



The Yarmouth Isle of Wight Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Yarmouth Town Council held at CHOYD Tuesday 3rd December 2024 at 6:30pm

PRESENT: Councillors D McCleary (Mayor), G Head (Deputy Mayor), S Cowley, T Cowley, P Cronin, P Spink, P Farrell.

IN ATTENDANCE: B Jacobs (Town Clerk), Martyn Collinson (Yarmouth Town Trust), Tim Adams (Harbour Commissioner) and 13 members of the public

154/2024 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ingram

155/2024 PUBLIC FORUM

The Mayor paid tribute to Yarmouth resident Sylvia Sharp who had recently deceased.

i) HARBOUR ISSUES

The Harbour Commissioner reported that overnight visits were up 97%, and short stays up 25%, on the year before, pointing out that last year was particularly bad. Overall, however, year-to-date visits were 2000 down on 2023, mainly due to adverse weather and economic conditions.

The installation of solar panels had been a great success and approval had been obtained to sell surplus electricity to the grid. The Harbour was now at net zero cost for power in Harbour buildings, though pontoons were still costing £107K a year, and that is being addressed. In response to a question from Cllr T Cowley about achieving overall net zero power consumption, the Commissioner responded that would never be achieved.

ii) YARMOUTH TOWN TRUST

YTT Chairman Martyn Collinson presented a report and that is Appendix 1 below.

iii) ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Isle of Wight Councillor P Spink presented his monthly report and that is Appendix 2 below.

With regard to 'affordable housing' Cllr T Cowley queried whether or not the IWC's definition of 'best value' included the impact of 'social benefit' and was assured it did, and some discussion followed concerning this topic and the Yarmouth School bid.

Cllr T Cowley raised the issue of a product called 'Water Gate' which he had come across on the Internet which is a PVC-based flood barrier, and the Harbour Commissioner delivered an explanation of the product, indicating that it was aimed at domestic rather than public flood prevention. There followed a discussion on the use of sandbags in flood prevention.

iv) COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

There were no reports by Councillors concerning local groups

v) LOCAL ISSUES

The Mayor reported that the Christmas lights in Yarmouth were very impressive and thanked those involved in their organisation.

vi) PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public paid compliment to Island Road for repainting of the white posts and rails in Thorley.

Martin Woodward of the Yarmouth Community Foundation reported a positive outcome for the query about acquiring the school sign. He had nothing to report about the school site sale apart from the email from IWC which had been circulated among Councillors indicating that the sale should now proceed without further delay.

156/2024 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor	Personal	Pecuniary
D McCleary		The Piano Café Freshwater Bay Vintage
G Head	British Horse Society RSPB	National Trust Bowcombe Estate
P Farrell	RSWYC	
S Cowley	Yarmouth Town Trust Shalfleet PC Wight Nature Fund	Lee Farm
T Cowley	Shalfleet PC Wight Nature Fund	Camp Wight Agenda item 137/2024.1
P Spink		Conservative Association Campaign for Protection of Rural England

157/2024 MINUTES AND CONFIRMATION OF ACTIONS

It was agreed to take as read and confirm as accurate the minutes of the November monthly meeting held 12/11/24, subject to clarification by Cllr Farrell that the projected costs of the Plaque Project had actually decreased over recent months.

158/2024 FINANCE

158/2024.1 Payment of Accounts

It was proposed by Cllr T Cowley, seconded by Cllr S Cowley and agreed unanimously to approve payment of the following accounts for December:

245072	P Cronin	Mesh Rec Gates	£123.63
245073	P Cronin	Mesh Rec Gates	£4.80
245074	P Cronin	Mesh Rec Gates	£25.99
245075	Island Roads	Play Area bin	£87.91
245076	Furniture@work	CHOYD desplay stands	£342.36
245077	B Jacobs	Clerk's salary Nov 2024 + backpay	£1,276.87
245078	CHOYD	Room hire	£30.00
245079	CHOYD	Office rental	£1,971.00
245080	B Jacobs	Expenses	£156.80
245081	HMRC	Clerk's salary Nov 2024 PAYE	£434.85
245082	Mark Holmes	Rec ground maintenance	£836.00
245083	ICS	Cleaning public toilets	£708.33
DD	Everflow	Water services toilets	£124.00
DEB	Microsoft	Office 365	£3.00
DEB	GiffGaff	Office phone	£6.00

158/2024.2 Bank Reconciliation

The financial statement for 31/11/24 was noted.

