

HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall on Monday 13 May, 2013 commencing at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), K. Denton, C. Flanigan, K. Helsby, J. Kellett
L. McCartin, L. Rock, S. Rock, R. Silvester, K. Thomson

Town Clerk: C. Hutchinson

Bolton Ward Councillors present: K. McKeon

CHAIRPERSON TO OUTLINE THE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 5929 Councillor Root referred to the procedure that was outlined in the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 5930 Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillor Downes and Councillor L Rock due to ill health and from Councillor Ramamurthy who was away.

Resolved to accept the apologies as presented.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 APRIL 2013:

FG 5931 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2013.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE REVIEW SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 APRIL 2013:

FG 5932 Resolved to approve the minutes of the Finance Review Sub Committee held on 18 April 2013

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 APRIL 2013:

FG 5933 Resolved to approve the minutes of the Community Initiatives Sub Committee held on 18 April 2013

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE HORWICH IN BLOOM ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 APRIL 2013:

FG 5934 Resolved to receive the minutes of the Horwich in Bloom Advisory Committee held on 9 April 2013

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

FG 5935 It was resolved to move out of Committee in order to allow a member of the Public to speak:

Councillor McKeon, Bolton Ward Councillor for Horwich North East spoke about a letter that had recently been sent out to local voluntary and community organisations in Horwich with an invitation to a meeting to be held on 21 May, with the aim of providing advice and support on how to apply for funding from the Lottery and other providers. The letter had been sent out with the agreement of the Leader of the Town Council and with the administrative support of the Town Clerk's office. To date, there had been at least 12 - 13 groups expressing a wish to attend. Councillor McKeon expressed his thanks for the help he had received and extended an invitation to all Town Councillors to attend the meeting.

It was resolved to move back into Committee:

There was general agreement that it was an excellent idea to use the services of a Bolton Council Officer who had proven success in obtaining funding for the voluntary sector, especially in the current climate where resources are difficult to access, and commended Councillor McKeon for his initiative.

However, after receiving a query from a member of the public, some Members expressed their concerns that the letter had been sent out on Town Council letterhead, signed by Councillor McKeon, without the permission of full Council, thereby giving the impression that Councillor McKeon was a Member of Horwich Town Council. It was felt that it was inappropriate to use the Town Council crest without first obtaining Council's Permission.

It was pointed out that this letter had actually been included on the present agenda as this had been the earliest opportunity to bring it to Council. It was confirmed that none of the Council's Standing Orders had been transgressed. Other Members felt that it was unreasonable to make an issue out of a minor mistake, as it was positive that the Town Council was involved with a venture that was for the benefit of people in the town.

Following further discussion, it was accepted that it would have been more appropriate if the letter had been signed by the Leader of the Council. An apology was noted and it was also accepted that this had been a learning process for Council.

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

FG 5936 Councillor Helsby declared an interest as a governor of St Mary's Primary School. Both Councillors Helsby and Root declared an interest as Representatives of the Town Council currently in negotiation with Heritage regarding the new lease for the Heritage Centre.

TO APPROVE THE QUARTERLY STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS TO 31 MARCH 2013:

FG 5937 Resolved to approve the quarterly statement of accounts to 31 March 2013.

TO APPROVE THE QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW TO 31 MARCH 2013:

FG 5938 Resolved approve the quarterly budget review to 31 March 2013.

TO RECEIVE THE QUARTERLY REPORT FROM INTERNAL AUDIT TO 31 MARCH 2013:

FG 5939 Resolved to receive the quarterly report from Internal Audit to 31 March 2013

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM HORWICH HERITAGE FOR THE PROVISION OF GRANT SUPPORT OF £1,500 FOR 2013 – 2014:

FG 5940 It was noted that a request for supporting information had been made but had not yet been received. Members were informed that negotiations with regard to the lease are now in their final stages, following a legal delay. With regard to this it was suggested that the funding request should form part of the final negotiation when the lease agreement comes to Council for its approval and that this request should be deferred until this time. The Town Clerk was asked to contact Horwich Heritage and explain this position. Members were pleased to learn that Heritage had expressed a wish to become more self-financing in the future and that past difficulties seem to have been overcome.

