



The Yarmouth Isle of Wight Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Yarmouth Town Council held at Thorley Church Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 6:30pm

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

IN ATTENDANCE: B Jacobs (Town Clerk), Martyn Collinson (Yarmouth Town Trust), Tim Adams (Harbour Commissioner) and 9 members of the public

1/2025 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2/2025 PUBLIC FORUM:

i) HARBOUR MATTERS

Visitor numbers are currently around average, a good result during a period of poor tourism.

The Harbour's YouTube channel has been started and 23 videos will be posted throughout the year; three are available at the moment with information about the harbour, the town, what to do in the town and promoting businesses.

Harbour Revision Order: This is a statutory process to ensure the Harbour remains fit for purpose, dealing with issues like autonomous shipping, drones, etc. That was submitted to the MMO and that went out to formal public consultation, following internal public consultation. Cllr S Cowley maintained there had been insufficient public consultation and there was strong feeling in Yarmouth about this. The Harbour Commissioner explained that the Yarmouth Harbour Advisory Committee (YHAC) had been consulted on 20/7/22, and further consultation took place on 14/9/22. The Commissioner reported to Yarmouth Town Council on 11/10/22 and also invited the YTC YHAC reps to a meeting on 9/11/22 at which a marine lawyer was present to answer questions on the HRO. Consultation with the public also took place at the AGM on 10/6/22 and a further public consultation took place on 24/9/24. The Harbour also advertised in The Observer for two weeks consecutively, and the London Gazette and put notices up in the harbour office and displayed on the gates. Cllr T Cowley expressed his disappointment that the Harbour had missed several recent YTC meetings, which

Cllr Ingram confirmed. After the Commissioner read out an extract of the 11/10/22 report, to which no challenge had been made at the time, the Mayor concluded this discussion and stressed the important importance of the Harbour and YTC working together.

A member of the public, Jill Cowley, asked for the Commissioner to raise again with the Commissioners the issue of planting trees at the Green, and he agreed to do so.

ii) **YARMOUTH TOWN TRUST**

Town Hall: Bookings are looking very good for 2025, the Town Hall re-opened for the year with the first booking on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd March.

The Town Hall was also used for Pancake Day races on Shrove Tuesday 4th March.

The Trust has engaged a cleaner for the Town Hall who will be attending every other week.

The new Trustee, Kevin Taylor, has experience with English Heritage of air purifying solutions and is investigating with a hope to make a proposal to the Trustees at their May meeting.

The inside of the upstairs windows has now been painted.

The Common: The missing dog poo bin, Eastern side of the Common, near the steps, by the road, has now been replaced by Island Roads.

The Trust has held an onsite meeting with Island Roads to discuss the Common, blocked drainage and a lost jetting head. Permission has been given to recover the lost head but it appears the blocked drainage is being held up somewhere between the IOW Council and Southern Water.

The Annual Grass Cutting Contract has been put out to tender, three quotes have been received and a contractor appointed.

Mill Terrace Cottage: Re-pointing work on Cottages 9 + 13 completed.

The Tenant of No 11 has sadly died. There is a significant amount of work required to refurbish, and quotes are being obtained.

In response to a question from Jill Cowley about trees on the Common, Martyn assured that they were being monitored.

iii) **ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Spink reported that he had been having some difficulties with IWC Planning about the controversial new shopfront at the former Yarmouth Deli, whose response was that the alterations were a low enforcement priority and the best approach was to negotiate a compromise with owners Premier. Cllr Spink maintains that this development is not open to compromise and represents a clear breach of local planning restrictions. The Mayor expressed her support of his approach and welcomed the news that the original shopfront might still be in existence.

He also reported on a letter he had received from Southern Water regarding Kings Manor stating that the main point they seem to be saying is that storm overflows do not come into the consideration of nitrate utility, which he considers incorrect. He also referred to a shellfish processing plant which the owners of Fort Victoria were attempting to install in spite of a planning refusal and he wishes Planning to look into this and issue an enforcement notice.

