



Tadcaster Town Council

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Open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 12.30pm

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5 APRIL 2022 AT 7 PM IN THE BOYS SUNDAY SCHOOL OFF KIRKGATE

PRESENT:	CHAIRMAN	D Bowgett
	COUNCILLORS	J Chiswick, P Emmott, D Mackay C Stephenson & R Sweeting
	CLERK	J Crowther
	DEPUTY CLERK	J Mottershead
	ALSO PRESENT	None

AT1 APOLOGIES – To receive and accept apologies for absence from Councillors – S Cobb, M Middlemiss.

AT2 MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – Members approved the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting on 6 April 2021.

AT3 PUBLIC SESSION – DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM - Members of the Public are welcome to speak and raise any matters relating to the town – none

AT4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – To receive the Chairman's Report of Council activities for the past year. Last June we moved from Zoom meetings caused by the Covid pandemic to face to face meetings in the Boy's Sunday School.

We have seen a lot of discussions over Selby Local Plan and efforts being made to encourage the local land and property owner to reinstate empty properties for affordable rental. There is much concern, however, over plans to build on the Central Car Park. Free parking supports local businesses, events in The Riley-Smith Hall and in our churches.

Under the Neighbourhood Plan we look forward to taking control of future developments and increasing the footfall in the Town. Thanks go to David Gluck and Mike Dando for progressing this.

We are exerting pressure on the Environment Agency to speed up their plans for Flood Alleviation.

Our Grant Aid support has gone to the Old People's Treat and equipment to help clear up February's Flood event.

The Town Newsletter goes to every house although this is circulated only twice a year.

We continue to maintain the Cemetery, the viaduct and Dorchester to Stutton Road footpaths.

We inspect and upkeep trees, litterbins and benches.

I am proud of the flowers around the Town and the improvements made to Westfield Allotments.

I am pleased about the policing in the Town and thank PC Nicholas Woods and his team for keeping the Town so safe.

Notable and successful events in the Town included Remembrance Sunday, the Christmas Market and the Lantern Procession to celebrate 5 years since The Bridge reopened.

I look forward to the development of a new Brewery Heritage Museum, the celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and our new monthly surgery consultations in The Ark.

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We look forward to the challenges of the transfer of power from Selby District Council to the new North Yorkshire Unitary Authority.

Our budgets continue to be run very effectively by Jane Crowther, our Clerk.

Thanks for overseeing the above go to our three Officers and my fellow Councillors. I wish Ian Edmondson best wishes in his retirement as we welcome Paul Emmott.

The Quaker's Burial Ground was tidy thanks to the volunteers.

The Town Council look forward to SDC improving the state and facilities in their Children's playgrounds up to the standards in the Grange playground

The Client Group had moved slowly as we await the improvement to the computer model which models the flow of the Wharfe

D Bowgett commended S Cobb for his year in office during difficult times.

R Sweeting felt that S Cobb had chaired meetings well and had dealt well with some serious issues.

AT5 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN: -

R Sweeting joined the meeting.

• Environment

We started this council year with the extremely disappointing news regarding the delays to the intended Tadcaster Flood Alleviation Scheme, as a result of inaccuracies in the modelling performed by the Environment Agency that was to be used as the basis of the flood defence scheme. As we know, the need to correct this has resulted in delays to the scheme until at least 2024. The recent and damaging flooding event in Tadcaster demonstrates the need to progress and complete this work and soon as possible, and I would like to thank everyone from Tadcaster Community Action Group and the council for their continued pressure and advocacy on this matter.

