

## 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 14 August 2017 commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, M. Jarvis, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, K. Schofield, P. Wright  
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson  
Bolton Ward Councillor S. Pickup  
Chris Green M.P Bolton West  
3 members of the press  
9 members of the public

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6691 Councillor Root outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6692 Resolved to accept apologies for absence from Councillors Graham, Holmes, Rock and Stone as presented.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JUNE 2017:

FG 6693 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2017.  
In response to a query re minute ref FG 6689 it was confirmed that an update on the town crest outside the Public Hall would be made available at the earliest opportunity, pending further investigation.

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

FG 6694 None.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE RIVINGTON CHASE DEVELOPMENT FROM MR PAUL WHITTINGHAM, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BOLTON COUNCIL PLANNING:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

FG 6695 Mr Whittingham informed Members that planning permission for a hybrid application on the site was granted in September 2015 and was subject to a legal agreement to seek contributions and control the way that the development happened. It had been originally envisaged as a single developer/entity developing the site but this had not been progressed. Bolton Council had tried to get all landowners together in a series of collaboration meetings to try and gather all information required to progress work on site and address the concerns of local residents and the Town Council. A memorandum of understanding which seeks to get all of landowners committed to working together on a site wide basis has been drafted and is ready for signature. This will enable the original development

envisaged to progress but will be delivered on a phased basis, giving due consideration to all of the site wide issues such as contamination, surface water, sewerage and highways and requiring all landowners to work together. This document will be shared with Town Council very shortly once everyone has signed up to it. Bolton Council has funded the work on this and also on re writing the s106 legal agreement. It was acknowledged that the original intention to provide all the community benefits including highways, education, affordable housing will now have to be carried out on a landowner phased basis, equally shared between all developers. Example is highways Bolton Council is funding design work to see how they can move from the highways being delivered on a phased basis when a certain number of houses are built, to moving to a cost per house for each developer. Bolton Council is also looking at a way it can frontload some of those highway costs, to be topped up by contributions from the developers and is also committed to trying to find external funding for this purpose to try and progress highway development through the site as quickly as possible.

The draft legal agreement is almost ready to be signed by all landowners, this will then become a public document. Reassurance was given that frequent meetings were taking place to get relevant consultees and parties involved to reach agreement and make sure development is controlled, with sufficient safeguards in place.

It was acknowledged that there was great concern about contamination. The Bellway site one of easiest parts to develop and de-contaminate, however Bolton Council would be pushing for other areas to be de-contaminated ahead of house being occupied in late 2018. There was also a requirement to resolve issues around surface water and unblocking of Nellie's Clough and other water courses running through the site, along with the de-contamination of the reservoir and to ensure sufficient capacity within the site to prevent the river being overloaded.

Members were informed that the new school development and health centre Are going to progress and highways were being designed and costed up. There were planned meetings with Environment Agency and United Utilities are taking place to ensure robust controls and processes are put in place. Funding bids for roads are being put into central government through Greater Manchester.

Mr Whittingham then responded to queries from Members as follows:

- Q. Will de contamination be done before houses are built?  
A. This will be done on a phased basis. The Bellway part of the site will have to be de-contaminated before any houses can be built there and

was confirmed that the next area of land would be de-contaminated while Bellway were building their development. There would be discussions regarding de-contamination of land owned by Railtrack with Morris Homes. If it were to happen that Bellway scheme progressed quickly and next phase wasn't ready, there would have to be a 'gold standard' for the de-contamination process and there would be conditions written into the contract which any developer would have to comply with. It was confirmed that the memorandum of public intent would be available to view as a public document and that the legal agreement would bind both existing and future landowners.

Q. In relation to contamination, is there a higher risk in certain areas and has that been addressed? What about a bus only link road route through the site? Why was the road off Chorley New Road down to Roden's Farm never developed as would have alleviated traffic problems on Chorley New Road and at the Beehive roundabout.

A. It was confirmed that Bellway site has pockets of contamination including the mound at the back of site and all these will need de-contamination. This area will be easier to de contaminate than others which is reason why it is being progressed. There is a significant cost attached to development of the whole site and from the developers' point of view and to get the developers' confidence that it is worth investing on the site there needs to be some indication that the housing market can come to Rivington Chase and get good value out of the houses being sold. A significant amount of money in the region of £1 million has already been invested by Bluemantle and Bellway without any receipt of income from sale of houses on site.

Bolton Council is trying to find a way through various options to enable a link road to be built, either through external funding or trying to get access from Mansell Way. This is proving difficult with issues about a 'ransom strip' located on the Middlebrook access road, which Bolton Council are trying to address.

