he believed was an important event and should not have been held virtually.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C1495(c) Ripon Cathedral – Rural Forum

The meeting received an email dated 23 December 2023 from The Revd Canon Matthew Pollard, Ripon Cathedral, inviting the Town Council to become a member of its Rural Forum. Cllr Southward suggested that it may be useful to have more information about the Forum before deciding whether or not the Town Council should consider joining.

Resolved: that further information be sought in connection with Ripon Cathedral Rural Forum.

C1495(d) Riponian Stages Rally – Sunday, 11 February 2024

The meeting received an email dated 4 January 2024 from Mr Alan Hill, Ripon Motor Sport Club Ltd, concerning the Riponian Stages Rally which was scheduled to take place on Sunday, 11 February 2024.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C1495(e) North Yorkshire Council – Parish Workshops

The meeting received an email dated 4 January 2024 from Mrs Deborah Flowers, North Yorkshire Council, which included an invitation to attend a parish workshop at the Thirsk Highway Area Office to discuss local highways matters in an informal setting. Cllr Mountford advised that she could attend one of the workshops.

Resolved: that Cllr Mountford contact Mrs Flowers to confirm her attendance at one of the Parish Workshops to be held in February 2024.

C1495(f) Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 – Information for Parish Councils

The meeting received an email dated 5 January 2024 from Ms Julie Walden, North Yorkshire Council, concerning a new grant for North Yorkshire residents to help make their homes more energy efficient.

Resolved: that Cllr Potter publicise this on the Town Council's social media.

C1495(g) Hate Crime Awareness and Hate Crime Community Champions Event

The meeting received an email dated 9 January 2024 from Ms Tracey Horseman, North Yorkshire Council, concerning a hate crime awareness and hate crime community champions session to be held on Monday, 26 February 2024 at the Civic Centre, Stone Cross, Northallerton.

Resolved: that Cllr Southward attend the Hate Crime Awareness and Hate Crime Community Champions Event on behalf of the Town Council.

C1495(h) Funding for Policing and Fire and Rescue Services in North Yorkshire and York

The meeting received an email dated January 2024 from North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, advising that the public consultation concerning funding for policing and fire and rescue services in North Yorkshire and York would end on Monday, 22 January 2024.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C1496 Budgets/Precept 2024/2025

The meeting considered the proposed budgets, draft precept calculation, and precept calculator. The Clerk confirmed that £5,000 had been included to cover the cost of running the Visit Thirsk website and that the budget for play areas had been increased by £2,000. He advised that the costs of maintaining all the play areas were becoming very high and that some old equipment which was in a poor condition at the Millennium Green had recently been removed.

The Clerk indicated that the proposed precept would be an increase of 8.97% which equated to an increase of £10.57 per annum for a band D property.

Cllr Jackson asked the Committee Chairs to confirm that they were all in agreement with the proposed budgets. Cllr Jackson then queried whether there ought to be an increase in the mayor's allowance which had remained at £500 for many years, noting that the allowance was generally used by the mayor to support good/charitable causes. Following discussion, it was agreed to increase this amount to £550. The Clerk noted that the revised figure would slightly alter the precept percentage increase.

Resolved:

- (i) that the Town Council accepts the draft budgets, subject to an increase of £50 in the Mayor's allowance;**
- (ii) that the Town Council sets the precept at £237,750 for the financial year 2024/2025.**

C1497 Accounts for Payment

Resolved: that the accounts for payment as 15 January 2024 be approved and cheques signed.

C1498 Reports from Members/Representatives

There were no reports from Members/Representatives.

Cllr Potter advised that there was a vacancy on the Planning Committee following Cllr Gibson-Brown's resignation and it was agreed that Cllr Holme would join the Planning Committee with immediate effect.

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman