



Tadcaster Town Council

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Open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 12.30pm

MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4 JUNE 2024 AT 7 PM IN THE ARK

PRESENT:	CHAIRMAN	K Poskitt
	COUNCILLORS	D Bowgett, G Butcher, J Chiswick, & P Tunney.
	CLERK	Present
	DEPUTY CLERK	Present
	ALSO PRESENT	None

The Chairman reported that the meeting was being recorded.

- E1 APOLOGIES – (Item 1)** - To receive, record and approve apologies for absence: - S Cobb, R Sweeting & C Stephenson.
- E2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – (Item 2)** - To receive and record declarations of interest at this point or at any other point on the agenda - None.
- E3 PUBLIC SESSION – SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS – (Item 3)** - To allow members of the public to speak on any matter as it relates to the town – Members of the public are asked to submit any questions in advance of the meeting to the Clerk – None.
- E4 REIMPOSE STANDING ORDERS – (Item 4)** – None.
- E5 CLERKS REPORT – (Item 5)** - Clerk to update members regarding any environmental matters not itemised on this agenda.

The Clerk reported that after production of the agenda an email had been received from The Environment Agency regarding access required on Tadcaster Town Council owned riverbank land. During part of the planning for Tadcaster Flood Alleviation Scheme, Heritage England had asked to excavate a trench at the foot of the Motte and Bailey where the current proposed works for the scheme would be required. The Historical Society had been informed.

K Poskitt was keen that the public were informed of the above activity, the Environment Agency were to provide wording for a statement.

K Poskitt reported that The Barn AGM was at The Barn on 11 June 2024 at 5.30pm anyone was welcome to attend.

- E6 PLANNING – (Item 6)** - Members noted and commented as required on the following applications received from Selby District Council: -

a. Planning Applications –

4/24 - 16 Station Road – Erection of new porch.

RESOLVED – Members had no objection to the application.

ACTION – Clerk to reply to NYC accordingly.

b. North Yorkshire Council –

Station Road – Proposal to make an order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for Prohibition of waiting and loading and provision of parking – Proposed double yellow lines 23m on both sides of the junction 90m southeast into Station Road and 23m east around the junction. 126m southeast into Station Road and 23 m northeast around the junction.

P Tunney reported all day and weekend parking on the Station Industrial Estate was an accident waiting to happen. He felt that the double yellow lines should be the length of the entrance road and not restricted to the junction.

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He felt the Council should request that the double yellow lines be extended.

RESOLVED – That a reply be sent to NYC with no objections but to include concerns regarding excessive, unsafe parking in Station Estate.

ACTION –

- P Tunney to draft a reply and forward to the Clerk.
- Clerk to reply to NYC accordingly.

E7 CORRESPONDENCE – (Item 7) - for members to note and make comments as required: - None.

E8 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, POLICIES & RISK ASSESSMENTS – (Item 8) -

D Bowgett reported that he had read and approved the policies which had been reviewed and approved in 2023 following changes to North Yorkshire Council.

RESOLVED – Following a unanimous vote members approved the following: -

- a. Terms of Reference for the Environment Committee: -
- b. Terms of Reference Emergency Planning Sub Committee
- c. Memorial Bench Policy.
- d. Tree Policy.
- e. Christmas Market Risk Assessment.
- f. Viaduct Risk Assessment.
- g. Litter Pick Risk Assessment.
- h. Allotment Risk Assessment

E9 EMERGENCY PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE – (Item 9) -

a. Councillor Membership – To elect Councillors to serve on the Emergency Planning Sub Committee. Members elected Councillors to serve on the Emergency Planning Sub Committee as follows: -

RESOLVED – Councillors D Bowgett, S Cobb, K Poskitt, R Sweeting & P Tunney.

ACTION – Clerk to check with D Mackay in his absence.

b. Election of Chairman - Members to elect a chairman.

RESOLVED – Following a unanimous vote members elected R Sweeting for the Emergency Planning Sub Committee Chairman.

c. Election of Vice Chairman – Members to elect a Vice Chairman.

RESOLVED – Following a unanimous vote members elected D Bowgett for the Emergency Planning Sub Committee Vice Chairman.

d. Members to approve the minutes of the 20 February 2024.