- While there are some things we cannot influence, there are others that we can, and I was as ever overwhelmed by the response of the community to the flooding. Donations, help with clearing and cleaning, local and some not so local businesses carrying out safety checks of the flooded properties... we might not always be able to depend on the bigger things going our way, but it seems we can always depend on the people of Tadcaster.
- In terms of some of the more general aspects that fall under the remit of the environment committee, we completed a programme of maintenance to bins and benches, including the installation of new benches along the riverside. There has also been a lot of work ongoing around the viaduct, including maintenance work and removal of trees, as well as the installation of swift boxes that I understand have already provided new homes to some of our feathered friends. We also have work ongoing to improve our three play areas and it was really positive to be able to respond to the concerns of a resident on this and to say that work was already planned and imminently due to begin. I wish it was always that easy!
- A significant programme of improvements to Westfield allotments has also been undertaken, which has been a huge piece of work managed by Jane and Jo – for which we are very grateful. The allotments have been cleared and a tremendous amount of rubbish removed or burned. New fencing has been installed and the plots subdivided into better sized and more appropriate areas. If anyone has been down there recently you will see that it is transformed! And while we are on the subject of gardening, the planting throughout the town has looked fantastic. The bulbs as you enter the town and along the river are beautiful at the moment and the hanging baskets in the bus station are worth every penny. A thank you goes to all our volunteer waterers

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– I know there have been fewer people able to take part due to Covid and a lot of effort has been made by a smaller number of volunteers – it is very much appreciated.

- My next thank you goes to David Gluck and Tadcaster Rural CIC for organising the cobbles market in collaboration with Little Bird markets. This has been taking place since July, with bigger markets at the Super SatTADday and Tadcaster Bridge celebrations. I for one really appreciate the market and see it as a huge asset to the town. I hope this is something that will continue and grow in the future. We were also pleased to see the return of the Christmas market which is always a highlight of the year for me. My thanks go to Cllr Sweeting for his role as market manager. And finally, looking forward to future events, I am grateful for all of the hard work that has gone into planning the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee event which is to include lighting of the beacon on 2 June and a Queens Platinum Jubilee Market on the 5th June.

- I would like to thank Jane, Jo and Sara and my fellow councillors for their support to the work of the Environment committee in the last year. Our work is not always the most high profile but I think we do a great job maintaining and improving the town for the benefit of everyone who lives in and visits Tadcaster.

- **Finance and General Purposes**

- 2021 marked the centenary of the town’s war memorial. Cllr Lodge led a working group in formally commemorating the event on Remembrance Sunday, which proved a great success.

- Our programme of improvements in the cemetery has continued, focusing primarily on the footpaths, several more of which have been repaired this year, making the site safer and more accessible. Cemetery fees were kept unaltered for the upcoming year.

- Grant Aid was given to Citizen’s Advice, and Small Grants were given to Cllr Emmott’s brewery museum project and Tadcaster TEMPT for the Lantern Parade, before the remainder of the Grant Aid fund was donated to the Flood Action Group in the aftermath of February’s flooding event.

- For the first time since 2018, we were able to recommend a precept increase that was below the rate of inflation. However, the lack of development in the town and corresponding erosion of the precept remains an issue.

- The council is making moves towards setting up an online banking facility, which should greatly streamline its day-to-day operations.

- For the upcoming 2022/23, the council is adopting a new meetings schedule which will see one full council meeting on a fixed date in most months, and Environment and F&GP meetings taking place on a roughly quarterly basis.

R Sweeting reported that the Town Council were the only Council to increase both NYCC and SDC had no increases.

The Clerk reported that several projects had been funded by the Councils Reserve and Capital. The Cemetery had been remained self-funding.

The increase in precept had been necessary as funding from reserves would still be required.

AT6 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES SERVING ON OTHER BODIES: -

- **Yorkshire Local Councils Association (Selby)** - Councillor D Mackay

Attendance of meetings had been via Zoom at the start of the year, the main topics had been New Legislation.

- **Swimming Pool Users Committee** - Councillor S Cobb

Tadcaster Swimming Pool Annual Report 2021/22

During 2021 the Trust continued to face significant COVID problems including, government closures, restrictions and staffing levels.

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The team of both paid staff and volunteers worked amazingly hard to keep the facility open and throughout this period we delivered 100% of our opening times, unlike every other pool and leisure facility in the area.

