

Minutes of a Meeting of Middleham Town Council held in the Garden Room at Middleham Key Centre on Wednesday 8 February 2023 at 6.30 pm. (SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT COUNCIL MEETING)

Present

Chairman Cllr Mrs S Fairhurst, Cllr Mrs H Byford, Cllr Mr S Mashford, Cllr Mr D Palethorpe, Cllr Mrs L Skelton.

Members of the public were present for part of the meeting. PCSO Tracie-Lee Taylor-Paige was also present for part of the meeting.

Clerk Mr D Keep.

Action

1. Open Forum.

Members of the public raised concerns about dog waste. A suggestion was made to relocate one of the existing dog waste dispensers from Park Lane as it appeared less well used than others and to consider installing an additional dispenser. The Clerk would purchase a supply of bags and advise the cost of an additional dispenser.

Clerk

2. Apologies. The Chairman declared the meeting open. Apologies were received from Cllr Mr S Watson (business commitment out of area). County Cllr Mrs K Sedgwick was unavailable as she was on holiday.

3. Declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda.

No further interests other than those previously notified were declared in matters on the agenda.

4. Minutes.

4.1 Minutes of the previous meetings

4.1.1 Subject to correction that it was Leyburn's youth football team that was planning a girls' team, not Middleham's, **IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Council meetings held on 21 December 2022 and 4 January 2023 and the confidential extracts presented to the meeting as a true and accurate record to be signed by the Chairman of that meeting.**

4.2 The schedule of agreed actions. Council confirmed that they did not review these and requested that they should not be prepared for future meetings.

4.3 Confidential and Urgent Items. There were no other urgent matters, although additional matters were agreed for discussion and recorded in the confidential minute book.

5. Town Council – Information/Decision Required.

5.1 Councillors and Clerk to report any meetings attended and actions undertaken (standing item). The Clerk reported that he had attended the Branch meeting of the Yorkshire Local Councils Association that had received a talk from Yorkshire Water.

5.2 Matters of local interest and concern as reported to Councillors or on Residents' Facebook page (standing item). None reported.

5.3 Council Matters:

5.3.1 Vacancy for Councillor to be filled by Co-Option. RDC, as electoral authority had confirmed that Council may fill the post by co-option. It was agreed to advertise the vacancy and make an appointment at the next meeting on 22 March 2023, following the same procedure adopted when filling previous vacancies. The deadline for receipt of applications would be Wednesday 15 March 2023.

5.3.2 Civility and Respect Pledge – Training Courses. Details of virtual courses run by

Clerk

Action

had been circulated.

5.3.3 Policies. A schedule of policies and documents that YLCA recommended that smaller councils should have, marked up to show those that Council currently had in place, was received. It was recognised that this was an important task. Cllr Skelton and Cllr Mashford agreed to form a working party to prioritise policies for adoption, where considered appropriate to Council's specific circumstances.

5.3.4 Citizens Advice Bureau donation. An email thanking Council for its donation of £200 was noted.

5.3.5 Councillor Training Courses. Cllr Skelton reported that the 2-part virtual training course 'Off to a Flying Start' had been informative and useful; she recommended Councillors, whether new starters or those with more experience would find it useful. Cllr Skelton would share her course notes.

5.3.6 Objectives and Priorities for 2023-24. Following discussion of suggestions by the Clerk, the following were agreed;

- Future of the Key Centre
- Canaan Lane resurfacing (to be grant funded)
- Claiming 'no man's land'
 - Besides former Tea Shoppe
 - Adjacent to open space, top of St Alkelda's Road.
- Investigate potential for car parking.

5.3.7 Annual Year Planner. An aide memoire of activity drafted by the Clerk was adopted.

5.4 Land Management Issues (standing item).

5.4.1 Storm drains on Council Lands. A further email had been received from the concerned resident. The Clerk would continue to chase Area 1 regarding whether its contractor might be able to clear drains on Council land.

5.4.2 Care of Trees along the Busks. It was agreed that additional work to the trees along the Busks, beyond those for safety reasons, be undertaken at an additional cost of £350 to the original estimate from Yorkshire Tree Services of £1,950. The works had already been completed, improving appearance and accessibility.

5.4.3 Care of Trees behind 9 St Alkelda's Road. Copies of correspondence with the householder and a report of a meeting with Cllr Byford were received. A second opinion on requested works to the trees was being sought from Mr Kalkowski. The Clerk would chase progress of an application for a tree preservation order with RDC. The tree report for the area would be shared with the resident.

5.5 Police & Fire Service Matters.

5.5.1 Monthly Activity Report from Neighbourhood Team (standing item). PCSO Tracie-Lee reported that recent appointments of an Officer and PCSO to the team should enable her and PCSO Watson to attend council meetings more frequently. She outlined current focus of Police activity, including defective vehicle checks and incidents of speeding.

5.5.2 HMICFRS's report on North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service's 'Effectiveness, efficiency and people'. The report was received. There was concern at an overall rating 'required improvement' and the risk that it might not be able to respond adequately to emergencies.

5.6 Update on Unitary Authority.

5.6.1 Feedback from attendance at online briefings. No briefings had been attended by Councillors.

5.6.2 The Parish Charter. A new Parish Charter had been circulated by North Yorkshire Council.

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

6.1 Play Areas

6.1.1 Inspection reports. Report noted. Cllr Palethorpe would undertake repairs to stone walls alongside play areas which appeared to have been deliberately removed.

