



BOROUGHBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

1 HALL SQUARE, BOROUGHBRIDGE, NORTH YORKSHIRE, YO51 9AN
www.boroughbridge.org.uk
info@boroughbridge.org.uk
Tel: 01423 322956

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2022.

Meeting held in the Crown Hotel, Boroughbridge – safe distance protocols followed.

Councillors participating: P. Taylor (Chair), Peter Phillips, Pauline Phillips, J. Wilkinson, R. Young, M. Kaczmarczyk, S. Hynes, J. Fuller, K. Fuller, J. Goss, R. Windass.

Clerk present: J. Nichols.

Members of the public present: None.

Meeting opened: 18:27

1. Apologies for absence – None.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda – None.

3. Mayor's Diary.

3.1 Civic engagements over the previous month.

a) Plough Sunday Service, Ripon Cathedral, 9th January.

3.2 Civic engagements over the next month.

a) Candelmas Festal Eucharist, Ripon Cathedral, Wednesday 2nd February.

b) Queens Green Canopy Tree Planting Ceremony, Sunday 6th February.

c) Festal Evensong on 6th February at 3.30pm to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Accession of HM Queen Elizabeth II, Sunday 6th February.

4. Approval of previous Meeting Minutes.

4.1 Full Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday 4th January 2022.

PROPOSAL – to agree and sign off the Minutes detailed above. **All in favour.**

4.2 Planning Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday 4th January 2022.

PROPOSAL – to agree and sign off the Minutes detailed above. **All in favour.**

5. Public questions/statements and requests to speak at Agenda item 4 received prior to the meeting.

Mr B. Dooks and Mr R. Nixon attended the meeting from the start in order to talk through Mr Dook's notes concerning the 2 year suspension of the Boroughbridge High School 6th Form.

Mr Dook's notes were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

Boroughbridge Town Council, Langthorpe Parish Council and Kirby and District Parish Council had not been consulted about the suspension.

When Boroughbridge Town Council learned about the suspension of the 6th Form, a meeting was set up involving the Boroughbridge Mayor and two other Councillors with Mr B. Horner, current Federation Governor to discuss the position. This took place on Monday 24th January at the Council Offices. At this meeting, Mr B. Horner offered to set up a further meeting with the Head and Representatives of the Federation Governors so that further discussion could take place.

In response to the information presented by Mr Dooks at the Full Council Meeting, the general feeling across Council was that decisions had indeed been made without proper consultation of relevant stakeholders. The consultation period has closed.

Cllr R. Windass, District and county Councillor is speaking with Patrick Mulligan, NYCC Executive Member for Childrens' and Young Peoples' Services on Tuesday 2nd February regarding the consultation process concerns. Cllr Windass is expecting an update on the afternoon of 2nd February.

A wide range of issues were raised by individual Councillors notwithstanding the backdrop of a (currently) declining, very small and non-viable 6th form roll at BHS.

Many key questions remain unanswered – a modest selection being:

- a) How the school can be made a more attractive proposition for students and their parents in our area.
- b) How to increase the student numbers.
- c) The need to develop a clear vision for the future.
- d) What, exactly, the 2-year suspension means.

Mr B. Dooks and Mr R. Nixon left the meeting at 19:00hrs.

ACTION – Councillors await the forthcoming meeting that Mr B. Horner offered to set up.

6. External Stakeholder and Working Group Reports.

6.1 County and District Councillor's monthly report.

The intense focus around the pending Unitary Authority prevails amongst the constituent Borough/District Councils and NYCC. The existing 8 Borough/District Council Leaders (or Deputies) are due to meet soon.

Since the May 2021 re-patriation of Highway Services back under NYCC control from Ringway there have been some problems. Some of these have been down to embodied and unsatisfactory working practices of Ringway which have come to light. These are being addressed.

In May elections take place for the 90 Unitary Authority Councillors. Once elected they will still be County Councillors until the Unitary Authority goes live in 2023.

Councillor Windass has been active in negotiations with the developers of the Stump Cross Phase 1 residential site and the developers have offered a strip of land close to Chapel Hill for Community usage which would present an opportunity for the development of a Community Centre. RW is awaiting further developments including news of whether the developers would be prepared to build such a facility for us. RW is also examining the future 106 monies and has asked HBC to review the situation. The developers, Barratt/Taylor Wimpey have no firm plans regarding Phase 2 of the Stump Cross Development. They will most likely wish to see how the sales of the 260 Phase 1 dwellings pan out before Finalising the purchase of the Phase 2 land.

