

## HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall on Monday 9 May 2016 commencing at 7.30pm.

PRESENT Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), G. Atkinson, M. Brady, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, P. Holmes, M. Jarvis, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, S. Rock, K. Schofield, P. Wright  
Town Clerk: C. Hutchinson  
Mr Mark Gordon representing the Woodland Trust

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6481 Councillor Root outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6482 Resolved to accept apologies for absence from Councillor Allen and Councillor Bullock as presented.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2016:

FG 6483 With reference to minute ref. FG 6474, Councillor Kellett informed Members that the policy of the £50 limit for attendance of the police for shop theft had been brought to the attention of Councillor Derek Burrows and this matter would be raised with the police. Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2016.

TO REMIND MEMBERS TO MAKE A DECISION CONCERNING ANY MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE MEETING OF WHICH THEY HAVE AN INTEREST:

FG 6484 None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT MAY PUT QUESTIONS OR MAKE OBSERVATIONS REGARDING MATTERS IN RELATION TO WHICH THE COUNCIL HAS POWERS OR DUTIES OR WHICH AFFECT THE PARISH. MAXIMUM PERIOD 15 MINUTES:

FG 6485 None.

TO WELCOME MR MARK GORDON REPRESENTING THE WOODLAND TRUST AND TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE WOODLAND TRUST AT SMITHILLS MOOR:

FG 6486 Mr Gordon informed Members that the Woodland Trust was a conservation charity that had been set up in 1972 and was run by a board of trustees with the objective is to protect and enhance native woodland nationwide. It encourages tree planting and engages with the public to make them aware of the work that it does. The Woodland Trust bought part of the Smithills Estate site for 3.5m from Bolton Council and is looking to acquire more land through fund raising activity. The site is the biggest in England covering 685 hectares equivalent to the size of 1,000 football pitches. Maps were provided to show the coverage and boundaries of the site. The site has 60 properties with a number of tenants and one of the aims is to show tenants ways of improving the land as an example to other landowners such

as United Utilities, thereby breaking the cycle of exploitation and neglect of the land.

The other main objective is to increase engagement with the public, investing in more parking, signage to improve public access and also offer tree planting packs for small schemes. It was also confirmed that renovation and repainting of the '63 Steps' had been completed.

In response to a query it was confirmed that the Trust had not had direct contact with Armstrongs with regard to the quarry site. It was confirmed that the Trust had resolved not to allow fracking on any land that it owned.

The Trust was planning to double the tree cover on the site and this would include boundary trees and shrubs and the screening of roads with multi purpose forestry. While the production of timber was important it was not the primary purpose but was recognised as being a sustainable resource. On the issue of overgrazing it was confirmed that it was not the objective to change the moorland habitat but it was important to have grazing at the right densities.

Mr Gordon was thanked for his interesting presentation and left his contact details with the Town Clerk in case further information was required. It was noted that Councillor Bullock was a member of the Woodland Trust and had designated it as one of his mayoral charities in 2016 – 2017.

**TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HORWICH IN BLOOM ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 APRIL 2016:**

FG 6487      Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Horwich in Bloom Advisory Committee held on 20 April 2016.

**TO DISCUSS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON MATTERS OF HIGHWAY SAFETY IN HORWICH AND TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR CHADWICK ABOUT PARKING ISSUES ON LEE LANE:**

FG 6488      As requested the Town Clerk had contacted Bolton Council about the costs of installing a fence along the perimeter of the playing field adjacent to Green Lane and had received an update including costs for three different options, copies of which had been distributed to all Members. It was noted that Bolton Council had been informed that an existing fence had been removed. Also noted that the playing field was leased by Rivington and Blackrod High School from Bolton Council.

Following discussion it was resolved firstly to request that Bolton Council undertake a safety assessment on Green Lane on grounds of concern regarding highway safety and following completion to request

Bolton Council, as landowner to consider re-instatement of a metal fence at its own cost and if this option was not possible that Horwich Town Council would consider a maximum contribution of half the cost of a metal fence.

Councillor Chadwick reported that he had received several complaints from residents on Lee Lane about vehicles parked on the bend outside a business at night time, obstructing the pavement and the view of motorists and causing a danger to highway safety. Contact had been made with a local Ward Councillor who had advised that there was no Area Forum funding available for this purpose. It was noted that traffic wardens did not patrol at night and the police had been contacted but were not prepared to take any action.

Councillor Denton declared a personal interest as the owner of the business was known to him.

Following further discussion it was resolved to request Bolton Council to undertake a highway safety assessment in an area to be specified following co-ordination with other Members by Councillor Root.

#### ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED.

FG 6489 Resolved to approve accounts for payment as presented and totalling £1,859.57.

#### TOWN CLERK'S REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6490
- a) Brazley Community Gardens: feedback on use of previous grant funding including purchase of new shelving and materials for rebuilding of collapsed wall.
  - b) Horwich Heritage: feedback form for Ridgmont Graves Project and Service of Commemoration.
  - c) Horwich Festival of Racing: thank you letters for grant awards of £3,000 and £500 for Festival of Racing events in 2016.
  - d) St Catherine's Church, Horwich: thanks for grant award of £300 towards restoration fund.

Resolved to note the Town Clerk's Report as presented.

#### REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6490 Town Mayor

Members were informed that the 'Lancashire Evening' held on 30 April had been a great success and very well attended. It was the Mayor's last charity fund raiser and Members offered their congratulations to both the Mayor and Mayoress on the excellent work they had done

throughout their year of office fundraising for their various charities.

Horwich Music Festival

Councillor Root reminded Members that tickets were still available for events at the Horwich Music Festival 13 – 15<sup>th</sup> May at Horwich Community Centre and hoped that Members would be able to show their support for this initiative.

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS ABOUT TO BE TRANSACTED IT IS ADVISABLE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE TEMPORARILY EXCLUDED AND IF PRESENT ARE ASKED TO WITHDRAW