

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 12 February 2018 commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, I. Carruthers, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, R. Graham, P. Holmes, M. Jarvis, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, S. Rock, G. Stone, P. Wright.
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson
Councillor S. Pickup, Horwich and Blackrod Ward Councillor Sharon Pendlebury, Community Safety Officer, Bolton Council
3 members from Greater Manchester Police
8 members of the public

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6779 Councillor Root outlined the procedure from the information provided.

On behalf of Members, Councillor Root welcomed Councillor Ian Carruthers, the newly elected Councillor representing Lever Park Ward to the meeting.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6780 None.

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

FG 6781 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 15 January 2018.

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 6782 None.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MEASURES ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIVITY IN HORWICH TOWN CENTRE FROM SHARON PENDLEBURY, COMMUNITY SAFETY OFFICER, BOLTON COUNCIL:

FG 6783 Sharon Pendlebury, Community Safety Officer at Bolton Council along with three members from Greater Manchester Police provided an update on measures undertaken to address the problem of anti-social behaviour in Horwich, and answer questions raised by Councillors and members of the public at previous Council meetings.

Sharon informed members that a number of agencies including GMP and housing providers had been working together to address the problem.

While there is no evidence of a continuing upward trend in ASB, some months show an increase and some a decrease, the figure for January 2018 is higher than January 2017 which may be due to the push to encourage the public and other agencies to report incidents through the 101 service. It has been noted that the reports of crime that have appeared on social media do not tally with those recorded by the 101 service.

Two young people identified as the ringleaders have been arrested and charged with offences. All young people identified are put on the ASB Pathway and the parents of young people who are not involved in ASB but are in the area receive a letter advising that their child is in the locality. ASB is the basis for the authorisation of dispersal orders which if breached is an arrestable offence. Group and individual intervention sessions are used to engage with young people. The youth club had now re-opened after being closed for several weeks, during which time the young people causing issues were dealt with. Police attended the re-opening night and no issues were reported.

Security staff at Middlebrook and staff at the Leisure Centre and Fox Street had received training on how to accurately report individuals committing ASB. Police patrols had been increased when possible, dependent on demand and shift patterns with the use of dispersal powers if required. Damage and vandalism to vehicles was viewed as an ASB issue and should be reported as such by contacting 101 and creating a crime report.

It was acknowledged that the length of waiting time when contacting 101 was a common complaint and in response to a suggestion for either a call back or automated system it was confirmed that this would be taken back as a question. The importance of reporting and recording of incidents of ASB was stressed. The use of 101 triggers a multi-agency response and long standing problems that do not require an instant response can be reported to Bolton Council's ASB team when an officer will share the information with the police. The use of an assigned worker has proved particularly effective in cases of vulnerable people affected by ASB. Another option is the use of the national True Vision website for reporting hate crime with information being passed on to local police.

The use of targeted youth work was found to be effective with a good take up of sessions. Letters go to parents and there is a warning system by letter. A contract is made to set out behaviour and this is rarely breached.

It was acknowledged that police resources had been stretched covering other areas such as Lostock and Blackrod over the last few months, however officers had spent time recently on foot patrol and this had shown

a positive effect and had been welcomed by the public.

In response to a query about an increase in drug use following a rise in the number of used needles found in various locations in the town centre, it was stated that young people involved in ASB are not known as being intravenous drug users. The use of cheap, freely available metal canisters or “poppers” was discussed and the police confirmed that they would look at this as well along with the issue of the increase in the number of used syringes found recently. The police confirmed that stop and search procedures had been carried out and that no issue with knife crime had been identified.

It was agreed that the role of the community was to share information and the police confirmed that they were looking at improving ways of communicating with residents. The use of Crime Stoppers was noted. While the use of social media was often a useful tool, the importance of reporting crime directly to the police was emphasised again. It was expected that increased contact with the public would address discussions about vigilante action that had appeared recently on social media.

In response to requests for a public meeting, it was confirmed that the local policing team had arranged a PACT (Police and Communities Together) meeting on Monday 12 March at 6.30pm at Brazley Community Centre, to which all residents were welcome, subject to confirmation of venue. Sharon indicated that she would be prepared to update Council on a regular basis. Council and Councillors were part of the communication system and Council would put information on its website to keep residents updated.

Sharon and members of the police were thanked for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

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

FG 6784 None.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE HORWICH COMMUNITY CENTRE SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2018:

FG 6785 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Horwich Community Centre Sub Committee held on 24 January 2018 and to commend the positivity of the Committee under the leadership of its Chair, Councillor Root on the extensive programme of improvements due to be carried out at the Centre over the next few months, for the benefit of Centre users and the wider community.

TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET REVIEW TO THE PERIOD ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2017:

FG 6786 Resolved to approve the statement of quarterly accounts and budget review to the period ending 31 December 2017.

TO APPROVE THE QUARTERLY REPORT FROM INTERNAL AUDIT TO 31 DECEMBER 2017:

FG 6787 Resolved to approve the quarterly report from internal audit to 31 December 2017.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE HORWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ACTION GROUP/STEERING GROUP AND TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HORWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ACTION GROUP/STEERING GROUP HELD ON 7 NOVEMBER 2017:

FG 6788 It was reported that the area plan had been approved by Bolton Council and there had been another meeting held on 6 February. A grant application was to be submitted by the end of March and it had been confirmed that the group would qualify for an additional £5,000 funding due to the amount of construction work taking place in Horwich. It had been decided that it was important to widen the scope of the group from a small core and get more members of the public involved, as the process should be community led/driven. A community engagement event was being planned for a Day for St George in April and the use of the Town Council gazebo was offered and accepted.