We managed to get the school swimming and our Learn to Swim Programme back in place from September 2021, which was brilliant to see.

The financial situation was boosted by a number of grants and awards from Sport England, Selby District Council and a number of smaller awarding bodies.

Throughout this the community support has been fantastic even with the new procedures, timetables and restrictions in place.

Although December 2021 was disappointing with poor attendance and low customer confidence due to the Omicron variant we started 2022 in a fantastic way.

In February 2022 we broke the record for the highest ever attendance over a week in the Swimming Pool. This was then broken again two weeks later.

We have put this down to customers wanting to stay local and other pools have restrictions in place due to staffing and recruitment issues.

Future Concerns

Our future concerns are mainly to do with the significant increases in the Energy costs.

An example of this is:

Electricity current - £50,000 per year

Electricity forecast - £135,000 per year – from September 2022

Gas Current - £35,000 per year

Gas Forecast - £55,000 per year – from September 2023

This is an increase of £105,000 in 12 months.

To help reduce these costs we are replacing our boiler and air handling unit at a cost of £200,000.

The new system will be 20% more efficient.

However, this level of utility increase makes the Trust become unviable as it will mean that major losses will be recorded each year. Whilst we have some reserves it is not going to keep the facility open for a long period.

We are having to look at how we operate overall and make historical changes just to survive.

These changes will impact the community as well as the clubs and schools that use the facility on a weekly basis.

If there is any financial or grant support to help with the installation of energy saving equipment as detailed above please let me know.

In conclusion the facility remains extremely popular and provides an outstanding asset for the Town and surrounding areas. However the threat faced by the increasing Energy costs is even more significant than COVID.

Facility Manager

- **Dawson & Oglethorpe Trust - Councillors** – Councillor D Bowgett

The Dawson and Oglethorpe Trust funded a variety of projects this year, all intended to support the general well-being of the students of Tadcaster Grammar School, as well as students in financial need. Of particular note, we funded a visit from a theatre company in order for them to put on an interactive workshop, something we felt was a particularly worthy cause given the isolation that was caused during the COVID pandemic.

- **Tadcaster Twinning Association Committee** - Councillors D Bowgett & S Cobb

We only managed a couple of meetings in the year to March 2022, for obvious reasons.

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On more positive notes, we can report the following:

A very successful fund-raiser at the 2021 Christmas Market.

We are re-forging links with Wetherby Twinning Association, with whom we are planning a Summer event

There are ongoing and developing penfriend links between Saint Chély schools and pupils at TGS, and St Joseph's.

We are moving forward now and are hoping for a slightly fuller programme this year.

- **Selby District AVS** - Councillor D Bowgett

The Selby District AVS has typically operated via the Community Engagement Forum. Since that was discontinued, the AVS has moved into working with groups in the town on a more direct basis.

Most of the AVS's operations have focused on Selby Town and the immediate area over the past years, but I am hoping to meet with the AVS's chief executive in the near future with a view to discussing ways forward for the organization to deliver its services in Tadcaster.

- **Tadcaster Community Library** - Councillor G Lodge – No report

- **Tadcaster Medical Centre Patient Participation Group** – M Middlemiss, no report.

- **Environment Agency** – Client Group – Councillors S Cobb & D Mackay

D Mackay reported that the Environment Agency Tadcaster Flood Alleviation Scheme were holding community drop ins every Tuesday morning at the Ark. He had held positive conversations with EA representatives, including Low Points during recent flooding and flood prevention.

Timelines for completion of the project remained unchanged the start of the scheme 2024 and completion 2026.

Selby District Council Flood Funding was to be allocated to shops and businesses in the town.

R Sweeting reported that the MP had contacted the Government Flood Minister to request funding for Tadcaster which had been turned down, but SDC had secured flood funding to shops and businesses.

AT7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – The Clerk reported that a Citizens Advice Council representative was no longer required.

AT8 CLOSE OF MEETING