

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of

WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCIL held on

TUESDAY 30th May 2023 at 7.30pm in the council chamber

Present

Chairman

Councillor M Royds

Councillors

Councillor R A Neal

Councillor D Chorlton

Councillor T Aldred

Councillor S Rhodes

Councillor D Powell

Councillor G Baron

Councillor M Whitworth

Councillor J Whitehead

Councillor R Blezard

Clerk of the Council: Miss R Hodson

No members of public were present; no members of the press were present.

16. To receive apologies and the reasons for absence.

Councillor Olaolu was unable to attend due to personal reasons.

1. To receive any Declarations of Interest.

Councillor Blezard declared a personal interest in item 3 as he is an employee of Rossendale Leisure Trust.

1. To receive an update from Whitworth’s elected representatives on Rossendale Borough Council on Rossendale Leisure Trust.

It was resolved that this item on the agenda be discussed at the exclusion of press and public since it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. This was moved by Cllr Neal and seconded by Cllr Whitworth.

Cllr Powell updated members as he was able regarding the closure of Whitworth Leisure Centre and expressed his wish that he could give more information to both Council and the general public, but he was bound by confidentiality to RBC. He stated that it was best to focus on rebuilding Whitworth Leisure Centre somewhere in Whitworth. He stated that there was a need for a public meeting so that Whitworth’s resident’s opinions could be heard. Cllr Neal spoke about various locations that could be considered in Whitworth and spoke about options for funding. He agreed that a public meeting was necessary so that the people of Whitworth’s voices could be heard. Cllr Whitehead considered that more questions need to be asked of RBC and reminded councillors that the people of Whitworth donated a lot of money, time and resources in the past to Whitworth Leisure Centre. She felt that the people of Whitworth deserve respect and should have access to more information and that a public meeting should be held as soon as possible. Cllr Royds expressed his upset that Council was not consulted in the discussion or informed of the decision by RBC and that he found out about the closure on social media. Cllr Royds stated that he would be writing to RBC to express his disappointment regarding this.

It was resolved that the existing facility in its current state must close. This was proposed by Cllr Neal and seconded by Cllr Baron.

Cllrs discussed funding options and possible sites for a new facility.

It was resolved that the new leisure facility should be built in Whitworth. This was proposed by Cllr Whitehead and seconded by Cllr Neal.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm.