

HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall, Lee Lane, Horwich on Monday 13 February 2017 commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, K. Denton, R. Graham, P. Holmes, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, S. Rock, K. Schofield, P. Wright
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson
Representatives from Greater Manchester Police: Officers Ben Brookfield and Steve Howard
1 member of the public

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6612 Councillor Root outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6613 Resolved to accept apologies from Councillor Chadwick and Councillor Jarvis as presented and apologies for lateness from Councillor Kellett and Councillor McKeon.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2017:

FG 6614 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017.

TO WELCOME PCSO BEN BROOKFIELD AND PCSO STEVE HOWARD FROM GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON POLICE PRESENCE IN HORWICH:

FG 6615 Members were informed that there had been no drastic changes in staff levels after the cutbacks of a couple of years ago. Two police officers and four support staff covered the whole Horwich area and were based at Middlebrook Police Station and also used an office at the Public Hall.

It was reported that to date February had seen a reduction in reported crime in comparison with December and January. There had only been one reported incident in the town centre and there had been success with regard to catching the perpetrators involved in the recent spate of burglaries at Horwich businesses. One arrest had been made and more information would be available following referral to the CPS.

Councillor Kellett arrived at this point.

In order to keep in touch with local residents and to maintain police presence in Horwich GMP had recently started new police surgeries at the Public Hall. Dates of these had been publicised and it was hoped to add more dates in the coming months. Members of the public were able to make an appointment to see an officer at any time and GMP were trying to get this

advertised as widely as possible. It was acknowledged that there was often a problem with waiting time when phoning 101, however there was answerphone service at the Public Hall office and contact could also be made by email via the GMP website. In response to a query it was confirmed that details of police surgeries were displayed outside the Public Hall, at Horwich Community Centre and on the Council's website. Members requested that details of how to contact local officers could be made available to the Council and be included in the newsletter and on the website.

Councillor McKeon arrived at this point.

In response to a query regarding policy regarding low level theft in local shops it was confirmed that all incidents reported by business owners were recorded and given a crime number, although it would be unrealistic to expect the police to investigate every incident of low level theft due to lack of resources. However prolific offenders would be dealt with and was important to report all incidents of theft. In response to a query about repeat incidents of theft by school children recorded on CCTV at one particular shop, it was confirmed that police officers would go into school and speak to the parents of the children responsible in order to stop the crime at that level. It was also confirmed that the police telephone outside the Public Hall although damaged did work and this had been reported and was waiting repair.

Both Officers were thanked for their attendance and update to Members.

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

FG 6616 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 6617 Mrs Dorothy Bullock raised the issue of the recent confusion regarding the map of proposed house building sites in Horwich in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework consultation.

It was confirmed that the map in question had been included as a background document as part of the consultation. The map had originally identified possible future sites for 6,000 Bolton at Home properties. Bolton Council prepared its Core Strategy and the Housing Allocation policy identified sites that the council wished to build on however this did not include all of the sites identified on the original plan. Bolton Council have since contacted GMSFP requesting that the sites in questioned should be removed from the consultation document. In response to a query it was

confirmed that Bolton's Allocations Plan was available to view on the Bolton Council website.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE CIVIC AWARDS AND CIVIC SIGNS SIB COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2017:

FG 6618 Members were informed that within the last few days the Town Clerk had been informed by Bolton Council that the original wording "Historic Lancashire Town" as proposed by the Sub Committee for the boundary signs would not be acceptable as it did not confirm to highway policy guidelines. The Town Clerk had followed up on a suggestion made by Councillor Rock at an earlier Sub Committee meeting to use the wording "Historic Railway Town" and it had been confirmed that this would be acceptable. Copies of proposed design for the signage were distributed to all Members who were asked to consider this option as an amendment to the minutes of the Sub Committee for approval.

While it was recognised that there was a strong sentimental attachment towards the use of Lancashire, it was accepted by the majority of Members that administratively Horwich was part of Greater Manchester. Some Members criticised the image of Rivington Pike on the signage as it was not part of Horwich. However there was strong support for including the Pike on the signage as many Members were of the opinion that this was a landmark that was highly visible when approaching Horwich and an important part of its landscape and instantly associated with the town. Several Members expressed the view that the use of the image of the steam train and the wording "Historic Railway Town" was particularly appropriate, reflecting the unique heritage of Horwich.

Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Civic Awards and Civic Signs Sub Committee with an amendment to minute ref. CAS 43 to approve wording on the boundary signage to read "Historic Railway Town".

