

HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall on Monday, 11 November, 2012 commencing at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors: C. Root (in the Chair), M. Downes, C. Flanigan K. Helsby, J. Lavin S. Rock, J. Kellett, K.Ramamurthy.
Bolton Ward Councillors A. Cunliffe
1 member of the public
1 member of the press
Town Clerk, C. Hutchinson

CHAIRPERSON TO OUTLINE THE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

FG5836 Councillor Root outlined the procedure

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG5837 Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Baxendale, McCartin and L. Rock due to illness and Councillor Thomson who had another commitment. Resolved to accept the apologies as given.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2012.

FG5838 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 October, 2012.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2012:

FG5839 Resolved to approve the minutes of the Community Initiatives Sub Committee held on 18 October 2012

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF HORWICH RESOURCE CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2012 NOTING UPDATED CONSTITUTION AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE USE OF THE RESOURCE CENTRE:

FG5840 It was noted that these updates had been requested following the Annual General Meeting that took place in September. It was also noted that this was not the final version. Members requested that the final version would be brought back to Council at the earliest opportunity.
In response to a query it was confirmed that, as the Resource Centre Management Committee was an advisory body of the Council, it was covered by the Council's own liability insurance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

FG5841 **Resolved to move out of Committee** to allow a member of the public to speak regarding car parking in Horwich town centre.

On return to Committee, it was noted that the proposals put forward by Bolton Council to ease traffic flow and encourage shoppers to the town centre had been received and commented on two occasions at meetings of the Town Council which had been open to the public. These recommendations had then been implemented by Bolton Council. Horwich Town Council was not able to make any comment about the manner in which a recent meeting of the Two Towns Area Forum had been conducted by Bolton Council and any comments or queries should be addressed to their Area Working Team, whose contact details were available from the Town Clerk.

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

FG5842 Councillor Downes declared a personal interest as a member of Horwich Heritage and this was noted.

TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR THE HORWICH IN BLOOM 2012 COMPETITION:

FG5843 Members were pleased to learn that the competition had once again been a great success and encouraged improvement in the street scene in Horwich and Resolved to approve the financial summary for the Horwich in Bloom 2012 competition.

TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL RETURN TO 31 MARCH 2012 AND TO RESOLVE TO TAKE ACTION ON THE ISSUES IN THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT:

FG5844 A report detailing recommendations requiring action as detailed in the report from external audit had been circulated to all Members, with the following points for consideration:

1. Current Financial Regulations and Standing Orders required updating in line with the 2011 Accounts and Audit Regulations. The Town Clerk confirmed that an updated model would be brought to Council for adoption before the end of the current financial year and recorded in the minute.
2. Some donations and payments to groups and organisations had been incorrectly recorded as Section 137 payments, when other statutory powers and duties existed. The Town Clerk had obtained a list of these and would ensure that the relevant statutory power would be used, with immediate effect.
3. The internal auditor had noted a weakness in the financial systems, which, over a period of time had lead to incorrect calculation of pay from NJC pay scales. It was confirmed that this had been addressed at the start of the current financial year when payroll had been outsourced to an external provider.

Resolved to approve the annual return to 31 March 2012 and the action detailed in the external auditor's report

TO APPOINT A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL TO SERVE ON THE HORWICH RESOURCE CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

FG5845 Resolved to appoint Councillor Ramamurthy to serve on the Horwich Resource Centre Management Committee and Members thanked Councillor Ramamurthy.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG5846 Resolved to approve the payments as presented and amounting to £4,424.78.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG5847
- a. LALC: September newsletter: details of forthcoming training workshops on chairmanship, finance and neighbourhood plans
 - b. Electricity North West: questionnaire for Town and Parish Councils
 - c. NALC policy consultation: consultation on proposals for introduction of new town and parish councils
 - d. Bolton Council: Consultation on proposals for introduction of council tax support scheme on 1 April 2013

Resolved to note the information presented in the Town Clerk's Report.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG5848

Town Mayor:

The Town Mayor reported that she was continuing to enjoy a busy and successful mayoral year, attending many events, with excellent press coverage. and would bring her photographic record books to the next meeting for Members to look at.

LALC AGM :

Councillor Root advised that along with the Town Clerk she had attended this event in Preston on 10 November and although a few relevant points had been noted, most of the content of the meeting had limited relevance for the Town Council, and the benefit of any future attendance was questioned.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE AS MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2012 AT 7.30PM:

FG5849

Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting as Monday 10 December 2012 at 7.30pm

DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS ABOUT TO BE DISCUSSED THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC:

FG5850

In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed Resolved to exclude members of the press and public