

Horwich Town Council Annual Report 2016/2017



The Council's budget for the financial year 2016/2017 has continued to provide considerable financial support for many local organisations who have applied for grants to help to pay for a wide range of activities throughout the year. Horwich Carnival, Horwich Heritage and Horwich Festival of Racing have also continued to receive generous financial assistance from the Town Council. Council

was also very pleased to be able to offer additional support in 2016 for the re-launch of the Horwich Music Festival which was held at Horwich Community Centre over three days in May and catered for a variety of musical tastes and featured local musical talent. Due to its success in 2016, the event will take place again in 2017, with the support of the Council.

Horwich Community Centre and Horwich Heritage Centre continue to thrive with the Council's support, with the Heritage Centre continuing to attract many visitors with its varied programme of exhibitions and events. The Community Centre continues with initiatives to raise its profile in the wider community as well as providing a variety of facilities and activities for the people of Horwich. Funded jointly by the Town Council and the Centre's own reserves, the refurbishment of the Saddlery area is nearing completion and this bright, modern space will be available for full community use by mid-May. This will be the final and much anticipated part of the refurbishment of the entire site which originally began 25 years ago!



'Horwich in Bloom' the annual gardening competition run by the Council with assistance from enthusiastic green fingered volunteers was once again a great success, making the streets more colourful and bringing the community together. In 2016 the Horwich in Bloom Committee, with the help former Fruit, Flower & Vegetable Society members re-launched the annual Fruit, Flower & Vegetable Show, held on the same day as the Horwich in Bloom presentations at the Community Centre and preparations are now under way for this year's competitions.

The Council's website www.horwich.gov.uk recently had a complete re-design and local organisations make good use of the free publicity for their events available on the diary page. In addition the Council now has its own Facebook page and Twitter account. The Council's quarterly newsletter 'Connections' continues to be well received and is available at various locations in Horwich. Work is currently under way on the new edition of the official Town Guide due out later in 2017.

Council has consulted throughout the year with the unitary authority, Bolton Council, on a wide range of matters of importance to the Parish such as planning issues, as well as the police and transport providers. With the Council's support, the Horwich Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Group has been set up to investigate the feasibility of a Neighbourhood Plan for Horwich.

While keeping costs to a minimum Council continues to increase its role providing add on services and facilities to the community of Horwich. It allocates funds for environmental initiatives such as spring and summer planting of the town centre's 24 flower troughs, additional winter gritting for some of the hillier parts of the town, provision of free dog waste bags at the Community Centre and the employment of a part time street cleaner to address the concerns of local businesses and public concerns about litter and other environmental issues in the town centre.



Civic Medals will be awarded in 2017 to Mrs Irene Jackson and Reverend Terry Litherland both who have dedicated many years of exceptional voluntary service to our community and Council gave its highest honour an Honorary Freeman Award to Kevan Helsby MBE in recognition of his long service to Horwich in both a voluntary and civic capacity.

A civic plaque has been installed on the Crown Hotel and is the latest addition to the existing 15 green plaques on buildings in Horwich of historical significance. Council intends to create a permanent and appropriate acknowledgement of the town's rich history with further additions and plans for a 'Horwich Heritage Trail' leaflet to accompany the plaques.

As part of its regeneration budget, Council has also commissioned the renovation and re design of the 5 pictorial boundary signs along with the installation of a new sign on Lever Park Avenue, working with Bolton Council on a design that recognises the importance of the Loco Works on the development of the town.

The Lighting of the Civic Christmas Tree Service continued to mark the start of the festive season in the town and was well attended by all ages and once again welcomed the involvement of Horwich Rotary Club and local schools.



The annual Remembrance Parade and Service continues to flourish due to the promotional efforts of the Town Council, the support of the Royal British Legion in Horwich with the increasing attendance of many local groups and organisations as well as the general public. The annual Poppy Appeal is similarly well supported.

The Town Mayor has had a very busy year, performing a wide variety of civic duties, with the support of the Town Mayoress, assisted by the Deputy Town Mayor, supporting several good causes including the Legacy Rainbow House, Bolton Children's Opportunities Group, Newstalk and the Woodland Trust. The Town Mayor was also asked to open several new businesses marking the continuing revival of Horwich as an independent shopping destination.



Staff continue to work with Councillors to develop the role of the Council & maintain high standards of professionalism in the Council's activities and a Deputy Town Clerk has been appointed to assist the Town Clerk, as the Council's role has expanded. Staff and several Members of the Council have undergone and will continue to undergo training with LALC on the role of Councillors and Council procedures. External Auditors found no matters for concern for the financial year 2015/2016 and Internal Auditors continue to report that they are satisfied that all financial controls and systems are effective. The annual risk assessment has been undertaken, the internal system for financial control has been reviewed and Council policies continue to be reviewed and updated.

The role of Town Councillor remains completely voluntary, Members do not receive any payment or claim any expenses. As the Council faces new challenges it is important that it builds on foundations already in place, keeping the best of tradition while continuing to contribute to the ongoing success of the modern community which is Horwich.

Councillor J. Bullock
Town Mayor 2016/2017

Horwich Town Council can be contacted via:

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Individual Councillors' contact details can be found in the Annual Report, the Council's quarterly newsletter 'Connections' or on the website www.horwich.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS: AS AT 31 MARCH 2016

BALANCE SHEET:	£
In Reserve Account	16,000
Current Assets:	
Debtors	0
Bank Balances	190,697
Cash in hand	0
Total Assets:	190,697
Current Liabilities:	
Creditors & accruals	24,247
Net Current Assets:	166,450
Financed by reserves:	
Capital Account	16,000
General Fund	150,450
Total:	166,450

Total expenditure under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972
£16,351.

Limit: £113,734 (Electorate 15,453 x £7.36 per elector)

A full copy of the Council's accounts are available by contacting the Town Clerk.