158/2024.3 BUDGET 2025/6

The second pass of the above was noted.

159/2024 PLANNING ISSUES

New Applications:

No objections were raised to the following application

Application No	Location	Proposal	Dates
24/01679/HOU	Ossian Cottage High Street Yarmouth Isle Of Wight PO41 0PN	Removal of first floor conservatory; Proposed extension at first floor level and associated alterations	13/12/24

160/2024 YARMOUTH SCHOOL COMMUNITY ASSET

This had already been dealt with in the Public Forum.

161/2024 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND HNS

Cllr T Cowley, Working Party Deputy Chairman, reported that a meeting has been held with Community Action following Councillors' agreement to proceed with a housing

needs survey, and had elected to proceed using a generic template. It was hoped to begin this shortly.

162/2024 HYP PROJECT PLAQUES AND YARMOUTH PROMOTION

The Yarmouth Historic Plaques project has been deferred in favour of suggestions for promoting the Yarmouth image in conjunction with Yarmouth businesses. The Mayor expanded on the preparation of a video for the Wightlink ferries, and this was discussed by Councillors who were all in favour of this project. It was also suggested making the town more attractive with planters, etc.

Cllr T Cowley suggested that Yarmouth Carnival Committee should become a properly constituted body which would formalise its operations and unlock potential funding, such as from Yarmouth Council.

163/2024 RECREATION GROUND

Cllr Cronin reported little activity at the Rec other than continuing efforts to register the strip of land between the Rec and the Cycleway. He also stated that the Rec Committee was considering hydraulic closers on the pedestrian gates.

164/2024 MILL COPSE

Cllr T Cowley reported that IWC had sent him the wrong forms to use for re-opening the rights of way through Mill Copse, though the correct forms had now been received.

165/2024 YARMOUTH SPORTS FOUNDATION

Standing Orders were suspended to allow public participation in the discussion of this issue. The Foundation appears to have some financial problems. Cllr T Cowley proposed to meet with one of the Foundation Trustees to discuss a way forward. It was evident from the discussions that this facility, with its excellent ventilation and sprung floor, is well-used and important to Yarmouth. Cllr S Cowley suggested building a support grant of £4K into the 2025/6 YTC Budget.

166/2024 ENVIRONMENT OFFICER SERVICE

The Clerk advised that he was still awaiting a response from the IWC as to the cost benefits of this service. Cllr T Cowley expressed concern about the inconsistency across IW local councils of charges for this service and transparency of its outcomes.

167/2024 COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

An email update for the community speedwatch along Tennyson Road had been circulated.

168/2024 MAYOR'S AWARD

The Mayor advised that she had selected Adrian Evans to be the recipient of the 2024 award and the Clerks was asked to make the appropriate arrangements.

169/2024 CLERK'S REPORT

There was no Clerk's Report to discuss this month.

170/2024 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received since the last meeting was noted.

171/2024 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Budget
- Promotional video
- HNS
- Sports Foundation
- Environment Officer

172/2024 MEETING VENUES

The venue for the next monthly meeting at 6:30pm 7/1/25, CHOYD was confirmed.

Signed..... (Town Mayor)

Date.....

Appendix 1: YARMOUTH TOWN TRUST INFORMATION UPDATE December 3rd 2024

1) Town Hall

WightFibre Full Fibre – the WIFI was upgraded on 30th October. Bookings have gone very well during 2024. Town Hall traders have been notified that hire rates will not increase in 2025. Traders have been requested to submit their preferred 2025 hire dates by end of December.

2) The Common:

The Trustees have received a report on land slippage on the Common and are considering what action, if any, should be taken in the medium to long term. The report did not identify anything urgent.

Brighstone Landscaping continue with the grass cutting.

3) Mill Terrace Cottage

The gates on all cottages need refurbishing and quotes being obtained. Work has started on Cottages 9 + 13 re-pointing.

4) The Recreation Ground

The condition of the pitch and ground overall has improved considerably after recent treatment.

5) Trustee Vacancy

Due to the long-term illness of one of our number the Trustees are now advertising for a replacement Trustee to be co-opted onto the Trust. Applications to be in by December 31st after which interviews will take place.

