

HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall, Lee Lane, Horwich on Thursday 25 January 2018 commencing at 7.15 pm.

PRESENT Councillors: S. Rock (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, R. Graham, M. Jarvis, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, C. Root, G. Stone, P. Wright.
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson.
Councillor R. Silvester, Ward Councillor Horwich North East.
3 members of the press.
15 members of the public.

TOWN MAYOR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

TC 3606 The Town Mayor outlined the procedure.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

TC 3607 Resolved to accept apologies for absence from Councillor Holmes as presented.

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

TC 3608 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:

TC 3609 Resolved to move out of Committee to allow two members of the public to speak.

Mr Halliwell a resident of Horwich referred several matters to the attention of Members which had been raised at the meeting of the Town Council on 21 December 2017. These included a faulty street lamp column on Chorley New Road near the Fire Station, rubbish dumping in Old Station Park and in addition regular flooding at the Chorley New Road entrance to the park. Mr Halliwell acknowledged receipt of the letter received from the Town Council with an update on the issues raised at the last meeting but expressed his dissatisfaction at the length of time it was taking to address these matters.

Mr Stevens another Horwich resident raised the matter of the increase in anti social behaviour in Horwich over the past few months. Local residents were frustrated at the lack of police response and that the use of vigilante action had been widely discussed, particularly on social media as a way of dealing with the current problem and requests had been made for a public meeting to be arranged immediately by the Town Council.

Resolved to return to Committee.

On return to Committee

Mr Stevens was advised that the Town Council was extremely concerned about ASB and acknowledged the seriousness of the situation as several Members had either experienced or witnessed this behaviour directly. While fully sympathetic to the fears and frustrations of local residents the Town Council could not condone any form of vigilante action.

In response to requests that Council to arrange a public meeting, it was confirmed that the Council had been trying unsuccessfully for several months to get a police representative to attend one of its meetings. All Council meetings are open to the public and there is the opportunity for the public to speak. Bolton Council's Community Safety Officer would be attending the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 12 February to provide an update on the current situation and action taken to address the problem and it was hoped that there would also be a police representative present.

It was noted that the police and the community safety team had met and reported on measures to control the current problem, including the prosecution of two of the ringleaders although it appeared that this had not had any deterrent effect. There was a discussion about the causes of the problem, including more early intervention by agencies, use of special officers, previous use of dispersal orders and the lack of police response due to a shortage of resources due to austerity cuts with the police admitting that they are "fire fighting". It was accepted that this is a national problem, however Horwich is a large town and deserves a better police presence. Given the seriousness of the situation it was hoped that Ward Councillors would continue to try to influence the police to act.

All the issues raised would be passed on to the Community Safety Officer with a request for a response in time for the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 12 February which members of the public would be welcome to attend. The suggestion that the Community Safety team and the police be asked to organise a public meeting was noted.

Mr Halliwell was advised by Councillor McKeon that these matters would be again raised with the Ward Councillors for Horwich and Blackrod and confirmed that Councillor Pickup had been working on these and it was confirmed that the faulty streetlight was included in the planned repairs programme. However it should be recognised that due to austerity measures, maintenance of spending on front line service such as social care and children's services took priority over other services such as environment. It was also important to acknowledge that in reality the Town Council does not have direct control over the issues raised but would continue to pass these on for action by Bolton Council through the Ward Councillors.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 21 DECEMBER 2017:

TC 3610 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 21 December 2017.

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 DECEMBER 2017:

TC 3611 Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 21 December 2017.

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2018:

TC 3612 Resolved to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 15 January 2018.

TO APPROVE THE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET FOR 2018 – 2019:

TC 3613 Resolved to approve the Town Council budget for 2018 – 2019 as presented.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SEE ATTACHED LIST:

TC 3614 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and

amounting to £6,276.14.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL AS 22 FEBRUARY 2018:

TC 3615 Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting of the Town Council as 22 February 2018.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Chairperson..... Date.....