Q. The development on the Loco Works site is clearly most important thing that has happened to Horwich for many years and naturally people have concerns. This is why it is so important that Bolton Council officers are prepared to give a commitment to attend both Town Council and the Liaison Committee on a regular basis and so that any fears or doubts can be alleviated as the process continues.

A. The next meeting of the Liaison Committee is planned for October with an expectation of collaboration between Council and landowners before this, with a written update provided if landowners

do not attend the Liaison Committee meeting. It is important to understand what is being proposed along with timescales as it was acknowledged that this has not happened in the past and Bolton Council are looking to overcome this.

- Q. Concerns expressed about phasing and the need for a site wide plan.
- A. The master plan was a document in the original planning consent, and gave a rough indication of location of uses on the site e.g. open space areas, but was not finalised detail. The phasing plan once approved will break down those areas into individual phases and begin to structure where the roads are going to go. While fully aware of what a master plan requires and with regard to comparisons with the Buckshaw Village development about contamination concerns, it was pointed out that this was done on a master plan basis because there were only two owners who could deliver infrastructure and sell it on with everything in place, but this isn't possible at Rivington Chase. A more detailed master plan would have been preferable but delivery can be done on a phased basis with the skills and influence of the officers, without a site wide master plan that everybody has to sign up to which could result in further delays. Phasing has yet to be finally approved and Bellway have put an application in that can be split up from some of the other land owned by Bluemantle. There will be a viability report on each phase developed, replacing the previous requirement for one after every 850 houses.
- Q. Should the fact that the site is contaminated be on a register? Is it being admitted that it is contaminated? Is there a register? If it appears on record that the site is contaminated surely it should be on a register?
- A. An assurance was given that these points about the register will be passed on to Environmental Services and why they have not appeared on the register. Site contamination showed up in phase 1 and 2 studies that were submitted as part of the 2014 application. Conditions within planning consent required further work to take place and those would need to be submitted as part of the reserved matters application by Bellway. There will then also have to be a validation process once de-contamination has been completed.
- Q. Is there or will there be a comprehensive traffic analysis regarding construction traffic on Rivington Chase and Chorley New Road school?
- A. Highway capacity is being assessed as part of design of new junction well in advance and are fully aware of the school and other development taking place. The reason why the Council is trying to find a way to frontload some of the highway works is to make

improvements early and recoup the money as the site is being developed. The link road is key and ways will be found to deliver it on a phased basis.

Q. Is the s106 agreement being re-written being reduced in any way e.g. already no funding for sport? Outline planning permission stated that until there was a master plan in place no construction should begin. Given that there is already an application for construction from Bellway Homes what guarantees are there that the link road will be built? In the absence of a master plan each developer is going to look after their own area of the site and if the link road not going to be built until the end of development, there will be additional traffic on Chorley New Road which is already at full capacity.

A. Although the link road will be part of the phased works but the aim is to get construction traffic off the junction with Chorley New Road as quickly as possible although this is down to the timing of the delivery of that road.

Q. Concerns about types of contamination – dangers of asbestos are already known – but what about PCBs? Surely this should be addressed before any building takes place on the site?

A. With regard to PCBs in the de-contamination process on the site there will have to be a validation report which says that it is fit for living on etc. Where there is specific contamination soils may have to be removed and replaced with de-contaminated soil.

Q. Why can the planned junction 7 on M61 not be re-instated as this would alleviate traffic congestion in Horwich?

A. New motorway junctions on motorways are the decision of Highways England. It was confirmed that there had been no discussion at the Liaison Committee about rail travel and parking capacity at Horwich Parkway.

Mr Whittingham was thanked for his attendance and interesting update and it was hoped that he would return to Council to give further updates as development progressed.

**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 6696 Resolved to move out of Committee to allow a member of the public to speak.

Mr David Barnes stated that although he was generally in favour of the Loco Works development, was not re-assured about contamination as it appeared

that there was going to be de-contamination work taking place after Bellway had developed the site, with the potential risk to residents living on the new estate. He was also unconvinced about the strategic plan for the site. He pointed out that there was no mention of Red Moss which was a triple SSI and the potential for contamination of that area. He asked if Members would raise the question of whether there would be protection for this particular site as the development presented an opportunity to make this site more publicly accessible.

Resolved to move back into Committee.

It was noted that the developers were building on the least contaminated part of the site, contamination is worse in other parts. When de-contamination starts this may affect properties on Avonhead, Rotherhead Close and parts of Mason Street. The contamination issue may have an effect on the saleability of houses on the new development and if not managed properly through a master plan will have a detrimental effect on the development. While no-one had a problem with the re-development of the Loco Works site it was important that this was done properly as it was the biggest development in the town's history and a phased master plan was not satisfactory for this purpose. There was great concern about de-contamination being carried out after development starts as contamination is potentially airborne, affecting people in the surrounding area, including schools. The difficulty is that there is a lack of information on the levels of contamination.

