

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023



This report aims to update you on some of the work we have been doing on your behalf over the past twelve months, future projects and useful information.



WHAT WE DO

Horsforth Town Council is the first tier of local government. The role of Horsforth Town Council is to represent the whole of the Horsforth community. It holds Full Council meetings every two months where it discusses local concerns and planned events, listens to any issues raised by residents and presentations on the work of community groups, and ratifies spending decisions. All decisions are agreed and made by the whole Council, via democratic vote; no individual Councillor can make decisions. Full Council also oversees and ratifies decisions made by Committees that were formed to focus on specific areas of Council business.

Whilst Leeds City Council makes many of the decisions for the city, for issues such as planning, refuse collection, and highways improvements, Horsforth Town Council ensures that Horsforth is represented when those decisions are being made. Horsforth Town Council wants to ensure that all members of Horsforth are represented by the Council. It has elected representatives who attend community initiatives such as Dementia Friendly Horsforth and Horsforth Fair Trade, and has a Young People's Champion. The Town Council strives towards ever closer ties, and work, with the people of Horsforth and encourages interested residents to get involved.

The Town Council raises money for Horsforth through the Precept, collected with the Council tax which is invested back into Horsforth through local services to the area such as events, Christmas lights, street furniture, flowers and watering.



Information about the Town Council can be found at www.horsforthtowncouncil.gov.uk. On the website you can find the dates of Town Council meetings including the agendas and minutes, latest issues news and information relevant to Horsforth and the Town Council.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Report by Councillor Stones

As I reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud to have been the Chairman of Horsforth Town Council.

I would like to thank my fellow elected, voluntary Councillors for the commitment they have shown towards their roles and work on the Council over the last twelve months. We have successfully worked as a professional strong, cohesive, and collaborative team to benefit the community of Horsforth.



I would like to give special thanks to our Vice Chairman, Cllr Dowling for his support across the year.

During the year, two Councillors have left the Town Council. I would like to thank Cllr Batchelor and Cllr Prater for their work during their time as Town Councillors.

This year our highlights on Council have been:

- We proudly and fittingly honoured the sad loss of Her Majesty the Queen – by setting up two books of Condolence, one in Morrisons and the other at St. Margaret's Church, which were subsequently sent to Buckingham Palace. The Council received a lovely, heartfelt letter of thanks on behalf of King Charles from Buckingham Palace to thank the people of Horsforth for their kind messages of condolence.
- We began the process to apply for the Foundation Award under The Local Council Award Scheme.
- We launched our new and improved Horsforth Town Council Website – with easier accessibility and usability.
- We were able to take into consideration the demands being placed upon our Horsforth residents with the rising costs of living, by resolving to keep our Precept (the Council Tax rate each household in Horsforth is charged) at the same rate for the second year in a row, at Band D, £16.96.
- We continue to provide the Speed Indicator Device (SID) on Low Lane to safely calm traffic speed.
- We have provided grants and sponsorship to benefit numerous Horsforth community groups.
- We were able to publish a newly revised edition of Horsforth Matters – distributed to every household in Horsforth.
- We continue to provide and fund 4 Defibrillators, replacement pads and servicing for the community of Horsforth.

- Work is about to successfully begin on the internal renovations of No.3 The Green (at the bottom of Town Street next to the Museum) working with a professional architect to create a Community space for Horsforth.
- We have successfully provided new community equipment and resources for Horsforth paid for by our CIL fund.
- We have hosted Horsforth's Remembrance Service, Christmas Light Switch On and will be co-hosting Horsforth's Coronation celebrations with the Horsforth Town Team.
- We have further forged cross community links by holding our Horsforth Town Council Stall at the Farmer's Market.
- We continue to provide our Councillor Surgeries before each Full Council meeting.
- We have been working in conjunction with our newly appointed Horsforth Ward Manager PC Carlton and his excellent team of PCSOs to keep our Horsforth Community safe and to provide public meetings and services.
- We have worked in conjunction with a growing number of amazing, Horsforth Community groups including: Churches Together, Dementia Friendly Horsforth, Horsforth Climate Action, Horsforth in Bloom, Horsforth Town Team, Horsforth ABCD Community Assets Builder, Horsforth Walk of Art and Horsforth Cultural Neighbourhood Host.

During the Council year our Committees have met regularly across the year supported by our Working Groups and Development Groups to ensure the smooth running of Council.

