

HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish of Horwich held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall, Lee Lane, Horwich in Monday 13 May 2013 commencing at 7.00pm.

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

Bolton Ward Councillors present: K. McKeon

Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson

2 members of the public

CHAIRPERSON TO OUTLINE THE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

AA 081 The Chairperson referred to the procedure that was outlined in the information that had been made available.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

AA 082 Apologies were accepted from Councillors Downes and L. Rock due to ill health and from Councillor Ramamurthy who was away.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2012:

AA 083 Resolved to approve the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14 May 2012.

ANNUAL REPORT:

AA 084 A written report had been circulated, the main points were as follows.

The Council's budget for the financial year 2012/2013 has continued to provide considerable financial support for Horwich Carnival and Horwich Festival of Racing as well as Horwich Heritage.

In addition, many local organisations have applied for small grants to help pay for a wide range of activities throughout the year, including a separate grants pot specifically to fund projects for the benefit of children and young people, with a special one-off fund that enabled local primary schools to celebrate Diamond Jubilee and Olympic events which were enjoyed by all those who attended.

Horwich in Bloom, the Council's annual gardening competition was a great success and the Town Mayor has been delighted to serve on the Committee charged with its organisation.

The Council has been pleased to gain re-accreditation as a Quality Town Council, a scheme first launched in 2003 to provide a benchmark standard for town and parish councils across the country. The Council first achieved Quality Status in 2008 and since then Councillors and Officers have been working hard to maintain high standards of professionalism in all of the Council's activities.

Work has started on the new Town Guide, due to be published in summer 2013. This is always extremely popular with both residents and visitors to the town. The Council's website www.horwich.gov.uk remains popular and local organisations make good use of the free publicity available for events available on its 'Horwich Live' page. The quarterly newsletter continues to be circulated throughout the town.

The Lighting of the Civic Christmas Tree continues to mark the start of the festive season in the town and is well attended by all ages and has now welcomed the involvement of the Rotary Club of Horwich. The Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service continues to benefit from record attendances, in part due to the promotional efforts and general support of the Town Council, assisted by the Royal British Legion.

Civic Medals were awarded to David Fairbrother and Thomas Peter Kellett for their long and outstanding service to the young people of Horwich. Council also made a decision to award Honorary Freedom of Horwich to Bob and Barbara Ronson in recognition of their loyal and dedicated service to the community in both a voluntary and civic capacity over many years.

Council has consulted throughout the year with the unitary authority, Bolton Council on a wide range of matters of importance to the Parish including planning issues and Lottery funding was secured in partnership for activities for young people at Horwich Leisure Centre. Regular updates are also received from the Police about their efforts to ensure the safety and well being of residents.

The Council's involvement with Fairtrade has continued and the Council's determination to encourage civic pride has carried on with the installation of another civic plaque, contributing to the ambition of creating a Heritage Trail through Horwich.

External Audit found no matters for concern for the financial year 2011/2012

and issues arising were addressed. The Internal Auditors are satisfied that all financial controls and systems are effective. The annual risk assessment was undertaken and the internal system for financial control reviewed.

The Town Mayor has had a very busy year in office, performing a wide variety of civic duties, assisted by the Deputy Town Mayor who has given every support.

The Town Mayor has thanked the staff for their hard work and ability to adapt to change over the last twelve month. The post of Town Clerk has been filled by Carol Hutchinson who, after taking over the responsibilities for the running of the Town Council, is working with Councillors to develop the role of the Council.

Great sadness has been expressed at the death of a much respected and well liked Member of the Council, Peter Baxendale and thoughts have been with his family. Peter will be sadly missed.

The Town Mayor acknowledged the fine efforts of Councillors in what had been another very busy year for the Council and finally wished her successor every success during her forthcoming year of office as Town Mayor.

Resolved that the Annual Report be approved.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

AA 085 Copies of the financial statement for 2011/2012 were provided.

Resolved to approve the financial statement for 2011/2012 as presented.

ATTENDANCE RECORD:

AA 086 Copies of the record of attendance for all Councillors at meetings during the Previous year were provided.

ISSUES RAISED BY HORWICH ELECTORS:

AA 087 There were no issues raised by Horwich electors.

The Town Mayor was pleased to welcome Bob and Barbara Ronson to the meeting and to present them with the award of the Freedom of Horwich, in recognition of their exceptional service to the town and its people, in both a civic and voluntary capacity.

The Town Mayor explained that it was the first time that Horwich Town Council had awarded the title of Honorary Freeman and that it was the highest honour that the Council can bestow, reserved for those individuals such as Bob and Barbara who had given exceptional and continuous service over a period of many years. It was also noted that this award originally came with certain privileges, such as the right to drive sheep and cattle through the town, although this is no longer the case.

Both Bob and Barbara had represented the people of Horwich for over thirty years as both Town and Borough Councillors as well as serving as Town Mayor on three separate occasions. Although both stood down from Council duties in 2011, both of them are still very much involved in voluntary and fund raising activities.

Bob and Barbara thanked the Town Council for their awards, which had come as a total surprise, but that they were very honoured to receive them.

Having thanked everyone for attending the meeting, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 7.15pm.

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Chairperson

Date