

## 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 November 2022 commencing at 7.15 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: D. Grant (in the Chair) I. Aldcroft, M. Baines, J. Bostocksmith, M. Brady, S. Chadwick, S. Rock, C. Rotheram, G. Stone, S. Williamson, P. Wright.  
C. Hutchinson, Town Clerk.  
1 member of the public.

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 7472 Councillor Grant outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

FG 7473 Apologies were accepted from Councillor Denton.

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

FG 7474 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 7475 None.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2022:

FG 7476 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 October 2022.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY GROUPS SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2022:

FG 7477 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Grants to Voluntary Groups Sub Committee held on 26 October 2022.

TO CONSIDER A MOTION THAT COUNCIL RESOLVES NOT TO CO-OPT TO FILL THE VACANCY IN BRAZLEY WARD:

FG 7478 Resolved that Horwich Town Council does not co-opt to fill the vacancy in Brazley Ward, for the reason that election or co-option process would delay the announcement of boundary review changes in 2023.

TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2022:

FG 7479 Resolved to approve the statement of quarterly accounts for the period ending 30 September 2022.

TO APPROVE THE QUARTERLY REPORT FROM INTERNAL AUDIT TO THE PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2022:

FG 7480 Resolved to approve the quarterly report from internal audit to the period ending

30 September 2022.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR GRANT ON WINTER GRITTING AND CONSIDER THAT HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL WRITES TO BOLTON COUNCIL TO EXPRESS ITS CONCERN AT THE RECENT HIGHWAYS BUDGET SAVING PROPOSAL FOR A REDUCTION IN WINTER GRITTING PROVISION IN HORWICH:

FG 7481 Councillor Grant informed Members although there had been a welcome U-turn on this matter he proposed that Horwich Town Council should still write to Bolton Council regarding the review of winter gritting, due to the fact that the Town Council currently contributes £12,000 per year for gritting of additional roads in Horwich, and which he viewed as double taxation.

Councillor Brady confirmed that the winter gritting review stated that every road would be risk ranked, with an indicative map of the road network put out based on guidance for highways and with the Council opting for the smallest allocation. This had not been finalised and was indicative of a worst-case scenario and as things currently stand nothing would change for either the current year 2022 – 23 or next year 2023 - 24. Guidance for all highway works was that everything would be risk ranked and moving forward and using set criteria this would justify why some roads would not be gritted. The statutory requirement is for the highways authority to clear roads as practically as possible, with no obligation to clear every road and at some point, this would have to be phased in. It was noted that many roads currently gritted are historical and it was uncertain as to whether New Chapel Lane and the top of Brownlow Road were included. If this was the case then it would put the Town Council in difficult position continuing to pay for roads to be gritted that did not fall within the specification used by Bolton Council.

It was hoped that those roads paid for by the Town Council to be gritted would be included going forward with concern expressed at the prospect of the Town Council continuing to fund gritting of these additional roads. It was not the job of the Town Council to fund gaps left by Bolton Council and it was suggested that Town Council should consider removing funding for additional gritting for next year 2023 – 24.

Resolved to approve Councillor Grant's motion that while the Town Council welcomes the recent U-turn on maintaining current gritting in Horwich, it is aware that this is a temporary reprieve and expresses concern at reductions to the service in the future, the Town Clerk and Councillor Grant to draft the letter to Bolton Council.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR GRANT ON HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL'S AMBITION TO OBTAIN THE FIELD AT TELFORD STREET AND CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR GRANT WRITES TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF BOLTON COUNCIL TO EXPRESS CONCERN AT THE DELAY IN THE SAMP PROCESS FOR THIS SITE AND THAT THE COUNCIL SUPPORTS COUNCILLOR GRANT'S QUERY REGARDING THE VALIDITY OF THIS DECISION AND REQUESTS THAT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL ON THIS MATTER, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY:

FG 7482 Councillor Grant informed Members that recently he had met with the Chief Executive of Bolton and Borough Solicitor who had both agreed that the Executive

Cabinet Member's office had been in error when stating that the Town Council did not qualify for the CAT process and that both agreed to write to the Town Council to confirm this and to request that it could put forward business proposals. This would then enable the Telford Street Steering Group to work on proposals so that some start-up funds could be allocated in the budget for 2023 – 24. As the letter had not yet been received, it was agreed that the Town Council should still write to the Chief Executive to encourage written confirmation of the verbal assurance received by Councillor Grant, thanking them for the meeting and looking forward to their reply.

