



KIRKBYMOORSIDE TOWN COUNCIL
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Minutes of the Annual Town meeting in The Moorside Room at 7pm on Tuesday 7 May 2024.

Present: Mayor Jill Wells, Councillors Bettany, Coughlan, Illingworth and Riby.

Also present: The Town Clerk, L Bolland, and 6 members of the public.

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Councillors Dowie, Moffat, Sheilds and Woodhams.

1 WELCOME FROM THE TOWN MAYOR

Councillor Jill Wells opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present.

2 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON 2 May 2023

The minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 2 May 2023 were **approved** and **signed**.

3 MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayors report was received. Full Report at Appendix A.

The Town Mayor summarised the Town Council's business interests and activities of the past 12 months:

- TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP
- FINANCIAL MATTERS
 - 2022/23 AUDIT
 - 2024/25 BUDGET
 - GRANTS
- MATTERS REFERRED TO NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY
 - SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON MARKET PLACE
 - 20MPH
 - PARKING IN TOWN FARM CAR PARK
- PLAY AREAS
- SPORTSFIELD DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT
- MANOR VALE
- THE TOWN POUND OR PINFOLD
- WILDFLOWER VERGES
- PLANNING
- CHRISTMAS
- FLOODING
- KIRKBYMOORSIDE HISTORIC STONE SIGN
- CIVIC EVENTS

According to the format of previous Town Meetings the presentation of the Community Award would usually follow the Mayor's Report. However, the Town Mayor explained that this year arrangements are in progress for an event to celebrate the community's achievements over the previous 12 months. Further information will be provided before close of the meeting.

5 PUBLIC SESSION

A member of the public raised concern about the state of the churchyard with many graves inaccessible due to the overgrowth. The clerk explained that the churchyard and Millennium Garden are the sole responsibility of All Saints' Church. The Town Council has awarded a grant to All Saints' PCC each year, upon application, to contribute towards the cost of the grounds maintenance of the churchyard and the Millennium Garden. In 2021, the Town Council took into consideration concerns raised by members of the public that throughout the churchyard and the Millennium Garden areas of wild flowers are mowed and the contractor sometimes applies weed killer which is harmful to the environment. Subsequently it was proposed that the Town Council start a dialogue with the PCC to change the way the grounds maintenance is carried out so that it is wild flower friendly. The grant application was agreed subject to the caveat that designated areas would be cut less frequently to encourage wildflower growth with regular mowing adjacent to all paths and areas that are well attended. Unfortunately this approach to management of the churchyard was not well received by parishioners. The Town Council conceded that whilst it is good to encourage the growth of wild flowers, the number of complaints made by members of the public was indicative that the more sympathetic approach to ground maintenance was not favourable. It was therefore agreed to suggest the PCC revert to the contractor's preferred maintenance programme and, where possible, encourage wildflower growth and avoid mowing during May to support the 'No Mow May' campaign. It was made clear that the Council will continue to support the PCC by contributing towards the costs of grounds maintenance, upon application in accordance with the Standing Orders, as long as it is able to do so. It is worth clarifying that whilst the Town Council has always agreed financial support to All Saint's PCC by contributing to the cost of grounds maintenance (upon application), management of the churchyard is the responsibility of the PCC.

A member of the public raised concern about the state Manor Vale woodland.

They have noticed the progressive loss of diversity of wildlife and plants and explained that, where previously wild plants had thrived, they are now unable to grow due to the dense brash that has grown around and over the fallen wood throughout the woodland. The current approach to management, leaving fallen and felled wood in situ to rot down, has had the effect of covering the ground to such an extent that there is limited light to support new growth of wild species, whilst encouraging the growth and spread of brambles. The areas on the side of the golf course road had supported a variety of wildflower species but these have been encroached by the brambles. It was queried as to whether there is shared responsibility between the Town Council and the Golf Club for the maintenance of the verges along the length of the road.

They also noted a significant decline in the number and variety of birds and wildlife in the woodland and asked if it would be possible to introduce some additional bird boxes.

Another concern was the state of the footpaths, making much of the woodland inaccessible to wheelchair users.

