

Minutes of a Meeting of Middleham Town Council held in the Richard III Room at Middleham Key Centre on Wednesday 11 May 2022 at 6.30 pm. (SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING)

Present

Chairman Cllr Mrs S Fairhurst, Cllr Mrs H Byford, Cllr Mr G Fortune, Cllr Mr N Hopper, Cllr Mr S Mashford, Cllr Mrs L Skelton.

County Cllr Mrs K Sedgwick

Member of the public: Mrs R Thompson, Mr R Fletcher, Mr S Wheeler

Clerk Mr D Keep.

Action

1. Re-election of Town Councillors following election on 5 May 2022. The uncontested appointment of Mrs S Fairhurst, Mrs H Byford, Mrs L Skelton, Mr G Fortune, Mr N Hopper and Mr S Mashford as Town Councillors was noted. Each signed a Declaration of Acceptance in the presence of the Clerk and completed a return of election expenses for submission to the electoral authority.

Clerk

2. Election of Mayor and Deputy

2.1 Election of Town Mayor / Chairman and signing of Declaration of Acceptance. The Clerk invited nominations. Cllr Fairhurst was nominated by Cllr Skelton and seconded by Cllr Byford; on a show of hands Cllr Fairhurst was elected as Mayor / Chairman of the Council. Cllr Fairhurst signed the declaration of acceptance in the presence of the Clerk.

2.2 Election of Deputy Town Mayor / Vice-Chairman. Cllr Byford was nominated by Cllr Fairhurst and seconded by Cllr Skelton and, being unopposed, was duly appointed as Vice Chairman.

3. Open Forum.

A suggestion by Mrs Thompson that each of the three dog waste bag dispensers be 'adopted' by a resident to ensure regular restocking was agreed to be useful and names of individuals were suggested. Cllr Byford and Cllr Hopper agreed to talk to Mr Tennant about a gate on a local path that required repair.

**Cllr Byford
/ Cllr
Hopper**

4. Introduction and Apologies.

The Chairman declared the meeting open. All Councillors were present at the start of the meeting however Cllr Fairhurst apologised and left at this point due to a conflicting business commitment. The chair was taken by Cllr Byford.

5. Declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda.

No further interests other than those previously notified were declared in matters on the agenda. The Clerk would recirculate existing declarations of interests for updating, here required, redating and signing.

Clerk /All

6. Minutes.

6.1 Minutes of the previous council meetings

Following amendment **IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Council meetings held on 23 March 2022 (including the confidential minute) as a true and accurate record to be signed by the Chairman of that meeting:**

6.2 The schedule of agreed actions. Noted.

Action

7. Confidential and Urgent Items. There were no other urgent matters. Two matters were discussed and are recorded in the confidential minute book.

8. Town Council - Information/Decision Required

8.1 Councillors' report of meetings attended, and actions undertaken (standing item). No other meetings were attended other than as reported elsewhere in these minutes.

8.2 Matters of local interest and concern as reported to Councillors or on the Residents' Facebook page. None raised.

8.3 Council Matters:

8.3.1 Co-Option of Councillor to fill vacancy. It was agreed to follow the usual process to advertise the vacancy and make an appointment at the meeting on 22 June.

All / Clerk

8.3.2 Job description for Councillors. This was noted as a helpful aide memoire although it was not a statutory role description.

8.4 Land Management Issues (standing item).

8.4.1 Storm drains on Council Lands. An update was still awaited from Area 1 and would be chased. It was agreed to ask whether NYCC could provide jetting services for drains on Council-owned land.

Clerk

8.4.2 Direction Signs to amenities. Cllr Fairhurst had reviewed direction signs generally and considered they were adequate. In discussion it was agreed that enlarged signs should be placed at both ends of the RIII ginnel for the public toilets. Consent was granted to MSWCA, subject to sight of the design, to place a sign on the Plantations towards the Playing Fields.

Clerk

8.4.3 Employment of a handyman. The merits of the Clerk's suggestion were discussed. The consensus was that whilst excellent work had been undertaken by volunteers on various tasks, from time-to-time speed was of the essence and certain work required specific skills and tools, such as repair to the skate park surface, however was no apparent need for an ongoing appointment. Councillors would suggest suitable candidates for these tasks.

