



## **BOROUGHBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

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### **MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2023.**

Meeting held at the Council Offices.

**Councillors attending:** Sean Hynes (Chair), Pauline Phillips, Peter Phillips, John Goss, Julie Fuller, Kenny Fuller, James Wilkinson.

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

**Police representatives present:** Sgt Mike Spittlehouse, PC Connor Coulthurst

**Meeting opened at 18:30.**

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Jamie McNeil, Cllr Monika Kaczmarczyk.

Inspector Holly Nicholls, North Yorkshire Police.

#### **2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda**

None.

#### **3. Approval of previous Meeting Minutes.**

3.1 Full Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**Proposed. All in Favour.**

3.2 Planning Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**Proposed. All in Favour.**

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

None received..

#### **5. External Stakeholder and Working Group Reports**

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

District Councillor Windass was absent from the meeting. No report was received.

##### **5.2 Police Report**

Apologies had been received for non-attendance by Inspector Holly Nicholls.

Sgt Spittlehouse gave his report:

An introduction was given to the newly appointed PC attending the meeting, who has now taken up his post in Boroughbridge. A warm welcome was extended by the mayor on behalf of the town and the council.

The new officer comes from a different background of policing bringing valuable community experience and skills with him to his role. The newly appointed Inspector is in post and is bringing new ideas and organisational attitudes to the area, which are already impacting positively.

The recent multi agency community meetings held about East Gate and Spring Gardens were mentioned.

Surprise had been expressed about the lack of involvement of the Housing Associations that acted as landlords to the sites. However, this has now been rectified and the Broadacres Housing Association is now issuing warnings to tenants, with accompanying visits planned. The tenants complaints made to the Housing Association had been shared ineffectively with the Police previously, but it is hoped this is now being rectified.

Cllr Peter Phillips explained to Sgt Spittlehouse how Boroughbridge Town Council had now left the Safer Neighbourhood Group and had approached Inspector Nicholls for support with a more local Police liaison group; of which she was in favour of developing. Some local Parishes had already pledged to attend the new group and optimism was shared that this could be a more effective system for liaison. It was suggested guidance may be sought from the Knaresborough area where a similar group is already in successful operation. Sgt Spittlehouse will ask Inspector Nicholls for any guidance/support she may be able to also offer. It was commented that there seemed to be less problems currently in the locality following the recent multi-agency meetings held. Sgt Spittlehouse supported this view and was intent that the momentum created by the joint working meeting should be maintained and continued. He reinforced the importance of partnership action and joint working.

Cllr Pauline Phillips requested that the involvement of the RSPCA was pursued, and this was agreed, with a promise that the PCSO's will continue to follow up this issue, including with visits.

Cllr Hynes asked why the advertised public Police liaison session in September did not take place. It was explained that this was regrettably due to the lack of vehicles available to the local officers.

It was agreed that the visibility of the Police force in the town is a priority to develop public confidence and partnership working. Assurances were extended that this remains a Police aim.

Cllr Hynes expressed the gratitude of the council for the officer's attendance at the meeting and joined with the Sergeant in expressing optimism that future partnership working will initiate the positive changes needed.

### **5.3 Schools Liaison Group report led by Cllr Pauline Phillips**

Cllr Phillips explained there was no report to share due to the vacations and the recent start to the new term. It was agreed by all present that the recent OFSTED Inspection Report for the High School had been very disappointing.

## **6. Matters arising from previous minutes.**

### **6.1 Remembrance Day 2023**

Cllr Hynes explained that he has another commitment on the day of the Service but Cllr Kenny Fuller has kindly taken the responsibility for laying a wreath at the occasion on behalf of the town council.

It was hoped that Menwith Hill representatives will be invited to attend by Cllr Kaczmarczyk.

### **6.2 Sports Field Facility update led by Cllr Hynes.**

Cllr Hynes gave his report:

A valuation of the land has been received, but a request has been made for a review of the valuation, with a possibility to increase it.

A meeting is now planned with Mr Sadler to discuss project proposals and to identify the expectations of all parties involved going forward.

A draft lease for the land had been obtained and circulated prior to the meeting. This was considered by all.

**Proposal:** To agree the draft lease as a final copy and to send this to the tenant. **All in Favour.**

A summary of the current situation was made by Cllr Peter Phillips:

Issues regarding the speed limits along the road have been discussed and worries alleviated.

North Yorkshire Council legal representatives have been consulted in consideration of the sale of the land and any possible pertinent issues that may arise from the sale have been highlighted and discussed.

The tenancy lease has been rewritten to suit the circumstances of the possible sale and any pre-planning works that may be needed, this will now be issued to the tenant.

A market valuation of the land is taking place.

The next step is now to confirm a meeting with Mr Sadler.