RESOLVED – Members approved the above minutes subject to changes put forward by P Tunney.

ACTION – Clerk to deal.

E10 RIVERBANK LAND – (Item 10) - Members to discuss Tadcaster Town Council owned Riverbank land.

The Clerk reported that following a search of Council owned Riverbank Deeds completed by The Environment Agency as part of the Tadcaster Flood Alleviation Scheme and a following report it had been highlighted that not all land had been Land Registered.

P Tunney reported that he was surprised by the ownership of parts of the land, he asked if all the boundaries had been confirmed and complied with Land Registry.

The Clerk reported that the Councils Riverbank Deeds had been organised in 2014 she was not qualified to carry out further investigation work. The EA Lawyer had been grateful for the organisation of the documents.

The Clerk asked if an independent or NYC Lawyer should be used.

RESOLVED –

- **Following a unanimous vote members agreed to contact NYC to seek Legal Advice regarding the registering of the above land.**
- **That the item be discussed raised at the 18 June 2024 Council meeting for Council approval.**

ACTION – Clerk to deal.

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E11 COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY – (Item 11) –

a. Members to discuss the Councils Biodiversity Duty.

K Poskitt reported that the Council had a duty to have a Biodiversity Policy in place. A working Group of D Bowgett, S Cobb & C Stephenson had previously been agreed to meet to draft a Policy.

D Bowgett reported that a Tadcrafters representative had shown an interest in being involved in the Group.

RESOLVED – The above Group to draft a Biodiversity Policy and bring back to the next appropriate meeting.

ACTION – D Bowgett to contact the above Working Group, the Tadcrafters representative and the NYC Biodiversity Champion to arrange a meeting to discuss and draft a Council Biodiversity Policy.

b. Members to discuss and agree a Council Biodiversity Policy - as above.

E12 TADCASTER GREEN/OPEN SPACE – (Item 12) - Members to discuss Green/open Space in the town.

K Poskitt reported that Tadcaster Community Sports Trust (TCST) had raised concerns regarding the lack of Green/Open space in the town available for community use. Councillors were unaware of how woeful the access to Green Space in the town. As an action point of Tadcaster Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group it had been agreed to include Green/Open space in any future development.

P Tunney felt that the Community Trusts Plan for the proposal for development of land at London Road for leisure purposes had been a dilemma. The Trust had been led to believe that the plan would go ahead but was retracted two days before production of the Local Plan. The plans had been shelved because of the conflict directly having with NDP proposals. The proposal would have been a huge asset to the town and wider community. He felt there had been a conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan proposals. Tadcaster was desperate for Green Space.

K Poskitt reported that the project would have satisfied Green Space issues and have been beneficial to the town. She felt it was important for the Council to keep the conversation high on the agenda for the Council to look at how it could show support.

D Bowgett felt it was key for any project to be successful in the town was knowing landownership.

K Poskitt felt that knowing land ownership in the town was important. She suggested sending a letter to TCST thanking them for attending a Council meeting and that the Council supported improved Green Space in the town.

The Deputy Clerk reported that a draft highlighted map of landownership in the town was in the office and could be scrutinised.

G Butcher asked if North Yorkshire Council held a beneficial land register of land they owned information that could be explored.

RESOLVED –

- **A letter be sent to Tadcaster Community Sports Trust thanking them for attending a Council meeting and the Council supported the principle of improved Green Space in the town.**

- **K Poskitt and D Bowgett to meet to investigate potential use of land in the town for Green Space purposes.**

E13 BLOCKED DRAINS IN THE TOWN – (Item 13) - Members to discuss the reporting of blocked drains to North Yorkshire Council.

K Poskitt reported that blocked drains had been discussed at a recent NYC meeting. A report regarding the frequency of clearing blocked drains and gullies had been discussed; she had requested a Tadcaster report. How to report blocked drains/gullies had been discussed.

P Tunney reported that he had exchanged emails with NYC regarding blocked drains. He had experienced difficulties on the NYC website when reporting a blocked drain. Recent weather conditions meant drains were blocking regularly.