**Cllr
Skelton /
Cllr
Mashford**

Clerk

Clerk

Cllr

6.1.2 Repairs to scramble frame. No progress to report, to be undertaken in better weather.

6.2 Roads and paths.

6.2.1 Street Lighting. The new light installed in Park Lane had still not been wired up. Some of the lights reported as defective had been repaired.

6.3 **Environmental Matters**. Recent incidents of diesel oil in water courses within the Town had apparently been reported to the Environment Agency. There was no ongoing role for Council, although it would continue to monitor reports.

6.4 Community Matters

6.4.1 Warm & Well projects. A report, as submitted to RDC by the Key Centre, on use of the Centre under the Richmondshire Warm and Welcome Spaces scheme, was received. The Key Centre would increase publicity when colder weather returned.

6.4.2 Second home policy. The Mayor's email to Richard Flinton, Chief Executive of North Yorkshire County Council and his reply were received. Mr Flinton recognised local concerns around the number of second homes in Middleham and other North Yorkshire communities. North Yorkshire Council intended to place a 100 per cent Council Tax surcharge on the owners of second homes once central government brought forward legislation authorising this.

7. Project Updates:

7.1 Burial Ground.

7.1.1 Verbal Update: No matters reported.

7.1.2 Application for permission to plant memorial tree. A family's request was received. It was agreed to suggest a suitable location on the wider area of the Busks on the northern side of Leyburn Road at the town end. The Clerk would obtain a list of suitable trees from Mr Stockdale to suggest to the family.

7.2 **MSCWA**. A brief verbal report had been received from Mr Fletcher during the Open Forum.

7.3 Funding

7.3.1 Funding Opportunities. A bulletin of funding opportunities was received.

7.3.2 Funding request from Friends of Middleham and Spennithorne Schools. Mrs Wheeler had spoken during the open forum in support of an application for £500 of grant funding to support extra-curricula activity through an 'Eco Club' to create bio-diversity at the Middleham School site. Council considered the benefits arising from the proposed scheme and agreed to propose to the Inhabitant Householders Charity that a grant of £150 be made, plus an additional £150 if the Friends can match fund with £150 sourced from elsewhere.

7.4 **Key Centre**. Discussed in private session and recorded in the confidential minute book.

8. Events in Middleham (standing item).

8.1.1 Middleham Stables Open Day on Good Friday, 7th April. Permission was granted for the organisers to use areas of Council land on the Wastes, Busks and Low Moor, as in previous years. A specific request to adopt a different system for managing traffic to and from parking on the Low Moor was also considered and approved. Regarding location of temporary toilet facilities, Council suggested an area of the Cobbles to the front of Neville Hall in the West End and on the Busks. Toilet facilities could be offered at the Key Centre.

8.1.2 Coronation Day of King Charles III Saturday 6 May 2023 (Bank Holiday on Monday 8 May). The official timetable for the weekend was noted. By comparison to the previous year's Jubilee weekend, there appeared to be less enthusiasm and so far no funding schemes had been announced locally. Council felt a community 'bring and share' family-oriented event could be held on the Sunday. It was agreed to approach local groups whether they had any plans, speaking to MSCWA in the first instance.

8.1.3 Events in 2023. The following events were known to be taking place:

Spring Clean (Cllr Skelton to liaise with Mrs Wheeler)

Clerk

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Clerk

Action

Richard III Festival	(to be organised by RIII Society within the Castle, 1 st week in August)
Coronation Day of King Charles III	Saturday 6 May 2023
May Bank Holiday	Feast Day
Summer	Seniors' coach outing (Cllr Fairhurst to organise)
Christmas	Children's Grotto (Cllr Fairhurst to organise) Seniors' Christmas lunch (Cllr Fairhurst to organise) Carols and switching on the lights (Clerk to organise).

9. Planning**9.1 Planning decision notices received since the last meeting:**

9.1.1 Erection of Summer House in Rear Garden (Retrospective), 4 St Alkelda's Road Middleham DL8 4PW 17/00398/FULL **Refused.**

9.1.2 Full Planning Permission for Conversion of Barn and Stable to Residential Dwellinghouse at Barn North of Coverham Lane, Middleham, North Yorkshire **Granted.**

9.2 Planning Applications. None received.

9.3 Potential Planning Enforcement Issues. No new matters at the current time.

A watching brief would be maintained on the Barn at Manor Farm, West End Middleham, a listed building previously reported to Planning Enforcement.

10. Finance – Information/Decision required

10.1 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.

10.2 Specific Expenditure Approvals. None.

10.3 Review of internal controls. Guidance on internal controls specific to local councils was received. It was agreed that a review be completed before the year end, to follow a slightly different format now that the bookkeeping function was outsourced. Cllr Mashford and Cllr Palethorpe would undertake the review. The Clerk would organise a meeting with Kim Duke.

10.4 Risk assessment review. Councils were recommended to carry out an annual review. It was suggested, in his absence, that Cllr Watson might be able to provide input to this process.

10.5 Clerk's contract of Employment. Discussion recorded in confidential minute book.

**Cllr
Mashford /
Cllr
Palethorpe**

**Cllr
Watson**

11. Suggested items for the next agenda.

11.1 Appointment of internal auditor.

The next monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday 22 March 2023.

There being no further business the chair declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm

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