### **6.3 Commuted Sums update, report by Cllr Peter Phillips**

Cllr Peter Phillips had no further updates to report.

### **6.4 Report on renovation of car park toilets, by Cllr K Fuller.**

Cllr Kenny Fuller gave his report:

In spite of promises from the contractor to visit and deal with the issues raised on the 'snagging list' remaining in place, no response has been forthcoming from the contractor. Disappointment was expressed by all councillors to this lack of resolution.

**ACTION:** Clerk to formally send a letter to the company to pursue the issues identified with the contractor.

The painter is ready to begin painting the exterior of the toilet block, but the roof needs repairing prior to the decoration.

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact a local roofing company identified to mend the roof.

### **6.5 The state of the Buttermarket Cobbles**

The poor state of the cobbles was discussed again, especially with reference to the weeds growing and the imminent Remembrance Day celebrations.

It was agreed volunteers were needed to help clear some of the weeds.

Cllr Kenny Fuller volunteered to help with this task.

Cllr Hynes suggested that he is allowed to carry out a test of a process he has used on his own property to repair the cobbles as no contractors have been identified. It was agreed that Cllr Hynes should carry out a trial test in an indiscrete area of the cobbles to decide if this may be appropriate.

### **6.6 Lighting on the Bridge led by Cllr K Fuller**

Cllr Fuller gave his report:

A meeting took place with the company and engineers of the lights Cllr Fuller had suggested may be feasible to install.

Photographs of the lighting system units were shared, as they would be placed on the bridge.

It was agreed that the lights were not suitable for use on the bridge and the consensus was that a different design of lights would be needed.

It was agreed that Cllr Fuller will now continue to investigate further possible options for the project.

### **6.7 Update on Car Charging points led by Cllr Peter Phillips**

Cllr Peter Phillips gave his report:

No further updates are available. It would appear that funding is no longer available for the chargers from North Yorkshire council (formerly Harrogate Council).

Disappointment and consternation was expressed by all present.

### **6.8 Update on Recreation Ground led by Cllr Peter Phillips**

Cllr Pauline Phillips gave her report:

At a recent meeting that was held with a representative from North Yorkshire Council [NY](Harrogate area) it was disputed that the land where the recreation ground is sited belonged to Boroughbridge town council. This therefore imposed a process that required officers from the council at NY to lead any changes planned.

The ownership was challenged by Cllr Phillips and she is awaiting confirmation evidence that this is correct.

Longstanding councillors present at this meeting also supported the view of Cllr Phillips that the land did not belong to NY council. It was the consensus that the land was given in the past to the town as a play space for the children of the town.

In view of the proof of ownership required for NY officers to lead any changes, Cllr Phillips and Cllr Peter Phillips have continued to prepare a process for the improvements to the play area.

When ownership is proven Commuted Sums funding will be required by Boroughbridge town council to fund the changes and developments intended.

If NY proves ownership they will have to fund the developments and the town councillor's will withdraw.

Consternation and disappointment was expressed by all councillors that the involvement of NY officers should challenge the process initiated by the town council, leading to the disruption and delay to a project designed to better provide facilities for the children of the town.

It was agreed that Cllr Phillips will wait one more week to get confirmation from the NY officer of ownership by NY council. After this period she will contact Mr Bastiman and Andrew Jones MP for support to progress with

the project as originally intended and initial plans will be resumed using Commuted Sums monies to pay for the improvements and equipment identified.

## **7. New issues.**

### **7.1 Annual Risk Assessments reviewed and renewed.**

The Risk Assessments were shared and accepted by the council going forward for the next year. Thanks were extended to the Clerk team for the work involved.

### **7.2 Formation of a Youth Council**

Only one offer of volunteering to help has been given from members of the council by Cllr Jamie McNeil. The project requires at least two volunteers to progress. No other councillor has offered to support the project. No further offers were forthcoming. Cllr Phillips expressed his disappointment.

### **7.3 Grass verges, cutting and maintenance issues with North Yorkshire Council.**

Cllr Wilkinson questioned if there was an official policy in place for the cutting of the grass verges, as 'safety' and 'aesthetics' have been quoted as the rationale imposed for the decision governing whether a verge will be cut or left to grow.

A grass cutting grant of £2,500 paid to Boroughbridge town council each year in the past has been refused this year. Funding was not allocated in the Boroughbridge town council budget for 2023-24 to pay an extra £2,500 towards grass cutting, which is therefore problematic. An additional £2,500 will be included in the new budget being prepared for 2024-25 and the PRECEPT request will have to reflect this change.

Cllr Wilkinson requested there is clarity sought regarding the NY policy for grass cutting.

