



Blackrod Town Council

Blackrod Library/Council Services ~ Church Street ~ Blackrod ~ Bolton ~ BL6 5EQ

Telephone: 01204 696362

Email: blackrodtowncouncil.org.uk

www.blackrodtowncouncil.org.uk

Town Clerk: Mrs L Nuttall

Minutes of a meeting of Blackrod Town Council held on Monday 22nd July 2024

Present:-

Chairman Cllr. D Snowden

Councillors Cllr. K Grant
Cllr. D Grant
Cllr. J Price
Cllr. N Bell
Cllr. P Shacklock
Cllr. C Bancroft
Cllr. R Harrison

Also Present: Mrs L Nuttall (Town Clerk) and 7 members of the public

Before the start of the meeting, the Town Mayor, Councillor Derek Snowden welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting and explained housekeeping/health & safety.

The Town Clerk also invited new members (Cllr. P Shacklock, Cllr. C Bancroft and Cllr. R Harrison) to make their Declaration of Office and asked them to join their fellow members at the Town Council table.

No clergy were in attendance.

44. Apologies for Absence

An apology from Cllr. Seddon was received and accepted.

45 . Declarations of Interest

Cllr. D Grant declared an interest in all planning applications.

46. Review of Street Furniture (deferred from July meeting)

Councillors discussed the various street furniture (banners, posters, signs) that has been increasing around Blackrod and is becoming unsightly. The question was raised whether this street furniture is sited on private or public land. If a private fence or railing, the council are unable to have any impact on such street furniture. If public or council land, Neighbourhood Services will remove. It is best to give them a couple of weeks' notice. It was raised that the yellow builder's signs are allowed up for twelve months after the completion of a build.

A further discussion took place regarding whether it would be good practice for the Town Council to remove the street furniture once out of date and what timescale this would require. It was raised that this would not be wise and would be better left to Neighbourhood Services. It was proposed by Councillor D Grant and seconded by Councillor Bell and voted in favour by all and

Resolved:-

That Councillor D Grant would contact Neighbourhood Services at Bolton Council to get clarification of protocol and the role that Blackrod Town Council could undertake to assist.

47. Planning Applications.

No planning applications were received therefore no comments were required by Councillors.

48. Planning Decisions & Inconsistencies

Councillors were informed that correspondence had been sent to the head of Bolton Planning regarding attending the Town Council for discussion/training and we are awaiting a response regarding this.

It was proposed by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved:-

That the information regarding planning decisions be received and accepted.

49. Enforcement Cases Received and Resolved

It was proposed by Councillor D Grant and seconded by Councillor Bell and

Resolved:-

That the information regarding enforcement cases be received and accepted.

50. Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council

Held on Monday 1st July 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor K Grant and voted in favour by all and

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 1st July 2024 be received and signed as a true record.

51. Correspondence - general

The Councillors were informed that the following correspondence had only arrived recently, after the Agenda had been circulated.

1. An email from a resident regarding a suggestion about an 'adopt a grave' scheme.

It was discussed by Councillors that whilst this is a lovely idea, sadly the graves are private property. Any tending to graves would require the permission of the owners and this would take a lot of hard work and research to track families/owners of each grave that has an appearance of being unattended. Local groups helping to maintain the cemetery have previously been told that they are not to try and move, change or straighten headstones on the graves and that they need to be very careful as without the correct information they could easily offend families.

The resident could conduct this research themselves but it would be a lengthy process and would require the correct permissions.

2. An email of thanks from Blackrod Primary School to the Town Council for their support with the Youth Council.
3. A letter regarding an asset of Community Value (circulated prior to the meeting) was accepted and noted.

52. Public Participation

- A member of the public requested information as to whether any news had been received regarding the upgrade to the Station Road slip-road. It was explained that whilst the roadworks are nearing completion, the road would not open straight away. The resident then informed the Town Council that four or five of the properties on the new development are up to roof height and thus won't be long until complete.
- Another resident shared a neighbour's concern about the positioning of the new post box. Residents believe that it is likely, with parking in the area and the lorries that drop off goods for the shops, that this post-box will soon be knocked over and damaged because of its siting. There is also disappointment that the new post-box is that of HM Queen Elizabeth and not our current Monarch.
- Further to this, once again, disappointment was raised in relation to the condition that the cemetery has been left in after it has been strimmed. Many people in the village are complaining about it and even though the grass and hedges have been cut back, the Councillors agree that it is still a disgrace. It was raised that the team who tend the front of the cemetery do so quite regularly but this gives the impression that the back is also tended. However, the back of the cemetery is tended by a separate team. Bolton Council say that through being short staffed there is currently no schedule for the grass cutting or maintenance. The ongoing problem is progressive as when the services come to tend the area, it is like doing initial works every time as there is no maintenance in between. The question was raised whether the presence of Himalayan balsam would speed up the process but the maintenance teams already know about this problem. Ward Councillors are working on the level of service – recently it has been the bins and once this has been corrected, it will be green spaces. There is an intention to discuss devolving some of the services but this will require financial attention for tax purposes.

The discussion continued to the weeds on footpaths around the village where some are becoming impassable.

It was suggested that the Town Council continue to send a letter every month until an improvement in services is evident.

- The final issue raised by a resident was the danger that is being caused at the end of the car park which leads on to Rivington Street. Drivers are not showing any courtesy and are driving straight across the road to move on to Manchester Road. There have been lots of near misses and the end of the car park should have a 'give way' sign visible.