The concerns about the drainage on the development site are well articulated. Yorkshire Water will be installing a pumping station on site and 2 x Attenuation Ponds in at the top corner of the site where water is known to lie with leakage on to the adjacent road which presents an ice hazard in winter conditions.

6.2 Police issues.

There was no Police attendance.

Crime statistics for our Town were provided by the Police. Between the 26th December and 26th January there were 15 crimes reported which is 2 less than the comparable period in the previous year.

Council remains deeply concerned about the lack of Police resource in our area and the inability of our local PC to give any focus on our area because they are constantly re-allocated to other areas. We are covered by 2 PCSOs at present.

The next Safer Neighbourhood Group takes place on Monday 7th February and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner will be attending. The Boroughbridge Mayor, Cllr Pat Taylor, will be representing Council and Cllr. Pauline Phillips will be representing the Boroughbridge Emergency Response Team.

7. Matters arising from previous minutes not specifically covered on the agenda.

7.1 Bridge Lighting status update.

The application to discharge the HBC Planning Conditions was submitted on 18th January.

HBC Planning have set out the sequence of actions that HBC Planning are going to take as regards the application to have the 4 planning conditions discharged.

Only 2 of the conditions require any technical consideration by HBC Planning.

These are:

1. Some technical matters about the lime mortar being used in the post implementation restoration of the stonework affected. This has been dealt with in comprehensive detail in the discharge application.
2. The colour of the actual lighting unit installations. This has also been dealt with in comprehensive detail in the discharge application.

We have been advised by HBC Planning that we will receive a decision by 14th March.

There is not much our contractor, MSF Ltd, can do until the conditions are discharged.

No commercial organisation is going to take a risk of procuring materials, allocating project time etc when they know the client has not yet got everything finally approved.

We battle on, the aim is to have the Bridge Lighting completed by the end of May 2022 is still achievable if there is no further slippage.

Remarkable progress has been delivered over the last 18 months by the Council following (the project has been debated for some 40 years) the taking over of the project from NYCC. All delays are not of the making of Boroughbridge Town Council who have been tenacious in driving this forward and securing the funding.

7.2 Replacement of the St James' Square Tree Lights status update.

We have finally received the quotation from YLES to replace the existing Tree Lights plus low voltage transformers with a far more robust set of lights. The quotation is £2,600 ex VAT which includes the removal and compliant disposal of the previous lighting set.

This is covered in the 2022 – 2023 Operating Budget.

PROPOSAL – to confirm acceptance of the YLES quotation and instruct them to proceed.

All in favour.

ACTION – Town Clerk to confirm acceptance of the quotation to YLES and ensure an expedient delivery.

7.3 Re-development of the A1 exit roundabout status update.

This is coming together. The quotation for the work from Alan Stainton Landscapes (raised beds, planting, installation of a large “Welcome to Boroughbridge” Yorkshire Stone) is £13,900 + VAT

This is covered in the 2022 – 2023 Operating Budget.

The aim is to start the work in March so that the roundabout is ready for Easter and the start of the Tourist season. The key piece of work that comes before all of this is to ensure we can adequately manage the traffic around the roundabout whilst the week-long project is underway. Progress on this will be reported back to March FCM.

ACTION – Town Clerk to continue the drive to have this project completed in time for the late spring/summer

tourist season. It will be a major improvement for the Town of Boroughbridge.

ACTION – Town Clerk to ensure NYCC approval of the plans and to ensure Traffic Management during the key delivery phases of the project is satisfactorily organised.

ACTION – Town Clerk to put the issue on the March FCM agenda and to report progress to Council.

7.4 Aldborough grass cutting 2022 – update from Cllr Hynes.

Cllr Hynes has liaised with our contractor and has explored and discussed health and safety and personal welfare concerns with our contractor.

PROPOSAL – Boroughbridge Town Council continues to use the services of the existing Aldborough grass cutting contractor for the 2022 season. **All in favour.**

7.5. Update on the Mill Lane pre planning application and options.

The BTC on-site pre-planning application was submitted to HBC Planning on Friday 14th January 2022.

Councillors will recall that our last on-site pre-planning application at the end of 2020 could not proceed due to the lock down. The Consultee process did take place though and the Consultee responses were very much opposed to the development of the proposed residential development on the site.

This time we have not focused specifically on a residential development on the Mill Lane site but we are asking HBC Planning for guidance on what may and what may not be possible as regards any development of the site.

7.6 Debrief following the Remembrance Sunday 2022 cross party meeting on Tuesday 18th January and future BTC responsibilities (led by Cllr Kenny Fuller and Cllr Julie Fuller).

RBL continue to push the status of Event Organiser from themselves to Boroughbridge Town Council.

This is notwithstanding the resource pressures with the Council Office.

A further meeting is to be held which will be organised by the Council.

All options for the for organising and management of future Remembrance Events future must remain open.

7.7 Debrief following the Boroughbridge High School Meeting on Monday 24th January (led by The Mayor, Cllr Goss and Cllr Hynes).

This agenda item was migrated to agenda item 5.

7.8 Debrief following the BTC and CAMPrA meeting on Wednesday 26th January (led by Cllr Peter Phillips).

Discussions were held at the meeting about the provision of a toilet waste disposal facility for Motor Home users. The proposal involves the installation of the disposal facility at the rear of our Toilet Block.

CAMPrA will fund the purchase of the unit at £700 + VAT and BTC would be expected to organise and pay for the installation and plumbing of the unit.

PROPOSAL – Town Clerk to obtain quotations for the required work and submit these to the March FCM before any decision is made. **10 in favour, 1 against.**

7.9 The review of Boroughbridge Town Council's Standing Orders (led by Cllr. Peter Phillips).

Deferred to the March FCM.

8.0 Defibrillator usage training for members of the public – cost of public training sessions.

We have obtained 3 quotations for the delivery of the public training as follows:

1. Livius £432 (10 delegates)
2. Your Training £459 (12 delegates)
3. St John Ambulance £875 (8 delegates)

This is for just one event. The cost is high and we could not guarantee getting people/the right people to the event – it would be best endeavours.

PROPOSAL – to explore alternative options to cascade the appropriate information across the community including the Town Council web site and Facebook page. **All in favour.**

8. New issues.

8.1 Replacement of the benches at the Recreation Ground – led by Cllr Pauline Phillips.

PROPOSAL – proceed with the ordering and installation of 2 replacement long life (resin) benches at circa £350 each. **All in favour.**

ACTION – Town Clerk to order the benches and have them installed.

8.2 The provision of free public wi-fi in Boroughbridge via the £300k HBC Fund.

This is now going ahead and will be installed in Boroughbridge starting 25th February 2022.

8.3 Hanging baskets 2022 – led by Cllr Goss.

PROPOSAL – BTC will be taking the following baskets for our properties – 2 at £180 and 2 at £135 for the 2022 summer season. **All in favour**

8.4 Usage of the rear of the Council Office by a commercial third party – led by Cllrs Peter Phillips and James Wilkinson.

The proposal for HC Townsend and Son, Funeral Directors to use the space at the back of the Council Office for a lightly used Boroughbridge representative office was discussed.

This will not compromise nor impact on the regular Council business operations.

PROPOSAL – to offer HCT a 12 month lease (renewable) of the space required subject to the validation of any potential insurance implications by the Council.

ACTION – Cllr. Peter Phillips will make the offer to HCT and will report back to Council.

ACTION – Town Clerk to investigate the insurance position and will report back to Council.

8.5 Future usage of the Mill Lane Site by BCC.

A letter was received from the Trustees of Boroughbridge Community Care dated 26th January to express a potential interest by BCC in the site for a new office. The letter was received too late to be included under item 10 on the agenda but was circulated to all Councillors.

PROPOSAL – Council will respond in writing to the Trustees of BCC confirming that we are looking into the proposition. **All in favour.**

ACTION – Town Clerk to prepare the letter.

9. Finance and HR.

9.1 Ratify the end January 2022 Finance Statement, Bank Reconciliation and January invoices paid.

PROPOSAL – to ratify the January Finance Statement, Bank Reconciliation and Invoices paid.

