

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 March 2018 commencing at 7.35pm

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, R. Graham, M. Jarvis, J. Kellett, K. McKeon, S. Rock, G. Stone, P. Wright.
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson
Andrew Suter, Heritage Projects Manager Groundwork CLM

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6797 Councillor Root outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6798 Resolved to accept apologies for absence from Councillor Carruthers and Councillor Holmes with apologies for lateness accepted from Councillor McKeon and Councillor Rock.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2018:

FG 6799 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12 February 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 6800 None.

Councillor McKeon arrived at this point.

TO WELCOME ANDREW SUTER, HERITAGE PROJECTS MANAGER, GROUNDWORK CLM TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON WORK AT RIVINGTON TERRACED GARDENS:

FG 6801 Members were informed that following a delay in the tender process, capital works scheduled to start in early December were now due to start week beginning 19 March. Work done by volunteers was ongoing with over 300 people registered as volunteers with 40 – 60 attending regular Saturday sessions, providing a total of £128,000 in volunteer hours to date as part of matched funding requirements. In addition there had been midweek task days, 70 corporate volunteering days and 20 school visits. This had meant total savings of £179,000 against contract work. Work completed included clearing of 5 miles of footpath, 25,000 sqm of vegetation cleared, Japanese Lake waterfall cleared and de-silted, 200m of 'lost' footpaths located and restored and access cleared to all structures in preparation for

contractors.

Publicity was ongoing via social media and local and national media and newspaper coverage. Successful events that had taken place in 2017 included the Viking March in August and the Lantern Parade and Bonfire in November. Events planned for 2018 will include activities for children for six weeks during the summer, mushroom foraging in September and a fundraiser at a local restaurant in May. There are also plans for heritage crafts and green skills activities and art and introductory photography sessions.

The capital works will result in a significant change to the Terraced Gardens and will start at the Pigeon Tower, moving down to the Great Lawn and Japanese Lake and are expected to take 50 weeks to complete. There will be some disruption expected as some areas will be fenced off for safety reasons but good communication will ensure that the public are kept fully informed.

In response to Members' queries, the following points were noted:

- on completion of capital works, ongoing maintenance would be funded by income generated from events, additional funding through work with Groundwork and support to Rivington Heritage Trust from United Utilities
- in response to a query about wildlife it was explained that in the past the lower woodlands had not been maintained, allowing the proliferation of rhododendron growth which had caused the soil to become acidic and prevent the growth of native species and causing trees to become unhealthy. Trees have been cut down to encourage the growth of a mixed canopy which will encourage wildlife such as insects and small mammals.
- there has been consultation with and support for the Woodland Trust tree planting project at Smithills
- contingencies had been put in place for planned events so as not to increase traffic congestion in the area especially at weekend. Regular parking is available off Sheephouse Lane with additional space available on the field adjacent the Information Centre and also at Rivington and Blackrod High School and car sharing is encouraged.

Councillor Rock arrived at this point.

- it was confirmed that there were not a lot of trees that would respond to coppicing but permission has been requested from DEFRA to produce and sell charcoal on site
- it was accepted that there were challenges in providing disabled access but if capital works come in under budget it is planned to re-surface part of the road from Roynton Cottage.

Andrew was thanked for his attendance and update on the inspirational work that was being undertaken at the Terraced Gardens.

Councillor Kellett left the meeting at this point.

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

FG 6802 None.

TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HORWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2018 AND THE DRAFT COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN:

FG 6803 Councillor Kellett returned to the meeting at this point.

Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the Horwich Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on 6 February 2018 and the Draft Communication and Engagement Plan. It was noted that Members were pleased to see this initiative was progressing well.

TO RECEIVE AND UPDATE ON HIGHWAY SAFETY ISSUES ON GREEN LANE:

FG 6804 Members were in general agreement that the Town Council should now move forward with the installation of a fence along the boundary of Green Lane playing field, although with confirmation of responsibility for ongoing maintenance by a third party. There was some doubt as to whether the school owned or leased the playing field and due to this the possibility of the Town Council taking over ownership of the field could be an item for discussion at a later date once the facts had been established

Before progressing further it was agreed that it was important to have definite legal confirmation from Bolton Council regarding ownership of the field and also that the Town Council may engage the services of any contractor of its choice as part of the tendering process.

Resolved that the Town Clerk request legal confirmation from Bolton Council to establish responsibility and ownership for Green Lane playing fields before starting the tendering process. Council to be updated at F & G P in April with a view to reaching a final decision at F & G P in May, with the Town Clerk to refer the matter to the Ward Councillors if and when necessary.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6805 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and amounting to £1,932.15

TOWN CLERKS REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6806
 - a. The Post Office: correspondence about proposed new post office at 519 Chorley New Road, Horwich.
 - b. Wright Place Luncheon Club: feedback form for grant award of £150 in October 2017.
 - c. Local Council Public Advisory Service: New Review of Ethical Standards in Local Government.

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

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6807 Town Mayor

The Town Mayor reported that it had been an interesting month with a varied amount of engagements including the 60th Commemoration of the Winter Hill Air Crash, the Mayor of Bolton’s Ball, the Horwich Palladium social event organised by Rotary and tree planting at Smithills Moor. The Deputy Mayor and Consort were thanked for their support.

PACT Meeting

Councillors McKeon and Rock had attended the PACT meeting held earlier and reported that there had been a reasonable number of the public in attendance. The issues of anti social behaviour and car damage were brought up and would be addressed at the next meeting at the end of May. It had also been reported that another officer would be covering additional areas and this would free up other officers to cover Horwich. It had been a very positive meeting with reassurance provided by the police.

Members were reminded about two upcoming events which were the Pike Fell Race on Easter Saturday and Horwich Music Festival in early May.

TO APPROVE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 9 APRIL 2018:

- FG 6808 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 9 April 2018.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

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