

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 January 2019 commencing at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: K. McKeon (in the Chair), M. Brady, J. Bullock, S. Chadwick, K. Denton, R. Graham, P. Holmes, J. Kellett, G. Stone, P. Wright.
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson

DEPUTY CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 6939 Councillor McKeon outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 6940 Apologies were accepted from Councillors Carruthers, Holmes and Root.

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

FG 6841 None.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT MAY PUT QUESTIONS OR MAKE OBSERVATIONS REGARDING MATTERS IN RELATION TO WHICH THE TOWN COUNCIL HAS POWERS OR DUTIES OR WHICH AFFECT THE PARISH. MAXIMUM PERIOD 15 MINUTES:

FG 6942 None.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2018:

FG 6943 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 3 December 2018.

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF £3,500 FROM HORWICH FESTIVAL OF RACING FOR EVENTS IN 2019, SUBJECT TO FORMAL APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR 2019 -2020:

FG 6944 An ambitious, extensive programme of activities was planned for 2019 and considerable support was expressed for Council to continue to provide financial assistance for this and other similar events such as the Carnival. Out of consideration for local businesses, the Festival of Racing had taken the decision that road closures would not start until 6pm on the Saturday. In response to a query about the £25K expenditure to Bolton Council it was assumed that this was for event management costs as well as provision of staff support. A request for a more detailed breakdown of these costs for future reference was duly noted.

Resolved to approve the request for financial support of £3,500 from Horwich Festival of Racing for events in 2019, subject to formal approval of the Council's budget for 2019 - 2020.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT ABOUT THE TOWN GUIDE AND TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN ALTERNATIVE FORMAT IN 2019:

FG 6945 All Members had received a report about the town guide and a recommendation for an alternative format in 2019 in response to an increasing lack of take

up of the town guide in its traditional format of an A5 colour booklet. The last guide was published in summer 2017 at a cost of £750 plus VAT for a total of 5,000 copies. The publication date for the next guide due in summer 2019 and to date there are approximately 1,400 guides left.

One option for consideration would be the production of a glossy, coloured A2 folding leaflet containing a map of the town centre including a heritage trail, other information and photographs, using the services of a local printing firm. The final design, layout and costs to be approved by the Marketing and Promotions Sub Committee and reported back to Council.

While there were some reservations expressed about the loss of the town guide, it was accepted that there was a generational change in attitude with a rise in the use of social media over the last 5 – 10 years. It was noted that while there were constraints on the amount of information that could be included in the leaflet, consideration could be given to the option of producing additional leaflets in the future. The leaflet would be a useful promotional tool for Horwich and all it has to offer, for both residents and visitors, with more detailed information continuing to be available on the website.

Resolved to approve the recommendation of the report about the town guide and that Council produces a glossy, coloured, A2 size folding leaflet in 2019 as an alternative to the town guide and this to be reviewed at a later date.

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL TO NOMINATE HORWICH RMI CLUB AS AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE:

FG 6946 Concerns had been raised about the future of Horwich RMI Club and the possibility of its closure with the land being sold to a developer. Although there were other smaller venues such as Horwich Community Centre and Brazley Community Centre, since the scaling down of the Leisure Centre only the RMI Club had the capacity to hold large events. Registering the club as an Asset of Community Value would provide a six month period which would allow the Council and the wider community time to make a reasoned decision on its future. It would also show that the Council was pro-active and recognising the importance of this building to the local community.

An Asset of Community Value is defined as a building or other land if its main use has recently been or is presently used to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future. The Localism Act states that “social interests” include cultural, recreational and sporting interests. Once registered with the local authority and should the owner wish to sell property or land, a moratorium period of six months is triggered, allowing time for a community organisation to develop a proposal and raise the money required to bid to buy the asset.

Resolved to nominate Horwich RMI Club as an Asset of Community Value and to undertake future consideration of other buildings or land as recommended by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 6947 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment amounting to £15,882.88 as follows:

Petty Cash		£60.00
S. Turner-Preece	N/Plan online survey	£70.00
Leach Briely	Payroll services	£150.00
Nationwide Capital Finance	Copier rental	£450.00
Signs of the Times	New civic plaque	£495.66
Bolton Council	Christmas lights	£7,800.00
Salaries and Wages Account		£5,000.00
HM Customs and Excise	PAYE Tax Month 9	£1,857.22

Payments to S. Turner-Preece made in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 sched 9, to Signs of the Times in accordance with LGA 1972 s137 and to Bolton Council in accordance with LGA 1972 s144.

TOWN CLERKS REPORT – (EMAILED TO ALL MEMBERS) FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 6948
- a. LALC: newsletter December 2018.
 - b. Email to St Catherine's Parents' Association re. Christmas Lantern Parade.
 - c. LALC: nomination for ballot for outgoing Town Mayor to attend Buckingham Palace Garden Party on 15 May 2019.

The Town Clerk's Report was noted.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 6949 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - following the negative reaction to the draft survey form, a re-draft would be taken back for approval to the next meeting of the group.

Royal British Legion – despite difficult circumstances in 2018 it was expected that funds raised through the Poppy Appeal would exceed those of last year.

Environmental Advisory Group – it was reported that North West Electricity had responded to a report of material which may have contained asbestos near the electricity substation on Mason Street, and had confirmed that asbestos was present and had immediately removed the material.

Reports from Representatives were noted.

TO APPROVE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 11 FEBRUARY 2019:

FG 6949 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting as 11 February 2019.

The meeting closed at 8.23 pm.

Chair..... Date.....