The Committees of the Council have been busily proactive, and the Chairs have provided their reports later in this document as follows:

The Planning, Licensing and Traffic (P<) Committee - Chairman, Cllr R Hardcastle

The Community and Environment (C&E) Committee - Chairman, Cllr C Calvert

The Finance and General Purpose (F&GP) Committee - Chairman, Cllr T Stones

The Staffing and Employment (S&E) Committee – Chairman, Cllr T Stones

Thank you for taking the time to read our Horsforth Town Council Annual Report. I hope it will provide you with a good understanding of the professional undertaking by our Town Council and the positive challenges we have faced during this Council year.



Keep up to date with all the council's projects by liking the Town Council's Facebook page and visit the Noticeboard on the Town Council website.



COUNCILLORS

The Town Council has 22 Councillors who are elected to represent one of the five wards in the town. Councillors are elected to serve a period of four years. The Councillors serving from May 2019 until May 2023 were:

Broadfields Ward

Cllr SL Dowling
Cllr Garvani
Cllr Hyndes
Cllr Jones
Cllr Bromley

Brownberrie Ward

Cllr Capitano
Cllr Collins
Cllr Glover
Cllr Harris
Cllr Townsley

Hall Park Ward

Cllr SM Dowling
Cllr Hardcastle
Cllr Mallot
Cllr Firth
Cllr Stones

Victoria Ward

Cllr Arbuckle
Cllr Heaviside
Cllr Fletcher
Cllr Sellers

Woodside Ward

Cllr Calvert
Cllr Jacques



Cllr J Arbuckle



Cllr E Bromley



Cllr C Calvert



Cllr R Capitano



Cllr D Collins

Vice Chairman
Cllr SM Dowling

Cllr SL Dowling



Cllr K Firth



Cllr M Fletcher



Cllr J Garvani



Cllr C Glover



Cllr R Hardcastle



Cllr R Harris



Cllr B Heaviside



Cllr E Hyndes



Cllr R Jacques



Cllr R Jones



Cllr P Mallott



Cllr C Sellers



Cllr M Townsley

Chairman
Cllr T Stones

Councillors are elected by the Horsforth community to carry out three main roles.

The first is to make decisions about things such as spending, community events and services.

Secondly, Councillors monitor all decisions taken, to ensure that they were effective.

Thirdly, Councillors commit themselves to staying informed about local issues and to listening to the range of opinions on those issues within Horsforth.

Please check the Town Council website to find out who was elected in May 2023.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report by Councillor Calvert

The main purposes of the Community and Environment Committee are to assess and administer grants and sponsorship to local groups and oversee the Annual Event, Remembrance Service, Editorial, and Christmas Lights Working Groups. These working groups report to Community and Environment Committee but are not run by it. The committee is also responsible for the upkeep of the hanging baskets around town that are owned by the Council.



The Community and Environment Committee meets only three times a year. The committee meeting scheduled for 8th September 2022, which was to be my first as Chair did not go ahead due to the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Instead, the committee met in November 2022 (Extraordinary Meeting), December 2022, and March 2023 this council year.

Young Achiever and Good Citizens Awards

One of the initiatives that the Community and Environment Committee is responsible for is running the Young Achiever and Good Citizen Awards every year. These awards are presented to residents and groups in Horsforth who have been nominated for recognition for the good work they have done in our community and presented at the Christmas Lights Switch On every year. In 2022, the Good Citizen Group Award was presented to the Horsforth Walk Of Art. The awards are open for nominations from January until October, and the current closing date for nominations for all 2023 awards is 13th October.



Horsforth Matters

In November we published the most recent issue of Horsforth Matters, which was distributed to every household in Horsforth. In this issue, we advertised the 2022 Christmas Lights Switch on, reported on the 2022 winners of the Good Citizen Award, and reported back on the success of the 2022 annual event, which celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of our late monarch.

Due to the election period, there was no publication of Horsforth Matters in May 2023 and a new edition will be published later in the year.

Remembrance Service 2022

We held the annual Remembrance Service at Horsforth Cenotaph on Sunday 13th November 2022, in collaboration with the local Royal British Legion. It was very well attended by the community, with wreaths laid and Horsforth Choral Society singing hymns and a reading of 'On Flanders Field' by a sixth-form student from Horsforth School, who did extremely well, and it was clear he had really practiced his reading!



