

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 November 2017 commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors: P. Wright (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, M. Jarvis, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, S. Rock, G. Stone.
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson
Ged Kelly, Bolton Council Department of People Services
John Goudie, Wilmott Dixon Construction.

DEPUTY CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6735 Councillor Wright outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6736 Resolved to accept apologies for absence from Councillors Holmes and Root as presented.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2017:

FG 6737 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9 October 2017. One abstention was noted.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM GED KELLY, CAPITAL PROGRAMME MANAGER, BOLTON COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF PEOPLE SERVICES AND JOHN GOUDIE, WILMOTT DIXON ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW CHORLEY NEW ROAD C.P. SCHOOL:

FG 6738 Mr Kelly informed Members that Wilmott Dixon had recently started construction on the site and the structure was quickly taking shape and on track for the new building to be available for use at the start of the new academic year in September 2018 as planned, at which point demolition of the old school building would commence. Following demolition this area would be re-instated for use as additional play and recreational space. It was confirmed there had been a delay to the start of construction due to necessary culvert diversion work.

There had been some amendments to the original design including the replacement of cladding on the front elevation with a red and black brick façade as it was thought this was more in keeping with the area. A curved nursery area with a play train, detail around windows and the clock tower salvaged from the old school would to be included to reflect Horwich's industrial heritage.

It was confirmed that as well as a more useable car park there would be two combined entrances/exits to alleviate concerns about traffic on Chorley

New Road. In response to individual Members' queries the following matters were addressed:

- Temporary fencing on Chorley New Road to be removed now that culvert diversion work was completed and the footpath would be re-instated.
- In response to a query about flat roof issues it was confirmed that this type of similar specialised roofing had been used on many similar projects without any problems being reported, with a proven 25 years warranty.
- Concerns at the loss of football pitches in Horwich were acknowledged, it was noted that the school had limited use of their sports field due to grass drainage issues. There had been some discussion with Sport England but it had been confirmed that the field was not a full size pitch. There would be a large amount of grassed area available in addition to hard standing areas and a new multi use games area (MUGA) which could be used throughout the year and which would provide greater diversity of use, an arrangement that had proved successful elsewhere.
- In response to concerns about contamination due to the school's location to the Loco Works site it was confirmed that a full site investigation had been completed prior to the start of construction with no traces of any harmful substances found. A lot of the site was hard standing and as an additional precaution there would be a capping layer of top soil on softer areas.
- It was confirmed that the decision not to use cladding had nothing to do with the Grenfell Tower fire. It was thought that the use of brickwork would be aesthetically more pleasing. The building was already energy efficient by virtue of its design with a built in facility to convert to the use of solar panels if required in future.

Members thought that this was a marvellous design and were impressed with the speed and progress of the building work as well as the subtle design references to reflect Horwich's railway heritage. Members were pleased to learn that there had been full engagement with the school and the local community and pupils involved in planned activities.

With reference to the consultation from Rivington and Blackrod High School, now an Academy, regarding a proposed reduction in pupil numbers from September 2019, Mr Kelly informed Members that this was both surprising and disappointing in view of an expected rise in the demand for secondary school places due to the extensive housing development planned for Horwich over the next few years. The local authority faced challenges due to the lack of central government funding, there had been a disappointing allocation of

basic need funding for 2019 -2020, with the Department for Education calculation failing to recognise the expected growth in primary school admissions. Concerns about the lack of secondary school places had been raised with Rivington and Blackrod and the Department of Education.

Mr Kelly and Mr Goudie were thanked for their interesting presentation.

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

FG 6739 With reference to agenda item 13, Councillors Denton, Kellett and Wright declared an interest as members of the Events Team at St Elizabeth's Church.

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 6740 None.

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE HORWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2017 INCLUDING A REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT SUB GROUP HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2017:

FG 6741 Resolved to note the minutes of the Horwich Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Group held on 17 October including a report of the meeting of the Communication and Engagement Sub Group held on 20 September 2017.

TO APPROVE A CHANGE TO THE DATE OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE FROM 8 JANUARY TO 15 JANUARY 2018:

FG 6742 Resolved to approve a change of date of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee from 8 January 2018 to 15 January 2018.

