

Monthly Update – February 2024

1. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.

An apology for absence has been received from Councillor Carter.

Councillor Langthorne to declare and interest in Accounts regarding cheque payments.

2. MINUTES.

RECOMMENDED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 24th January, 2024 having been having been previously circulated be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. CO-OPTED VACANCY.

The vacancy is currently advertised on the notice boards around the village, on the Councils web site and on the Facebook Northallerton Noticeboard page.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

(i) Virgin Media Works

The Clerk met on site with the Virgin Media on the 6th February.

The connection bollard was to go on The Green but that didn't seem appropriate as the trees and roots could affect it and the digging up to install the bollard could also affect the trees.

The connection bollard will therefore go just off the highway on The Green adjacent to The Pinfold where it doesn't interfere with any trees or with the grasscutting.

The Clerk asked that the terminal box that is to go next to the Zoom box near the bus shelter be green to match the others and not the usual Virgin Media grey and they have agreed to this.

(ii) Felling of Sycamore Tree in the Churchyard.

Contrary to the decision at the last meeting of the Council to fell this tree to ground level it was subsequently decided to leave the tree at the height originally decided upon due to the increasing costs of further removal and the fact that this work was taking up essential time when it was necessary to be carrying out hedge cutting works before the cut off date. Although it is accepted that some rot may occur due to the ingress of rain water into the large branches that remain it is considered that this would not be a problem for well over 20 years and perhaps many years beyond that.

(iii) Proposed Ecclesiastical Parish Boundary Changes

The Clerk met with the York Diocese representative on the 26th January concerning the change of the ecclesiastical boundaries between Northallerton and Brompton.

In effect this removes the whole of the new Persimmon estate and adjoining agricultural land from the Brompton PCC area and puts in with Northallerton PCC.

The Vicar of All Saints Church will then have responsibility for that area and Reverend Cooper will be given additional rural parishes.

This does not affect where people will be buried in any way as that follows the BTC/NTC local authority boundaries.

The Clerk will bring plans to the Council meeting so that Councillors as members of Brompton Burial Board are aware as the York Diocese is required to consult.

(iv) Bollards at Corner of The Three Hose Shoes.

The contractor put the barriers up ready to start work but was called away to another job and removed the bollards. Since then they have been unable to carry out the works whilst Virgin Media are working in that area.

(v) Broken Glass in the Recreation Ground.

The Clerk removed a large quantity of broken plate glass early last Friday morning from all around the Recreation Ground.

It looked very much like window glass and the heavy weight would probably equate to it having been a very large plate of glass. However it is unsure as to how it came to be spread all over the Recreation Ground.

(vi) Church Wall.

Reinstatement works are proceeding well and the skip on Church Green on the Northallerton Road side is for the removal of all the spoil from the church wall repairs.

(vii) Faulty Street Light – Hilton Close.

NY Councillor Steve Watson is pursuing the repair of the street light on the Northallerton Road/Hilton Close junction. This light was paid for by Brompton Council in 2020 and taken over by the former HDC. The light has not worked for some time and NYC had no record of it but it is clear that BTC paid an extra sum of money to cover on-going energy and repair charges so that the light could be taken over by HDC. Obviously this information has not been passed onto the successor Authority.

5. REPORT OF COUNCILLOR STEPHEN WATSON

To be reported to the meeting.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – The meeting will be opened for a maximum of 10 minutes for Members of the public who wish to speak regarding items within the remit of the Council.

7. LOCAL CRIME REPORT.

Statistics taken from	01/01/2024 to 31/01/2024
Crime Type	
Anti-Social Behaviour	9 Reports
Anti-Social Personal	2 Reports
Total	11 Reports
Arson	0 Reports
Burglary Dwelling	0 Reports
Burglary Commercial/Other	0 Reports
Criminal Damage	2 Reports
Theft (inc. Theft from Shop)	0 Reports
Violence against the person	8 Reports
Other crimes inc. Drugs	7 Reports
Hate Crime	0 Reports
Robbery	0 Reports
Fraud	0 Reports
Auto Crime / SMV	1 Reports

The Police advise that there is a specific reason which they are dealing with for the large increase in incidents compared with recent months.

8. CHAIRMAN'S/VICE-CHAIRMAN'S ACTIONS.

To be reported to meeting.

9. REPORTS – INCLUDING REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS –

(i) Finance Working Group.

The Finance Group met on the 5th February.

The Chairman and Councillor Robinson signed the NY Locality Budget return form so that the grant of £2,000 towards new goalposts at the BRG field could be paid into the Councils bank account. This will be done when the money is paid into the Councils bank account.