Resolved to defer consideration of a request from Horwich Heritage for the provision of grant support of £1,500 for 2013 – 2014 by 8 votes to 0 with 2 abstentions pending Council's approval of the lease for the Heritage Centre.

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR THE PROVISION OF GRANT SUPPORT OF £131 TOWARDS THE COST OF A PURCHASE OF A DEFIBRILLATOR:

FG 5941 A scheme run by Bolton Wanderers to supply local schools with defibrillators had been completed. In response to a query it was confirmed that only

properly trained staff would be allowed to use the defibrillator. It was also confirmed that Bolton Council Area Forum had also provided some funding to St Mary's for the purchase of their own defibrillator.

Resolved to approve a request from St Mary's RC Primary School for the provision of grant support of £131 towards the purchase of a defibrillator by 9 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

TO DISCUSS CRIME PREVENTION MEASURES IN HORWICH AND TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF A HOMEWATCH LIAISON OFFICER:

FG 5942 Members were generally in favour of the appointment of a Home watch Liaison Officer, similar to the one in Westhoughton. It was felt that this initiative would provide better value for all council taxpayers than the CCTV scheme. Some Members expressed concerns about dual taxation but it was pointed out that it should be the role of the Town Council to take the initiative and funds had already been set aside in the budget for this purpose as part of crime reduction and community initiative measures.

The role of the Home watch Liaison Officer would be set up to create a dedicated position specifically for Horwich residents, to promote and encourage the creation of new schemes along with the provision and support of existing ones. It is also an important link between the public and the police, encouraging neighbourhoods to become more aware of crime prevention. Members were informed that details of costs and a template for a job description had been provided by Westhoughton's Town Clerk and these could be used to build up specifications for discussion at Staffing Sub Committee, to be brought back to Council for full approval, as a confidential item.

Resolved unanimously to approve, in principle, the appointment of a Home watch Liaison Officer, to be discussed initially at Staffing Sub Committee and brought to Council for approval.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

FG 5943 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and Totalling £14,941.39

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 5944
- a. Horwich Festival of Racing: letter of thanks for grant of £3,000 for 2013 events
 - b. RAF Air Cadets: letter of thanks for grant of £200 for purchase of

- new training equipment
- c. Rivington and Blackrod High School: letter of thanks for grant of £400 for Fairtrade activities in local primary schools during Fairtrade Fortnight with information leaflet
 - d. Horwich Fairtrade Group: newsletter and agenda for next meeting to be held on 14 May 2013
 - e. LALC: newsletter March 2013
 - f. Grant Funding Workshop: copy of letter sent to voluntary and community groups in Horwich inviting them to a meeting on 21 May 2013
 - g. Bolton Council: information from the Elections Officer about a bye election for the vacancy in Bridge Ward to take place on 20 June 2013
 - h. Big Lottery Fund: letter about Friday Night Fitness Zone project
 - i. Horwich Carnival Committee: letter of thanks for grant of £2,500 for 2013 Carnival events and parade.

Resolved to note the Town Clerk's Report.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 5945

Town Mayor

The Town Mayor reported that over the last few weeks she had been very busy and had attended a considerable number of events.

Resource Centre Management Committee

As a Member of this Committee, Councillor Root informed all present about an event planned at Horwich Resource Centre on 21 May from 2.00 – 4.00pm to promote Adult Learners' Week. There would be demonstrations by adult centre users taking place along with exhibitions of their work. An invitation had been extended to all Members of the Town Council.

A reminder was given to Members that the Memorial Service for Councillor Peter Baxendale was due to take place on Tuesday 14 May at 2.00pm at Holy Trinity Church, Horwich.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AS MONDAY 10 JUNE:

FG 5946

Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting as Monday 10 June 2013.

Councillor Root declared the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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Chairperson

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Date

