



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 6th JUNE 2023.

Meeting held at the Council Offices.

Councillors attending: Sean Hynes (Chair), James Wilkinson, Pauline Phillips, Peter Phillips
John Goss, Monika Kaczmarczyk, Julie Fuller, Kenny Fuller. District County Councillor (DC Cllr) Robert Windass joined the meeting at 18.35 and left at 19.00.

Clerks present: P. Howell and L. Leatherbarrow, L Leatherbarrow took the minutes.

Meeting opened at 18:30.

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

None.

3. Approval of previous Meeting Minutes.

3.1 Full Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday 2nd May 2023.

Proposed. All in Favour.

3.2 Planning Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday 2nd May 2023.

Proposed. All in Favour.

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

Mr Jules Preston, Chair of Boroughbridge and District Community Care (BDCC) shared a report with the Council, to follow on from his letter of introduction received by the Council in April.

His address summarised details about BDCC:

Mr Preston started as BDCC Chair in January 2023, with aims to make BDCC strategically and operationally stronger. Community Anchor status has now been granted to BDCC and it is the wish of the organisation to improve partnership working with Boroughbridge Town Council to gain strength from the pursuit of shared agendas and aims both organisations hold.

Mr Preston explained new partnership working with the newly located Harrogate Neighbours organisation will hopefully provide BDCC with chance to focus on the activities BDCC are both best at and excel at. Possible colocation with Harrogate Neighbours may be welcomed but this will be subject to discussions yet to be held. Cllr Peter Phillips and Cllr Hynes both thanked Mr Preston on behalf of the town council for giving his time to attend the meeting, and for the overtures extended towards renewed partnership working given the shared aims of the council and BDCC to serve the community. A request was made from the Council to BDCC for feedback following developments discussed/arranged with Harrogate Neighbours in future.

Mr Preston then also spoke to the meeting in his capacity as Chair of Governors at Boroughbridge Primary School.

The Primary School has recently been informed that North Yorkshire Council has awarded c £125,000 to the school in respect of Commuted Sums monies. The payment will enable the school to better make provision for the larger in-take of children in September 2023, due to new families moving into the new housing built.

North Yorkshire Council are also intending to review and reassess the needs of the school. The councillors were all very pleased to learn that the payment has been secured. The town council, and one councillor in particular, has spent much effort, dogged campaigning, and is in continuing negotiations with North Yorkshire Council, to clarify and secure payment of Commuted Sums funding from North Yorkshire Council to the intended appropriate sites within Boroughbridge.

Mr Preston left the meeting with agreement he will ensure that liaison is maintained and improved with the council and BDCC going forward.

5. External Stakeholder and Working Group Reports

5.1 County and District Councillor's report from District County Councillor Robert Windass

District County Councillor (DCCllr) Windass gave his report.

Teething problems at North Yorkshire Unitary Council are being addressed positively.

Planning Committee Meeting organisation has now changed, with Area Constituency Committees now in control. New systems imposed do not allow for questions to be asked at meetings when reports are shared. Boundary changes also impact on the meetings DCCllr Windass is permitted to attend, precluding him from the meeting at which the proposed Service Area on the A1 will be considered. DCCllr Nick Brown will be able to attend.

Local Plan information was shared. DCCllr Windass informed the council that local Plans already in place will continue to have effect until North Yorkshire Council implements its new Plan; this could take up to five years. It is expected that CIL funding systems will take the place of Commuted Sums systems in the future.

Cllr Peter Phillips expressed concerns that the Commuted Sums monies already received by Harrogate Borough Council are not 'lost' in any transitions when systems change. DC Cllr Windass promised to help the council to find the best contacts within the newly appointed Unitary Council organisation to work with to ensure monies are not lost.

Cllr K Fuller asked about Locality Budgets held by the DC Cllr Windass, following reporting seen in Stray Ferret. A discussion was shared about funding awarded to Boroughbridge Council from this funding which is recorded in Agenda point 6.8 below.

DC Cllr Windass then left the meeting.

5.2 Police Report

No Police report had been received.

Cllr Hynes requested that the Clerk contact the Police again to ask PC Spittlehouse to provide an up-date on issues previously discussed with him about the Boroughbridge locality, which are pertinent to the Council Meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to request a report from PC Spittlehouse.

5.3 Cemetery Committee Report led by Cllr Rob Young

The Deputy clerk gave a report on behalf of Cllr Young.