6) Next Trustee Meeting: The next Trust meeting is being held on Thursday January 16th 2025.

APPENDIX 2: Report of Ward Councillor For the November Meeting of Yarmouth Town Council.

- 1. Yarmouth Flood Prevention:** I have received a reply from the Environment Agency as follows:

Dear Cllr Peter Spink

I am writing to you as the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Risk Manager covering the Isle of Wight. As part of our operational responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers and the sea we consider the range of interventions that could be suitable to provide better protection to communities in times of flood risk. Temporary defence management plans (TDMPs) are one of the interventions that we have considered over recent years.

At the Environment Agency we have explored whether a TDMP would be suitable to better protect the town centre of Yarmouth from tidal flooding, and in 2016 developed the Yarmouth TDMP.

Over the last year we have been reviewing all our TDMPs to consider recent learning from the national deployment of similar barriers. This review was to ensure all our pre-planned temporary barrier deployments remain safe to deploy and operate, feasible and continue to offer a benefit to communities. In Yarmouth we have also considered the experience from a local exercise in Yarmouth itself and have used this knowledge to undertake a review of the effectiveness of any future deployment at Yarmouth.

The review has concluded that it was not possible to deploy these temporary defences safely or effectively at Yarmouth in the types of conditions when they would be most needed.

As a result of this review, having considered all relevant matters and after consulting with colleagues in Isle of Wight Council, we have decided that the TDMP at Yarmouth will be withdrawn due to the safety and effectiveness concerns.

We will continue to work with the Isle of Wight Council and engage with the local community to investigate further approaches to increasing flood resilience in Yarmouth.

I understand that this message may cause you concern, especially in light of recent flooding on the Isle of Wight. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me and we can speak with you further about the future improvements we are making to flood risk management on the Isle of Wight.

- 2. Digestive Lagoon Wilmingham Lane:** I referred in my November Report to the risk of harm to designated sites posed by this lagoon. The current position is that the IW Council has lodged a complaint re the failure of the Environment Agency (EA) to fulfil its statutory duty in this regard. I wrote to the EA but have yet to receive a substantive reply. I have also contacted the IW Council's Estuary Officer who is now dealing with this and I will of course keep the PC updated.

3. CHOYD Business Rate Relief: I have not received a reply to my email and will follow this up.

4. Yarmouth School Site: I received an email today (as did YTC) confirming that the IW Council will be proceeding with the preferred bidder on the original terms set out in the bid. No doubt Cllr Steve Cowley will provide greater detail in his report (Agenda item 160/2024).

5. CHOYD CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION: This took place this morning and I would like to thank all concerned for a most enjoyable time. We had the pleasure of both Shalfleet, Freshwater and Yarmouth School Children singing, 99 year old 'Ned' (who I had the pleasure of meeting on Remembrance Day at Totland) playing the piano, and delicious home-baked cakes.

6. YHAC: I attended the November Meeting both as Ward Cllr and on behalf of YTC. I expressed concern re the digestive Lagoon and it was agreed that the committee would write to the Environment Agency. Concern was raised by a committee member that Southern Water have confirmed that the sewer pipe on the west side of the River Yar is licensed to be used to pump raw sewage into the river 7-8 times per year. I will follow this up with the relevant agencies and of course will keep YTC updated.

7. Affordable Housing: Planning committee often approves planning applications in accordance with the officer recommendation that it will provide 'much needed affordable housing'. Recently, however, the committee has questioned whether granting an application will actually provide homes that Islanders on the housing register can afford.

Developments in excess of 10 units are obliged to provide 35% 'affordable housing'. By definition, therefore, 65% of the housing will be market value and not affordable. In addition, the rising costs of development have resulted in housing associations struggling to provide the 'affordable' element at a level which is affordable to those most in need (i.e. housing for rent at housing allowance levels). Unless a solution to this problem is found, many families will remain in temporary accommodation; this is unsatisfactory not only for the families concerned but also for the IW Council's budget.

A convincing case has been made for development of council owned land to provide truly affordable housing; the saving of purchasing the land at market value and B&B payments being taken into account.

Unfortunately, it is proposed to dispose of Council land to private developers. This decision has not been taken by a vote of Full Council but simply by the Leader. If like me you are against this please email Cllr Phil Jordan and copy me in.