Councillor Brady explained about SAMP evaluation and in response to a query confirmed that North East Ward Councillors had been looking at various possible funding streams, with the onus going forward for all interested parties to work together to prevent disposal of the land. Plans had been discussed for retention of an open field, some fencing with an area for dog walking with bins, an area for children's play equipment with thought given to future maintenance costs as there was no vehicular access. The perimeter would have to be cleared of overgrown brambles, with Neighbourhood Services funding to put trees in for an orchard and also looking at installing an adult gym, dependent on funding.

Resolved to approve a motion that the Town Council writes to the Chief Executive of Bolton Council to express concern at the delay in the SAMP process for land at Telford Street but welcomes the verbal assurance given by the Chief Executive and the Borough Solicitor at the recent meeting with Councillor Grant that the Town Council is eligible to express interest in the land at Telford Street as part of the CAT process and looks forward to receiving written confirmation at the earliest opportunity and hopes that going forward, the Chief Executive works in partnership with Horwich Town Council on this matter for the benefit of the local community.

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

FG 7483 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment amounting to £ 4,823.97

Leach Briely Accountants (Internal audit to 30.09.22)	£516.00
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Sage UK Ltd (Accounts package – November)	£86.40
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Payment to the following was made in accordance with LGA 1972 s137:

The Bridge Church Horwich	£500.00
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Horwich Public Hall Vets. Bowling Club	£210.00
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The Wright Place Luncheon Club	£200.00
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Bolton Mountain Rescue	£500.00
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Horwich National Spiritualist Church	£500.00
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Horwich Community Centre

£200.00

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

- FG 7484
- a. Record of outstanding motions.
  - b. Bolton Council: notification of nomination for an Asset of Community Value - the University of Bolton Stadium from Bolton Wanderers Supporters Society Ltd.
  - c. Bolton Council: decision on part successful nomination for an Asset of Community Value – ‘Pocket Park’, land adjacent to 244 Chorley New Rd, Horwich, Bolton BL6 5NP
  - d. Report on Town Council’s Jubilee events 2/3/4 June 2022.
  - e. New Chapel United Reform Church: feedback form for grant of £500 – July 2022.
  - f. St Catherine’s PCC: feedback/monitoring form for grant of £500 – July 2022.
  - g. Leverhulme Academy Trust: consultation with stakeholders and interested parties.
  - h. Summary of Town Councillors’ casework.

The Town Clerk’s report was noted.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 7485
- a. Town Mayor of Horwich  
Town Mayor reported that he had been very busy month, having attended The Bolton Sea Cadets Trafalgar Dinner, drinks reception at Bolton Mayor’s Parlour and Bolton’s Remembrance concert, a Bollywood event in aid of Bolton Mayor’s charities, Armistice and Remembrance events in Horwich and Blackrod and a concert with Eagley Band to celebrate 100 years of Rotary in the borough.

The Deputy Town Mayor had attended Bolton’s Armistice event on behalf of the Town Mayor.

b. Horwich Ward Councillors

Councillor Brady:

- meeting with Area Forum Co-ordinator who confirmed that Highways were progressing with the programme of TROs in approximately 83 locations, including at the top of Green Lane.
- flood alleviation scheme in Station Park progressing well and on target for completion in December with update expected in next couple of weeks for order of new children’s play equipment.
- a package of drainage works was planned for Pickups, Singleton and Ormston Avenues as well as improvements at junction of Singleton Avenue and Castle Crescent.
- The new Horwich Health Centre would be discussed at Bolton Planning Committee on 17 November.
- Councillor Brady announced her intention to step down from Neighbourhood Plan and recommended that remaining grant funding is

returned to Groundwork. If anyone wanted to take over, she would be happy to pass on all relevant information.

Councillor Wright:

- in response to complaints from some members of the public about Ridgmont Cemetery, had contacted Bolton Council and had been assured they would send out a grass cutting crew.
- attended Remembrance Services in Horwich & Blackrod.
- during work being done on Ramsbottom Road near Kildonan House, contractors had removed the street sign, Bolton Council had been informed and said they would investigate.

Councillor Grant:

- had met with Chief Executive and Borough Solicitor regarding Telford Street as discussed earlier and aside from case work everything else had been covered by Councillors Brady and Wright in their reports.

Councillor Williamson left the meeting at this point.

c. Representatives on Outside Bodies

Councillor Rotheram had attended a meeting of the Town Centre Steering Group and reported that Bolton Council had removed £525,000 from the Town Centre Regeneration fund and noted that unfortunately there had been no business representation present.

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS ABOUT TO BE TRANSACTED IT IS ADVISABLE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST THAT THE PRESS AND PUBLIC SHOULD BE TEMPORARILY EXCLUDED AND IF PRESENT SHOULD BE ASKED TO LEAVE.