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| **Mossley Town Council** |
| **17 January 2024 at 8.00pm** |
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|  | **Present:**Councillor Frank Travis (Chair) (In the Chair); Councillors Hamza Aslam, Dean Aylett, Amelia Bayliss, Bev Bennett, Stephen Homer, Idu Miah, Mary Mitchell and Pat Mullin. |
|  | There were no members of the public present at the meeting. |
| **2499** | **Apologies for Absence**An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Bev Bennett. |
| **2500** | **Declarations of Interest**Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.As a result of them serving as members of the Mossley Town Team, Councillors Idu Miah and Pat Mullin declared prejudicial interests and left the meeting during the consideration of the sponsorship request from that body (see minute XXX below). |
| **2501** | **Public Engagement** |
|  | PoliceThe Clerk advised members that the Police were unable to be represented at the meeting, but that PC Bradley Wild had delivered an update on recent Policing activity in the town.* The Police had issued a further three warrants in the past four weeks. One involved drugs and weapons being taken off the streets; the second involved the seizure of a dangerous dog; and the third involved the arrest of a suspect and the seizure of a vehicle;
* Further action had been taken with a persistent shoplifter to the point where his offending had ceased and the CO-OP had expressed gratitude to the neighbourhood team for their work with this problem;
* The Police bid for funding under the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS) had been submitted and a decision was awaited. If successful, £15,000 funding would come to Mossley to create a group helping secondary school age children struggling in mainstream school and who may turn to anti-social behaviour;
* The Police were aware of the spike in burglaries and vehicle crime over the last week or so. A plan was in place for this with the neighbourhood team focusing on Mossley in terms of high visibility patrols, stop searches, stopping cars etc. The residents of Mossley had been vigilant in reporting issues and providing information. The Police encouraged residents to continue and forward to the Police anything of note which might assist the Police to:

TamesideNorth@GMP.Police.uk  from where it would be sent to the neighbourhood team.* The Police encouraged the public to access Police social media platforms and to join the ‘Bee In The Loop’ platform where requests and information were regularly posted.