**ACTION:** Clerk to confirm the policy with NY.

### **7.3 Funfair 2023.**

**Proposal:** To welcome the Funfair to the town again for the dates previously agreed. **All in Favour.**

## **8. Finance and HR.**

### **8.1 To agree the end September 2023 Finance Statement, Bank Reconciliation, and ratify receipts to end of September 2023 for payment**

The finance statement was considered. The systems for paying invoices is altered now to reflect the advice of the internal auditor.

The receipts and payments were agreed and noted.

**Proposal:** To ratify the end September 2023 Finance Statement, Bank Reconciliation, and ratify receipts to end of September 2023 for payment, including salaries to be paid. **All in Favour.**

Explanation was given for the quotes received for repairs to the Alarm systems in the Flat 10a Fishergate.

**Proposal:** to appoint the electrical company to complete the repairs as quoted. **All in Favour.**

**ACTION:** Clerk team to ensure the repairs are completed as soon as possible.

### **8.2 AGAR: Completion of the limited assurance review for year end March 2023**

The RFO gave a report that the AGAR review has been completed with the letter received from external auditors.

The process required for completion of the review is underway and the information is accordingly published on the website.

Cllr Hynes expressed his thanks to the RFO for the work involved.

### **8.3 Budget preparation: Projects to include in the budget for 2024-2025**

The following projects were identified for inclusion in the new budget to be prepared:

The Bridge Lighting  
Repairs and improvements to the CCTV system  
Repairs to the Car Park  
Legal fees for the projects initiated.  
The Hall Square cobbles  
Possible green energy projects to develop

#### **8.4 Christmas lights for 2023, including necessary upgrades to timers.**

Cllr Wilkinson explained the Chamber of Trade have contacted the council to confirm the partnership process of funding the Christmas lights will be repeated this year.

**Proposal:** to part fund the Christmas lighting in Boroughbridge in partnership with the Chamber of Trade, equal to the amount funded as per the previous year. **All in Favour.**

**ACTION:** Clerk to confirm the partnership agreement.

Cllr Kenny Fuller reported that the lights at the Fountain are still not working correctly. It was agreed this needs to be repaired.

**ACTION:** Clerk to ensure the contractor visits and repairs the fault.

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

##### **9.1 Letter from Hedgehogs R Us organisation**

Noted.

##### **9.2 Letter from HSBC re pop up event (received 7.9.23)**

There was agreement that this would be positive and welcomed.

It was suggested the town would benefit more if the banks co-operated/ joined in partnership to organise joint working visits.

##### **9.3 JPC Agenda (received 26.9.23)**

Noted.

#### **10. Invitations received for the Mayor, and/or events to attend in October**

**NYC Chairman's Civic Charity Dinner Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October.** Invitation politely declined. **HADC Action AGM & Networking lunch on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October.** Invitation politely declined.

**Oakleaf Service to be held in Ripon Cathedral on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October at 3.30pm-** Mayor to attend.

#### **11. Information Exchange**

**Cllr Pauline Phillips:** A letter was sent to the Speed awareness group in April to report speeding concerns regarding Roecliffe Lane. No response was received. Another e-mail letter will be sent. Increased traffic on Roecliffe Lane is causing concerns as traffic is rerouting to avoid traffic works in the town.

**Cllr Peter Phillips:** requested that The Car Park is added as an agenda point in November. ACTION for Clerk. The honesty payment box in the car park was broken last week. A temporary repair has been made to secure the box. Suggestions for a replacement to the box were made but after consideration were rejected in favour of repairing the current box.

The tarmac for repairs to the surface has been purchased. Paint also has been purchased to repaint yellow warning strip. Repairs will be completed by Cllr Phillips soon.

The car park looks messy and needs money spent on it for maintenance, including the hard standing area for Motorhomes, which is well used.

Photos of old Boroughbridge were shared with the new owner of the crown Hotel recently, after a request for information.

**Cllr Wilkinson:** The state of the road in Roecliffe Lane is worsening, as has been identified by a member of the public in recent correspondence with the council.

It was suggested letters need to be sent to Melissa Burnham (NYC) and DCllr Robert Windass about this issue again. **ACTION:** Clerk to send letters as requested.

Cllr Goss: Brighter Boroughbridge group numbers are very low and dwindling in spite of efforts to recruit new volunteers. A request was made for help to advertise the group on Facebook. ACTION: Cllr Wilkinson to assist and Clerk to add information to council Facebook page.

**Clerk:** Reported that the contractor Phil Waud has been doing additional small tasks when completing his work, that are not remunerated. She requested thanks are extended to Mr Waud for his continuing commitment to maintaining the appearance of the town.

Thanks were expressed by all present.

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

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023, 6.30pm Council Offices.

The meeting ended at 20.45.

**Each page of these Minutes has been read and confirmed, following ratification at the Full Council Meeting held on 3rd October 2023**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor and Chair of Council

Date \_\_\_\_\_