Christmas Lights Switch-On 2022

The Christmas Lights Switch on Event was held Saturday 3rd December 2022, with Joy Choir providing the entertainment and Ronny the Rhino switching on the lights alongside that year's picture competition winner from Broadgate Primary School and of course Father Christmas. That evening Horsforth Walk of Art was awarded the group award for Good Citizens 2022, with Kezia Roberts on hand to collect the award on behalf of the group. There was a big turnout to the event from the community and I'd like to as the current Chairman of the Committee, thank all Councillors who worked so hard to make both events successful.

Annual Event

The annual event in 2022 for the Queens Platinum Jubilee was a success, despite some of the weather we faced at the picnic in the park! But this year's Annual Event Group has decided to instead fund the Horsforth Town Team to run an event for the Coronation of King Charles III over the May Bank Holiday.



Grants and Sponsorship

There were no grants or sponsorship requests in November and December 2022. However, in March grants and sponsorship requests came from 7th Airdale (St Margarets) Scouts and two applications from Horsforth Churches Together, one for the 2023 Perfectly Pitched concerts at St Margaret's Church and one for the Horsforth Walk of Witness 2023. These requests were provisionally accepted by the Committee and referred on to be ratified by the Finance and General Purpose Committee to come out of the Community Committee budget.

It has been my pleasure to Chair the Community and Environment Committee this Council year. Thank you to all members of the Committee for your hard work and contributions and to all Town Councillors who put their faith in me to lead it in the 2022/23 Council year.

MEETING DATES

The Council has a number of committees, the dates for the meetings in 2023/2024 are:

Full Council

27th July 2023
28th September 2023
30th November 2023
25th January 2024

Finance and General Purposes Committee

20th July 2023
14th September 2023
16th November 2023
11th January 2024
14th March 2024

Planning, Licensing and Traffic Committee

15th June 2023
13th July 2023
24th August 2023
21st September 2023
19th October 2023
23rd November 2023
21st December 2023
18th January 2024
22nd February 2024
21st March 2024
25th April 2024

Community and Environment Committee

8th June 2023
7th September 2023
7th December 2023
7th March 2024

All agendas and minutes are available at www.horsforthtowncouncil.gov.uk

Please note: Meeting dates may be subject to change.

KEY DATES TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

Summer Bands in the Park:

- Sunday, 4th June 2023 - Friendly Band
- Sunday, 2nd July 2023 - West Yorkshire Police Band
- Sunday, 6th August 2023 - Steel Concordia

Christmas Light Switch On:

- Saturday, 2nd December 2023



PLANNING COMMITTEE

Report by Councillor Hardcastle

My report on the activities of the Planning, Licencing and Traffic committee covers the period from July 2022, when I undertook the role of Chairman, until the present date.

Firstly, I must thank Cllr Jones, my predecessor for his stewardship of this committee.

Below is a brief description of the activities of the committee.

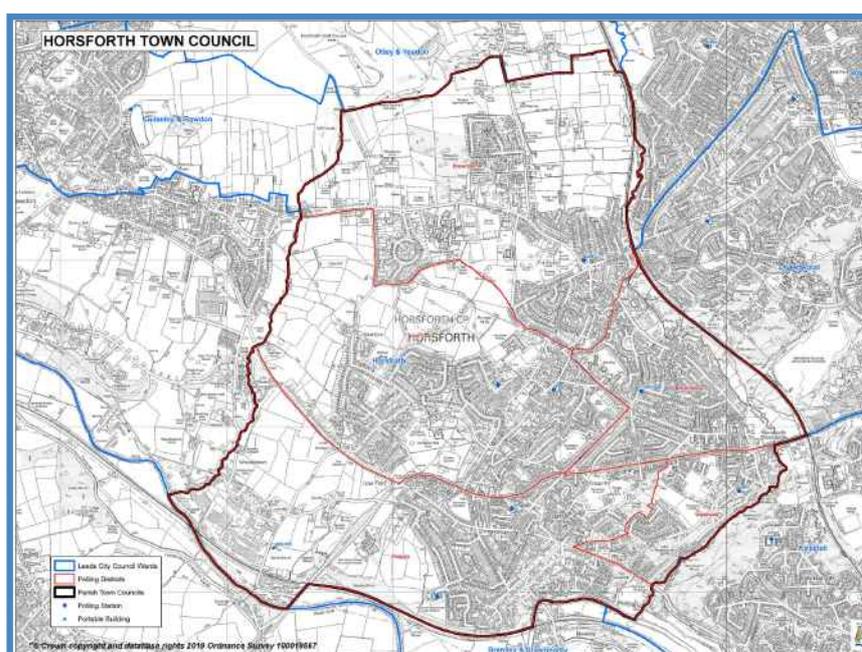
The committee's major duties are to examine and comment on planning applications including planning appeals, to note any licencing applications and note and comment on any traffic management proposals.