A site meeting has been held at the cemeteries. The sites have been assessed and recommendations for works identified to keep both sites maintained and some improvements have been identified.

Quotes for work to a hedge in Aldborough Cemetery have been obtained and were shared.

Proposal: To accept the quote for work to be carried out to the hedge from the contractor agreed as most suitable for the task. **All in Favour.**

ACTION: Clerk to appoint the contractor to start the works.

The list of actions needed in the cemeteries was considered. It was suggested some improvements may be paid for using Commuted Sums applications. Quotes are being sought for the projects identified. The Deputy Clerk will report again on progress at the next meeting.

ACTION: Deputy clerk to obtain quotes and report again in July.

The Tender for the grave digging contract has been advertised. The application received was discussed and recommendations made.

Proposal: To award the Two year Tender for grave digging to Abbotts, as per the terms they provided.

All in Favour.

ACTION: Clerk to inform Abbotts of the appointment and update the agreement records held.

5.4 Social Media and News Working Group report led by Cllr Jamie McNeil

No report to share.

5.5 Events and Social Working Group report led by Cllr Julie Fuller

Cllr Julie Fuller gave her report:

ACTION: Cllr Fuller to ensure a letter is sent on behalf of the council thanking the yarn bombers for their amusing and artistic decorations during the Coronation Celebrations.

Cllr K Fuller reported that when hanging baskets were put up in the town, bunting was taken down and some of the lights in the trees on the Fountain area are now no longer working.

ACTION: Clerk to contact lighting contractor to examine the broken lights.

Cllr J Fuller informed the council of the forthcoming PRIDE Celebrations planned in Boroughbridge, as advertised on Facebook.

The council commended the celebrations planned and voiced their unanimous support of the celebration.

5.6 Schools Liaison Group report led by Cllr Pauline Phillips

Cllr Phillips gave her report:

No meeting with the schools has recently taken place, however a meeting will be arranged before the end of Summer term.

Cllr Pauline Phillips again celebrated the fact that Boroughbridge Primary School has received notification about monies from Commuted Sums funding. This money has been awarded because of the actions taken by the town council to ensure the monies are rightfully spent for the residents of Boroughbridge.

5.7 Menwith Hill Liaison Group report led by Cllr Monika Kaczmarczyk

Cllr Kaczmarczyk confirmed she will be attending the event on 21st June- 'Civic Leaders briefing'.

Another invitation received inviting all councillors to attend Independence Day celebrations has been shared, the event is on 24th June.

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

6.1 Update on the sale of Mill Lane, report by Cllr Sean Hynes

Cllr Hynes reported that the sale of the land is still progressing. The purchaser has instructed reports and surveys to be completed towards the purchase and is awaiting these to be finalised. He is not anticipating any problems. Progress is steady and positive with regards the sale.

6.2 Sports Field Facility update. Led by Cllr James McNeil

Cllr McNeil gave his report:

The solicitor has been instructed. There is no feedback to share currently. It has been confirmed that the land does not have to go on the open market for sale. However, any purchaser will be bound to follow the terms of the covenant on the land regarding the permissible uses for the land.

Cllr J Wilkinson gave a report on the meeting he attended on behalf of the council with a prospective Purchaser/partner to develop a sports facility. The purchaser is very happy to be involved with the council in developing a sports facility on the site. The proposal is for a 'Sports Village' on the site with shared facilities both private and public use, open to all residents of Boroughbridge. The proposal discussed would include building a hall with a space for indoor sports activities, toilets, and a small kitchen. Outside the space would provide a running track, a MUGA (Multi use recreation space), car park and football field. All legal conditions for ensuring the site can only be used for sports and recreational purposes, not housing, will be written into any contractual arrangement. The site covers an area of 9 acres and only 3 acres would be sold. The proposal was recommended to the council as the best opportunity for a development project that has arisen for a very long time, and it could offer a great improvement of sports facilities in the town.

Cllr P Phillips supported the statements made and reinforced how the organisation and structure of the planning already undertaken provides features that limit risks involved in such a large project.

Proposal: To agree to the sale of the land, providing all the legal criteria are carefully outlined and met

All in Favour.

ACTION: Cllr McNeil to inform the working group and trustees to move forward with the project, keeping the town council informed at all stages.