In response to a question about the controversial digestate 'lagoon' and its impact on pollution Cllr Spink said he had been in contact with Southern Water. The Harbour Commissioner said that he had also been in contact with SW about discharges into the Yar. All parties concerned with this matter were in disagreement with SE's comments on nitrate neutrality.

The question was raised about the Yarmouth Area Character Appraisal, which is on the IWC website, and Cllr T Cowley suggested linking it to the YTC website, which the Clrk agreed to do.

iv) COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Cllr T Cowley reported that he had been in contact with the Environment Agency about the regulations to cover the storage of the digestate and had received the following reply:

'They do not have to be built to SSAFO (slurry, silage and effluent standards) and regulation sits outside of the environment, agency's remit. In turn, they do not have the regulatory framework to enforce lagoon standards even when the Integrity appears to be fading or compromised. In addition, we do not regulate the sites, which reduce the digestate as they do not legally require an environmental permit.

The digester is stored in accordance [allegedly] with a code of good agricultural practice for farmers, growers and land managers, but is not enforceable. As such, we do not have any regulatory remit or oversight to tackle the root cause of the digestate storage on the Isle of Wight [or anywhere else in England]. Planning permission is not required for these due to the size; they're built within 1500 cubic metres and so do not require Planning Permission. Therefore, this is not something the planning Authority can assist with or enforce either. Should you be unhappy with the regulation of digestate we recommend you contact your MP. There's a different regulatory approach regarding government legislation or policy changes'

...and that's why nothing is being done about the digest state lagoons, which are linked into the unique environment of the Yar and Newtown Estuaries. Cllr Spink suggested involving Natural England, though Cllr T Cowley was sceptical that this would result in any action because of the lack of legislation.

The Mayor reported that her attempts to attend FYT meetings had been stymied by lack of communication, but she would continue to try.

The recent Yarmouth Beer Festival was commended by several Councillors.

v) LOCAL ISSUES

Cllr Cronin commended the work carried out on the cemetery boundaries.

Cllr S Cowley referred to the 'freehand pruners' at the Heroes Orchard who had done so much malicious damage to the trees there.

Cllr T Cowley had reported fly tipping along Broad Lane to Island Roads, and Cllr Farrell reported similar incidents along the Cycleway.

The Deputy Mayor reported that Thorley churchwarden Andrew Johnson was retiring after 40 years' service and it was agreed to bring forward the 2025 Mayor's Award and present it to him at his retirement ceremony on 13/5.

The Mayor reported that a gate had been fly-tipped along Thorley Road and the Clerk was asked to report this to the attention of Island Roads.

vi) PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public expressed concern about the noise made by HGVs, though the stretch of road concerned was within the weight limit.

Jill Cowley detailed events taking place on and around 5/7 in Mill Copse and CHOYD to mark the Biosphere Festival. She also raised concerns about the future of St Swithin's Church at Thorley when Andrew Johnson retires, though the Deputy Mayor pointed out that a new curate had been appointed. Cllr S Cowley suggested that parking might be allowed opposite the Church as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3/2025 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

4/2025 MINUTES AND CONFIRMATION OF ACTIONS

RESOLVED: To take as read and confirm as accurate the minutes of the March monthly meeting held 4/3/25, subject to minor amendments.

5/2025 FINANCE

5/2025.1 Payment of Accounts

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

256001	CHOYD	Grant towards CCTV	£1,500.00
256002	CHOYD	Internet	£48.78
256003	Living Streets	Traffic survey	£3,000.00
256004	Island Roads	Play Area litterbin	£119.88
256005	Thompsons	Christmas tree	£300.00
256006	B Jacobs	Clerk's salary Mar 25	£1,000.07
256007	HMRC	Clerk's salary Mar 25 PAYE	£318.13
256008	Mark Holmes	Grounds maintenance Rec	£275.00
	Construction		
256009	ICS	Cleaning services public toilets	£728.33
256010	Wight Computers	Web hosting	£90.00
DEB	Microsoft	Office 365	£3.00
DEB	GiffGaff	Office phone	£6.00
DD	Everflow	Water charges public toilets	£120.55

5/2025.2 Bank Reconciliation

The financial statement for 31/3/25 was noted.