The Town Mayor explained that the woodland is managed by the Manor Vale Management Committee with reference to the original Management Plan and works are undertaken by the appointed contractor as necessary. The recent extensive tree works are as a result of recommendations made in the tri-ennial tree safety report in 2023. With regards to management of the woodland, the Town Council's approach remains, as last resolved in March 2010, that the general principle is to keep Manor Vale Woodland as natural as possible and to keep dead wood in.

With regards to the grass verges, Kirkbymoorside Golf Club holds responsibility for the upkeep of the road and, by mutual agreement, periodic cutting of the road verges. Short-term use by the club of a small area of open ground for overflow car parking has been agreed by the Manor Vale Management Committee.

All adopted footpaths and bridle paths in the woodland are the responsibility of North Yorkshire Council as Public Rights of Way. The surfacing of these paths is regularly assessed by the Countryside Officer to ensure they meet standard

Cllr Wells proposed that an agenda item be included for consideration at the next appropriate meeting to review the Management Plan and consider the installation of additional bird boxes upon determination of appropriate sites for the same.

6 REPORTS FROM CHARITIES AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Steve Peet, Kirkbymoorside History Group. Appendix A

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Linda Knight provided a report on the activities of the Kirkbymoorside Community Library as follows:

Our local community objectives and how we evaluate them:

To promote and market our own and the county library offer, working with NY and our town council to monitor any improvement in outcomes;

Work with NYC’s strategy document ‘**Your Library – Your place 2020-2030**’;

Know our book issue numbers, genres, turnover, what makes customers come through the door and providing what they want and what they don’t yet know they want;

Monitor footfall, website visits, customer profiles and local demographics;

Offer information and signposting to resources and guidance;

Help reduce loneliness and isolation by offering appropriate events and activities by continuing to work with agencies such as Ryedale Carers, Dementia Forward, Music for Wellness and Carers Plus;

Expand local digital inclusion by assisting customers to access on line resources, using trained IT volunteers and our Library Supervisor;

Help reduce health inequalities by assisting with Blue Badge and other support applications, use of the NHS app, the Reading Well collection, Blue Book and other service leaflets and guides;

Be a warm, safe, fully accessible space for all;

Assist with the household support fund and other economic initiatives;

Facilitate and promote the Home Library Service, understand the wider needs of our HLIS customers, engage with families and carers if appropriate;

Promote cultural activities, support tourism to improve our local economy and help to increase local employability skills;

Keep a close eye on local statistics and demographics, working with our town councillors;

Make lifelong learning accessible by offering courses and events, utilising the broad range of volunteer skills and promoting NY adult learning courses;

Engage with schools on early literacy, promotion of the SRC and foster an ongoing relationship with those children as library members; and

Extend and improve our offer to pre-school children to assist with school readiness and also to support hard to reach families.

Our internal management objectives:

Deliver our obligations under our Service Level Agreement with NYC and achieve KPIs;

Generate income to cover the running costs and invest for the future; and

Offer continuous training and development to volunteers, utilising their broad and valuable skill sets to enhance our offer.

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Moorsbus Community Interest Company

A REPORT TO KIRKBYMOORSIDE TOWN COUNCIL

7 May 2024

1. We start this report with a sincere THANK YOU to Kirkbymoorside – its Town Council, its Environment Group, its businesses and its citizens.
2. Moorsbus is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company run entirely by volunteers and led by its passengers. Although established and run by the National Park Authority over 40 years ago, the Authority ceased funding 10 years ago and the CIC was set up to try and resurrect what had been a popular and important local asset.
3. We work to provide a network of bus services for both locals and visitors in order to meet four overarching themes of Social Equity, Environmental Benefit, Health and Wellbeing, and Economic benefit.

3.1. Social equity

3.2. Our annual survey of passengers shows that over half of users are from households without a car – often the elderly who can no longer drive, those for whom a car is unaffordable, or those who find there is no need to have a car. This helps the area achieve an aim of being *'For all, regardless of wealth or social class'*. It's increasingly argued that public transport is a basic human right.

3.3. Environment

3.4. The use of public transport (and active travel such as walking or cycling) helps protect the environment. Visitor traffic in the area is the greatest contributor of greenhouse gases, as well as demanding bigger, wider, faster roads, more signage, more parking spaces.

3.5. Health and wellbeing

3.6. Using the bus helps physical and mental health by tackling isolation and other health issues. Our survey shows that 66% of our passengers said that their Moorsbus trip had helped improve their health, and 44% said it reduced isolation and loneliness. 17% of our passengers said they had a long term health or disability issue.

