

Steering Committee Meeting

Rural Arts North Yorkshire

Wednesday 14th April 2010 at 7.00pm

Minutes

Present

Peter Walker (Chair); Peter Cole (Hambleton District Council); Mark Haynes (Hambleton District Council); Bill Austin (Sowerby Parish Council & Safer Thirsk Group); Mark Faulkner (Carlton Lodge Outdoor Centre); Pat Chapman (Thirsk School) & Jeremy Baker (Business Link North Yorkshire.)

Apologies

Rev. Canon Richard Rowling; Cllr. Gareth Dadd; Alison Scurrah; Tony Jordan; Sgnt. Sharon Findlay; Cllr. Ellen Storm; Nick Redfern; Jacquie Boulton; Kelly Teagle & Linda Gibbon.

1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

Peter welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Wednesday 24th February 2010

Agreed as a true record thereof.

3. Actions & Matters Arising

- **Long Street Enhancement:** It was agreed that the action to clarify HDC's legal position with respect to enforcement powers and the state of repair of premises on Long Street be rolled forward until the next meeting.
- **ThirskBusiness.com:** Peter W., Nick and Kelly are to continue work to develop phase 2 of the website. The priority for phase 2 is the creation of a business directory facility which may generate an income with which to cover future hosting and maintenance costs.
- **Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funds:** It was noted that delegated funds had been made available to those Parishes identified in previous meetings that were looking to undertake small scale capital projects.
- **14-19 Learning Opportunities:** Peter W. advised that following discussions with NYCC and staff at Thirsk School no further action by TRI is required *at*

this stage but suggested that TRI note the current position. It was agreed that TRI monitor the continuing situation and in particular what happens regarding the vocational provision of Askham Bryan College at Thirsk Rural Business Centre in the light of the Bedale proposals. Peter indicated that plans are underway to develop a Skills Centre at the Allertonshire School in Northallerton and to improve the learning & skills 'offer' at Askham Bryan College in Bedale. **Action:** Peter W. to circulate a copy of the Report prepared by NYCC Children & Young People's Services to TRI members for information.

- **VisitThirsk.com:** Mark confirmed that no comments or suggestions had been received since the last meeting with regards to sponsorship to cover future hosting and maintenance costs of the site.
- **Thirsk TIC:** Peter W. confirmed that he is to meet with Phil Morton at HDC to discuss proposals outlined in a Report presented at the Thirsk Area Forum meeting held on Tuesday 9th March which recommends that no move of the TIC is enforced before the end of the current tourist season. It is understood that the proposals will be considered at a HDC Cabinet meeting to be held on 24th April 2010. Work is underway to consider whether a more cost effective delivery model can be used, which may include private sector involvement and an IT 'platform'. Peter W. indicated that the next stage of the process will be to agree a business plan to ensure the long term sustainability of the delivery of tourist information.

4. The Hambleton Renaissance Business Plan

Mark reported that little progress has been made on the 'Rural Capitals Business Space' programme but that work is ongoing to complete enhancements to Ingramgate. Mark also confirmed that the HDC Delivery Team, Environmental Health and HDC Development Management are working to broker a resolution to the issue of the appearance of premises on Long Street. Mark indicated that work to complete the Sensory Gardens should be finished by the end of May 2010. Peter W. congratulated those involved in the scheme.

Peter C. circulated a letter sent from Ann McIntosh to Cllr. Ellen Storm regarding concerns about access to Thirsk Station. The letter includes a response from Iain Coucher, Chief Executive of Network Rail, which confirms that Thirsk Station has not been selected for improvements funded by the £370m 'Access for All' fund but that the station *'is being considered as a potential candidate for funding in the second phase on the National Stations Improvement Programme. Subject to a feasibility study this would see a scheme developed to improve waiting facilities on the Northbound platform'*. Mark confirmed that he is to meet with representatives from Network Rail on 20th April 2010 to discuss issues both at Thirsk and Northallerton. A further update will be presented at the next meeting.

5. ThirskBusiness.com: The Next Steps

Peter C. confirmed that the site, launched on Friday 2nd April 2010, includes a range of demographic data including unemployment figures, wage & skill levels and details of existing businesses in the area. The launch of the site represents the first phase of the site's development and work is underway to add more features in phases 2 and 3. Such features may include an on-line business directory, an interactive business forum and a 'virtual' tour of the key business locations across Thirsk. TRI is also looking to secure

sponsorship from local businesses to cover hosting and maintenance costs beyond 2011. It was agreed that the effectiveness of the site be monitored over the next 12 months and that an evaluation of the site be undertaken.

6. Election of TRI Officers: Vice Chair/Treasurer/Signatories

Peter C. reminded members that the position of Vice Chair and Treasurer remain vacant. Jeremy Baker agreed to act as a signatory for TRI. Peter W. agreed to prepare the TRI accounts in readiness for the AGM to be held on the 8th September 2010 and to continue to seek a Vice Chair for the Group. Bill confirmed that although he will be unable to attend the TRI AGM he is willing to continue as Chair of the Safer Thirsk Group. **Action:** Peter W., Jeremy and Peter C. to complete a revised mandate form.

7. Any Other Business

▪ Venues for Future TRI Meetings

It was agreed that in order to make a better use of HDC Officer time and to reduce the running costs of TRI future meetings be held bi-monthly. It was agreed that other venues be considered for future TRI meeting but that the AGM be held at Rural Arts North Yorkshire. Other possible venues include Thirsk Clock, the Herriot Museum, East Thirsk Community Hall and Thirsk Town Hall. Mark Faulkner agreed to check whether a room at the Carlton Lodge Outdoor Centre would be available for the next TRI meeting which is to be held at **7pm on Wednesday 16th June.**

▪ YO7 Divert

Peter provided a brief update on recent activity in Sharon's absence and confirmed that 2 successful youth clubs have been held at the East Thirsk Community Hall which have attracted a total of 65 young people aged between 8 and 17. Work is underway to facilitate five-a-side football and a disco in the main hall.

▪ Neighbourhood Watch Event

Bill reminded members about the event to be held on Thursday 22nd April 2010 between 7pm - 9pm at the Thirsk Rural Business Centre. Co-ordinators of the Thirsk & Easingwold Neighbourhood and Countrywatch schemes will come together to update local residents on initiatives running in the area which seek to tackle crime. Representatives of the Police, Hambleton Community Safety Partnership and South Hambleton North Yorkshire Neighbourhood Watch Association will describe the range of schemes underway and how local communities can get involved. NYCC Trading Standard will also be in attendance to answer questions.

▪ Carlton Lodge Outdoor Centre

Mark reported that the Hambleton Paddlers have relocated to the Outdoor Centre at Carlton Lodge and agreed to provide an update on plans for the Carlton Lodge Climbing Centre at the next meeting.

The meeting finished at 8.45pm