During my term of office the committee has examined and commented on around ninety five planning applications. We have also considered complaints from members of the public on planning and traffic issues and received presentations from major developers and others.

We have representation on the LBA Consultative committee and maintain a close watch on airport developments.

We have responsibility for the maintenance of the Horsforth Neighbourhood Plan.

Finally, I must thank all the committee members for their help and support during the last year, not forgetting our clerks, Julie Sou and then Becky Crabtree and Administration Assistant, Steph White who have done so much to ensure the committee's smooth operation.



FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Report by Councillor Stones

The Finance and General Purposes Committee deals with the general business and procedural issues of the Town Council. It makes recommendations to the Full Council on any actions the Full Council may need to make.

The committee is also responsible for agreeing larger grants recommended to it by the Community and Environment Committee. The Committee agreed to award Horsforth Sports Club a grant of £3400 towards the pitch improvements. It was noted that 68% of the Clubs members are from Horsforth and therefore, the Councillors agreed to contribute 68% of the amount requested.



The Committee monitors the Council's income and expenditure throughout the year and the information is available after every meeting on the Town Councils website.

The Committee agreed to sponsor the band concerts at Horsforth Hall Park as part of Summer Bands in Leeds Parks 2023. Three concerts will be held throughout the summer.

At the end of each year, the Committee considers the budget proposals from all Committees and Working Groups and reviews the total budget for the following financial year. The Committee then advises the Council on the figure that the Council will need to pay for projects and items that will be part of the services that the Council will provide for Horsforth. Once agreed, this amount then becomes the Precept for the following year.

For the Financial year ending 31st March 2023, the Town Council had a precept of £126,019. This was equivalent to £16.96 per year per band D household. The overall spending of the Town Council was budgeted at £178,272 with the shortfall being drawn from reserves. The final accounts are provided on the next page and on the Town Council website.

For the financial year ending 31st March 2024, it was resolved not to increase the precept for the second year in a row and the Town Council has requested a precept of £126,035 which means that the charge per band D household remains the same at £16.96.

FINANCE

Report by the Town Clerk, Becky Crabtree

The Town Council's income currently comes from a Precept which is added to the Council Tax levy set by the Principal Authority, Leeds City Council. In 2022-2023, the Precept was £126,019 and the Town Council received a Local Council Tax Support grant of £4676.

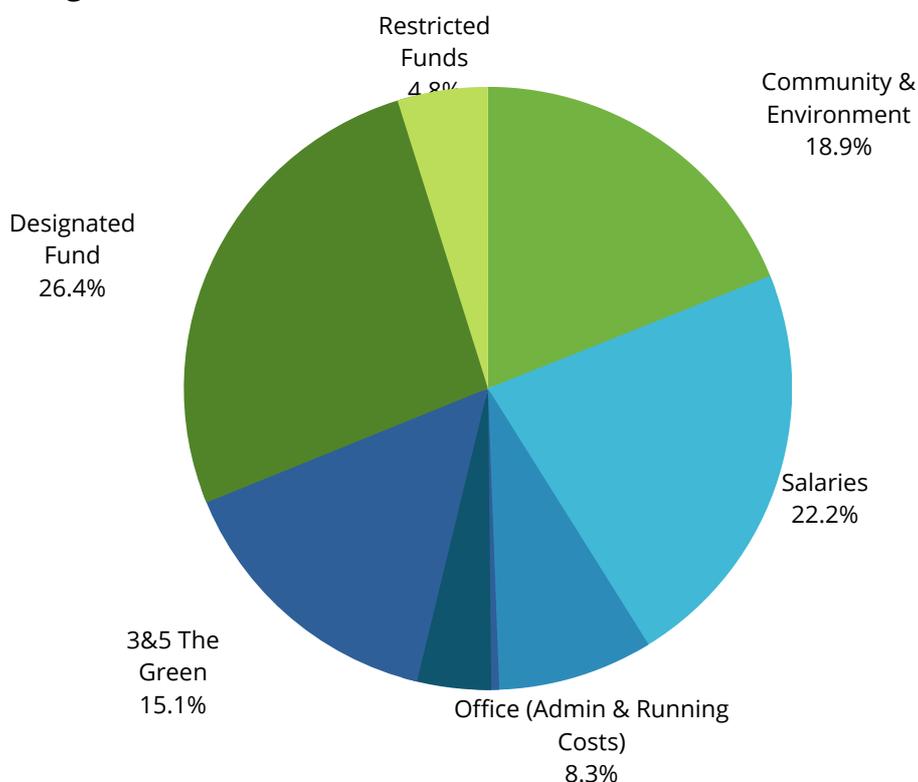
The precept for a Band D house remains at £16.96 for 2023-2024. This is substantially below that of surrounding areas and the average Band D Council Tax level set by Parish and Town Councils in England at £74.81.

