

## HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall on Monday 10 June, 2013 commencing at 7.30pm.

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

Town Clerk: C. Hutchinson

Bolton Ward Councillors present: A. Cunliffe

TO APPOINT THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 2013 – 2014:

FG 5947 It was proposed by Councillor Helsby and seconded by Councillor Flanigan and unanimously resolved to appoint Councillor Root as Chair of the Committee for 2013 – 2014.

CHAIRPERSON TO OUTLINE THE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 5948 Councillor Root referred to the procedure that was outlined in the information provided.

TO APPOINT THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR 2013 – 2014:

FG 5949 Proposed by Councillor Helsby and seconded by Councillor Silvester to appoint Councillor Denton as Deputy Chairperson for the Committee for 2013 - 2014.

Proposed as an amendment by Councillor McCartin and seconded by Councillor Flanigan to appoint Councillor S. Rock as Deputy Chairperson for the Committee for 2013 -2014.

Resolved to refuse acceptance of this amendment by 6 votes to 5 including the casting vote by the Chair.

Resolved to appoint Councillor Denton as Deputy Chairperson of the Committee for 2013 – 2014 by 5 votes to 3 with 2 abstentions.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 5950 Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillor Downes and Councillor Ramamurthy due to ill health.

Resolved to accept the apologies as presented.

TO RESOLVE TO ACCEPT CONTINUED APOLOGIES FROM COUNCILLOR DOWNES DUE TO REASONS OF ILL HEALTH:

FG 5951 Resolved unanimously to continue to accept apologies from Councillor Downes due to ill health.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 2013:

FG 5952 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2013.

TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE HORWICH RESOURCE CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 APRIL 2013:

FG 5953 It was noted that there was an unresolved financial matter of a confidential nature included in the minutes and Management Committee would be asked to record this as a confidential matter.

Resolved to approve the minutes of the Horwich Resource Centre Management Committee held on 11 April 2013 with an amendment regarding confidentiality

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

FG 5954: None.

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

FG 5955 Councillor Helsby declared an interest as a governor of St Mary's Primary School.

TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE FOLLOWING SUB COMMITTEES FOR 2013 – 2014:

FG 5956:

- I. Community Initiatives
- II. Staffing
- III. Standing Orders
- IV. Grants to Voluntary Organisations
- V. Civic Medals
- VI. Town Guide
- VII. Newsletter
- VIII. Appeals Panel
- IX. Finance Review

It was proposed that the composition of sub committees and advisory bodies should be in proportion to the number of seats held by each party on the Council, with an acknowledgment that this may change after the by election in Bridge Ward on 20 June. A detailed explanation was provided but several Members were concerned that they had not been given prior notice of these proposals and felt that it was not appropriate to make a decision about this matter until there had been sufficient time for consideration by all Members.

Resolved to refuse acceptance of the proposals for appointment of Members to Sub Committees, Advisory Committees and Outside Bodies by 7 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.

Proposed and resolved unanimously to request that the list of proposals is circulated to all Members for consideration and brought back to Council for discussion at the next meeting of the Town Council on 27 June 2013.

TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE FOLLOWING ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR 2013 – 2014:

- FG 5957
- i. Internet
  - ii. Commemorative Signs
  - iii. Horwich in Bloom
  - iv. Horwich Resource Centre Management Committee

Resolved unanimously to request that a list of proposals for appointment of Members to Advisory Committees is circulated to Members for consideration and brought back to Council for approval at the next meeting of the Town Council on 27 June 2013.

TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE FOLLOWING OUTSIDE BODIES FOR 2013 – 2014:

- FG 5958
- i. Horwich Flower Fruit and Vegetable Society
  - ii. Rivington Local Advisory Group
  - iii. Turton and North Bolton Advisory
  - iv. Fox Street Management Committee
  - v. Rivington and Blackrod High School Trust
  - vi. Fairtrade
  - vii. Group to Promote Cultural and Sporting Activity
  - viii. Bolton Council Standards Committee

Resolved unanimously to request that a list of proposals for appointment of Members to Outside Bodies is circulated to Member for consideration and brought back to Council for discussion at the next meeting of Town Council on 27 June 2013.

Councillor Flanigan left the meeting at this point.

