

HALEWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 10th May 2018 (7.30pm) at the Arncliffe Sports and Community Centre.

PRESENT

7 Halewood Town Councillors
94 members of the public.

Also in attendance:-

G MacKenzie, Town Manager
L Joyner, Senior Administrator

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Cllr. N Hogg, Chairperson of Halewood Town Council in the chair.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received and accepted from Cllr. Ms. C Harris, Cllr. S Ball, Cllr. D Samuels and Cllr. D Perry.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED:- That the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 11th May 2017 be approved, and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

3. ANNUAL REPORT

The Town Manager reported that the Annual Report for 2017-2018 was currently being prepared and would be distributed by an external agency to every household in the Parish in the near future.

RESOLVED:- That the report be noted.

4. ACCOUNTS 2016/2017

The Town Manager advised that the Town Council's accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2017 were available for viewing on the Town Council's website. In addition, paper copies can be made available if requested.

RESOLVED:- That the audited statement of the Town Council's accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 be formally received.

5. NOTICES OF MOTION

None received.

6. REPORTS

1. Merseyside Police

PCSO J Franco, Merseyside Police gave a report on the refurbishment of Halewood Police station and answered questions raised by residents in the public gallery.

2. Parks and Open Spaces

The Chairperson introduced this item by making the following announcement :

“I wish to make a statement following a conversation with the new Deputy Leader of the Majority Labour Group on Knowsley MBC, Cllr. Sean Donnelly.

Building on work undertaken by the former Cabinet Member for Resources at Knowsley Council the current proposal to establish Knowsley Parks Trust and to sell 17 identified sites for future development over the next 15 years is to be thoroughly reviewed; as such, the current proposal is ‘off the table’

Future work by Knowsley Council in respect of finding a sustainable solution for the management of parks and open spaces will include further consultation by Knowsley Council including with Town and Parish Councils, the community and other stakeholders”.

The Chairperson indicated that until a new proposal is tabled for consideration, the Town Council will not be debating or considering the matter any further.”

7. OPEN FORUM

The Chairperson welcomed residents from the community to the meeting, and declared the meeting open, for questions.

a) Ms. D Corrie

Asked if the leases would now stay with Halewood Town Council and spoke about the voting that took place at the Town Council meeting held on 15th March 2018 that had agreed conditionally to surrender the leases.

In response, the Town Manager referred to the statement just made by the Chairperson.

b) Mr. J Harvey

Mr. J Harvey asked that the Town Council make a promise that the leases for the open Spaces will never be given up.

In response, the Town Manager indicated that this request would be referred to the Town Council for consideration.

c) Mr. A M Harvey

Mr. A M Harvey referred to the petition handed into the Town Council on 19th April 2018 in relation to the green spaces. He proposed that:

- Halewood Town Council rescinds the resolution agreed at the Town Council meeting held on 15th March 2018 to surrender conditionally, the land leases to KMBC.
- the Town Council apply, on behalf of Halewood people, for ‘Village Green’ status to be designated for the land at Doorstep Green, Wood Road and Fredrick Lunt Playing Field, or

- o that all leased land be transferred to Halewood Town Council.

By acclamation, this proposal was moved and seconded by residents in attendance at the meeting and upon being put to the vote the proposal was agreed.

d) Ms. D Corrie

Ms. Corrie asked if the Chairperson of the Town Council had any regrets over what had happened regarding the green spaces proposals, as Councillors had lost their seats over this issue.

The Chairperson indicated that he would let the Council know Ms. Corrie's comments.

e) Cllr. I Hamilton

Cllr. Hamilton spoke to clarify the recent proposals regarding the green spaces, he reported that Halewood Town Council had been given two options by Knowsley Borough Council. These were to surrender all of the leases or surrender none. A third proposal was then made to forward a compromise that was not exclusive and not a final proposal, just a starting point for negotiations. Halewood Town Council had 3 weeks to come up with a plan. If Halewood Town Council chose not to surrender the leases they would face the capital costs associated with maintenance of the various land which not an option. From today the choices given are off the table.

f) Cllr. B Swann

Cllr Swann stated that as far as he was concerned, the proposal was not off the table because the minute still stands and this will need to go to Town Council to be rescinded.

