



## Horsforth Town Council

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### Horsforth Annual Town Meeting Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7pm St Margaret's Church, Church Lane, Horsforth

**Present:** E Bromley, D Brosnan, S Dowling, M Fletcher, G Garvani, J Garvani, A Goulden, R Hardcastle, E Hyndes, R Jones, E Richards,

**In attendance:** Town Clerk, PC Russell, Deputy Lieutenant, Stephen Boardman and seven members of public.

#### **ATM/24.1 Introduction and welcome from the Chairman, Simon Dowling**

Cllr Dowling welcomed all to the meeting.

#### **ATM/24.2 To approve the minutes of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting**

**Resolved** to approve the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 as a true and accurate record.

#### **ATM/24.3 Guest speakers:**

##### **24.3.1 PC Russell, Horsforth Ward Manager, Outer North West Neighbourhood Policing Team**

PC Russell, Horsforth Ward Manager for the Outer North West Neighbourhood Policing Team reported the crime statistics from 28<sup>th</sup> March which were: 42 crimes including 15 thefts from vehicles, 15 residential burglaries, 2 vehicle thefts and 2 robberies. There are no concerns with long term issues for the robberies as the person was known and the other robbery began in a different area.

Cllr Bromley asked if there was a prominent area of concern in Horsforth and it was noted that there is no pattern or cluster. PC Russell confirmed that they have a system where patterns can be picked up quickly on a map.

Cllr Brosnan enquired about the theft from vehicles and PC Russell said that the statistics are higher than they would like but there are no patterns at present. It was noted that there is still a reluctance from vehicle owners to report the crimes to Police. Cllr Russell confirmed that response teams may not attend the crime at the time due to it not being priority. He did say that if the response team are not able to deal with it, it is passed to the Neighbourhood Police Team who investigate it. He confirmed that if more people reported the crimes, then they would be able to monitor the patterns to try and make a conviction.

Cllr Bromley queried if the Police request feedback from every person that reports a crime. Cllr Russell confirmed that this is usually call back asking for feedback when a crime has been reported and the Police cannot resolve the issue.

PC Russell invited members of public to attend the PACT meetings if they would like to discuss any concerns or report issues such as anti-social behaviour, nuisance bikes and drug dealing. These are held every six weeks and are promoted on Facebook.

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Policing Team attend the TC's Full Council meetings to give updates and hold contact points at Hooleos's on Town Street regularly. The contact points give a chance for

residents to have an informal conversation with the local policing team about any concerns. The dates are advertised on the Town Council website and Facebook.

### **24.3.2 Stephen Boardman, Deputy Lieutenant**

Stephen Boardman, Deputy Lieutenant for West Yorkshire talked about men's mental health and how important it is for everyone to communicate with each other.

He shared some very personal experiences in his life that led to him being diagnosed with Post Traumatic Syndrome. He gave an insight into his personal and working life such as fighting in the war and losing family members.

He said that it was not a one-off event, and it was obvious once he was diagnosed that the past shocking events had impacted his life but at the time he did not process them or speak to anyone about how he felt. This also meant that he did not grieve. He has since had to deal with the memories and work through them so that he could move on with his life. He said do not let an experience or illness define you and be the person you are supposed to be.

He said that it is important to communicate and mental health impacts everyone. It may not be obvious to you that your family, friend, colleague is struggling, and it is up to you to reach out. Please check on them if you haven't heard from them or they have seemed different recently.

Cllr Bromley thanked Stephen for his inspiring speech and asked him for suggestions where isolated men could connect. Stephen said it needs to be a safe place where they can have discussions privately or in a group. A pub would not be ideal as they may have a drinking problem and it would not benefit them.

Cllr Jones thanked him for the way he reflected, it was very inspiring.

Cllr Brosnan works in construction which is usually male orientated and has noticed men are more open now. He asked why that may be the case. It was noted there are more opportunities now and if done right, it can be positive. Noone judges, you just have to be honest. This was discussed.

Cllr Dowling thanked Stephen Boardman and encouraged anyone who may struggling to reach out to professional agencies.