All

8.4.4 Control of dogs on the Moor. Recent reported incidents of dogs off leash on Council land, in particular one individual with as many as 9, were discussed. It was understood that some were without collars, which was a legal requirement, and although appearing under control were often off the leash and faeces were not being picked up. The matter was discussed without conclusion, in recognition that it was not easy to identify appropriate and effective enforcement action that Council could take. County Cllr Sedgwick suggested consulting RDC's dog team for guidance. It was noted that the Bye Laws required dogs to be on leashes on the Moors between 1 April and 31 July.

8.5 Police Matters.

8.5.1 Monthly Activity Report from Neighbourhood Team (standing item). Noted. Cllr Byford and Cllr Fairhurst provided feedback of a useful meeting with the Police Local Licensing Officer regarding initiatives to discourage underage drinking and provide positive activities to deter drinking and ensure safe and lawful operation at licensed premises. This had provided reassurance that a good understanding of current issues and local engagement existed. PCSO Gwatkinor was also speaking at the following week's Town meeting. Cllr Mashford, as a licensee, reported upon recent engagement by the Licensing Team with the town's licensed premises, noting that the Police urged public to report concerns.

County Cllr Sedgwick asked about follow-up to the meeting with Police regarding drug use; the Clerk would obtain an update from Wensleydale School's headteacher about the working group she intended to convene. YLCA had convened a virtual meeting with the Commissioner and a report would be received at the next meeting.

Clerk

Cllr
Fairhurst

Action

8.6 Annual Town meeting 18 May 2022: The agenda and speakers were noted.

8.7 Update on Unitary Authority. An update on the move to a unitary authority was received. County Cllr Sedgwick was congratulated on her election as member of NYCC and, from 1 April 2023, of the new authority. She undertook to update Council as policy adoption and organisation structures were agreed. In response to questioning regarding RDC's ongoing capability during its final year of operation, County Cllr Sedgwick confirmed that all Council and Committee meetings were continuing although there had been some staff departures, despite assurances that roles would not be lost; as a consequence temporary staff were being engaged.

9. Review of Health & Safety and Environmental Matters (standing item).

9.1 Play Areas Inspection reports. Received, including the first report on the new castle equipment. No matters of concern were reported. Cllrs Hopper and Fortune felt that the lifting panels on the skate park should be looked by someone with better equipment. The Clerk would enquire why heavy benches and tables were recommended to be bolted down.

Clerk

9.2 Roads and paths.

9.2.1 Surfaces concerns. Cllr Byford reported that retexturing near Spigot Lodge had improved the grip for horses, although to a lesser extent than elsewhere. As they remained acceptable there was no current need for further intervention. She would confirm this with trainers in that locality. Cllr Byford would also request costings from NYCC for works to be jointly paid for by trainers and Area 1.

Cllr Byford

9.2.2 Street Lighting. An update on light repairs and progress with installation of the requested additional lamp on Park Lane had still not been received, so would be chased again.

Clerk

9.3 Environmental Matters.

9.3.1 New Bin in Park Lane: The suggested location would be confirmed with RDC

Clerk

10. Project Updates:

10.1 Burial Ground. It was agreed to shorten the rules as an A3-sized summary on the noticeboard for ease of reading. The Clerk was now dealing with requests to purchase exclusive rights of burial.

10.2 MSCWA.

10.2.1 Update on storage shed, petanque court, fencing by skate park. Mr Fletcher as secretary reported that the storage shed was now complete. The dugout roof had been repaired. Construction of new cricket nets would shortly commence. Cold frames were now in place and use in the community garden. A recent increase in littering, particularly of sweet papers, had been observed.

10.3 Key Centre.

10.3.1 Report from New Trustees. Cllr Byford, as chair of trustees, reported that an updated business review was being undertaken and would be reported at the next meeting.

10.4 Play Area Improvements: A successful and enjoyable opening day had been held on 23 March. All external funding had been received and reporting obligations fulfilled. It was agreed to place plaques from funders on the installation, location to be agreed.

Clerk

10.5 Jubilee Light. Details of a suitable lantern had been circulated and would be purchased. A 50% contribution towards its purchase had been gratefully received from a resident. Total costs of up to £400 for supply and installation were approved.