 Members expressed satisfaction at the potential benefit to the community in the event of the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS) bid being successful.The establishment in the Town, of a group to offer help to secondary school age children struggling in mainstream school and who may be turning to anti-social behaviour, was a much-needed facility and the Town Council wished to lend its full support to that initiative.To that extent, the Town Council would welcome the opportunity to become actively involved in the initiative. The establishment of a model to assist our young people would ensure that the right people were targeted by the initiative.The Town Council expressed interest in nominating representatives to serve on any group managing the initiative. This would provide detailed local knowledge about the problems faced by young people and all residents in the Town. A partnership arrangement with the local Council would enhance not only the case for funding but also the operation of the initiative.In the (hopefully) unlikely event of the bid not proving successful, the Town Council wished to be informed of the reasons for rejection. In view of the need for and benefit which would be obtained by the Mossley community as a whole to the scheme, the Town Council fully supported the bid. |
|  | RESOLVED: | (1) | That PC Wild be thanked for providing this update. |
|  |  | (2) | That the Clerk be requested to convey the views of the Town Council on the Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme (ARIS) bid and to publish details on the Town Council website and social media. |
| **2502** | **Applications for Financial Assistance**Mossley Town TeamThe Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Mossley Town Team seeking the £50 sponsorship of the 3-tier planter in top Mossley. Members are advised that at the meeting of the town Council on 16 June 2021, it was agreed:"That subject to review by the Town Council at any time in the future, approval be given to the annual sponsoring of a three-tier planter in ‘Top’ Mossley at a cost of £50 per annum."The Clerk invited members to confirm that they wished to continue sponsoring the planter. |
|  | **RESOLVED:** | (1) | That the resolution adopted on 16 June 2021, approving subject to review by the Town Council at any time in the future, the annual sponsoring of a three-tier planter in ‘Top’ Mossley at a cost of £50 per annum, be reaffirmed. |
|  |  | (2) | That in view of the direct benefit to the area, part of the area or to some or all its inhabitants, the expenditure be met from Section 137 funding. |
| **2503** | **Minutes of the Meeting of the Council on Wednesday 6 December 2023**The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. |
| **2504** | **Asset Register**The Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Town Council to review and update the Asset Register. |
|  | RESOLVED: | (1) | That the report be noted. |
|  |  | (2) | That the missing gazebo referred to in the report be removed from the register and the Clerk requested to amend and update the register accordingly. |
|  |  | (3) | That a deposit of £50 be requested on all future requests to loan Town Council equipment refundable upon the safe return of the equipment. |
| **2505** | **Mossley Town Council Public Clock** (See minute 2489 of 6 December 2023)The Clerk reminded members that the local press had been invited to publicise the Town Council’s search for a suitable contractor in case there was a local provider with the necessary skills.That had now been publicised via the Tameside Correspondent but regrettably, no responses had been received.The Clerk added that he would arrange to ask an horologist operating in the Oldham area whether assistance could be given by him or a colleague.Councillor Amelia Bayliss undertook to explore the possibility of assistance being available via the ‘Tameside Means Business’ Group. |
|  | RESOLVED: | That the report and action proposed by the Clerk be noted. |
| **2506** | **Tree Planting Initiative**Councillor Aylett suggested that trees should be issued to all Year 6 pupils in the Town’s 5 primary schools as last year. Councillor Aylett undertook to arrange procurement of the trees once numbers required were available.Members endorsed the suggestion and added that the initiative should be extended to community groups operating in the Town. |
|  | RESOLVED: | (1) | That arrangements be made to provide a small tree to each Year 6 primary school child in each of the five primary schools in the Town. |
|  |  | (2) | That the Clerk be requested to seek the numbers of trees required by individual schools. |
|  |  | (3) | That the initiative be extended this year to community groups operating in the Town. |
|  |  | (4) | That the Clerk and individual members be requested to publicise the extending of the initiative to community groups with a deadline of 15 February 2024 being set for the submission of expressions of interest. |
|  |  | (5) | That the cost of providing the trees be met from the Environment Budget. |
| **2507** | **Proposed Cabinets at George Lawton Hall**The Clerk informed members that the Manager of George Lawton Hall had confirmed that permission to install cabinets with toughened glass was still available.Cllr Stephen Homer advised members that he would continue to source alternatives. |
|  | RESOLVED: | That the report be noted. |
| **2508** | **Planning Issues**The Council considered the following planning applications: |
|  | (i) | Demotion of existing commercial unit and construction of replacement unit resubmission of application 22/00712/FUL at Garage Adjacent to 6 Dean Street, Mossley (23/01098/FUL) |
|  | (ii) | T5 Ash - Pollard at 5m at Abney Congregational Church Micklehurst Branch, Huddersfield Road, Mossley (23/00106/TPO) |
|  | (iii) | Two storey rear extension at 37 Moorlands Crescent Mossley (23/01057/FUL) |
|  | (iv) | Single Storey Side Extension, First Floor Rear Extension and Loft Conversion. Including patio and retaining wall to front of property. (Re-submission of 23/00041/FUL) at Wellswood The Elms Mossley (24/00039/FUL) |
|  | (v) | First Floor Extension and Conservatory Replacement with masonry walls and solid roof with roof lights at 29 The Spindles Mossley (24/00028/FUL) |
|  | RESOLVED: | (1) | That in respect of application 23/00106/TPO - T5 Ash - Pollard at 5m at Abney Congregational Church Micklehurst Branch, Huddersfield Road, Mossley, Tameside MBC be advised that whilst the Town Council is pleased that the tree is not to be removed, it is requested that there is on site arboricultural supervision.  |
|  |  | (2) | That the remaining applications be noted. |
|  | The Chair then referred to the decision-making process undertaken by Tameside MBC in respect of recent planning applications for residential developments at Hey Farm and Mossley Hollins; and the non-determination of an application at Manchester Road. |
|  |  | (3) | That in respect of the applications referred to by the Chair, the Clerk in consultation with the Chair be authorised to submit the Town Council’s concerns to Tameside MBC.(Note: For ease of reference, the concerns agreed with the Chair and submitted to Tameside MBC are appended to these minutes.) |
| **2509** | **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Stopping up of Highway (North West) (No. ) Order 202 – Abney Church, Huddersfield Rd, Mossley**The Clerk reported the receipt of a communication from the National Transport Casework Team inviting comments on a proposal to stop up part of the highway at Abney Church on Huddersfield Road.The proposal was associated with the following planning application considered by the Town Council on 23 February 2022 to which there was no objection and the application had subsequently been approved by Tameside MBC:Change of use of church (Use Class F1(f)) to a residential dwelling (Use Class C3), with two doors (one replacing existing window) to rear elevation and rooflights, and creation of new parking area at former Abney Church Huddersfield Road Mossley (22/00018/FUL)A copy of the order, draft notice and plan had been circulated to members with the agenda. |
|  | RESOLVED: | That the proposal to stop up part of the highway at Abney Church on Huddersfield Road, be noted. |
| **2510** | **Financial Update to 31 December 2023**The Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) showing the financial position as at 31 December 2023 and listing all bills paid since the last meeting as follows: |
|  | Help in Hands A2B | £60.00 |
|  | Dave Kendrick | £250.00 |
|  | Back Stage Pass | £175.00 |
|  | Mossley Methodist Church | £40.00 |
|  | TMBC (Christmas events) (Authorised 6 December 2023) | £2,370.00 |
|  | Mossley Time of Your Life | £150.00 |
|  | Zoom | £15.59 |
|  | HMRC PAYE | £116.60 |
|  | M Iveson (Salary and Exp Dec 2023) | £782.69 |
|  | Frank Travis | £24.00 |
|  | TMBC (Elections May 2023)(Authorised 6 September 2023) | £8,750.00 |
|  | MCC (Xmas Tree sponsorship) | £25.00 |
|  | P&NFS | £22.50 |
|  | Total: | **£12,781.38** |
|  | The schedule showed actual expenditure against budget provision for the entire year.Mossley ‘Monday’ ClubCouncillor Stephen Homer invited the Town Council to consider funding the cost of new ‘Father Christmas’ attire for use by Mossley Monday Club.The Club had existing attire which was in need of replacement for use at existing and proposed future events including the George Lawton Hall. |
|  | RESOLVED: | (1) | That the report be noted. |
|  |  | (2) | That the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair be authorised to meet the cost (up to £200) of new ‘Father Christmas’ attire for use by Mossley Monday Club and that the cost be met from the ‘unallocated’ budget. |
|  |  | (3) | That in view of the direct benefit to the area, part of the area or to some or all its inhabitants, the expenditure be met from Section 137 funding. |
| **2511** | **Draft Budget and Precept 2024/25**The Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Town Council to give further consideration to the Budget for 2024/25 through to 2026/27 and to set the level of Precept for 2024/25.Appended to the report were:* A note setting out useful criteria used for calculating Council Tax;
* An updated schedule setting out the anticipated outturn expenditure for the current year 2023/24 projected to 31 March 2024 and a draft base budget for 2024/25; and
* Comparative taxation levels for the people of Mossley as a result of various levels of precept and Council Tax bases.