The Town Council sets a budget every year and maintains adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation.

Below is a summary of the income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2023.

Income	
Precept	£126,019
Council Tax Support Grant	£4676
Bank Interest	£1043
	TOTAL £131,738

Expenditure	
Community and Environment Committee	£37,317
Planning, Licensing and Traffic Committee	£0
Cold calling Zone	£0
Climate Change	£0
Salaries	£43,877
Office (General Admin and Running Costs)	£16,315
Training:	£825
Election:	£7745
3&5 The Green:	£29,737
Designated Funds	£73,176
Restricted Funds:	£9493
	TOTAL £218,485



Full details about the Town Council accounts can be viewed at www.horsforthtowncouncil.gov.uk

FINANCE

3&5 The Green

The Town Council carried out a public consultation in 2018 and wrote to every household in Horsforth about the opportunity the Town Council had to purchase No.3&5 The Green and The Stables community building to seek residents' opinion on the matter. Over 95% of the responses were in favour of the Town Council purchasing the premises and it was resolved at a Full Council meeting to offer Leeds City Council £200,000 for all three properties and the offer was accepted.



The purchase price increased by £35,000 to £235,000 due to Covid delays and Leeds City Council required the properties to be re-valued. Horsforth Town Council were given a short interest free period before paying the additional £35,000. The sale was completed in 2022.

The Town Council took out a loan of £290,000 for a term of 50 years, to purchase the buildings and fund the refurbishment. The Town Council pays £4,905.18 every 6 months and £278,633.96 is outstanding as of today.

The Town Council agreed to apply for a loan to ensure that the precept is used for other valuable projects.

Community Infrastructure Levy

At the beginning of this financial year, the Town Council had £80,666.85 in CIL funding available. Since then it resolved to contribute towards an accessible roundabout at the Newlaithes playground at a cost of £5093 and purchase two benches and bins to be installed at Newlaithes playground at a cost £4400.

The Councillors continue to engage with members of the public on how the Town Council can spend the CIL money and this has happened at the following events including The Horsforth Farmers Market, the Gala, and Horsforth Matters.

If you have any suggestions for the Town Council, please contact the Town Clerk.

Grants

The Town Council offers grants and sponsorship up to £500 to community organisations based in Horsforth in need of funding. This year, the Town Council awarded £5385 to four organisations. Further information is available on the Town Council website which sets out the criteria for applications.

STAFFING & EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Report by Councillor Stones

Over the last year the Staffing and Employment Committee has met regularly across the year to support the ongoing development of the staffing team and ensuring that Horsforth Town Council has up-to-date employment policies and procedures in place.

In early September our Town Clerk, Ms. Julie Sou made the difficult decision to step down from her well-loved role. We would like to formally thank Ms. Sou for all her hard work over her years of service to Horsforth Town Council.



We have welcomed a new full-time Town Clerk, Miss Becky Crabtree, and a part-time Administrative Assistant, Mrs Steph White to our Council Team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Miss Crabtree and Mrs White for the work they have proactively completed on behalf of Horsforth Town Council, ensuring that as a council we are fully compliant in all that we do.

During this year we have updated the Staffing and Employment Committee Terms of Reference and will be starting to review employment policies shortly.

Our Clerk, Miss Crabtree has undergone additional training this year on Rialtas – comprehensive financial software designed to support the Town Council's accounts and administration, along with other courses relating to her role and has overseen the training needs of our new Administration Assistant.

As a Council, it was resolved that we provide our staffing team with hybrid working opportunities - a balance of hours in the Council Office and hours worked from home to ensure they are able to achieve a better work/life balance.

Town Council Office

Horsforth Town Council Office is located at the rear of the library, off the car park opposite Horsforth St. Margaret's school entrance.

The address is: Horsforth Town Council, Mechanics Institute, Town Street, Horsforth, Leeds, LS18 5BL

The office is open every Tuesday - Thursday ,10.30am - 3.30pm.