### **ATM/24.3 Annual Report**

**To receive a report on the activities of the Town Council over the past year from the following Councillors:**

#### **24.3.1 Cllr Dowling, Chair of the Council and Finance and General Purposes Committee**

Cllr Dowling reported the following as Chair of the Council:

- At the elections in May 2023, many long serving councillors stepped down or were not re-elected to the council. The council, therefore, on that occasion had over 50% newly elected councillors. He thanked his fellow town councillors for the work they have done for the community over the past 12 months since the last Annual town meeting last year.
- Since the elections last year Cllrs Rob Harris, has stepped down from his role as a Cllr for the Brownberrie Ward and the TC is now co-opting a Councillor. The vacancy is advertised, and the TC hopes to co-opt in July 2024. He thanked Cllr Harris for his hard work over the 5 years that he was a Cllr.
- He thanked the Town Clerk, Becky Crabtree and the Administration Assistant, Steph White, for all their hard work over the last year.
- The Town Council was awarded the Foundation Level of the Local Council Award and is now aiming to achieve the next level of the award.
- The Town Council is now a Living Wage employer through the Living Wage Foundation.
- The big news from the Council this last year has been the finalisation of plans for 3 & 5 The Green for community use and the contractors are ready to start once Leeds City Council grants planning permission. Hopefully, Phase 1 will be completed by September 2024.
- The Town Council has a few goals set for the following 12 months including the refurbishment of 3 The Green for community use, D-DAY 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Walk of Art celebrations, Christmas Lights Switch on event, Remembrance Service and regular stalls at the Farmers' Market.

Cllr Dowling reported the following as Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee:

- The Finance and General Purposes Committee deals with the general business, financial 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 considers recommendations from the Community Infrastructure Levy Advisory Group (CILAG). Community Infrastructure Levy is money that the Town Council receives from Leeds City Council

from a levy charged on larger developments in the Horsforth area. This past year the committee agreed to spend a large amount of CIL money on the following: a waste bin at Newlathes play area and waste bin on Featherbank Lane, new paths around the bandstand in Hall Park, benches and picnic tables in Hall Park, goal posts on Woodside rec (next to Miller and Carter) and benches at the old ball roundabout.

- The committee ensures that Horsforth Town Council continues to run all services with value for money.
- The Town Council made the very difficult decision to increase the Precept to an annual charge of £19.33 per Band D property. This equates to an increase of 20p per month per Band D property. The Precept has not been raised for the past three years but it became necessary due to rising costs. In comparison to other Town Councils of a similar size, the Horsforth Precept is significantly lower.

#### **24.3.2 Cllr J Garvani, Chair of Staffing and Employment Committee**

Cllr Garvani reported the following:

- The previous Clerk resigned from her role in 2022 and Becky Crabtree who was the Locum Clerk at the time, was given a permanent appointment as Town Clerk.
- In February 2023, Steph was appointed as Administration Assistant. On her appointment, Steph was told that once she had completed her ILCA qualification, her pay would be increased by one point. I am pleased to say that she did this by Christmas and her pay has been increased accordingly.
- Cllr Garvani thanked Becky and Steph for their hard work this year.
- It was noted that staffing is a large amount of the budget, but they are required to be paid appropriately and there may be an increase in staffing once No.3 The Green opens.

#### **24.3.3 Cllr Hardcastle, Chair of the Planning, Licensing and Traffic Committee**

Cllr Hardcastle reported the following for the period from April 2023 until March 2024:

- 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 the reporting period the committee has examined and commented on around 120 planning applications. The committee has also considered complaints from members of the public on planning and traffic issues and received presentations from major developers and others.
- The committee has representation on the Leeds Bradford Airport Consultative Committee and maintains a close watch on airport developments.
- The committee has responsibility for the maintenance of the Horsforth Neighbourhood Plan.
- Cllr Harcastle thanked Vice Chairman, Martin Connors and all the committee members for their help and support during the last year, and Clerk, Becky Crabtree and Administration Assistant, Steph White who have done so much to ensure the committee's smooth operation.