6.3 Commuted Sums update, report by Cllr Peter Phillips

Cllr Phillips gave his report:

Questioning about why certain new housing development sites were not identified as appropriate for a Commuted Sums levy to be made, have been answered unsatisfactorily by officers at North Yorkshire Council. Further questioning has been raised to explain how and why decisions were made that did not follow protocols and patterns previously followed. Answers have yet to be received.

Cllr Peter Phillips is continuing with his aims to get clarification on the Commuted Sums systems employed and a fair outcome for the town regards funding available.

Cllr Hynes expressed his thanks on behalf of the council for the work and the tenacity of Cllr Phillips in pursuing this topic.

6.4 Report on renovation of car park toilets, by Cllr K Fuller, including Water rates issue.

Cllr K Fuller gave his report:

Delays have been experienced with the renovation project due to problems sourcing materials by the contractor. However the renovations are progressing well and at least some of the toilets have remained open during the renovations, in spite of the problems. It is hoped that the main renovation works will be completed by the end of the next week, with only painting to be finished afterwards. The painter has quoted separately for repainting all internal doors and requested a deposit is paid towards materials.

Proposal: To accept the quotes from the painter as they stand and pay the deposits requested towards completion of the works.

All in Favour.

ACTION: Clerk to ensure invoices are paid.

The issue with the water charge repayment has been resolved. Scottish Water Company have accepted a new meter reading and will refund the overpayment. However, the company will not fit a new water meter without possible charges attached to this action. It was agreed a new water meter is a sensible requirement. The clerk will pursue this with the company and challenge the need for payment.

The toilet cleaning contractor has now left his post. No responses were received for the Tender advertised. The toilets are being kept open with a combination of support from the clerk team and councillor support. Currently a replacement cleaner is being sought.

6.5 Report on progress made with correspondence with Yorkshire Water

Councillor Goss has received copies of the minutes from the meeting he attended with Yorkshire Water. There are issues from the meeting that are causing consternation regarding the cleanliness of local rivers and disposal of wastewater; also concerns were expressed about the high cost of Yorkshire Water executives attending such meetings when they did not appear to have a sound local knowledge of the area concerned.

6.6 Additional Electric Charging points in Back Lane Car Park

Cllr Peter Phillips reported that North Yorkshire Council have now rescinded the plans that were previously agreed for the car charging points in the Back Lane car park. The council officer co-ordinating the project is in contact with Cllr Phillips about the situation. Cllr Phillips will pursue the project as it was initially agreed to ensure Boroughbridge does not lose out on this additional service for residents and visitors. He will report back with any progress.

6.7 The state of the Buttermarket Cobbles

The poor state of the Buttermarket cobbles has been brought to the attention of the council. Many areas of the cobbles are lifting again and there are patches where loose cobbles are becoming potentially hazardous. The council does already have a sign in place warning the public of the uneven surface.

Discussion was shared about the options open to the council regarding this problem. It was decided to carry this point over as an agenda item to the next Full Council Meeting. To allow greater in-depth discussion to be shared.

6.8 The Bridge Lighting

The project to install lighting on the town bridge had to be suspended last year due to a combination of factors, notably the rise of costs previously unexpected and not budgeted for.

The project is not something the council would like to be dissolved.

Cllr K Fuller offered to investigate the situation regarding the costs quoted and to obtain new quotes from contractors to try to resurrect the project and ensure it is completed.

It was acknowledged that several grants had previously been awarded towards the costs of this project. DC Cllr Windass requested information about when the grants would be spent. He was assured the monies pledged are ring fenced in a savings account and remain safe for financing the project, as intended when secured. Planning permissions previously secured will determine the actions possible for consideration and review.

ACTION: Cllr k Fuller to report back to the next council meeting with progress made.

6.9 Solar Bins

The issue of providing new solar bins for the town centre has been considered and rejected. The bins suggested were found to be too large for the areas suggested and inappropriate to the aesthetic nature of the conservation area in which they were intended. North Yorkshire Council have accepted the replacement of any bins will now be limited to the existing size of the bins already in place.

7. New issues.

7.1 Tenancy at Aldborough Gate

The decision was made to give notice to the tenant at Aldborough Gate.

Proposal: to work with the tenant to achieve the best aims for him, whilst also giving notice on the tenancy.

All in Favour.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the solicitor to give notice to the tenant.