Further, Cllr Swann stated that the option outlined by Cllr Hamilton was wrong, that it was not an 'all or nothing' situation, Knowsley Borough Council only sought surrender of three named leases.

The Town Manager explained the procedure for a resolution to be rescinded and a possible timetable for the rescission of the decision taken on 15th March 2018.

There then followed a number of shouted interventions from the public in attendance:

g) Mr. E McIntosh - asked if the last meeting was abandoned, was it legal?

h) Mr. P Burke – referenced the lack of consultation – stating 'look at how Gary See had minions out posting leaflets for the election so why couldn't this have been done for the Green spaces'.

i) Mr. A M Harvey - stated (in response to above) that is because they wanted votes. Mr A M Harvey then proceeded to dispute with the Chairperson about voting Labour and being allowed to canvass for votes.

j) Mrs. L Millett-Simpson - said she had no faith in Borough Council or Halewood Town Council

k) Ms. D Corrie - claimed that the actions of this Council cost people their seats.

l) Ms. S Edwards - complained about the Council not answering questions.

m) Mr. J Ming - referred to Wood Road public open space and said he would like charges for hire of facilities to be restored with free use for the community.

The Chairman indicated that this point would be referred to the Town Council for consideration.

- n) Mr. S. Edwards - stated that the Chairperson should take his chain off and stand down.
- o) Mr. J Garner - stated that Allan Harvey was elected because he came on board to fight for us.
- p) Cllr. B Swann – stated that (in his opinion) progress had made tonight and hopefully the resolution will be rescinded and that the other option is Village Green status.
- q) Cllr. Bob Swann addressed the meeting about a consultation exercise that is currently being undertaken by Yew Tree Primary School to join the Wade Deacon Trust. He added that he did not like this idea and he considered the loss of 6th Form education at Halewood Academy to be attributable this. He asked the Town Council to say no to this as “they (the Academy) are not accountable to the people and we want our 6th form back”.

Ms. Corrie indicated to Cllr. Swann that a consultation on the first point raised is currently being undertaken by Yew Tree Primary School.

- r) Mr. A Lucock - addressing the public in attendance, asked “When was the last time you elected a Town Councillor?” He suggested that these meeting should be held monthly referring to the Public Forum element of the meeting.
- s) Mr. E McIntosh - suggested that information should be given on how the Council is run and how people can access this.

The Town Manager responded saying that information regarding this matter would be included in the next Town Council Annual Report, which was currently being prepared.

- t) Mr. J Ming - asked why the Open Forum meetings that used to be held in Halewood could not be reinstated.

The Town Manager explained that these meetings were held by Knowsley Borough Council, and that Halewood Town Council has an Open Forum session at the beginning of every Town Council Meeting.

- u) Mrs. J Worrall – spoke about the loss of 6th form education at Halewood Academy and asked why this cannot be brought back given the recent excellent performance by the school.

The Chairman answered this question explaining that the 6th Form had been closed due to the small number of 6th form pupils at the time that could not be funded by the Academy. It was noted that any consideration of 6th form education being reinstated at the school would have to be addressed by the Academy.

- v) Mrs. R Sowerby - suggested that there should be a Working Group formed for communications.

The Town Manager indicated that this suggestion would be referred to the Town Council for consideration.

- w) Mrs LMillet-Simpson - Asked the Chairperson how the Knowsley Borough Council Open Forums could be brought back. The Chairperson suggested that Ms. Simpson speak to Borough Councillor, Cllr. Allan Harvey who was in attendance at this meeting.

- x) Mr. P McDermott – acknowledging that he was not a Halewood resident, addressed the meeting saying that Merseyside has more green spaces than anywhere outside of London and spoke about the health benefits that are gained by living near to parks and open spaces. He suggested that a working group should be established to protect these green spaces.

The Chairman thanked residents for their attendance at the meeting

Meeting Closed at 9.10 p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....

DRAFT