K Poskitt agreed that the online system was not easy, she would be willing to help anyone with difficulties in reporting.

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- E14 LITTER BIN/ DOG BIN AND BENCHES SURVEY – (Item 14)** - Members to discuss and agree a way forward for a survey of Litter/Dog Bins and benches in the town.
Members were informed that the next survey was due during 2025.
- E15 PLANTING AND GROUND MAINTENANCE – (Item 15)** -
- a.** Members update of Summer Planting and hanging baskets in the town.
The Clerk reported that flower beds were to be emptied and summer planting was to commence in the near future. Due to Bus Station upgrading works the Council had previously agreed no baskets in the Bus Station for summer 2024. Baskets had been distributed around the town.
The Clerk reported that she was due to hold a meeting with a local business owner in Bridge Street to discuss the kind offer of helping the water baskets in the town.
- b.** Members to discuss and agree the Councils Planting and Grounds Maintenance Contract going forward.
The Clerk reported that there were two contracts Planting and Grounds maintenance. All present contractors were competent it was a three-year contract to include incremental rises, which would end in April 2025.
K Poskitt proposed that the current contractors continue for a further two years.
D Bowgett asked if the decision would need to be taken to Council for approval.
The Clerk reported it was an extension of the contract and funding was within the budget the only element not in the Environment budget were hanging baskets, it had previously been agreed these be funded from Reserves.
RESOLVED – That the current Planting and Groundwork contracts be extended for a further two years ending 31 March 2027.
- E16 ALLOTMENTS – (Item 16)** -
- a.** To discuss any matters relating to the allotments - None
- b. Allotment Tenancy Agreement** - Members to review the Agreement.
RESOLVED – Members approved the above agreement.
- c. Allotment Tenancy Rules and Regulations** – Members to review the Agreement.
The Deputy Clerk reported that a rule regarding the percentage of allotment to be cultivated had been included in the Rules and Regulations.
RESOLVED – Members approved the above Rules and Regulations including changes.
- d. Keeping Hens at Allotment sites** – Members to review the Terms and Conditions.
The Deputy Clerk reported that a line stating that hens would only be considered on large allotment plots had been included.
RESOLVED – Members approved the above Policy including changes.
- e. Rent Review** – Members to discuss and agree Allotment Rents for 2025.
The Deputy Clerk explained a table of Allotment Rent Comparisons of Local Councils. All were charging higher rates than Tadcaster.
The Clerk reported that vacated plots were often left in an unacceptable state including piles of rubbish and smashed greenhouses, contacting old tenants had proved difficult. Costs to the Council had been substantial, the present deposit of £30 did not cover costs. The Council had previously agreed £250 per plot for clearance, the annual rent and deposits did not cover expenses.
K Poskitt reported that Tenants are required to continue to work the plot so that the allotment is in good order to hand to their successor, this is not always adhered to.
The Clerk reported that a high percentage of tenants leave plots in an unsatisfactory state, it is a balance of increasing rents and deposits and attracting tenants. Allotments were for the community and not for profit.
P Tunney asked if an Allotment Association would be beneficial to the Council.
The Clerk reported that tenants at Middlemiss had requested an Association, but this had not been taken forward.

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D Bowgett suggested that an allotment clearance budget header be considered at the Budget stage.

P Tunney suggested that an element of the budget be considered for allotment clearance.

K Poskitt suggested a statement be included in the Allotment Rules and Regulations stating that a fine of £150 would be charged to any Tenant not leaving the plot in an acceptable state when vacating, a deposit of £50 for new tenants and rent for 2025 - small plot £35 and large plot £50 was proposed.

Members considered

RESOLVED – Following a unanimous vote members agreed the following: -

- **A deposit of £50 be charged for new tenants going forward.**
- **A statement be included in the Rules and Regulations stating that a £150 clearance fine would be implemented to any Tenant leaving the plot in an unacceptable state when vacating.**
- **Rent for 2025 - £35 per small plot and £50 for a large plot.**
- **An allotment clearance budget header going forward be considered by BEG.**

ACTION – Deputy Clerk to notify Tenants of the above Allotment Rent 2025 and send updated Rules and Regulations including Plot Clearance Fee information.

f. Allotment Clearance and Deposits – Members to discuss and consider Allotment Clearance and deposits following plot vacancies – as above.

g. Allotment Competition – Members noted the judging of the Allotment Competition Week Commencing 29 July 2024.

h. Transfer of Land - Westfield Crescent - Members update of the transfer of land to the rear of 24 Westfield Crescent to North Yorkshire Council.

