

## **HEBDEN ROYD TOWN COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING held WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023 at Hebden Bridge Town Hall.**

### **MINUTES**

**PRESENT** Mayor Cllr Jane Hoyle (Chair), Bampton Smith, Boggis, Cammack, Fenton, Hayes & Needham.

**One Member of the Public, Paul Monahan.**

Also present Jason Boom, Town Clerk, Hebden Royd Town Council

**1. WELCOME FROM THE TOWN MAYOR.**

The Mayor outlined that the Annual Town Meeting is a SEPARATE meeting from the Town Council Annual Meeting and can be held at any time between the 1st March and the 1st June. The Annual Town Meeting should be a relatively informal event for the community with electors, public and the press invited.

There is always an opportunity for the public and press to express their opinions on the council and their recent actions along with issues that are relevant to the area.

Votes can be taken at the Annual Town Meeting, however a vote taken at the meeting is not binding on the Town Council although it should be considered by them at the next meeting of the Town Council. Only members on the electoral roll can vote on an issue. Other members of the public can attend and express their opinions but not vote.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Cllrs Boden, Courtney, Fraser, Freeth, Guilfoyle, Harvey, Hodgins & Stevens.

**3. NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Town Clerk reported that the Public Notice of the Annual Town Meeting had been posted at conspicuous locations across the parish. Information had been shared on the Town Council's website.

**4. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

The minutes were reviewed and accepted as a correct record.

The Town Clerk was asked to contact West Yorkshire Police regarding anti-social behaviour in Mytholmroyd and request advise on the situation and measures in place to minimise instances.

**5. QUESTIONS FOR THE COUNCIL FROM ELECTORS IN THE PARISH**

From the floor Paul Monahan questioned the steady rise in the parish precept for Hebden Royd stating that according to the Office of National Statistics Hebden Royd stands in the top 5% of precepting bodies with a

precept of £129.34 (Band D property) against the mean being £48.75 for the UK.

He recalled that the Picture House had benefitted from a, promised at the time as a one off, increase in the precept. He stated the precept only goes up; it never comes down.

Mr Monahan would like to ask the council to ensure it delivers value for money and questioned if the steadily growing list of responsibilities are an effective use of the precept.

He asked if the newly appointed Climate Emergency & Biodiversity Officer is the most effective way to challenge this serious problem, could Calderdale MBC do more with regard to this issue.

Paul suggested that attempts to attract visitors to the town was for the benefit of traders, but perhaps not for residents. 'Ordinary Businesses' were being lost and Hebden Bridge was becoming reliant on the tourist economy, specifically day trippers, which in his opinion was not the best for the town. He stated, 'he doesn't mind visiting a theme park, but he does not wish to live in one'.

Paul asked that council must question itself, in that, is the work for the benefit of the towns residents, for the future, and he would encourage council to engage Calderdale MBC to contribute.

In response Cllr Hoyle praised the work of the Climate Emergency & Biodiversity Officer with local schools and stated that she felt Hebden Bridge's economy had developed into a tourist economy over the last 30 years.

Cllr Bampton Smith highlighted the loss of Calderdale MBC's support grant to HRTC as a reason for a need to increase the precept this year.

Cllr Boggis endorsed the work of the Climate Emergency & Biodiversity Officer with schools and the excitement pupils had expressed when being involved with the concept.

Cllr Needham welcomed the questioning. He stated that the adopted Climate Emergency Action Plan will make a difference and must be pursued. He cited e-bike and retro-fit initiatives as already make a difference.

He stated that budget cuts to Calderdale MBC from central government were affecting services i.e. highways and schools.

He stated that we did not want to lose services, the Picture House needs financial support as it builds back following the Covid-19 Pandemic, those in greatest need have been supported by Cost of Living initiatives and delivering 'Warm Spaces'. The small increase in the precept benefits many who get more than they have contributed back.

The budget for the town council was passed unanimously and we will continue to think hard to ensure value for local people. We spend to encourage our community and local people, should our visitors benefit then that is a bonus.

Cllrs Hayes made the meeting aware of the support HRTC had given to the important work of Calder Foods support for those most in need.

Cllr Bampton Smith highlighted that comments from last years annual meeting had taken a comment from the floor and acted on it by providing support during the cost of living crisis.

Paul Monahan replied to the comments made by HRTC Councillors with encouragement to make the good works of HRTC better known, letting

residents know what the council is undertaking on their behalf. He would expect HRTC to be able to confidently justify its choices and actions and he is happy to hear that HRTC will consider once more those decisions that have been taken.

Paul Monahan asked on behalf of Diana Monahan that the clock at Charlton Chambers be maintained appropriately and that it works as it should. He also asked that St James Church be advised how HRTC can support the electrification of their clock.

Meeting closed at 8.05pm.