

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE

THURSDAY 15th JUNE 2023 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Anthea Ambrose (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Andy Evans and Imran Uddin.

Officers in Attendance: Darren Tilley, Chief Executive & Town Clerk.

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

2. Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of any Disclosable Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests by Members.

3. Public Participation

In accordance with Standing Order 3.6, members of the public may attend the meeting for the purpose of submitting a petition and/or making representations, giving evidence or answering questions in respect of any item of business included on the agenda.

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held 16th June 2022

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th June 2022 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5. External Audit 2021/2022

The Sub-Committee noted that the External Audit was completed on 26th September 2022 and no matters were raised concerning the Town Council's accounts and governance arrangements for the year ended 31st March 2022 (item 5 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

Based on the Council's accounts and governance arrangements for the year ending 31st March 2022, the External Auditor's opinion was that the Council had complied with proper practices and relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had been met.

6. Internal Audit Report 2022/2023 and Internal Audit arrangements 2023/2024

The Sub-Committee received the Internal Auditor's Report in respect of compliance with relevant procedures and controls in operation during the financial year ended 31st March 2023 and to appoint an Internal Auditor for 2023/2024 (item 6 on the agenda).

The following points were discussed:

- a) Land Valuation – rather than arrange for land to be valued; it would be more appropriate to seek advice on how land could be revalued as a desktop exercise; given the Council's land was either public open space or a community facility; and
- b) Reserves – consideration should be given to placing a note in the accounts identifying which earmarked reserves were committed.

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

1. that the observations of the Internal Audit (attached at Appendix 1 of the report) and confirmation of compliance with the internal control objectives (attached at Appendix 2 of the report) be received and noted;
2. that the recommendations for improvement, along with the proposed response, as set out in the Internal Audit Improvement Action Plan (attached at Appendix 3 of the report), be adopted; subject to:
 - a) response no. 2 to the observation on "Land and buildings with a commercial value" being amended to read "review the process for land valuation", and
 - b) the response to the observation on "Guidance regarding the general reserve" including placing a note in the accounts identifying which earmarked reserves were committed; and
3. that the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils Internal Audit Service be appointed to undertake the Town Council's Internal Audit for the Year Ending 31st March 2023.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The Internal Auditor, having tested all the aspects of the Council's internal controls, was satisfied that in all significant respects the internal control objectives were achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the Council's needs.*
2. *To ensure that the observations of the Internal Audit would be addressed with appropriate and balanced measures.*
3. *To ensure arrangements were in place for compliance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.*

7. Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

The Sub-Committee received a report to enable it to review and ensure sound systems of internal control, including the management of risk and the preparation of accounting statements during the financial year ended 31st March 2023 and to recommend to Council adoption of the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 (item 7 on the agenda).

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the systems of internal control and management of risk, as set out in the report and in the updated Corporate Risk Register at Appendix 1, be approved and confirmed as sound; and that Section 1, Annual Governance Statement 2022/23, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/2023, attached at Appendix 2 of the report, be completed, signed and submitted accordingly.

Reason for Decision

Having reviewed the control measures for each of the areas listed on the Annual Governance Statement and also the assessment of risks facing the Council and associated mitigating measures, the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee were confident that to the best of their knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31st March 2023, there were sound systems of internal control and management of risk.

8. Accounting Statements 2022/2023

The Sub-Committee received the End of Year Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2023 in order to recommend to Council adoption of the Accounting Statements 2022/2023 (item 8 on the agenda).

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that Section 2, Accounting Statements 2022/23, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2023, attached at Appendix 9 of the report, be completed, signed and submitted accordingly.

Reason for Decision

The Corporate Governance Sub-Committee, having carried out an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's financial arrangements, concluded that there were sound systems of internal control. The Internal Auditor, having reviewed the annual accounts, found the Accounting Statements to have been prepared on the correct basis and were supported by adequate audit trails to underlying records.

9. Automatic Payments (Direct Debit, Standing Order and BACS)

The Sub-Committee received details of current direct debit, standing order and BACS payments for review and endorsement in accordance with Financial Regulations 6.6 to 6.8 (item 9 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the list of suppliers paid by variable direct debit, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be renewed;
2. that the supplier paid by use of a banker's standing order, as detailed in the table under Standing Order Payments in the report, be renewed; and
3. that the list of suppliers paid by BACS/CHAPS, attached at Appendix 2 of the report, be renewed.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that authorisations for variable direct debit payments were reviewed.*
2. *To ensure that authorisations for standing order payments were reviewed.*
3. *To ensure that authorisations for BACS/CHAPS payments were reviewed.*

The meeting closed at 7.25pm.

NOTE:

CRIME & DISORDER ACT 1998 (SECTION 17) – The Council has an obligation to consider Crime & Disorder implications of all its activities and to do all that it can to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area.

EQUALITIES ACT 2010

Braunstone Town Council has a duty in carrying out its functions to have due regard to:-

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and;
- foster good relations between different groups

To ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the basis of race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity.

These issues were considered in connection with each of the above decisions. Unless otherwise stated under each item of this report, there were no implications.

These minutes are a draft and are subject to consideration for approval at the next meeting June 2024.