TO APPROVE A NEW LEASE DOCUMENT WITH HORWICH HERITAGE FOR CONTINUED SOLE USE OF THE HERITAGE CENTRE FOR A FURTHER SIX YEARS FROM 1 JANUARY 2018 AT A COST OF £250 PLUS VAT:

FG 6743 Resolved to approve a new lease document with Horwich Heritage for continued sole use of the Heritage Centre for a further six years from 1 January 2018 at a cost of £250 plus VAT.

TO UNDERTAKE AND APPROVE THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY FOR 2017 -2018:

FG 6744 Resolved to undertake and approve the Council's Annual Risk and Assessment and Health and Safety Policy for 2017 -2018.

TO UNDERTAKE AND APPROVE THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT FOR 2017 - 2018:

FG 6745 Resolved to undertake and approve the Council's Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit for 2017 -2018.

TO APPROVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF £2,500 TO HORWICH MUSIC FESTIVAL IN 2018.
SUBJECT TO FORMAL APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR 2018 – 2019:

FG 6746 Members were in agreement that it was important to encourage and support musical related events and musicians in the local community. Resolved to approve financial support of £2,500 to Horwich Music Festival in 2018, subject to formal approval of the Council's budget for 2018 -2019. 3 abstentions were recorded.

TO APPROVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF £1,500 TO THE EVENTS TEAM OF ST ELIZABETH'S CHURCH FOR THE CEDAR AVENUE VILLAGE GREEN FETE IN 2018, SUBJECT TO FORMAL APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR 2018 -2019:

FG 6747 In response to a query it was confirmed that holding this excellent event each year was a condition of maintaining village green status.

Resolved to approve financial support of £1,500 to the Events Team of St Elizabeth's Church for the Cedar Avenue Village Green Fete in 2018, subject to formal approval of the Council's budget for 2018 – 2019 with three abstentions recorded.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PROGRESS ON WORK TO THE MEMORIAL BENCHES AND THE TOWN CREST OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC HALL:

FG 6748 Members were informed that the town crest had been thoroughly cleaned and the perspex cover replaced. A local resident had painted the frame case and Rotary had replanted the flower bed for spring flowering.

The repair and painting of the two celebration benches outside the Public Hall had not been completed due to recurring vandalism. It had been proposed that the two benches are moved to the area around the bowling green at the rear of the Public Hall where they would be relatively safe from damage and would be appreciated by members of the bowling clubs and members of the public. Horwich North East Councillors have proposed allocation of town centre improvement funding to install two new vandal proof benches to replace the celebration benches and also landscape part of the grassed area to allow access to a new flagged area with full disabled access and additional seating. Further repair and re-painting of the celebration benches had been put on hold until confirmation of replacement benches had been received.

It was noted that there had been a recent increase in anti-social behaviour by youths in the town centre with incidents reported by staff at the library, temporary closure of Fox Street, damage to the bowling green behind the

Public Hall as well as numerous complaints from local shop owners. Members were informed that the police were shortly due to meet with Bolton Community Safety officers in an effort to address these concerns. The Town Clerk confirmed that an invitation to attend Council would be sent to the local PCSO.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6749 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and amounting to £ 9,570.10.

TOWN CLERKS REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6750
- a. Horwich Music Festival: feedback/monitoring form and additional information for 2017 events.
 - b. LALC: annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017.
 - c. Rivington and Blackrod High School: consultation re application to reduce pupil admission numbers from 316 to 300 from September 2019.
 - d. La Garenne Colombes: enquiry about twinning opportunity with Horwich.
 - e. Brazley Community Centre: feedback/monitoring form for grant award of £300.

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

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6751 Town Mayor

The Mayor reported that he had attended several events including the Inner Wheel Coffee Morning and an event to raise awareness of men's cancers with both events raising funds for good causes.

There had been marvellous support for the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service, the organisation had been excellent and British Legion members and volunteers were commended for their efforts. In addition to the annual Poppy Appeal the lamp post poppy scheme had covered most of the town thanks to generous sponsorship by members of the public, local businesses and other organisations including the Town Council. The Mayor had also attended Blackrod's Remembrance commemorations and a Remembrance Concert performed by Horwich RMI Brass Band. Members were informed that the RMI Band had agreed to provide the music at the Lighting of the Civic Christmas Tree event on Friday 1 December.

Rivington Chase Liaison Group

Councillor Bullock that he had attended a meeting of this group and the outcome had been very positive with details of the site wide phasing strategy

and updated remediation strategy made available.

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

FG 6752 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 11 December 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

CHAIR..... DATE.....