53. Finance

It was moved by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Bancroft and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

- 1. That the Town Clerk and two members authorise payments amounting to £3607.67 (three thousand, six hundred and seven pounds and 67p) and dated 25th July 2024 (due to holidays) for the payment of cheques as listed on the schedule of payments (previously received by members).**
- 2. Members to note scheduled spending at month 5 (Aug) against 24/25 estimates.**
- 3. That the Town Clerk pay the BT Quarterly bill, received after current scheduling, but due well before the next meeting date in Sept. The payment to then to be logged on the September schedules. The Town Clerk also informed that online billing has been requested to avoid this in the future.**

54. HMRC credit

Councillors were made aware of a letter sent to HMRC regarding an increasing value of credit even though employers Tax/NI payments had not been forwarded to reduce this credit.

It was moved by Councillor D Grant and seconded by Councillor K Grant and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

That the Town Clerk continue to liaise with HMRC to reduce the credit.

55. Amended Schedules of Accounts from April to July

The Town Clerk shared the amended schedule of accounts in the new format.

It was moved by Councillor D Grant and seconded by Councillor Price and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

That the amended Schedules of Accounts be received and accepted.

56. Steering Group for looking at planning for a Festival of Blackrod

It was raised from previous minutes that to bring financial considerations to the Town Council for a Festival of Blackrod would be difficult without a steering group to look at all the aspects of a potential festival. The festival would be free to attend, free to participate, would cater for the whole community and would have a similar format to the Festival of Horwich. Whilst a larger demographic, the Festival of Horwich attracted 7000 people last year and more are expected this year. It was made clear that this would not have any detrimental effect on any other event in Blackrod, would be in addition to and held at a different time. Blackrod Cricket Club have shown an interest due to having previously hosted a similar event (although a paid for event at the time).

Questions were raised regarding insuring the event and where the money would come from and that this would be discussed and developed by the steering group.

It was made clear that local groups would be able to showcase at the festival and promote the work that is done in the local area. There are lots of hidden groups in the community and the festival is a good way to promote these. Groups who have been involved in Horwich have found that they now have more members.

It was moved by Councillor K Grant and seconded by Councillor Price and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

That the Councillors will meet on Wednesday 21st August at 6pm to arrange setting up a steering group to look at planning for a Festival of Blackrod.

57. Youth Council progression

The Town Clerk checked that all Councillors had reviewed the shared idea for a possible progression of the Youth Council to include a wider range of children on a rolling programme across four years. The purpose of the change is for the current Youth Councillors to be able to start and complete projects and support the novice Youth Councillors in their proposals.

It was moved by Councillor Bell and seconded by Councillor Price and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

That the proposal for the development and progression of the Youth Council be adopted and that the Town Clerk contact all relevant stakeholders.

58. 3 Year Business Plan Sub-committee

The councillors discussed the need for a business plan.
It was moved by Councillor K Grant and seconded by Councillor Shacklock and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

That the Councillors will meet on Wednesday 21st August at 6pm to arrange a sub-committee for creating a business plan.

59. Wreaths for Remembrance Sunday

The councillors were informed of the correspondence from Mrs Monaghan and discussed who would represent and lay wreaths at remembrance Sunday.
It was moved by Councillor Price and seconded by Councillor Bell and voted in favour and

Resolved:-

That the Town Clerk would contact Mrs Monaghan and request 4 wreaths for the Remembrance Sunday Service:

**1 wreath for the Mayor to lay at Blackrod Cenotaph on behalf of the Town Council;
1 wreath for the Town Clerk to lay at Blackrod Cenotaph on behalf of the Blackrod residents;**

**1 wreath for the Mayor to lay at Horwich Cenotaph on behalf of the Town Council;
1 wreath for the Deputy Mayor to lay at Bolton Victoria Square Cenotaph on behalf of Blackrod Town Council.**

60. Neighbourhood Plan Update

No update was received on the Neighbourhood Plan.

61. Site Visits

No site visits were requested.

**62. Ward Councillor Updates.
*(Cllr Grant stepped out of committee for the update period)***

Councillor D Grant welcomed the three new councillors.

He shared updates on the following:

- That the school signs had been replaced and they were much more visible.
- That the compound across from Blackrod Primary School had recently been visited by the fire service, who had put out a fire. This would be welcomed as several attempts to stop the lighting of fires on the compound had failed.
- There had been a request for a parking attendant in Blackrod and whether Blackrod could benefit from any fines received. The council were informed that fines go directly to Highways and are not allowed to make a profit. There is no possibility that any money from parking fines could go directly to the council.
- Finally, the skip that taking up a place on the car park has been removed.
- The next meeting will be to look at the reallocation of the regeneration fund; two of the schemes are complete (the Gateway signs and walkway near the shops). The parking bays on New Street were contentious and therefore the money for this work could be reallocated for the ideas put forward by the Youth Council. These ideas would have to be put to Bolton Council and then for public consultation.

63. Future Agenda Items for consideration

A number of road management or closures coming up in the area in the near future was raised; continuing works on Station Road, Bridge 63 towards Red Rock and Bolton Road A673 close to Luciano's at The Millstone

Officers have recommended approval for the application of an Aldi at the Beehive Roundabout. This is likely to cause further traffic congestion on what is already a busy Dehavilland Way. Highways have said that improvements are in place but this is for a cycle lane which won't improve the traffic. The decision has not considered or consulted Blackrod residents or Blackrod's small businesses who will be impacted by another larger store in the area.

The state of Station Road was once again brought up. The litter currently on the road is not down to the roadworks as it is full of paper and rubbish. Residents are upset because their properties are being de-valued. A request was made that based on the last minutes the Town Clerk write to both skip hire companies to look and this immediately and to also request particle mats. Cllr. Shacklock will also contact the Fire Enforcement Officer.

The Time and date of the next council meeting was confirmed as Monday 2nd September 2024 commencing at 7pm.

The public meeting closed at 8.27pm

Signed.....Chairman