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR GRANT ASSISTANCE OF £800 - £1,000 TOWARDS THE COST OF A SCHOOL TRIP TO FRANCE:

FG 5959 It was noted that this was the third successive year that a request for financial assistance for this purpose had been made to Council. Members felt that the school should have not been properly informed following the grant given last year that it would be inappropriate to apply again. In response to a query it was confirmed that all applications for Child and Youth grants were discussed individually as and when they were received by Council and separate from the main Grants to Voluntary groups applications which are considered twice a year.

Resolved by 8 votes to 0 with 1 abstention to refuse the request for grant assistance towards the cost of the school trip to France on the grounds that previous awards have been given for this purpose and other organisations should have the opportunity to apply for funding. The Town Clerk was asked to contact the school to inform them that it would be inappropriate to continue to continue to apply for financial assistance for this purpose.

TO CONSIDER THE USE OF TWITTER BY HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL:

FG 5960 It was proposed that the medium of Twitter should be used to publicise meetings of the Town Council and Mayoral attendance at events. In response to queries it was confirmed that use would be restricted to information only, as a one way communication with no discussion involved and with access limited to the Mayor and Town Clerk only.

Some Members expressed reservations, mainly as to the purpose of Twitter, whilst accepting that they were not fully aware of how it worked, while other Members viewed it as a means of moving forward and engaging with the electorate in Horwich.

Resolved unanimously to approve the use of Twitter by Horwich Town Council for a trial period of three months only, with a progress report to be brought to Committee on 12 August 2013.

TO CONSIDER THE SETTING UP OF A YOUTH COUNCIL IN HORWICH:

FG 5961 The Town Mayor explained that she had received an invitation from a Year 7 Class at Rivington and Blackrod High School to visit, with the Town Clerk, on 25 June and learn about a project they had been involved with about the local authority in the community. An additional invitation had followed to meet Year 7 form representatives and to listen to their views. This was seen as an opportunity to consider the setting up of a Youth Council which would represent the views of young people in Horwich. Although Members thought that it was a good idea to try and engage young people in the political process there were some concerns expressed regarding how it would operate. It was noted that there was already a structure in place nationally for Youth Councils, which usually operate as advisors to Council, meeting before Councils and having a representative present at Council meetings. They have no legal powers or responsibilities and act as advisors to Council on the needs and views of young people. It was confirmed that both high schools in Horwich would be invited to be involved if the project was to be confirmed.

Resolved unanimously to defer making a decision about setting up a Youth Council until the Town Mayor had met pupils from Rivington and Blackrod High School on 25 June and reported the outcome to Council at the next meeting of the Committee on 12 August

#### TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ABOUT ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC HALL:

FG 5962 Following an incident on 23 July following the Planning Committee when a member of security staff had locked the building before the meeting had finished, both Councillor Silvester and the Town Clerk had complained strongly to Bolton Council about this incident and the lack of public access to the building when meetings were taking place.

An apology had been received about the incident which had been caused by a breakdown in communication between staff members when the usual caretaker was on holiday. An assurance had been given that it would not be repeated. An assurance had also been given that all caretaking staff would be informed that public access into the building was to be made available when Council meetings were taking place.

Councillor Silvester and the Town Clerk were thanked for the work they had done in addressing this matter.

#### ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

FG 5963 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented and

totalling £10,845.98

TOWN CLERK’S REPORT – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 5964      a.      Horwich New Heart Club: email thanks for grant of £58 for annual room rental charge at Horwich Resource Centre
- b.      Bolton Council: list of candidates for by election on 20 June for Bridge Ward vacancy
- c.      LALC: notice of 69<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and Conference on 9 November 2013 at County Hall, Preston
- d.      Churches Together in Horwich: information about ‘Redeeming our Communities’ project for a Junior Café in Horwich
- e.      Horwich Festival of Racing: programme for 2013 events taking place 12 – 16 June
- f.      Bolton Council: details of temporary road closure 16 June for Festival of Racing and Horwich Carnival

Resolved to note the Town Clerk’s Report.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

FG 5965                      Town Mayor  
 The Town Mayor reported that since taking office she had attended quite a number of events and had especially enjoyed the Civic Sunday Service on 19 May and thanked Members who Had attended.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AS MONDAY 12 AUGUST 2013:

FG 5966                      Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting as Monday 12 August 2013.

Councillor Root declared the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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Chairperson

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Date