All in favour.

9.2 The impasse reached with the VOA regarding the 100% Business Rates relief on our Public Toilets.

BTC has been battling with the Valuation Office Agency for several months.

The reason why we need this (we have engaged with the VOA up to Chief Exec level) is that we need the Toilet Block to be a separate rateable entity in order to reclaim the Business Rates paid on our Public Toilet from April 2000 when 100% Business Rates relief was passed into law and we can also stop paying Business Rates on our Toilet Block in the future.

We have paid around £8,000 Business Rates on our Toilet Block since April 2020 and in each year going forward we will have to pay about £4,500 just on our Toilet Block.

The implications are stark – we may have to consider the closure of our Toilet Block whilst Business Rates Continue to be levied on our Toilet Block at the unsustainable levels seen over the last few years.

Many Town and City Councils up and down the country are caught in the same “trap” – they have a Car Park and a Toilet on the same site and they are all paying Business Rates on their Toilets.

We have continued to push back on the VOA since November on this issue and it always comes back to the ***“The Non-Domestic rating (Public Lavatories) Act 2021” which provides relief from non-domestic rates***

for hereditaments (units of assessment) that consist wholly or mainly of public lavatories” In other words, the VOA legally regard a Car Park and a Public Toilet as a single entity and they will not budge on this. If our Toilet was a free-standing facility in Town somewhere then we would have no problem in taking advantage of the 100% Business Rates relief.

The issue is It is important because the reclaimed and future avoided Business Rates were going to fund the Toilet Block Refurbishment.

We have also engaged Andrew Jones, MP in this matter who was aware of the law stopping the VOA doing what we wanted the VOA to do. Andrew Jones reported back that if we ultimately could not get what we needed then we should go back to him. Even if Andrew Jones were to push for a change in the law then this could take several years. We were one of the more vocal Councils pushing for the 100% relief in the first place - which perversely we cannot now take advantage of.

One good thing that has come out of this is that we have managed to have the rateable value of the Car Park and Toilet Block down from £18,250 to £14,750 – a 24% reduction. In terms of what is payable each month this will bring down the monthly Business Rates bill for the Car Park and Toilet Block from just over £900/month to around £720/month – a saving of £2,100 per annum.

In terms of the refurbishment of our Toilet Block which was going to be funded by a realistically expected refund of the Business Rates paid on our co-joined Car Park and Toilet Block which is not now going to happen – we can still afford this work out of our 2022 – 2023 Operating Budget. We are still gathering quotations for this work from both local and national contractors. Once we have the required quotations, these will be put in front of a future FCM for a decision to be made.

ACTIONS – Town Clerk to write to the British Toilet Association and also to Andrew Jones, MP (completed 1st February) to continue to lobby and push for legislative restructuring to allow us to reclaim the Business Rates paid since April 2022 and avoid future payments of Business Rates on our Toilet Block.

10. Correspondence received since the last Full Council Meeting.

Refer to agenda item 8.5.

11. Open forum for Councillors to share pertinent issues with Council.

Cllr Kenny Fuller.

Raised the issue of the potential for a skateboard park at the Minskip MUGA.

The custody and management of the Minskip MUGA remains a very complicated issue.

ACTION – Town Clerk to put the subject on the March FCM.

Cllr. Julie Fuller

Will investigate the costs and benefits around a River Ure located hydraulic Archimedes Screw for power generation and will report back to a forthcoming FCM.

Cllr Wilkinson

Raised the functionality of the Town Council Facebook proposition.

ACTION – The Town Clerk will have a fully functioning version implemented before the March FCM.

Cllr Peter Phillips

Raised the issue of some parts of the Town Centre streets being cluttered with bikes, A Frame advertising boards and tables/chairs.

ACTION – Town Clerk to put this on the March FCM Agenda.

12. Confirm the time and date and venue of the next Full Council Meeting.

Tuesday 1st March 2022, 18:30 pm at the Council Offices.

Meeting closed: 21:05

Following the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, the right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub Committees is established, but anyone wishing to do so, should advise the Clerk or Chair of the Council, to ensure compliance with BTC's adopted policy to manage this activity effectively and lawfully.

Signed _____
Chair of the Council

Dated: 1st March 2022