There was a view expressed about the use of alarmist language regarding the development, as this doesn't take into account the professionalism of civil engineers, used to dealing with contaminated areas along with the specialist skills and procedures used in this kind of work and it was inconceivable that the Council working with the Environment Agency and HSE would allow contamination. While this is an important issue which needs to be addressed, there should be recognition of the professionalism of those involved. It was recognised that fear is often created by word of mouth, so there should be more information available in order to reassure people. The importance of colleagues from Bolton Council regularly attending Town Council was emphasised, to make sure that factual information is available as opposed to rumour and misinformation. An assurance was given that Red Moss will be vigorously protected.

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE HORWICH IN BLOOM ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 AUGUST 2017:

FG 6697      Resolved to receive the minutes of the Horwich in Bloom Advisory Committee held on 2 August 2017.

TO APPROVE THE LOCATION AND COSTS OF A NEW 8M FLAGPOLE AT THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE ON LEVER PARK AVENUE:

FG 6698 The Town Clerk had informed Members that Bolton Council Corporate Property Services had confirmed that there was no possibility of replacing the flag pole on the front of the Public Hall due to the poor state of the existing brickwork. The grassed area at the side of the Public Hall was unsuitable due to the location of trees. Following up on a suggestion made at a previous Council meeting the Town Clerk and Councillor Kellett as Leader of the Council met with an officer from Bolton CPS and a contractor at the Garden of Remembrance to discuss the possibility of locating a flag pole on the grassed area between the Cenotaph and the banking. An agreement was made that the raising and lowering of the flag would be carried out by building support staff based at the Public Hall who had been trained to do this.

The cost for the installation of an 8 metre high pole with internal mechanism attached to a steel plate inside a trench to be encased with concrete was quoted at £1,350 plus VAT. As there was a time constraint due to the requirement to apply for planning permission at an additional cost of £195, this had already been authorised by the Town Clerk in agreement with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Opposition. In response to a query the Town Clerk confirmed that a meeting with a representative from the British Legion had been scheduled for the following day.

Resolved to approve the location and costs of a new 8 metre flagpole at the Garden of Remembrance at a cost of £1,350 plus VAT plus additional cost application for planning permission at £195.

TO CONSIDER SUBMISSION OF ANY RESOLUTION BY HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION BY DELEGATES AT THE 73<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF L.A.L.C. ON 18 NOVEMBER 2017 AND TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6699 It was confirmed that the Council's representatives were Councillor Bullock and Councillor Jarvis. Members were informed that any resolutions would have to be approved by Council in time for the closing date of 18 October 2017.

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE HORWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP (NPAG) ON 6 JUNE 2017 AND TO REVIEW THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR NPAG:

FG 6700 Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the Horwich Neighbourhood Planning Advisory group (NPAG) on 6 June 2017. Members agreed Councillor Root and the Town Clerk to prepare a new terms of reference, based on the existing document, to be made available to NPAG by end August/beginning September for comment, for approval by Council on 11 September.

## ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6701 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and amounting to £ 17,713.78.

## TOWN CLERKS REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6702
- a. Monitoring/feedback forms for grant awards: 28<sup>th</sup> Bolton (Horwich Parish Church ) Guides, Horwich Public Hall Ladies' Bowling Club, Nasmyth Street allotments and Horwich Cricket Club.
  - b. SSAFA: thank you letter for grant funding of £300
  - c. Email from Mr Stephen Laycock re enforcement of display of compulsory tenant fees on advertisements for rental properties with response from Town Clerk and Councillor Cunliffe.
  - d. LALC: June newsletter.
  - e. LALC training workshops: Community Engagement with case studies 28 September 2017 and Chairmanship workshop 16 November 2017.
  - f. Horwich Festival of Racing: thank you letter for Council's financial support for the festival in 2017.
  - g. Groundwork/Heritage Project: invitation to all Members to the Viking March on Saturday 12 August from 10.30 am to Rivington Terraced Gardens.
  - h. Bolton Council Borough Solicitor: letter re. of Community Right to Bid Macron Stadium.
  - i. Letter to Mr Halliwell from the Town Clerk acknowledging matters raised during Public Participation at the meeting of the Town Council on 20 July 2017.

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

## REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6703 Deputy Town Mayor

The Deputy Town Mayor, accompanied by the Consort had attended the new Heritage exhibition which they had found very interesting.

## TO APPROVE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 11 SEPTEMBER 2017:

FG 6704 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 11 September 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.41 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....