6/2025 PLANNING ISSUES

The following were noted:

New Applications:

The following were noted:

Application No	Location	Proposal	Dates
25/00325/LBC	The Cottage St James Street Yarmouth Isle Of Wight PO41 0NU	Listed Building Consent for replacement of first floor windows on front and rear elevations	Fri 11 Apr 2025

Applications Approved:

Application No	Location	Proposal	YTC Comment
19/01359/FUL	Off The Rails Station Road Yarmouth Isle Of Wight PO41 0QT	Retention of two walk-in refrigerator units and bin store	Not notified (presented 2019)

7/2025 VE DAY 80th CELEBRATIONS 8/5/25

The Mayor offered to arrange for Kevin Shaw to make a speech and Cllr Farrell agreed to arrange amplification. There was some discussion about arranging catering facilities.

Cllr Farrell offered to help get the beacon in place and the Mayor offered the services of her son to help him. No decision was made about where to get wood for the beacon from, but Cllr T Cowley offered to help if there was a problem.

8/2025 YARMOUTH SCHOOL COMMUNITY ASSET

Cllr S Cowley reported that the sale was nearing completion but had asked IWC how the affordable housing was to be transferred and was told that the Affordable Housing Group had to put forward a planning application.

9/2025 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

Working Party Deputy Chairman Cllr T Cowley reported that the Living Streets survey had been completed and proposed that it was put up on the YTC website, which was seconded by the Deputy Mayor and agreed unanimously, subject to Cllr Cowley providing a preamble.

Further activity on this project will be delayed until after the elections, and Cllr T Cowley explained that a Place Plan, rather than a Neighbourhood Plan, might be more appropriate.

10/2025 PROMOTION

The Mayor praised the video for promoting Yarmouth town and businesses on Wightlink.

11/2025 RECREATION GROUND

Cllr P Cronin referred to the 3 small dead elm suckers in the north east corner of the Rec and Cllr T Cowley advised replacing them with disease-resistant elms and offered to fell the dead ones and would provide a quote for doing this.

Faulty carousel – Cllr Cronin had been advised that the cost of a new bearing from Playdale would be £4K, and £7K for a complete new carousel. IW Garden Services quote for examining and re-greasing the unit is £550; they will also supply a quote to replace the decomposing rubber matting. Cllr Cronin had met with Ross Davidson to look at the faulty land drain and also thought he could get a bearing for the carousel. His quote for digging up and inspecting the drain (he will also use his equipment to lift the carousel at the same time) is £500. It was proposed to accept this by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and agreed unanimously.

Cllr Cronin reported that he will be installing soft closers on one of the pedestrian gates and was arranging for CCTV to catch dog owners who allow their dogs to defecate on the pitch.

12/2025 MILL COPSE

Cllr T Cowley reported that the rights of way, access and fencing in around Mill Copse is progressing.

13/2025 YARMOUTH SPORTS FOUNDATION

Cllr T Cowley reported that this was progressing slowly and that funding was in place for another year, and documentation was slowly being produced and there were questions about existing reserves.

14/2025 TREE WARDEN SCHEME

Cllr T Cowley reported that he was due to have a Zoom meeting about this scheme. The position regarding insurance needs resolving.

15/2025 PATH BY MILL

It was agreed to remove this from future agendas.

16/2025 ELECTIONS

The Clerk asked Councillors standing for the forthcoming local council election on 1/5/25 to let him have their nomination forms.

17/2025 CLERK'S REPORT

17/2025.1 COMMEMORATIVE TREE

It was agreed that any commemorative trees would have to be new and planted in the Autumn. Two such requests have been received by the Clerk.

18/2025 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received since the last meeting was noted.

19/2025 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Grants

Tenders

School site

Audit

Risk Analysis

20/2025 MEETING VENUES

To confirm the venue for the Annual Town Meeting on 22/4/25 18:30 at CHOYD, the AGM on 6/5/25 18:30 at CHOYD, immediately followed by the May monthly meeting.