The Clerk had received correspondence from the HSBC Bank which would hopefully lead to the receipt of a sum of £2,026.47 being the monies held by the bank from the former Middleton Whittaker Charity.

The Group had a preliminary look at the budget heads for the financial year 2024/25.

Coxon Brothers had been asked to supply estimates for taking out the bends at the leaky dams. This work being subject to the receipt of CIL Grant monies from NYC.

The quotations from play equipment companies for works in the Recreation Ground would be available prior to the March meeting of the Finance Group.

The grasscutting tender for the 2024 grasscutting season had been received from CE+CM Walkers with a 4.7% increase on the 2023 tender at £862.80 per cut. **RECOMMENDED - That the tender be accepted.**

The Clerk to ask Hillside Tree Surgeons to invoice the Council for as much tree and hedge works as possible by the time of the March Council meeting.

The Clerk to remind Swaledale Stonemasonry that the amount to be invoiced for with regard to the Church Wall in the current financial year is to be no greater than £13,000 inclusive of VAT with the remainder being invoiced for in the next financial year.

The Clerk to arrange with the Councils insurers to add the adult outdoor gym equipment to the Councils insurance policy.

As regards the Allotments **RECOMMENDED - That the Council pay for the installation of the water butts.**

RECOMMENDED - That a donation of £100 be made to The Methodist Church towards the costs of work to the floor.

That the Clerk make enquires about the future maintenance of the four Defibrillators in the village.

That the BRG Committee be asked to submit a Business Plan outlining it's financial needs for the future.

Works to the car park be only for clearance works is the sum of £2,000.

The following be projects -

BRG - Goal posts and Linen Mill plate.

Cemetery - Path, drainage and sunken graves.

Wildlife areas - Village Green + the School

Notice Board at the Wildlife area to be moved back to the path at the Water Splash.

In 2024/35 dog/litter bins be provided at the Rugby Club and at the entrance to Lodge Lane.

Councillors BTC email addresses be set up for when the new banking arrangements come in.

The Finance Group to in future meet on the Tuesday in the week before the monthly Council meetings.

(ii) Highways/ Road Safety Working Group.

No meeting held this month.

(iii) Play Equipment/Adult Outdoor Gym Equipment Working Group.

Tenders for works in the Recreation Ground are currently awaited. Two have been received to date.

(iv) Joint Pedestrian/ Cycling Working Group.

Summary of Local Transport events held in Northallerton Town Hall on Saturday 10th February. A more detailed report will be submitted to the March Council meeting.

Area Concerned

Future transport priorities for Northallerton.

Summary

Following a recently held Northallerton-wide transport event in the Town Hall, this report provides initial feedback and considers the next steps.

Information

Northallerton Town Council, jointly with Brompton and Romanby Councils, recently hosted a successful transport event in the Town Hall, the principal objective of which was to help guide the future of transport in Northallerton and the surrounding area. It is also necessary, in the short term, to influence the development of the new Local Transport Plan, currently being developed by North Yorkshire Council, and the upcoming Mayoral elections.

It should be noted that additional support was provided at the Town Hall event by North Yorkshire Council, Hambleton Strollers and bus user groups.

The event was well attended by over 150 local residents providing a wide range of valuable comments and suggestions relating to all forms of transport throughout the town.

To ensure the full success of the event is built upon, the following actions are proposed:

- A summary report of all the comments/suggestions is prepared and circulated to all stakeholders, including North Yorkshire Council to assist in the development of its County wide Local Transport Plan.

- The report be sent to all York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Mayoral candidates, as the successful candidate will have responsibility for future transport improvements.
- Discussions to take place with Northallerton School and Sixth Form College to consider how the views of younger residents could be sought.

(v) YLCA Hambleton Branch Meeting – 14th February 2024.

Very poor attendance at the meeting of the Hambleton Branch of the YLCA with only 7 Parishes being represented.

The YLCA have revised Contracts of Employment for new employees and are addressing a number of anomalies in the current guidance.

The main discussion was related to the recent change in the law which now permits Councils to give grants to Churches which in the past Councils had been forbidden to do on the grounds that it could be seen as religious discrimination as not all residents of a Parish attend one particular Church and could validly object to their Council Tax monies being so appropriated.

This could cover requests for grant funding for such as church roofs, windows, boilers and lighting etc.

There has always been a grey area as to whether Councils could provide funding for CCTV for Churches or for such as Church clocks and these have been permitted as they would be of benefit for the whole community and not just the Church but this was still against the original law.

This has now all been clarified with the recent change in the law in December 2023.

The YLCA Bio diversity Policy is something that all Councils need to look at - something for a future BTC agenda.

The YLCA has restored the availability of an Internal Audit service for Councils which it had to withdraw in recent years due to a lack of auditors available to carry this work out for local Councils.

