

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 March 2017 commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, R. Graham, P. Holmes, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, S. Rock, K. Schofield, P. Wright
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson
Bolton Ward Councillors: A. Cunliffe, S. Pickup
Bill Parkinson, General Manager – Arriva Buses Manchester
1 member of the public

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6630 Councillor Root outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6631 Resolved to accept apologies from Councillor Jarvis as presented.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2017:

FG 6632 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2017.

Resolved to move the order of business.

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

FG 6633 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 6634 None.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2017:

FG 6635 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Staffing Sub Committee held on 23 February 2017.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HORWICH COMMUNITY CENTRE SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2017:

FG 6636 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the Horwich Community Centre Sub Committee held on 27 February 2017.

TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL TO HOLD A CIVIC RECEPTION FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE HONORARY FREEMAN AWARD TO KEVIN HELSBY, MBE, FROM 6.00 PM TO 7.00 PM ON 23

MARCH 2017 BEFORE THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AND TO APPROVE A MAXIMUM BUDGET FOR THIS PURPOSES:

FG 6637 It was agreed that it was important that Council should mark such a special occasion and it was proposed that a maximum budget of £100 should be allocated to cover cost of refreshments, to be provided by a local business.

Resolved to approve a maximum budget of £100 for the cost of a civic reception on the occasion of the presentation of the Honorary Freeman award to Kevan Helsby on 23 March 2017, with an invitation to Bob and Barbara Ronson, previous recipients of this award.

TO WELCOME MR BILL PARKINSON FROM ARRIVA MANCHESTER TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON CHANGES TO THE 575 BUS SERVICE IN HORWICH:

FG 6638 Mr Parkinson was welcomed to the meeting and he provided a brief update on recent changes to the 575 bus service including the extension of the service to Wigan on Sundays.

Mr Parkinson responded to Members' questions about timetabling and ticketing and also confirmed that it was anticipated that services would not be affected by the Bus Bill that was expected in 2020. Members were also invited to contact Mr Parkinson directly to discuss any concerns or queries that they may have on behalf of residents or alternatively send questions to the Town Clerk who would forward them to Mr Parkinson, whose contact details had been distributed to Members.

Mr Parkinson was thanked for attending the meeting.

TO DISCUSS THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE COUNCIL IN COMMEMORATIONS FOR 'BATTLE'S OVER – A NATION'S TRIBUTE ON 11 NOVEMBER 2018:

FG 6639 This information had previously been brought to Members' attention in a previous Town Clerk's Report and it had been requested that it should be brought back to Council and discussed as a separate agenda item.

'Battle's Over' is an event of commemoration planned to mark the end of the First World War with the lighting of a chain of beacons across the country. While Members agreed that it was important to mark this anniversary, this initiative could be viewed as diluting what was being planned by established military support organisations. Members were reminded that following the joint initiative to illuminate Rivington Pike with a poppy with Chorley Council in 2014, Council had agreed that it would consider re-visiting this initiative in time for the anniversary of the end of the First World War in 2018.

Resolved that the Council does not at this stage wish to consider involvement in commemoration for 'Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute on 11 November 2018.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON HIGHWAY SAFETY ON GREEN LANE INCLUDING DATA FROM AUTOMATED TRAFFIC COUNT UNDERTAKEN IN JANUARY 2017:

FG 6640 Members had received a summary of speed/volume data following an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) undertaken by Bolton Council Highways at the request of and funded by the Town Council week beginning 9 January 2017.

Highways had confirmed that there was no mainstream funding available for area wide traffic calming such as speed bumps, a programme which actually ceased eight years ago. The use of 20 mph speed limits has been promoted in residential areas and Highways confirmed that the 20 mph speed limit roll out is the most cost effective method at the current time. In respect of traffic calming Highways also confirmed that Green Lane would not be taken in isolation but would have to be part of an area wide treatment which would push up estimated cost in the region of £100K. In terms of danger, Green Lane was not considered a priority, ranking 182 out of 487 roads monitored throughout the borough. On this basis Highways confirmed that there is no justification for the consideration of boundary fencing on the playing fields along the length of carriageway on Green Lane. Enforcement of the 20 mph speed limit is a police matter, although the police would argue that they do not have the resources to do it and it would not be viewed as a priority.

It was noted that while the ATC showed an increase in the speed of traffic, there had also been a reduction in traffic flow and there was a query about the methodology of calculating the danger ranking. All Members agreed that this particular stretch of Green Lane was a particularly dangerous stretch of road and there were concerns about children running out into the road in pursuit of stray footballs. Members raised earlier concerns about the removal of the fence, responsibility for its replacement and the costs quoted for a replacement. Comments were also noted with regard to the effectiveness of a speed sign in this location. Some Members queried as to whether treating this matter in isolation would be acceptable to residents in other areas of Horwich and that a proper, detailed discussion was required before any decision was made.

It was generally agreed that should the Town Council decide that it was necessary to provide a replacement fence then it should be prepared to accept the financial responsibility for it, and this may require an accompanying increase in the precept for 2018 – 2019. There would be a requirement for a tendering process, with approval from Bolton Council. In response to a query it was confirmed that the Town Council did not own

Green Lane playing fields, nor any other land in the Parish, other than the small area containing the Loco Works War Memorial.

It was noted that Rivington and Blackrod High School have responsibility for the top half of the playing fields and following a survey may be looking to improve it, although the costs of doing so are prohibitive.

Resolved that any interested Councillors interested in forming a small (2 – 3 Members) start and finish group to investigate the options for a replacement fence should contact the Town Clerk. The aim of the group would be to report on the cost and feasibility of the Town Council funding this initiative, taking into account current budgetary information, to be brought back to Council for consideration at a later date.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6641 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and amounting to £ 53,488.60.

TOWN CLERKS REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6642
- a. GMP: times/dates of forthcoming Police Surgeries
 - b. Horwich Music Festival: press release
 - c. Horwich RMI Cricket Club: invitation to Members to 125th anniversary event on Sunday 23 April 2017
 - d. Crowborough Town FC: update on proposed visit May 2017
 - e. LALC: March newsletter
 - f. LALC: planning workshop Thursday 20 April at Howick House
 - g. Horwich Widows: grants to voluntary groups monitoring/feedback form
 - h. British Legion/Poppy Appeal: press release

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

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6643 Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Group
Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March had been forwarded to the Town Clerk and were distributed to all Members for information. It was noted that the Clerk had also been provided with a list of group members along with contact details, but would not be made publicly available.

Horwich Loco Works Liaison Group

Councillor Bullock, as one of the Members of the Town Council attending meetings of this group, expressed concern about the lack of information regarding progress on the development of the Loco Works site and asked that Council consider request clarification from Bolton Council

Planning on several key points which he had outlined.
Resolved that Councillor Bullock liaise with the Town Clerk and draft a letter to Bolton Council requesting clarification in writing on the main points of concern and also to ask if Phil Green, Planning Officer would attend the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 20 APRIL 2017:

FG 6642 Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 10 April 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.29 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....