

Minutes of the Meeting of

WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCIL held on

THURSDAY 22nd February 2024 at 7.30pm in the council chamber

Present

Chairman

Councillor M Royds

Councillors

Councillor G Baron

Councillor R Blezard

Councillor L Burton

Councillor D Chorlton

Councillor A Neal

Councillor K Olaolu

Councillor J Whitehead

Clerk of the Council: Miss R Hodson

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

### 198. To receive apologies and the reasons for absence.

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting by Councillor Aldred who was unwell, Councillor Whitworth who was caring for a family member and Councillor Rhodes who was a training course.

1. To receive any Declarations of interest.

None.

### To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2024, and to approve them by the signature of the Chairman as a correct record.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2024, copies of which had been circulated to each Member, were correct and should be approved by the signature of the Chairman as a correct record. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Whitehead

### Public Question Time.

A member of the public asked what members of Whitworth Town Council were doing to assist with the prevention of illegal off-road biking and were they liaising with other agencies regarding this. Councillor Olaolu replied that this issue will be discussed at agenda item 10.

A member of the public stated that he is involved with the cemetery and would like to brighten the sunken garden up, clean the flagging around the headstones and take up and re-bed the flags. They have acquired some quotes for the work to be done at a weekend. Councillor Whitehead reported that this was discussed at the Whitworth In Bloom AGM on Monday and that she had already emailed RBC regarding this. Councillors discussed the need for the correct public liability insurance to be in place and a clear process for the works to be followed.

### Planning Applications for consideration and comment:

1. *2024/0043 Ashlea, Market Street, Whitworth, Rossendale OL12 8DY - Prior approval for a larger home extension: The proposed extension is to project 4 metres from the original dwelling house, with a total width of 4.295 metres. The proposed extension is to have a render finish to match the existing dwelling house.*

It was resolved that Council support this planning application. This was moved by Cllr Chorlton and seconded by Cllr Whitehead.

1. *2024/0050 767 Market Street, Whitworth, Lancashire OL12 8LS - Retention of unauthorised dwelling house*

It was resolved that Council support this planning application. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Whitehead.

1. To discuss a proposal from Lancashire County Council, under Section 84 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, the effect of which will be to introduce a 20mph speed limit on Railway Close, Facit, Rochdale, for the entire length.

 It was resolved that Council accept the above proposal from Lancashire County Council. This was moved by Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Chorlton.

1. To discuss a proposal from Lancashire County Council ,that in accordance with Section 90A of the Highways Act 1980, a junction table will be introduced in the following locations: 1. Cowm Park Way North, Whitworth, from the intersection of the centreline of Railway Close and Cowm Park Way North for a distance of 9.8 metres in a southerly direction; 2. Railway Close, Facit, Whitworth, from the intersection of the centreline of Station Road/Cowm Park Way North and Railway Close for a distance of 19.3 metres in a north westerly direction; 3. Station Road, Facit, Rochdale, from the intersection of the centreline of Railway Close and Station Road for a distance of 15.2 metres in an easterly direction. The junction table will have a maximum height not exceeding 75 mm.

It was resolved that Council accept the above proposal from Lancashire County Council. This was moved by Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Chorlton.

1. To receive and note the minutes of the Finance Monitoring Committee meeting held on the 5th February 2024.

It was resolved that Council receive and note the minutes of the Finance Monitoring Committee meeting held on the 5th February 2024. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Whitehead.

1. To note, and if appropriate, accept the proposals of the Finance Monitoring Committee regarding the planned works at the Mildred Crabtree Picnic Area.

It was resolved that Council accept the proposals of the Finance Monitoring Committee regarding the planned works at the Mildred Crabtree Picnic Area. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Olaolu. Councillor Neal also thanked Councillor Olaolu for all her hard work regarding this.

1. To discuss Whitworth Town Council calling a public meeting to discuss our local moorland and to highlight what can be done as a community to help protect it.