7.2 Environment and Sustainability Group, including hydro power on the River Ure

Cllr Hynes explained that there is no Committee/Group considering climate strategy or sustainability issues currently in the council structure. It was considered that this is an omission in need of rectifying.

Cllr K Fuller and Cllr J Fuller expressed their support for this new group and volunteered to take the lead on this going forward. Cllr J Fuller is very interested in the idea of possibly harnessing power from the natural resources of the town.

Proposal: To create a new Committee 'Environment, Climate Change and Sustainability' Chaired by Cllr J Fuller and Cllr K Fuller.

All in Favour.

8. Finance and HR.

8.1 To agree the end May 2023 Finance Statement, Bank Reconciliation, and payments to end of May 2023

The finance information was shared with key points highlighted by Cllr Wilkinson.

Proposal: To accept the Finance Statement for the end of May 2023.

All in Favour.

The internal audit is due and needs arranging. The internal audit for 2021-2022 has not yet taken place. The last audit was completed by a company that is no longer able to offer the service.

Proposal: To appoint an internal auditor, at similar costs to the last audit completed.

All in Favour

ACTION: Clerk to organise internal audit in line with requirements.

8.2 PWLB Statement 31st March 2023

A copy of the most recent statement received relating to the PWLB was shared with the councillors to up-date them on the balances remaining.

8.3 Grant from North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

A letter has been received from the offices monitoring the grants awarded from the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to request information about how the grant monies have been spent. The office has requested up-dates from the council.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to the officer informing her of the actions agreed at this meeting: i.e. to actively seek new contractors to restart the project of the Bridge Lighting.

9. Additional correspondence received since the last Full Council Meeting.

9.1 Letter from Chair of Boroughbridge Community Care

The Chair of Boroughbridge and District Community Care attended the council meeting to share the information in his letter. (See point 4 above)

9.2 Damaged bench in Minskip at bus stop site

The letter detailed a broken bench adjacent to the bus stop in Minskip.

ACTION: Cllr Kaczmarczyk to help arrange replacement of the bench, possibly using Commuted Sums monies allocated to the Minskip area.

9.3 Telephone kiosk in Aldborough

A letter regarding the disconnection of the power in the phone box has been received.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to the letter to inform them of the state of the power.

9.4 Community Awards North Yorkshire Council

ACTION: Clerk to share some of the key information received on the Council Facebook page.

9.5 Citizen's Advice van in partnership with BCC

A request has been made to host the Citizen's Advice van outside the council offices again, following the recent successful visit made in partnership with BCC in May.

The councillors agreed that the van is a welcome visitor to the town and offered full support to enabling it to return and park in Hall Square when it can be arranged.

ACTION: Clerk to confirm the arrangements with BCC and advertise the date on the website, in the Tourist Information Office and on the Boroughbridge Town Council Facebook page when it is confirmed.

10. Invitations received for the Mayor, and/or events to attend in June

Army Foundation College Freedom Parade in Harrogate, Sunday 11th June; Service of Thanksgiving at Ripon Cathedral, Sunday 11th June; Civic Leaders Briefing at Menwith Hill Camp, June 21st,
Noted by councillors.

11. Any Other Business.

Cllr Wilkinson highlighted that there have been reports that the new substations serving the Fibre optic cables around the town emit quite a lot of low-level noise. It is likely this is due to fans needed to keep the equipment in the substations cool as they operate.

Cllr Peter Phillips expressed his disappointment at the response from DC Cllr Windass to requests for support and action at the meeting.

Cllr Goss reported that he is concerned at the number of new A-Frame advertising boards that have been recently appearing in the town and locality. He is concerned about the distractions the signs cause to drivers and the hazard to pedestrians caused on some pavements.

Cllr McNeil questioned if a safe crossing point for pedestrians could be considered outside the Crown Hotel. The question prompted a lot of opinions.

ACTION: Clerk to include this as an agenda item in July.

Cllr K Fuller reported on contact he had received from the tenant living in the flat above 1 Hall Square, and the subsequent visit he had made to the flat. Issues arose from the visit made, including installation of a new Carbon monoxide monitor. Cllr Fuller questioned the actions needed by the council to fulfil their duty of care to the tenant.

ACTION: Clerk to add the topic as an agenda item in July.

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

Tuesday 4th July 2023, 6.30pm Council Offices.

The meeting ended at 20.55.

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 _____
Mayor and Chair of Council

Date _____