The Town Clerk informed Members that all three recipients had confirmed that wished to accept their civic awards and confirmed that this information was now in the public domain.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2017:

FG 6619 Members were informed that the re-designed website had now gone live. Councillor Wright was thanked for his input in the process.

Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the Marketing and Promotions Sub Committee held on 3 February 2017.

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE HORWICH IN BLOOM ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2017:

FG 6620 Resolved to note the minutes of the Horwich in Bloom Advisory Committee held on 25 January 2017.

TO APPROVE THE COSTS FOR HORWICH RMI BAND FOR CIVIC SUNDAY ON 14 MAY 2017 OF £350 AND RIVINGTON AND ADLINGTON BAND ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2017:

FG 6621 Resolved to approve the costs for Horwich RMI Band for Civic Sunday on 14 May 2017 of £350 and Rivington and Adlington Band on Remembrance Sunday 12 November 2017.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR BULLOCK ON THE VIABILITY OF DEVELOPING A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP AND APPROVE THE NEXT STAGE OF THE PROCESS TO INCLUDE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTH INCLUDING A START AND FINISH DATE:

FG 6622 Councillor Bullock informed Members that the original resolution had been to appoint three Councillors to set up a group of suitably qualified and interested local people to advise Council on the feasibility of a Neighbourhood Plan for Horwich. Over the past few months contact had been made with local groups and organisations and although there had been a fairly disappointing response, sufficient numbers had expressed an interest in serving on a formal committee and had elected Councillor Brady as Chair. It was noted that this did not include two people who had planning qualifications who had expressed an interest but not attended any meetings to date.

There is now a requirement for the Town Council to formally approve the draft terms of reference for this group, in order to support its activities and provide direction. Some Members were of the opinion that the name of the group should be amended to "Horwich Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group". It was envisaged that the proposed terms of reference will apply to the first stage of the process by which the group will have to justify the reasons for a Neighbourhood Plan for Horwich, its geographical scope and feasibility by producing a viability report by the end of the agreed six month period for consideration by Council at F & G P in September 2017. On the assumption that the Town Council approves the proposal, new terms of reference will be required for the next stage involving the actual preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan

There was an additional requirement regarding the continuing involvement of Councillors on this group. Following discussion it was proposed that the three existing Councillors, if willing, should continue to serve as Council

delegates, with the appointment of the Chair being a matter for the group itself. The requirement for the group to provide minutes of its meetings at regular intervals to keep Council updated on its progress was also noted. A limited amount of funds would be made available for the group during the initial six month period, with all items of expenditure referred to the Council for approval, with the Town Clerk delegated to authorise expenditure at the request of the group on behalf of the Council up to a total maximum amount of £500. The Council would continue to offer free use of the meeting room at Horwich Community Centre with a requirement for a representative from the group to sign the standard form for all groups using the Centre.

Resolved to approve the formation of the Horwich Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group (NPAG) as per the draft terms of reference with immediate effect for a period of six months ending on 1 September 2017. Further resolved that Councillors Brady, Bullock and Rock are appointed to NPAG as delegates of Horwich Town Council.

TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2016:

FG 6623 Resolved to approve the statement of quarterly accounts to 31 December 2016 as presented.

TO APPROVE THE QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW TO 31 DECEMBER 2016:

FG 6624 Resolved to approve the quarterly budget review to 31 December as presented.

TO APPROVE THE QUARTERLY REPORT FROM INTERNAL AUDIT TO 31 DECEMBER 2016:

FG 6625 Resolved to approve the quarterly report from internal audit to 31 December 2016 as presented.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6626 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and amounting to £ 5,814.56.

TOWN CLERKS REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

FG 6627

- a. Bolton Council: Slim Bin Update – end December 2016.
- b. GMP: details of new police surgeries in Horwich.
- c. Bolton Council: Area Forum – item of interest.
- d. Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute
- e. LALC: Finance training workshop Thursday 23 February, Chairmanship training workshop Thursday 16 March, full list of training workshops for 2017.
- f. Grants to Voluntary Groups monitoring/feedback forms: Horwich Visiting Service, Public Hall Veterans' Bowling Club, Horwich Spiritualist Church.

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

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6628 Town Clerk

The Town Clerk informed Members that she had recently attended a training seminar organised by Zurich Local Councils Advisory Service in Northwich. Relevant topics had included safe management of events and monitoring and review of manual handling procedures for staff.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 13 MARCH 2017:

FG 6629 Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 13 March 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm.

Chair.....

Date.....