A question was raised as to whether CIL monies could be spent on Churches and it was considered that this would be a question for the Principal Authority if any Council wished to spend CIL monies on Churches.

The question of whether smaller Parish Councils could afford web site hosting and Councillors council email addresses was raised. It was felt that this was beyond a lot of Councils.

As NYC is currently carrying out budgeting reviews that will impact on staff it was questioned if this would affect Parish and Town Councils especially with the current rationalisation of the former Hambleton and Richmondshire service areas.

Concerns were expressed about the very high proportion of planning applications that would be delegated to officers for decision.

This has been an issue of concern at the recent meeting of the YLCA Ryedale Branch.

Northallerton Town Council has already raised its serious concerns about this and it was agreed that the most senior NYC Planning Officer be asked to address a meeting of the YLCA to which all Councils in all of the Branches be invited to attend.

The overall view is that more planning applications should be dealt with by the NYC Planning Committees.

There was also a view that in due course the new Mayor needs to address all Branches combined about the Transport Portfolio.

There are serious concerns about the inadequacy of rural transport and again it was agreed that NYC officers need to address the Branches about how this can be improved, including new strategies and ideas as across the whole County there is a distinct lack of rural transport.

It was also hoped that NYC would appoint specific Parish Liaison Officers to assist Parish and Town Councils with issues as is done in West Yorkshire.

As regards YLCA Training it was suggested that it would be useful for a training seminar to be held to assist those Councils who are interested in taking over for community facilities such as the village pub or village hall or the village shop as a community facility for the benefit of the local community in particular aimed at what funding streams are available for Councils.

9. PLANNING MATTERS.

(i) Decisions

ZB23/0206/MRC – Variation of conditions regarding occupancy of dwelling limited to a person employed locally in agriculture or forestry or dependents at Northfields Bungalow, Long Lone – Refused.

ZB23/02516/FUL – Installation of dropped kerb to allow access to the driveway at front of dwelling at Corber Hill - Granted

(ii) Applications

To make decisions on the following planning applications -

ZB24/00119/FUL – Replacement door and storm porch cover – 8 Manor Court

ZB23/02288/FUL – Retrospective construction of an agricultural storage area and possible workshop – Newstead Bungalow, Deighton Lane

ZB24/00288/FUL – Erection of 3 Detached Dwellings and Provision of Associated Domestic Curtilage – Lombardy, 89A Northallerton Road

(iii) Enforcement Action.

Removal of solar panels at 1 Cockpit Hill – Necessary report has been drafted and submitted to NYC Legal Department and Enforcement Officer will inform BTC when the Enforcement Notice has been issued.

11. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

Receipts –

Nil

Payments –

Sam Turner and Sons (Road salt)

P Atkin (Expenses)	****
P Atkin (Salary)	429.38
HMRC (PAYE)	107.20
Hillside Tree Surgeons (removal of tee in Churchyard + hedge works)	2,100.00

Mr D Langthorne (Grit Bins)	****
YDS Ltd (Trailer hire)	60.00
*NYCC Yorwaste (Advance Charges)	27.41 *

Bank Balances at 2nd February

Current Ac't - £200.00

Business Premium Ac't (i) - £38,668.26

Business Premium Ac't (ii) - £142,190.93

RECOMMENDED - That the accounts listed above be approved for payment.

The Bank Reconciliation appears on the last page of this Monthly Update.

12. LOCAL BUS SERVICES.

To agree how to proceed to ascertain where the £500,000 from the North Northallerton Development for local bus services has disappeared to as it has now been a considerable time since the new bridge was opened which was the trigger point for the transfer of the monies to North Yorkshire Council.

Nothing whatsoever appears to have been done by NYC to improve any local bus services and the Bus Stop markings along North Moor Road have started to disappear.

Northallerton Town Council has also raised the issue and has been informed that its Legal Services Department has been having difficulties with Section 106 agreements which is not really a satisfactory response.

14. HIGHWAY MATTERS - Including Notification of Road Closures.

(i) Road Closures.

PLANNED ROAD CLOSURE NOTIFICATION - SW-19187-The Green,Brompton

The Closure will be in place for a period of 5 days between 26th February 2024 and 1st March 2024 to allow for fibre installation works on behalf of Avonline Network Services Ltd

The Road Closure and any associated Diversion Routes can be viewed using this URL link <https://one.network/?tm=137438190>

(i) Meeting of Town/Parish Councils held at Area 2 Highways Office on 13th February 2024.

NYC Highways will be restructured in March but no information as to what that will look like.

There has been a substantial increase in service reports in all categories.

A dedicated highways section will be set up under Planning to look into planning applications from the highways viewpoint.

