

**Minutes of the Meeting of Thirsk Town Council
held on Monday, 19 January 2026 at Thirsk & Sowerby Town Hall**

Present: Cllrs: D Southward, (Chairman), D Duffey, A Robinson, B Smith, A Trueman, K White, A Trueman

Apologies: Cllrs: S Ward, S Holme, K Mountford, F Potter, Ben Early

In attendance: North Yorkshire Cllr G Dadd

C1719 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C1720 Police Report

There was no police representative in attendance, nor had a police report been received.

**C1721 Reports on Matters Relating to Thirsk
North Yorkshire Council**

Cllr Dadd was pleased to note that it had been announced that funding was to be made available to enable the proposed refurbishment of Thirsk Railway Station to go ahead.

Cllr Dadd reported that North Yorkshire Council had received its financial settlement from the government for the next three years which would mean the certain withdrawal of some rural services. He advised that the settlement equated to a reduction of around £40m per year but that savings arising from the local government reorganisation were expected to be approximately £68m per year and that NYC had some reserves. He indicated that approximately £12m to £14m a year was raised through council tax being applied to second homes and that this income would be used to build low cost homes.

Cllr Dadd noted that work on Station Road had recommenced during the last week and that, so far, traffic disruption had not been as bad as may have been expected. A member of the public commented that the team that had been carrying out work adjacent to his premises had been very helpful and that one worker in particular was "a credit to the team".

C1722 Open Forum

A member of the public who was in attendance did not raise any matters.

C1723 Minutes

C1723(a) Town Council Meeting held on 17 November 2025

The meeting received the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November 2025. It was noted that the minutes listed Cllr Robinson as being present at the meeting. Cllr Robinson confirmed that she had not been present.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 17 November 2025 be approved as a correct record (subject to an amendment as above)

C1723(b) Matters arising

Nothing arising

C1724 Committee Minutes and Reports

C1724(a) Planning Committee – Minutes of Meeting held on 17 November 2025

The meeting received the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November 2025.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 November be received and noted.

C1725 Burial Board Minutes/Report, Applications for Memorials

There were no matters raised and no applications for memorials to be considered.

C1726 Correspondence/Items Raised

C1726(a) Yorkshire Air Ambulance – Request for Donation

The meeting received an email dated 19 November 2025 from Yorkshire Air Ambulance which included a request for financial assistance.

Resolved: that the Town Council makes a donation of £250 to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance.

C1726(b) Sensory Gardens - Maintenance

The meeting received a letter dated 1 December 2025 from Ms Rebecca Frank in which she stated that she would no longer be able to maintain the Sensory Gardens as from February 2026. The Clerk explained that the gardens contained special plants which were used to stimulate different senses and that Ms Frank had worked on the gardens since their inception. He suggested that quotations should be obtained for the work. Cllr Robinson suggested that Ms Frank be requested to provide a maintenance plan which could then be passed to people who wanted to quote. The Clerk also reported that a section of fencing needed repairing/replacing as it was going rotten, although there was uncertainty regarding ownership of the fencing which would need to be ascertained.

Resolved: that Ms Frank be requested to provide a maintenance plan for the Sensory Gardens and that quotations for the work be sought.

C1726(c) Planned Road Restriction Notification – Thirsk 10 Mile Run 2026

The meeting received an email dated 22 December 2025 from North Yorkshire Council concerning road closures on Newsham Road and the A167 Sandhutton to enable the Thirsk 10 mile run to take place on the morning of 22 March 2026.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C1726(d) Christmas in Thirsk

The meeting received emails dated 3 January 2026 and 6 January 2026 from Ms Jo Wood which advised that the majority of the team who organised the Christmas lights, including the switch-on event, had decided to step down. The email stated that the team hoped that, in future, the event could be funded and run as a council activity. The Clerk advised that he had included an amount in the proposed budget figures for 2026/2027 to cover the anticipated costs.

Resolved: that standing orders be suspended

Mr Mark Boersma, from the Christmas in Thirsk team, provided some information concerning the work which was involved in hosting the Christmas lights and the switch-on event, including fundraising, preparing risk assessments and liaising with S Dresser, electrical contractor. Discussion took place with suggestions being made as to the possibility of putting up the lights without providing a switch-on event or downsizing the switch-on event. It was suggested that the Town Council would face criticism if the lights/switch-on event were not put on. Cllr Duffey advised that the Town Council could provide the funding but that a large number of volunteers would be needed, particularly if a switch-on event were to take place. Ms Jo Wood, who was also in attendance, indicated that not all the team were going to step down and

she understood that the lady from Butterflies, who coordinated the entertainment, was happy to continue. Cllr Robinson stated that she would be happy to assist with putting on the lights but did not have the time to help with the switch on event. Cllr Smith stated that he would be happy to assist with holding a switch-on event and suggested that all options be considered. Cllr Ward summarised the discussion by stating that the Town Council considered it should definitely take over the Christmas lights and look at options for the switch-on event. Cllr Duffey suggested that enquiries be made and that the matter be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Resolved:

- (i) **that enquiries are made and the matter be considered at the next Town Council meeting.**
- (ii) **that standing orders be reinstated.**

C1726(e) Urban Highway Grass Cutting

The meeting received a letter dated 6 January 2026 from North Yorkshire Council which confirmed the payment which NYC was offering to the Town Council to undertake urban highway grass cutting on its behalf.

Resolved: that the email be noted.

C1726(f) Thirsk Town Investment Plan Survey

The meeting received an email and attachment dated 9 January 2026 from North Yorkshire Council which advised that the Thirsk Town Investment Plan Survey was now live and could be accessed via a web page. The email also stated that paper copies were available at Thirsk Community Library.

Resolved: that the email and attachment be noted.

C1726(g) Riponian Stages Rally - Sunday, 8 February 2026

The meeting received a letter dated January 2026 from Mr Alan Hill, Ripon Motor Sport Club Limited, which gave details of timings and locations for the Riponian Stages Rally on Sunday, 8 February 2026.

Resolved: that the letter be noted.

C1726(h) Visit Thirsk Website – Visitor Metrics

Cllr Duffey indicated that the details in respect of visitor metrics for the Visit Thirsk website was for information only. He stated that visitor numbers were increasing and that the website was being used all over the world.

C1727 Budgets/Precept 2026/27

The meeting considered the proposed budgets and the draft precept calculation for 2026/2027. The Clerk advised that Cllr Duffey had requested an additional £500 for the Visit Thirsk website. Cllr Duffey stated that it had been agreed at a recent meeting of the Personnel & Office Committee that money would be made available for a new accounting system and the Clerk indicated that £1,500 should be added in that respect. Members considered the amounts for donations and play areas and the Clerk advised that a significant amount was needed to purchase new swings at The Holmes. The Clerk stated that the overall figure needed to be increased by £2,000 and that he would send out the percentage increase when this had been recalculated. He noted that the overall increase was less than 4% on the current financial year.

Resolved: that the Town Council sets the precept at £272,983.00 for the financial year 2026/2027.

C1728 Accounts for Payment

Resolved: that the accounts for payment as at 19 January 2026 be approved and cheques signed.

C1729 Reports from Members/Representatives

Cllr Ward reported that she had enjoyed attending a Carol Service at St Mary's Church and that she had read one of the lessons.

The meeting closed at 8.38 p.m.

Chairman