3.7. Economy

3.8. When undertaking a Moorsbus journey users many combine their day out with a meal, or shopping. The average spend per passenger was £12.39 in 2023.

4. Passengers rate Moorsbus very highly, with an average satisfaction score across nine topics of 94% making it one of the most appreciated bus services in the country. It gained 97% for reliability and drivers were given 99%. Comments from our passengers are very humbling and speak of the importance and emotions which a journey can make. These comments, from passengers from home and abroad are a vital way of us finding out what we do right, and what we do wrong. But they also help guide us developing future services. Our passengers really are in the Moorsbus driving seat.
5. In 2023 fund raising proved exceptionally difficult and we could only afford to operate the network over two months. Most of the funding comes from relatively small grants and donations, such as from town and parish councils, one or two charitable trusts and passengers. The National Park Authority has provided no funds since the CIC was established nor did

North Yorkshire County Council, although the new North Yorkshire Council has provided essential financial support for this year's network.

6. Fare revenue is limited and the reimbursement rate for the use of concessionary passes is very low. In order to maintain simplicity of fares, we participate in the £2 maximum fare scheme for single journeys, and also issue and accept joint tickets on many services such as the 128 and Arriva's services between Middlesbrough, Whitby and Scarborough.
7. In 2024 we have achieved funds to operate over a 4 month season, although there have been a series of setbacks including the closure of the route between Rosedale and Danby due to poor repairs last year, refusal to allow our buses to park in certain locations to enable connections and drivers' breaks, and the lack of low-floor buses with experienced drivers has meant that one planned Saturday route has had to be abandoned.
8. We hope the new Mayoral Authority will enable a long-term funding stream and a better understanding of the issues and opportunities surrounding public transport in general, and Moorsbus in particular. We are part of a small group who have researched an innovative approach to public transport based on a Swiss-system where even the smallest villages have decent public transport 7 days a week, from 6 in the morning to midnight. Each candidate was sent a presentation on this, and several participated in discussions with us. We hope the York and North Yorkshire mayor will continue to show an interest in this innovative proposal.
9. Back to the human right for all to have access to public transport? We've come a long way, but we've got much further to go. We are so grateful for the ongoing support we have received from the town council. Thank you.

Bill Breakell, Moorsbus Community Interest Company 7 May 2024

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The Town Mayor thanked participants for the reports given and offered congratulations on their hard work and achievements to date, and well wishes for this coming year.

The Town Mayor invited Cllr Illingworth to provide information about the change to the format of the Community Award and the new Celebration event that will be held on 12 October 2024.

Cllr Illingworth expressed that all of us that are lucky to live, work or shop in Kirkbymoorside know what a very special place it is, a real community with lots going on. Throughout the year, there are events where the whole town comes together and the strength and warmth of our community is obvious, events like the 10K, and Eco Fair, the Remembrance Sunday Parade and the Christmas Fair.

But there is no single event dedicated to just celebrating Kirkbymoorside and the amazing people who live here. Kirkbymoorside Town Council are delighted to announce the 'Town Celebration and Community Awards 2024', the first of which will take place on Saturday 12th October in the Memorial Hall.

Organisations based in Kirkbymoorside have been invited to have a stand in the hall during the day to showcase and celebrate their organisations and their contributions to the town. This could be for the purpose of fundraising, where stall holders can sell relevant items, or for attracting new members or providing information, or just as a social event. The wonderful Kirkbymoorside Town Brass Band will play during the day, and there will be local food and drink for sale to add to the atmosphere.

On the evening of the same day, the event will step up a notch with the Community Awards Ceremony, with a short band concert and light refreshments for the invited guests. Awards will be for the following categories:

- The voluntary organisation / charity of the year
- The membership group of the year
- The 'quiet contributor' of the year
- The young person of the year

The Town Council may also give an extra award to an individual or organisation they feel is deserving of special recognition.

Nominations are now open for residents of Kirkbymoorside to put forward Kirkbymoorside based organisations/charities/groups and individuals for awards. The shortlisted nominees and the first person to nominate them will be invited to the event.

CLlr Wells concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and active participation.

The meeting ended at 7.56pm.