Major routes such as the A61 are inspected monthly with lesser routes being inspected annually.

Criteria about highways standards such as for example what are considered to be pot holes will be made available to all Councils so that they can be included on their web sites.

In the 12 months from January 2023 there have been 41,184 service requests, consequently it is not possible to provide feedback in all cases.

The focus is always on risk to life and property.

Basic maintenance costs April - December 2023 -

Budget (other than Capital) £1.578m for basic maintenance

Gully emptying - £155k with £129m spent by December 2023

11,851 gullies inspected - 10,812 cleared

Road sweeping - £500 a day

Weed spraying - £16,000

Road lining - £1,000 a day

Emergency call outs - £96,000

A new system of gully cleaning has been adopted based on historic records and this will be available for public viewing on the NYC system

Maintenance under the new NYC owned highways company is proving much better than with the previous contractor Ringway

Road side ditches are the responsibility of the landowners not NY Highways.

If water is seen standing on top of gullies they are not blocked - water stops smells emitting from the drain - likewise standing leaves are not signs of blockage

Discussions are taking place with the Environment Agency about the river bed at Morton on Swale bridge

Motorists who drive into flood water whether there are Road Closure signs out or not invalidate their insurance

If any flood signs are seen left out long after any flooding has occurred these need to be reported so that they can be removed

Manhole type covers in highways are the responsibility of the various utility companies although if they are missing then it needs to be reported to NY Highways

Prior to the Parish Portal being established 65% of service issues were raised through Customer Services and 35% being raised directly to the Area Highways office

Subsequently 68% are referred through the Parish Portal, 18% through Customer Services and only 14% through the Area Highways office.

It is acknowledged that there are issues with the Parish Portal currently that need to be addressed, especially problems with signing on to access the Portal.

The Parish Portal was set up originally to encompass all NYC services but to date it only includes Highways related services - whether this will change when the new Mayoral system comes in this year is yet to be seen.

The Portal covers the reporting of - roads, street lights, pavements, vegetation and drainage matters.

The current Licence for the Parish Portal ends in January 2025 and other options are being looked at. This could include the function of being able to report all NYC Service issues instead of as at present having to negotiate the NYC web site to locate the reporting form to submit for whatever it is that you wish to raise for whatever NY service.

It is acknowledged that some NYC services such as Countryside Services are incorrectly informing the public that they can only report matters through Parish Portal - this is not the case and with some services there are issues with new staff who are not fully aware of how the systems work.

All matters can be reported through -

0300 131 2 131

or

Customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk

Maps of areas of grass cut by NYC are on the NYC web site

Finally parking on the pavement is to shortly become a civil offence

15. GREENS INSPECTION + WILD LIFE AREA - Including Future Management Programme for the Wildlife Area.

Councillors are to meet on site with MAB Ecological of Thirsk on the 23rd February.

16. GRASSCUTTING TENDER – 2024 GRASSCUTTING SEASON

See recommendation of the Finance Group above.

17. CORRESPONDENCE.

(i) Parking on Hilton Green

A request was received that the Council remove parts of the grassed area on the northern side of Hilton Green to provide more car parking. The resident has been asked to refer their request to Broadacres Housing Association.

(ii) Letter of Complaint.

The Clerk received a very lengthy email from an unhappy resident who has just moved into Brompton saying that Brompton Council must do much better and listing numerous complaints about housing matters. The Clerk informed the resident that the property that they occupy comes under Broadacres Housing Association and not Brompton Council.

(iii) Step next to the Dance School.

A lady tripped over the step in the dark next to the Recreation Ground leading to the path along to The Methodist Church. The Council is looking at whether this step should be painted a light colour so that it is more easily seen in the dark.

(iv) St Thomas' Church - Request to Plant Daffodils and Flower Beds in the St Thomas' Church Yard.

Received from the Parochial Church Council -

Time has passed by very quickly since our request to plant daffodils in the St Thomas' Church Yard (February 2021) and we would like to get this and some small flower beds (directly outside the main church entrance) underway as soon as possible.

It was proposed that we plant the daffodils on Sunday 20 October after 9 am service and plant the flower beds over the spring/summer months. We will be mindful of the grass cutters when deciding on the size of the flower/shrub beds.

We would be very grateful if you could confirm that the Town Council are still okay for us to proceed with this?

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Including (i) Date of Next Meeting of the Council – Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 7.15pm

19. BURIAL MATTERS.

Two burials are scheduled to take place next week.

There are a number of graves to be topped up when the weather improves.

Several enquiries have been raised about family histories of persons buried in the Cemetery; the Clerk is working his way through them included meeting with relatives in the Cemetery.