The report included updated observations/assumptions on the current year’s budget; and an outline of the anticipated financial position at 31 March 2024. The Town Council’s ‘running costs’ for 2024/25 were set out in the report. Members were invited to give consideration to the ‘policy options.’Policy commitments on Environment, Egmont St and the Neighbourhood Plan had been rolled forward because the Council had given previous approval to these.Members need to consider allocations for:* large and small grants,
* Christmas 2024,
* Creative space
* Partnership working
* and any other options they wish to include.

At this stage it was envisaged that the end of year balance (£2,780), underspendings (£36,992) and a precept of £32,000 (for illustrative purposes only) amounted to approximately £71,772.After deducting the running costs of £19,000, and policy option commitments of £16,000, the Council had approximately £36,000 to consider allocating as policy options. Members discussed policy options including the need for the Town Council to assist with and encourage various community events.Members emphasised the need to publicise the existence and role of the Town Council within the community and the possibility of the Town Council providing a regular feature on its activities in the Mossley Browser.Members considered a range of items for the forthcoming year which may require various levels of funding or assistance from the Town Council including:* A harvest festival event at Egmont St
* The ‘Mossley Walks’ event.

In considering the Precept for 2024/25. Members acknowledged that the Precept had remained at £32,000 for several years resulting in the Town Council’s Budget reducing considerably in real terms. |
|  | RESOLVED: | (1) | That the report and information presented by the Clerk be noted. |
|  |  | (2) | That in consultation with the Chair, the Clerk be requested to review the policy options for inclusion in the 2024/25 and subsequent years’ budgets for consideration at the next Town Council meeting. |
|  |  | (3) | That following consultation with the Chair, the Clerk be authorised to meet the cost of producing any publicity material in connection with the ‘Mossley Walks’ event and that the cost be met from the ‘Environment’ budget heading, |
|  |  | (4) | That a precept of £36,000 be set. |
| **2512** | **Chair’s Report**No additional items were reported. |
| **2513** | **Correspondence**The Clerk advised that there were no items of correspondence to consider. |
| **2514** | **Application for Financial Assistance**This item had been dealt with earlier during the meeting. |
|  | The meeting closed at 9.53pm. |

Chair

**Planning issues (See minute 2508 above)**

At the meeting of Mossley Town Council on Wednesday 17 January 2024, members considered recent planning applications. Members also reviewed the consideration given by Tameside MBC of 2 applications which had been determined by Tameside MBC and a further application which has been undetermined for an unusually lengthy period. I set out details of the Town Council’s concerns below.

The Town Council is disappointed at the outcome of the planning applications at "Hey Farm" and “Mossley Hollins.” The first, particularly on the scale and necessity of the development, but also the way in which the application was considered. This is because the process of presentation by opposing parties was followed by the representations of the developer. Whilst the Town Council understands that the Speakers Panel cannot have lengthy and complicated "courtroom" scenarios, this was a significant application with considerable impact.

As the developer’s representation came second, there was no opportunity to question statements made which in the opinion of local members did not bear much relationship to reality. In theory this should be picked up in officer's report and their own professional advisory evidence and reports but ‘on the day’ the view was taken that statements made, without challenge, lead to wrong impressions and imbalance.

The second part is that it appears that the comments on the intensity and character of the Hollins proposal were not addressed.

The continued acceptance of "traditional" estate layouts time and again is disappointing. There is a real need for more inspired and imaginative urban design opportunities, especially in sensitive situations.

The other question concerns application 21/00196/OUT for 17 dwellings on land off Manchester Road. This application was submitted and then verified on 12th February 2021 but appears still not to have been determined for a period of 3 years.

The application site is zoned for employment use. On that basis, it would appear reasonable to expect that the application would be refused or otherwise dealt with long before now.

The Town Council acknowledges that there may be reasons for a decision not to be made immediately, but this length of time seems excessive. Members considered that as an alternative was being sought with employment use and by a high-quality company wishing to come into Tameside to expand and create jobs, this is a clear block to investment which is being hailed as unacceptable by both the current Government and the Opposition.