In response to a query about the end point of the Neighbourhood Plan it was confirmed that the plan would be driven by what people want to change, which sits within Bolton's Local Plan and the NPPF. It was accepted that it was important to avoid raising expectations.

It could not be confirmed as to whether the Holmes Chapel and Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plans had successful outcomes, but they had been included as good examples of templates for presentation of data and information. It was noted that neither of these communities, with between approximately 3,000 – 5,500 residents were not comparable in terms of population with Horwich with its 20,000 residents.

Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the Horwich Neighbourhood Plan Action Group/Steering Committee held on 7 November 2017.

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES OF THE END OF WORLD WAR 1 COMMITTEE AND TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE END OF WORLD WAR 1 COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2018:

FG 6789 Members were updated as follows:

- Council has allocated £1,000 in the budget for 2018 -2019 for end of World War 1 events and projects
- Chorley Council has been contacted regarding illumination of Rivington Pike for the Remembrance period and were still considering this. Horwich Town Council had contributed £500 towards the overall cost in 2014 and would consider similar support in 2018. Council to be kept updated
- Bolton Stone have been asked to provide an estimate for cost of repair the Loco Works War Memorial by including missing pieces of rifle and restoring the faded wording at the front, as shown in the photos distributed to Members
- An approach had been made to a local metalwork firm to install a small black metal fence around the back and sides of the memorial to prevent wreaths being blown away in high winds
- £2,500 has been allocated in the budget for 2018 – 2019 for the repair of the Loco Works War Memorial and there may also be funding available from the War Memorials Trust and this will be investigated once estimates have been received for the work required

It was also noted that Horwich Music Festival had agreed to commemorate end of World War 1 in 2018 with a special performance by Horwich RMI Band during Festival weekend in May. Some Members hoped that events would express commemoration rather than celebration of the end of the conflict and that there would some element of education included.

Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of the End of World War 1 Committee held on 29 January 2018.

TO DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY FROM HORWICH CLERGY:

FG 6790 Members were informed that there had been a suggestion from a member of Horwich clergy as to whether there should be a change to the arrangements for the Remembrance Sunday Parade, in recognition of Armistice Day falling on the same date as Remembrance Sunday and that 2018 is the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1, with a suggestion to move the time of the Remembrance Service forward to 11.00am. The Town Clerk had advised that consultation should take place with the British Legion as they organise both the Parade and Service. A representative from the British Legion had confirmed that they wished to keep the existing arrangements and were looking at adding extra dimensions, as mentioned in the notes of the End of WW1 Committee meeting

TO APPROVE THE DATE OF CIVIC SUNDAY AS 13 MAY 2018:

FG 6791 Resolved to approve the date of Civic Sunday as 13 May 2018.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE FOR THE LIGHTING OF THE CIVIC CHRISTMAS TREE IN 2018 AS FRIDAY 30 NOVEMBER IN VIEW OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY HORWICH ROTARY CLUB:

FG 6792 Traditionally the date for the lighting of the Civic Christmas Tree service has always been the first Friday in December and in 2018 this would be 7 December. An important part of the event is the appearance of the Rotary Santa Sleigh, however Rotary have informed that Town Clerk that they will be unable to meet this obligation due to a previous commitment and have asked if the date could be brought forward to Friday 30 November when they will be able to attend. This is also the date of Westhoughton's lights switch and as a courtesy the Town Clerk has contacted Westhoughton's Clerk who has confirmed this will not impact on their event, although regrettably the 'big switch' will not be available for use at Horwich.

Members welcomed the change of date as it was thought that this would extend the period of the festive season in the community and also that it was important for Rotary to be represented at this event. Resolved to approve confirmation of the date of the lighting of the Civic Christmas Tree as 30 November 2018.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6793 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and amounting to £9,370.45

TOWN CLERKS REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6794
- a. Invitations to all Members: Holy Trinity Namibia Committee's third Annual Family Brunch on Saturday 17 February 9.30am – 12.00pm in the Parish Hall, Church Street; Horwich Churches' Together Women's World Day of Prayer Service on Friday 2 March 7.30pm at Horwich Evangelical Church, Wright Street.
 - b. Invitation to all Members from Horwich Heritage to Open Day/Exhibition of 60 years since the Winter Hill Air Disaster on Saturday 24 February (10am – 1pm) at the Heritage Centre.
 - c. LALC: Chairmanship Workshop Thursday 8 March 7pm – 9pm.
 - d. LALC: Annual Report 2016/2017.
 - e. NALC: Parliament prepares for Lobby day 2018.
 - f. Invitation to all Members from Horwich Community Centre Sub Committee to the 'Celebrate Horwich' Art Exhibition at the Community Centre on Monday 19 February from 11am – 1pm.

Resolved to note the Town Clerk's Report as presented with thanks to Councillor McKeon for arranging donation of the six Celebrate Horwich wall mosaics to Horwich Community Centre.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6795 None.

TO APPROVE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 12 MARCH 2018:

FG 6796 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 12 March 2018.

The meeting closed at 8.34 pm.

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