

Steering Committee Meeting

Rural Arts North Yorkshire

Wednesday 20th January 2010 at 7.00pm

Minutes

Present

Peter Walker (Chair); Peter Cole (Hambleton District Council); Freda Roberts (Thirsk Town Council); Ellen Storm (Sowerby Parish Council); Cllr. Gareth Dadd (Hambleton District Council & North Yorkshire County Council); Jeremy Baker (Business Link Yorkshire); Tony Jordan (Carrs Field Trustees); Rev. Canon Richard Rowling (Honorary Canon of York Minster and Rector for Thirsk); Bill Austin (Sowerby Parish Council & Safe Thirsk Group); Mark Haynes (Hambleton District Council); Kelly Teagle (CK Services, Thirsk); Michael Burrows (St. James' Green Resident's Association); Nick Redfern (St. James' Green Resident's Association); Don Cartridge; Paul Evans; Malcolm Warne (Darlington & Stockton Times); Jacquie Boulton (Yorkshire Forward); Mark Faulkner (Carlton Lodge Outdoor Centre); Mo Penson & Linda Gibbon (Thirsk Clock.).

Apologies

Alison Scurrah; Emily Thomas; Dave McGloin; Pat Chapman; Jan Marshall; Sgnt. Sharon Findlay & Lee Godfrey.

1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

Peter welcomed Nick Redfern and Michael Burrows to the meeting representing the St. James' Green Resident's Association.

2. Representation from members of the St. James' Green Resident's Association with regards to concerns over the relocation of Thirsk Clock.

Nick thanked TRI members for the opportunity to raise concerns about the proposed relocation of Thirsk Clock and also to question the process by which Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funds were allocated at the meeting held on November 25th 2009. Nick confirmed that the Resident's Association supports the work being undertaken by Thirsk Clock but feels strongly that the proposed site at the Methodist Church is inappropriate and may attract anti-social behaviour from young people who are not members of the Clock.

Peter W. explained that the role of TRI is to act as a conduit for the allocation of Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funds. Peter also confirmed that the original application for funding was to help purchase IT equipment for Thirsk Clock but that once it became clear that refurbishment of the proposed premises would be of benefit to the young people a subsequent application for £9k was considered at the November meeting.

Peter explained that an agreement was reached by members at the November meeting that a decision on the allocation of funding for Thirsk Clock could be made regardless of the location of the new site and that the exact location of the site would be confidential.

Nick questioned a reference in the minutes of the last meeting regarding the need for planning permission. Cllr. Dadd suggested that clarity is required over the need for such planning permission and that he would ensure the matter was not dealt with by way of delegated authority by HDC Planning Officers. Linda declared her interest in the matter and briefed the meeting indicating that guidance had been given from HDC that planning permission would not be required. Peter W. confirmed that the £9k allocated from Yorkshire Forward's Delegated Funds will finance refurbishment work on the existing structure.

Nick queried a comment made that a police officer had visited the site to ascertain the appropriateness of the site and indicated that an Architectural Liaison Officer had visited the building. Peter W. said this was not a matter for TRI to comment on.

Peter invited both Nick and Michael to ask questions both of TRI and Thirsk Clock. In response to the questions asked:

- Mark confirmed that match funding had been secured from NYCC but that further work is to be done on the application process before the funding is 'signed off'.
- Linda confirmed that the move would take place regardless of whether the delegated funds were allocated to Thirsk Clock and that the moving date would be the 29th January. Linda explained that the funding, if allocated, would help refurbish the premises. If the funding was not allocated to the Clock plans to enhance provision would take longer to develop.

In response to a question about future plans Nick confirmed that future activity has yet to be decided and suggested that the Resident's Association may seek to agree a Constitution. Peter W. expressed the hope that a reporting mechanism would be agreed between Thirsk Clock and the Resident's Association to address any concerns raised by the local community.

Nick requested that TRI review the decision taken at the meeting in November 2009 to allocate £9k of Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funding to support the refurbishment of the new Thirsk Clock premises. In response to Nick's presentation Peter W. proposed that a case had been put to review the decision made at the TRI meeting in November. This proposal was seconded by Bill Austin. A vote was taken by TRI members as to whether the decision to allocate the funding to Thirsk Clock be reviewed. Both Linda Gibbon and Tony Jordan expressed an interest in the outcome of the decision and did not vote. Those observing the meeting did not vote. The vote was two in favour of the review and three against. Canon Rowling, Bill Austin and Freda Roberts voted against the proposal to review the decision. The proposal to review the decision made in November was rejected.

