

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 9 December 2019 commencing at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: M. Brady (in the Chair), I. Aldcroft, M. Baines, J. Bostocksmith, S. Burke, K. Denton, D. Grant, C. Rotheram, S. Rock, G. Stone, P. Wright. C. Hutchinson, Town Clerk.

Before the meeting began, a minute's silence was observed in memory of former councillor Ken Thomson who passed away last week. Ken served on the council from 2007 to 2015 as a Liberal Democrat member and represented Lever Park ward. He served as Town Mayor 2010 – 2011, with his wife Vivienne as his Mayoress.

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 7087 Councillor Brady outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 7088 Resolved to accept apologies from Councillors Chadwick, Coward and S. Denton. An apology for lateness was accepted from Councillor Wright.

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

FG 7089 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:

FG 7090 None.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2019:

FG 7091 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 11 November 2019.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE REVIEW SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2019:

FG 7092 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Finance Review Sub Committee held on 15 November 2019.

TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2020 -2021:

FG 7093 Members were reminded that there is a legal requirement for the council to approve its budget by the end of January of the current financial year and having sight of draft proposals allows for discussion and amendment where necessary. The proposals were drafted following the meeting of the cross party Finance Review Sub Committee where councillors put forward suggestions for expenditure for the next financial year.

It was noted that it was decided to include some new headings and amend

some existing headings to be more representative of the council's activities, further explanation had been provided in the notes accompanying the draft budget.

There is a proposed increase in the precept figure compared to the current year of £14,865. Once the proposals for the draft budget have been approved, Bolton Council would be informed of the requested precept figure and would then provide figures for the cost to the average council tax paying household in Horwich.

Resolved to approve the council's draft budget proposals for 2020 - 2021.

TO UNDERTAKE AND APPROVE THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY FOR 2019 - 2020:

FG 7094 Members were informed that these are statutory requirements undertaken on an annual basis. There are two elements, firstly the requirements for the Community Centre to ensure the health and safety of all staff and users, as well as any events run by the council. There are also requirements for all of the council's business and financial activities which are also included in more detail in the separate annual review of the effectiveness of internal audit. In response to a query it was confirmed that both the risk assessment and health and safety policy were based on HSE templates.

Resolved to undertake and approve the council's annual risk assessment and health and safety policy for 2019 – 2020.

TO UNDERTAKE AND APPROVE THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT FOR 2019 – 2020:

FG 7095 Resolved to approve the council's annual review of internal audit for 2019 – 2020.

TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS TO UPDATE THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AS DETAILED IN THE REPORT PRODUCED BY THE TOWN CLERK:

FG 7096 Following council's resolution to progress with the installation of a fence along the boundary of Green Lane as part of its proposed future management of the playing fields, it was being proposed that the council's financial regulations should be updated as per 2018 NALC guidelines to include 'lighter touch' requirements for procurement. These recommend that councils in England may have financial regulations which state that 'contracts valued at £25,000 or below are exempt from a tendering or procurement exercise'. Adoption of these guidelines would negate the current requirement to undertake a tendering process for these works, which would incur additional costs to the council.

Resolved to approve the recommendations to update the council's financial regulations as detailed in the Clerk's report to include the 'lighter touch' requirements in order to progress with the installation of a fence along the Green Lane playing field boundary.

TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 7097 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment amounting to £10,141.65 as follows:

Petty Cash	£50.00
Nationwide Capital Finance (Quarterly rental Xerox C4500 13/12/19 – 12/3/20)	£187.36
Goodwin Chukwukelu (Production of Horwich N/Plan report Aug 2019)	£240.00
Rivington and Adlington Brass Band (Remembrance Sunday 10/11/19)	£550.00
Horwich Community Centre (VAT refund 1.6.19 – 30.9.19)	£782.29
HTC Salaries and wages account (Reimbursement for payment of grants from incorrect account)	£1,332.00
Horwich Town Council (Salaries and wages account)	£7,000.00

Payment to Goodwin Chukwukelu was made in accordance with Localism Act 2011, Schedule 9.

TOWN CLERKS REPORT (EMAILED TO MEMBERS) – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 7098
- St Catherine's PCC: feedback/monitoring form for grant funding of £300 in June 2019 towards provision of entertainment for senior citizens.
 - Horwich Cycling Club: information about cyclists' safety campaign.
 - Summary of councillors' casework.

The Town Clerk's report was noted.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

FG 7099

Town Mayor's Report

It was reported that the Town Mayor had been kept very busy with mayoral duties in the run up to Christmas as detailed in the emailed update. The Deputy Town Mayor had also accepted several invitations on his behalf.

Horwich Ward Councillors

None.

Reports from Representatives

As detailed in the emailed update, Councillor Rotheram had attended a meeting of the Rivington and Brinscall Advisory Group where the main item had been an introduction to the new Police Wildlife and Rural Crime Team and the increase in collaboration on tactical cross country/borough policing.

The reports were noted.

TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 13 JANUARY 2020:

FG 7100 Resolved to confirm the date of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as 13 January 2020.

The meeting closed at 7.44 pm.

Chair..... Date.....