It was resolved that Council suspend standing orders to allow members of the public to speak. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Chorlton. Councillor Olaolu spoke about the environmental disaster that is occurring and the total ruinous impact of illegal off-road biking on the local moorland. A member of the public stated that the reporting system used by West Yorkshire police is much simpler than that used by Lancashire police for these incidents. They considered that Operation Centurian seemed to be Lancs Constabulary’s main focus. Councillor Olaolu urged members of the public to report any incidents as, unless the police receive reports of this activity, they won’t get any resources to assist with its reduction. A member of the public stated that lots of the individuals carrying out this activity are using uninsured, untaxed vehicles and are destroying fences and posts whilst on the moorland. They stated that the groups of individuals come from areas such as Bradford, Mansfield and Barnsley. Another member of the public reported that they had seen 7 individuals near Cowm Reservoir who are there regularly and urged the police to apprehend them. Councillor Royds stated that he would liaise with the member of the public after the meeting and will write to Andrew Snowden, Andy Pratt and Sir Jake Berry MP regarding the damage done to the moorland. Councillor Chorlton reported that members of the public seem to be keen to write about these things on social media but don’t actually report them to the appropriate agencies. Councillor Chorlton also suggested a piece be included in the next Whitworth Valley News on how to report incidents. Councillor Neal stated that he would be asking a question at the next RBC meeting regarding the enforcement of their Public Space Protection Order. Councillor Royds stated that he is now a member of the Community Roadwatch Scheme and that he will be able to assist but needs a PCSO or Police Officer with him. Councillor Whitehead stated that Rossendale Police have now fully recruited for all their vacancies. It was resolved that Council reinstate standing orders. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Chorlton.

### To review, and if appropriate, adopt the Annual Investment Strategy.

It was resolved that Council adopt the Annual Investment Strategy. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Olaolu.

1. To review, and if appropriate, adopt the Financial Risk Assessment and Financial Procedures.

It was resolved that Council adopt the Financial Risk assessment and Financial Procedures. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Burton.

1. To discuss the Whitworth Town Council website.

Councillor Baron reported that he and Councillor Chorlton are going to meet up to review the current content on the website. Councillor Royds asked if a reporting/signposting feature could be included to other agencies. Councillor Chorlton echoed these ideas and thought it was important to be able to guide users as to where to report issues and make it more user friendly.

### To receive the report of the Town Mayor.

The Mayor reported that he had attended the Healey Dell Management Committee and was disappointment that no officer from RBC had attended. He also reported that he is continuing to help the Lighthouse Foodshare and encouraged others to assist with this vital local organisation. The Mayor also reported that he was honoured to represent Whitworth Town Council at past Mayor and former councillor Lynda Barnes’ funeral, who had sadly passed away in January. The Mayor also reported that he was delighted to officially open Whitworth Leisure Centre on Saturday 17th February and had received membership number 0001. He also reported that the Mayoress and himself had attended a very entertaining afternoon at Stronger Together’s first birthday party the previous Sunday. The Mayor also stated that he had had a recent very enjoyable meeting with the Mayor of Rossendale, where they discussed working together for the benefit of all residents.

The Mayor reported that details had recently been finalised for his Spring Party in April and encouraged all present to buy tickets, with all profits going to the Mayor’s Charity Fund.

1. The Chairman or Clerk to answer questions from Councillors (Standing Orders 16 & 24 – 27, for information only).

Cllr Neal asked why Ofgem are failing to protect the people of Whitworth who are having to pay 65% of their total energy costs in standing charges.

1. To receive reports from delegates and representatives to outside organisations (for information only).

Cllr Neal reported that the next Town and Council meeting is on the 4th of March. Cllr Neal also suggested that the trustees should be changed on Farrow Hoyle Charitable Trust and Cllr Royds agreed that this item could be included in the next Town Council agenda.

Cllr Chorlton reported that he had had a meeting with the town clerk and the manager of The Ashcroft regarding the forthcoming 80th anniversary of D Day event, which includes an afternoon tea, WVHB, Whitworth Community Choir and u3a ukelele band.

Cllr Baron reported that he had set up a fundraiser for Whitworth Leisure Centre.

Cllr Whitehead reported that Whitworth In Bloom had had their AGM on Monday and appealed for any volunteers who would like to assist the group.

Cllr Neal reported, on behalf of Cllr Aldred, that Town Twining had held a meeting recently and they are currently organising for a delegation to visit Kandel in October.

1. To receive and, if appropriate adopt the financial statements presented by the Clerk.

It was resolved that Council receive and adopt the financial statements presented by the Clerk. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Whitehead.

### To authorise the signing of orders for payment: schedule 11, 2023-2024.

The clerk explained the Schedule of Accounts Payable in the form of Report 11, 2023-2024 and asked for approval. It was resolved that approval be given for the Schedule of Accounts payable. This was moved by Councillor Neal and seconded by Councillor Baron.

1. To carry out the internal audit.

Members carried out an internal audit of bank statements, invoices and Schedule of Accounts Payable, balances against bank statements and receipts and petty cash. All was found to be in order.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35pm.