Bill suggested that activities to be undertaken by the YO7 Divert multi-agency partnership group (see agenda Item 7) may help address any issues regarding antisocial behaviour in the area and that monitoring of the situation would be a priority for the Group.

Peter thanked Nick and Michael for the manner of their presentation. Nick expressed his disappointment at the decision taken to allocate the Delegated Funds to Thirsk Clock and reaffirmed his belief, and that of the St. James' Resident's Association, that such an allocation was an inappropriate use of Yorkshire Forward funding. Nick also expressed concern that the process by which the funds were allocated was not transparent.

Action: Peter W. and Mark to liaise with Yorkshire Forward to confirm that TRI has acted in a proper manner with regards to the allocation of funds and to reconvene a meeting with Nick if this is not the case.

Nick and Michael left the meeting at this point.

Members congratulated Richard on his recent Canonisation. Rev. Canon Richard is now Honorary Canon of York Minster and will remain Rector for Thirsk.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Wednesday 25th November 2009

It was noted that:

- Thirsk Town Council is looking for funding to support a reprint of the Thirsk & Sowerby 'Past and Present' leaflets, not Northallerton Town Council, as per the minutes
- Thirsk in Bloom was celebrating it's 10th Anniversary, not its 10th Centenary
- The minutes did not record that Peter W. invited members to consider whether the location of the new premises remain confidential for the purposes of the meeting. Following discussion an agreement was reached that the exact location of the new premises remain confidential and that the decision to allocate funds to Thirsk Clock was made without members being made aware of the proposed site.

4. Actions & Matters Arising

- **Thirsk Market:** Peter W. confirmed that work is ongoing with regards to the future management and promotion of Thirsk Market.
- **Thircon Roundabout:** Peter W. to contact Thirsk Town Council with regards to sponsorship costs of the Thircon roundabout along with plans to plant bulbs to celebrate Thirsk in Bloom's 10th anniversary in 2010.
- **Visit-Thirsk. Com:** A Report will be presented at the February meeting which will identify hits/visit statistics for the summer period and will propose a business plan to ensure that the site is sustainable.
- **Long Street:** Peter W., Mark and Peter C. have met with HDC Development Management to discuss the situation on Long Street. **Action:** Peter C. to follow up with Environmental Health prior to the next meeting regarding enforcement powers and procedures. It was questioned whether HDC is looking to consolidate Long Street as a designated Residential Area.

- **Thirsk & Sowerby Past and Present:** Peter C. confirmed that Thirsk Town Council was seeking financial support to reprint 10,000 copies of the Past & Present leaflet. It was agreed that the request for financial support be considered once the printing costs are known.

5. ThirskBusiness.com

Kelly presented more detailed proposals for the business information website described at the TRI meeting held in November and members considered details of the development proposal circulated prior to the meeting. Members welcomed the proposals and agreed that before further work be undertaken that costs of the project (including the costs of the work already undertaken to develop the project) be made clear. Freda expressed concerns over the www.york-england.com website but agreed that the proposals looked comprehensive. In response to a question from Malcolm Peter C. confirmed that with regards to Community Grant funding there is no requirement to seek quotations from other companies for the work to be done. Kelly confirmed that plans include ways in which the scheme can be self-sustaining ie. through sponsorship from local businesses. **Action:** Kelly to provide details of the cost of the project and to identify what level of detail the budget available will allow.

6. The Hambleton Renaissance Business Plan (including Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funding)

Mark confirmed that Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funds are targeted to support small scale capital projects in Market Towns. Mark is working with Kate Staines at HDC to explore an 'art in empty spaces' project and is also working with Howard Kemp at Thirsk Town Council to develop a plan to undertake enhancements to Ingramgate. Some match funding for the scheme has been secured and Jacquie confirmed that YF funding can 'bridge' financial years in certain circumstances if required. Mark Faulkner reported that a conditional offer of £10k had been made from Awards for All to Carlton Lodge subject to the production of financial accounts.

Mark reported that the Land Registry has elected not to review its decision not to disapply an outdated restriction on the land which is preventing Thirsk Town Council from completing the project. Peter W. reminded members that TRI has been seeking to help deliver the Sensory Garden project since its inception. In response to a question from Gareth Peter W. confirmed that the scheme includes designs to address anti-social behaviour (railings etc.). **Action:** Peter W., Jan and Mark Haynes to follow up. Peter W. to write a letter to Chief Executives of both Wainhomes and Taylor Wimpey along with a letter to the relevant Minister of State to request that work be allowed to continue and the project completed.

Mark referred to a Business Plan update circulated prior to the meeting and drew attention to an update from Beth Carss following a conversation with Karen Poole of Network rail. It is understood that Network Rail are unable to accelerate the National Strategic Improvement Programme that will fund improvements to the station in 2011.

Ellen reported that she had recently met with representatives from Network Rail and NYCC to discuss issues at the station. At this meeting an estimate of £3m was quoted to install a lift to improve disabled access. Ellen confirmed that though some issues have been resolved there is more work to be done and that she is awaiting a further response from Network Rail in February. **Action:** Ellen to email Anne McIntosh regarding the need for improvements to the Thirsk Station and to copy Peter W. with any correspondence.

There were no further questions about the projects.

7. Freedom of Information Request: Askham Bryan College/Yorkshire Forward Contract

Members agreed to Peter's request that this item be deferred until the next TRI meeting to be held in February pending further discussions with Yorkshire Forward.

8. YO7 Divert

Peter circulated copies of the YO7 Divert Terms of Reference for consideration by TRI members and explained that the Group has been established to increase opportunities for young people in Thirsk to engage in diversionary activities. Whilst TRI members welcomed a partnership approach to addressing antisocial behaviour concerns were expressed both about the number of agencies within the Partnership and also about the use of TRI's bank account to hold any funds secured by the Group. Peter W. confirmed that TRI continues to seek a new Treasurer.

Linda and Tony confirmed that Sgnt. Findlay had approached both Thirsk Clock and the Trustees of Carrs Field with a view to joining the partnership. Canon Rowling suggested that the purpose of the Group requires further clarification before the Terms of Reference can be endorsed by TRI. Some confusion exists as to whether the Group will simply signpost to existing youth provision or whether it will seek to co-ordinate and facilitate youth activities of its own. Peter C. confirmed that the Group has no financial resources but that Nicky Smith, the Hambleton Project Development Officer, would be approached to apply for funding from various sources.

Action: Peter W. to contact Sgnt. Findlay and Lee Godfrey to offer support for the Group and to ensure that the Partnership *complements* existing service provision. Peter C. to forward a copy of the Terms of Reference to Martyn Richards, Head of the Legal Team at HDC, for consideration.

Freda noted that Carrs Field had been left to all residents of Thirsk, not just to young people.

9. Meetings & Correspondence

Ellen confirmed that she had attended the Thirsk8 Park consultation event held recently and reported that the majority of those who attended appeared to be generally in favour of the scheme. However both Ellen and Bill described concerns over lighting on Gravel Hole Lane and the opening times (between 7am-9pm.) Bill confirmed that Sowerby Parish Council has yet to make a decision as to whether they will approve the proposed scheme.

Peter C. agreed to circulate emailed correspondence received prior to the meeting with the minutes of the meeting:

- An email received from Jan Marshall requested that it be made clear in the minutes that at the TRI meeting held in November members of the Group, including Town and District Councillors, were not made aware of the location of the proposed new venue for Thirsk Clock before the decision to allocate YF Delegated Funds to the project was made.
- An email from Dave McGloin indicated that there may not be enough time to allocate Yorkshire Forward Delegated Funds to help purchase brown sign with which to

promote Thirsk Market. Discussions are underway between HDC and NYCC to consider the legal aspects of the proposals and the process by which the signs can be installed. It was agreed at a HDC cabinet meeting in November that the Council's Area Forums and the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee should be consulted. This is taking place with Area Forums over the next two weeks but the next Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting is not until 18 March.

10. Any Other Business:

- **Thirsk Safe Group:** members agreed to the suggestion made by Canon Rowling that the Thirsk Safe Group would provide a suitable forum for members of the St. James' Green Resident's Association to raise any issues over anti-social behaviour associated with Thirsk Clock. Linda confirmed that Thirsk Clock would be seeking to establish a three-way dialogue between the Clock, the Methodist Church and the St. James' Green Resident's Association. **Action:** Bill and Peter to follow up with the Resident's Association.
- **Dates for TRI Meetings in 2010:** These have now been agreed. **Action:** Peter to circulate the details of future meetings with the minutes.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.