

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 15 January 2024 commencing at 7.15 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: D. Grant (in the Chair) I. Aldcroft, R. Bamforth, S. Burke, G. Campbell, S. Chadwick, K. McKeon, V. Rigby, S. Rock, J. Walton, P. Wright
C. Hutchinson, Town Clerk
1 member of the public

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 7649 Councillor Grant outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTE THE REASONS:

FG 7650 Apologies were received from Councillors Rotheram, Scoble and Williamson and reasons noted.

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

FG 7651 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. *Questions/matters raised do not require any response from Members, nor should matters not on the agenda be debated since no lawful decision can be made during this period, but may be added to the next available agenda if considered relevant by the Town Clerk/Chair*

FG 7652 Councillor Grant introduced Isabella Randle-Sykes, a student at Rivington and Blackrod Sixth Form, a member of the Youth Council studying A level politics and running for Youth MP. She had asked to undertake some work experience with Horwich Town Council and Bolton Council and this was being arranged.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2023:

FG 7653 Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 11 December 2023.

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM HORWICH HERITAGE TO HOLD A JOINT SERVICE WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL TO COMMEMORATE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE WINTER HILL AIR DISASTER AT 11.00AM ON 27 FEBRUARY 2024:

FG 7654 Horwich Heritage are marking the anniversary of the Winter Hill Air Disaster on 27 February 2024 and had requested if this could be a joint service with Horwich Town Council with the Town Mayor present. The disaster happened on the morning of 27 February 1958 when a Manx Airline aircraft flying between Douglas, Isle of Man and Manchester crashed on Winter Hill killing 35 passengers and crew with only 7 survivors. Memorial services have been led by Horwich Rotary, who have confirmed that they will not be holding a service this year and in future will only attend on significant anniversary dates

such as 70th, 80th etc. There are no plans for any Manx Rotarians to visit on the date either but will there will be a small service held with Horwich Rotary in May.

Arrangements will be made by Horwich Heritage and will include the cost of a wreath shared with Horwich Town Council as in 2023.

Resolved to approve the request from Horwich Heritage to jointly hold a short memorial service with Horwich Town Council on Winter Hill at 11.00am on Tuesday 27 February 2024.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK ON THE COUNCIL'S APPLICATION TO THE NALC LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME AND REVIEW AND APPROVE SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEET ALL CRITERIA TO OBTAIN ACCREDITATION UNDER THE SCHEME AS DETAILED:

FG 7655 The Clerk had produced a report which had been circulated to all Members prior to the meeting. The Council's application to the Local Council Award Scheme had been submitted in 2023 and the assessment panel had provided feedback, stating that it was very happy with the overall standard of the submission, however some points had been highlighted as necessary requirements and once this evidence has been provided it will be pleased to Horwich Town Council with the the Local Council Foundation Award.

Criteria such as review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, some Council policies and other minor suggestions can be actioned at the earliest opportunity and in line with the launch of the new website which was currently under construction. In line with the Transparency Code, details of all items of expenditure over £500 would be included on the website on a quarterly basis.

The main issue for consideration was the Council's meeting and committee structure. It was not good practice to see committees such as Finance and General Purposes and Planning consisting of all members of the council, it should only be some of them. If the whole council is summoned to meet, then it is a council meeting. Although opinions varied, the option that not all councillors sit on these two committees did not prove popular, with the alternative option to hold two full council meetings per month at the same time and date as existing meetings being preferred. The first meeting would cover finance, governance and related matters and the second would consider planning applications and related matters.

Resolved to receive the report from the Town Clerk on the Council's application to the Local Council Review scheme and review and approve the recommendations for requirements to meet criteria to achieve accreditation, and that matters presently considered at Finance and General Purposes and Planning Committee meetings will be incorporated into two full monthly council Meetings which will remain at the same time and date as existing meetings.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 7656 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment as presented amounting to £16,259.32:

C. Hutchinson – Petty Cash	£50.00
Contemporary Chorus - Festival of Horwich	£75.00
Zonkey Solutions - website migration	£84.00
Sage – accounts package (January)	£92.40
Town Mayor’s Charity Account – transfer	£1,000.00
HMRC – PAYE tax month 9	£2,996.92,
Illumidex – balance for new Christmas lights	£11,961.00

Payment to Contemporary Chorus was made in accordance with LGA 1972 s145, to Zonkey Solutions with LGA 1972 s142 and to Illumidex with LGA 1972 s144. Payment to Sage was made by direct debit.

TOWN CLERK’S REPORT – (EMAILED TO ALL MEMBERS) – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 7657 a. Record of outstanding motions/actions
 b. Armed Forces Covenant: invitation to community launch of GM Forcer Protocol on 8 February 2024

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

FG 7658 a. Town Mayor

Reported attendance at:

- Horwich and Blackrod Christmas Lights switch on events
- Opening of RAMP and donation received of musical equipment for distribution to foster children
- Ridgmont House Christmas market
- Event at refurbished Bolton Arena
- Visits to local lunch clubs for Christmas dinner
- Adlington Christmas Concert

b. Horwich Ward Councillors

Councillor Wright – theft of lead flashing from new houses on Rivington Chase was being investigated

Councillor Rigby:

- New community bin installed at the top of Brownlow Road and looking at possibility of additional bins in other locations
- Confirmed missing litter bin in Station Park is being used by contractors working on the new Health Hub and will not be replaced at the present time
- Bolton Wanderers in the Community have provided residents only parking signs and the next meeting with police and highways present will discuss enforcement measures to tackle the parking issues
- Lack of funding at Brazley Park play area, some equipment dangerous and is being looked at by Bolton Council/Bolton at Home

Councillor Bamforth:

- Additional information on GM Forcer event
- Evening with Greater Manchester Police witnessing several arrests, most of which were dispersals. GMP also engaged in pro-active operation making several drug-related arrests

- Major issue with reduced bin collections recently with speculation that it may have been a test to gauge the reaction to monthly collections. Missed bins problem has now been addressed
- £500 from Area Forum funds to Rock it
- Update on Bolton Wanderers in the Community 10k fun runs for chosen charities

Councillor Grant:

- TROs finally approved and awaiting delivery
- Budget discussions taking place at Bolton Council and consultation on library provision in Horwich and Blackrod

c. Representatives on Outside Bodies as per the approved list

None.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 12 FEBRUARY 2024:

FG 7659 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 12 February 2024.

The meeting closed at 7.53pm.

Chair..... Date