#### **24.3.4 Cllr Cousins, Vice Chair of the Community and Environment Committee**

Cllr Dowling reported the following in Cllr Cousins absence:

- The Community and Environment Committee deals with the more outward facing roles of the Town Council and is involved with organising the events, band concerts and floral displays.
- The Committee receives reports from Councillors working on the Editorial Working Group to produce Horsforth Matters. To help reduce printing costs, it was decided to no longer produce two printed editions a year. Going forward, Horsforth Matters will be predominantly published online. Only our winter edition will be delivered to you by post and will also be available online too. We also set up a mailing list and you can sign up to this via the Town Council website.
- This year, the Town Council awarded £4000 in grants and sponsorship to:
  - WW1 100 years towards electricity costs for the lights inside the perimeter walls of the Fink Hill Cenotaph site to illuminate the memorial
  - Woodside St James' PCC towards the construction of the Community Pantry.
  - Walk of Art towards the event being held to celebrate the 10th year anniversary in 2024.
  - Horsforth Shed towards a replacement router.
  - Horsforth Community Garden, a project of Friends of Horsforth Hall Park towards raised beds for growing vegetables and herbs.
  - 9th Airedale Scouts towards camping activities.
  - Horsforth Churches Together towards the community Walk of Witness on Good Friday.
  - Horsforth Central Methodist Church towards a boiler.
  - Horsforth Hawks towards new rounders equipment.
- Each year the Town Council has acknowledged and highlighted the hard work and successes of local people making a difference for Horsforth as part of the Good Citizen and Young Achiever Awards. The scheme has now been rebranded and is called 'The Heart of Horsforth Award Scheme'.

Nominations are now open, and the awards will be presented at the Christmas Lights Switch On event.

- Working groups of councillor's report to the Community and Environment Committee on their work to organise events like the Christmas Event, Remembrance Service and Annual Event.
- The Committee agreed to sponsor three band concerts as part of the Summer Bands in the Park. The concerts will be held in Hall Park and the dates can be found on the TC website.
- Cllr Dowling thanked the Chair of the Committee, Cllr Gains and Vice Chair, Cllr Cousins, and committee members for the hard work, especially as this particular committee has more responsibilities.

#### **ATM/24.4 To invite the public to raise any matters of interest or concern**

Members of the public raised the following concerns or queries:

One member of public enquired about the three editions of Horsforth Matters that are not delivered to every household and if it would only be available online. Cllr Dowling that some paper copies will be available to pick up from the Horsforth Community Hub and Library on Town Street, along with other key locations.

One member of public asked if a noticeboard will be installed outside No.3 The Green when it opens. Cllr Dowling said this can be looked into and confirmed the TC already has a noticeboard at the top of Town Street.

One member of public noted that the TC resolved to defer a decision for a memorial plaque to be installed at the bench located on Broadgate Lane/Stanhope Drive. He asked if the TC will now consider it. Cllr Dowling confirmed that Leeds City Council approached the Town Council to enquire if the TC would transfer the asset (bench) to them so that they could work with the family and install the plaque quicker. The TC agreed this and therefore, it would now be LCC's decision. It was noted by a couple Cllrs that the plaque has been installed.

A member of public made Cllrs aware that a number of benches on Town Street need repairing and Cllrs agreed to investigate this. It was noted that LCC are also responsible for a large number of the benches. The Clerk will check the asset register and arrange inspections.

Deputy Lieutenant Stephen Boardman thanked Cllrs for inviting him to the meeting and giving residents the opportunity to attend a meeting like this as it shows the TC is open and accountable.

Cllr Dowling thanked all for attending and reminded everyone that Cllr Surgeries are held before every Full Council meeting and all Full Council and Committee meetings (held quarterly) are open to the public. All meeting dates are published on the website, Facebook and the noticeboard.

The Committee meetings are held at The Stables, Church Lane and Full Council meetings are currently held at St Margaret's Parish Centre and will be held at No.3 The Green when it opens.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.