The Deputy Clerk explained the Council's situation regarding land to the rear of 24 Westfield Crescent and the request for the land to be transferred to NYC, the situation had been ongoing since 2019.

ACTION –

- **K Poskitt to chase.**
- **Deputy Clerk to forward relevant emails to K Poskitt.**

i. Allotment Pest Control – Members to discuss Pest Control Surveys of Allotment sites.

The Deputy Clerk reported that vermin issues had occurred at allotment sites over previous years, following a conversation with a local pest control contractor, an offer to survey both sites for a nominal charge was suggested, she asked members if a yearly survey would be a consideration.

Members felt this would be a proactive way forward.

RESOLVED – Members agreed to a yearly survey of Tadcaster Town Council owned allotments.

ACTION – Deputy Clerk to deal.

P Tunney was concerned that some areas of North Yorkshire provided Pest Control, but Selby District did not.

E17 VIADUCT EMBANKMENT GARDENS – (Item 17) –

The Clerk explained Tadcaster Town Council ownership and responsibility of Viaduct Embankment land including the bi annual rent for the land due for collection in 2025.

a. Letting Agreement – Members to review the Viaduct Embankment Letting Agreement.

RESOLVED – Members approved the above Agreement.

b. Rules & Regulations – Members to review the Viaduct Embankment Land Rules & Regulations.

RESOLVED – Members approved the above Regulations.

E18 VIADUCT INSPECTION REPORT – (Item 18) - Members to note the report and discuss and consider the report's Conclusions and Recommendations.

D Bowgett proposed that due to the scale and importance of the report that the item should be moved to Full Council.

RESOLVED – That the above item be raised at the Council meeting on 18 June 2024.

ACTION – Clerk to deal.

E19 WEBSITE, NEWLETTER AND MEDIA ITEMS – (Item 19) - To suggest appropriate matters from this meeting to place on the website, Facebook and before the media.

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P Tunney suggested an item regarding the Bus Station be included on Council website.

ACTION –

- **K Poskitt to contact NYC for update information regarding the Bus Station to be included on the Council website.**
- **Clerk to include the above information on the website.**

P Tunney reported that graffiti and stains remained in the bus station it was a blight on the area.

K Poskitt reported that she had contacted NYC on a weekly basis regarding the disgusting state of the bus station.

The Clerk reported that flower beds in the bus station remained unmaintained.

ACTION – K Poskitt to contact NYC.

K Poskitt reported that a recent meeting held with NYC and relevant authorities in the bus station had been embarrassing as the area including the toilet was in a disgusting state. There were questions regarding future upkeep and cleanliness of area following the planned improvement, there would be no point if standards could not be raised.

The Clerk reported that the Bus Station and Britannia Car had been neglected for years, she had highlighted cleanliness and lack of monitoring issues for years, with no improvements. Graffiti prove paint had been applied to the walls on previous occasions to no effect.

ACTION – K Poskitt to pursue the above issues with NYC.

P Tunney felt the Chill Pod in Britannia Car Park was unsightly.

K Poskitt reported that the Pod was to be cleaned up and maintained as part of the Plans, the Pod was a well-used facility.

E20 MINOR MATTERS AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING – (Item 20) - to bring to the attention of the meeting, or the Clerk any relevant items of business for the next meeting of the Environment Committee 1 October 2024.

G Butcher reported that hedges in the Wetherby Road area were overgrowing pavements.

K Poskitt reported that it was NYC Highways responsibility and could be reported on the NYC website.

D Bowgett reported that pathways were overgrown on the A162.

P Tunney asked if the NYC website could be made more user friendly.

K Poskitt reported that the NYC website had been revamped, she would feedback members concerns.

To consider exclusion of the press and public by virtue of the Public (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed at agenda items only.