Cllr Byford

Recent discussion had identified the need to add to and improve existing provision of benches. An indicative costing of between £250 and £280, each, for shot blasting and

Cllr Byford

Action

painting 2 existing benches from Sam Duffus had been received and was approved.

11. Events in Middleham (standing item).

11.1 Platinum Jubilee bank holiday Thursday 2 June and Friday 3 June 2022. A summary of events planned over the weekend was presented. The Clerk would obtain Temporary Event Notices at a cost of £21 for each event that required one. Mrs Thompson was thanked for replenishing the flower display in the Jubilee Fountain.

Clerk

11.2 Stables Open Day. Good Friday 15 April 2022. Feedback was that the event had been well attended and efficiently organised, although one licensee had suggested that temporary toilets be provided in future as their own facility had been overused. Racing Welfare was planning a meeting with voluntary groups to discuss distribution of allocated funds.

11.3 Seniors' Coach outing. **IT WAS Resolved** to approve £350 for coach hire, on a date to be agreed (expenditure pursuant to s137 Local Government Act).

**Cllr
Fairhurst****12. Planning****12.1 Planning decision notices received since the last meeting:**

12.1.1 Full Planning Permission for Conversion of Outbuilding to 1 Bedroom Dwelling at Lambs Cottage, Market Place, Middleham, North Yorkshire, DL8 4NP

21/00369/FULL **Granted**

12.2 Planning Applications.

12.2.1 Certificate of Lawfulness Proposed to replace six wooden sash windows with six wooden sash windows in the existing openings with no change of colour, material or design at Castle Hill Cottage, Castle Hill, Middleham, DL8 4QR 22/00170/CLP. **No objection, comments submitted between meetings**

12.2.2 Full Planning Permission for a Detached Garage Building, Braeval Park Lane Middleham DL8 4QZ 22/00213 **No objection**

12.2.3 Racing Stables Kingsley Park Farm Park Lane Middleham North Yorkshire DL8 4QZ 22/00212/FULL **No objection**

12.3 Potential Planning Enforcement Issues. The background to delayed determination of FPP for Redevelopment of Existing Racing Yard at Manor House Farm, Middleham, DL8 4RH 21/000285 was noted. It was understood that consideration of this matter was required at a further planning committee due to a technical error in the processing of the application rather than any need for additional scrutiny. As a consequence, the applicant had been required to cease construction during this delay incurring additional and unrecoverable costs.

Works being undertaken at the former Castle Keep Tea Rooms did not appear to have prompted a Listed Building Application and would be looked into.

Clerk**13. Finance – Information/Decision required****Clerk**

13.1 IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the schedule of direct debits and internet bank transfers to approve and ratify all payments since the last Meeting as set out on the payments schedule.

Cash books, bank statements and bank reconciliations at the end of months ending January, February and March 2022 were presented.

13.2 Outsourcing of Bookkeeping. The Clerk provided a verbal update that the current year's cashbook was now maintained by Ms Duke and that initial set-up and transfer of opening balances had gone smoothly and was already saving Clerk's administrative time.

13.3 Year-end accounts. A verbal progress report was received from the Clerk.

13.4 Renewal of Insurance Policy. The Clerk reported that he was seeking quotes,

Action

from Gallagher and Zurich, the current and previous brokers, respectively, which both specialised in the local council sector. Due to increased information requests a full comparative quote had not been received and, as renewal was due on 30 June **IT WAS RESOLVED** to delegate the renewal decision to the Clerk to seek confirmation from brokers that cover is appropriate and liaise by email with Councillors.

Clerk

13.5 s137 Local Government Act: Expenditure limit. For the 2022/2023 financial approximately it was noted that £5,574.24 as available to incur expenditure which in a smaller council's opinion is 'in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants' and for which no other statutory power exists.

13.6 Clerk's contract of employment. Recorded in confidential minute book.

14. Suggested items for the next agenda.

14.1 Annual Accounts for approval.

Clerk

14.2 Feedback from North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner virtual meeting with YLCA branches 26 May 2022.

Cllr

14.3 Council objectives for 2022-23

Fairhurst

14.4 Planning by, and support needed to, Middleham Key Centre.

All

14.5 Continuity of service provision by RDC

Cllr Byford

The next monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday 22 June 2022.

There being no further business the chair declared the meeting closed at 9.17pm (following conclusion of discussion of confidential items)

Signed.....Date.....