

## HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Hall, Horwich Community Centre, Beaumont Road, Horwich on Monday 10 May 2021 commencing at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: D. Grant (in the Chair) I. Aldcroft, M. Baines, J. Bostocksmith, S. Burke, S. Denton, C. Rotheram, G. Stone, S. Williamson, P. Wright.  
C. Hutchinson, Town Clerk.  
David Johnstone, GMP Geographical Inspector for Bolton West (via Zoom)

### CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 7272 Councillor Grant outlined the procedure from the information provided.

On behalf of the Council, the Chair welcomed everyone back to the first in-person Council meeting since March 2020 and also welcomed Councillor Sam Williamson, newly elected Member for Lever Park Ward to the meeting.

### TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 7273 Resolved to accept apologies from Councillors Brady, Chadwick, Coward and Rock.

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

FG 7274 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 7275 None.

### TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM DAVID JOHNSTONE, GEOGRAPHICAL INSPECTOR FOR BOLTON WEST ON HOW GMP ARE ADDRESSING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN HORWICH AND TO MAKE COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON THIS MATTER:

FG 7276 Inspector Johnstone informed Members since the last time he had addressed Council the main initiative put in place were S34 dispersal powers to minimise and mitigate anti-social behaviour. This was put in place following the second stage of lifting of lockdown restrictions, to manage residents' expectations over the recent bank holiday weekend after patrols had been required to deal with several disturbances in the town centre. S34 is advertised in advance to prevent problems in the community and has been used twice in the last year. However, it was pointed out that it is fairly resource intensive and is not a permanent solution to the problem of anti-social behaviour which needs to be dealt with on a longer-term basis by addressing issues as they arise.

In response to Members' queries Inspector Johnstone confirmed that s34 powers had been used in other areas of Bolton, however his remit was Bolton West and he stressed that a more pro-active approach was preferable. Intelligence had shown that in addition to locals, youths were coming to Horwich from other areas

such as Westhoughton, Deane, Daubhill and with some crossover from Lancashire, due to the location of the local high school. There was little evidence to prove that young people from other areas came to Horwich with the deliberate intention of committing anti-social behaviour, the problem has a tendency to propagate itself when there is a large gathering of young people and the influence of alcohol and certain substances involved adds to the anti-social behaviour committed by a few perpetrators. Following the easing of lock down it was expected that there would be problems and there had been communication with colleagues in Lancashire. It had been found the use of S34 although dissipating the problem in a specific area usually resulted in moving anti-social behaviour to another location and should be used sparingly with other measures to address it such as CCTV as a deterrent, environmental improvements to make people feel safer and hotspot patrolling in certain locations as a longer-term solution. It was suggested that consideration should be given to why there is a lack of take up of youth provision among a certain group and to find out what will divert them from anti-social behaviour. It was agreed that going forward it was important to have a youth engagement strategy, getting various groups, agencies and individuals with relevant experience to work together and with the police. There were many groups such as Bolton Wanderers, Bolton Lads & Girls Club, the Fire Service and various sport and recreational organisations already involved in youth provision. The Town Council was hoping to set up a youth council in local high schools and the Community Centre is used by Horwich Boxing Club on a regular basis with classes for young people.

Inspector Johnstone was thanked for his presentation and it was hoped that next time he would be able to attend in person.

There was general agreement by Members that the Town Council could play its part in addressing the issues raised and it was commented that the effectiveness of CCTV is limited if it is just recorded and works more effectively if live streamed, but this comes at great expense. Entry and exit CCTV is shown to be very effective at catching cross county crime.

It was agreed that there had been a prolonged and general lack of investment in youth provision. Horwich had proved to be an attractive location for large gatherings of youths to congregate in a large park in the town centre with food and drink outlets in close proximity. There was concern that in many cases parental responsibility appeared to be absent. It was agreed that a multi-fold approach was required and is something that the Town Council could become involved with.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY ON 12 APRIL 2021:

FG 7277 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held remotely on 12 April 2021.

TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL THAT HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL SUBMIT A NOMINATION TO BOLTON COUNCIL FOR HILTON COMMUNITY CENTRE AS AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE:

FG 7278 Councillor Grant provided a brief background to this proposal. There was

concern that Horwich Table Tennis Club who had enjoyed use of the building for many years had been unable to update the lease and it was found out that the building, car park and playing fields had been added to Bolton Council's SAMP list. There was great concern that these facilities could be lost at a time when the population of Horwich is expanding and there is a lack of community facilities. It was noted that Horwich Community Centre was at full capacity and unable to pass on any enquiries due to a shortage of alternative community space in Horwich, in particular Hilton which was under used. It was confirmed that Hilton Community Centre serves as a central hub for table tennis in Bolton.

Resolved to approve a proposal that Horwich Town Council submits a nomination to Bolton Council for Hilton Community Centre as an Asset of Community Value.

**TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:**

FG 7279 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment amounting to £18,198.00

C. Hutchinson (Petty cash)	50.00
Bolton Council (Spring planting Horwich town centre)	1,398.00
Transfer to Mayor's Account (Mayoral allowance 2021 – 2022)	1,750.00
Transfer to Salaries and Wages Account	10,000.00
Horwich Visiting Service	1,250.00
Horwich Dementia Café	1,250.00
Rivington Heritage Trust	1,250.00
Trust Music	1,250.00

Payment to Bolton Council was made in accordance with LGA 1972 s144. Payments to Horwich Visiting Service, Horwich Dementia Café, Rivington Heritage Trust and Trust Music were donations from the Town Mayor's Charity account for 2020 – 2021.

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

- FG 7280
- a. NALC: MHCLG consultation into electronic communication infrastructure.
  - b. Stocks Park Residents Association: letter of thanks for grant award of £143.88 for cost of annual Zoom subscription.
  - c. LALC: Open Spaces Society Grant a Green Campaign.
  - d. Fields in Trust: notice of AGM 2021.
  - e. Summary of Town Councillors' casework.

**REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:**

- FG 7281
- a. Town Mayor – Councillor Denton invited all Members to attend a short service of dedication for former Town Mayor and Councillor Ken Denton's memorial bench at the Garden of Remembrance, Lever Park Avenue on 22 May at 3.00pm.

b. Horwich Ward Councillors – Councillor Wright reported that Blackrod residents had voted in favour of the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan; had been contacted regarding ASB outside Sainsburys on Lee Lane and a request made for the removal of the bench, which was currently under discussion as the bench is also used by many older people; following reports of flooding at Crown Lane/Vale Avenue confirmed that this would be addressed by drainage work; planning application for Horwich Loco Works site Heritage Core had been approved at Bolton Council Planning.

c. None.

Reports from Representatives were noted.

TO APPROVE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 14 JUNE 2021:

FG 7282 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting as 14 June 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....