

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE

29th JUNE 2023 AT 8.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Tracey Shepherd (Town Mayor), Councillor Paul Kennedy (Deputy Town Mayor) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Sevim Aslan, Nick Brown, Alex Dewinter, Andrew Evans, Richard Forrest, Sam Fox-Kennedy, Rebecca Lunn-Scoppie, Sam Maxwell, Darshan Singh, Christiane Startin-Lorent, Marion Waterton, Robert Waterton and Mark Widdop.

Officers in Attendance: Darren Tilley, Chief Executive & Town Clerk and Pauline Snow, Deputy Chief Executive and Community Services Manager.

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

COUNCILLOR TRACEY SHEPHERD, TOWN MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR

6138 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Leanne Lee, Gary Sanders, Satindra Sangha and Imran Uddin.

6139 Disclosures of Interest

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

6140 Public Session

In accordance with Standing Order 3.6, members of the public may attend the meeting for the purpose of submitting a petition, 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 present at the meeting.

6141 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 18th May 2023 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

It was proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by the Deputy Town Mayor and was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 18th May 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

6142 Internal Audit Report 2022/2023 and Internal Audit Arrangements 2023/2024

The Council 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 5 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and was

RESOLVED

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 recommendation 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; 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 2024.

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.*

6143 Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

The Council received the statement which enabled it to 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 authorise the completion and submission of the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 accordingly (item 6 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and was

RESOLVED 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.

6144 Accounting Statements 2022/2023

The Council received the End of Year Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2023 and agreed to adopt and submit the Accounting Statements 2022/2023 accordingly (item 7 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and was

RESOLVED that Section 2, Accounting statements 2022/2023, 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 Government 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.

6145 Amendments to Capital Plan 2023/2024

The Council considered the proposed amendments to the 2023/2024 Capital Plan to incorporate works to the Car Park at Mosssdale Meadows as part of wider works to improve drainage and prevent flooding at Mosssdale Meadows (item 8 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and was

RESOLVED that the following items be approved for inclusion in the short to medium term Capital Plan 2023/2024:

- i. Drainage work to the entrance of Mosssdale Meadows car park to drain water from the car park into the brook as the car park entrance was prone to frequent flooding which was raised during the Walking & Cycling route construction; and
 - ii. Resurfacing of Mosssdale Meadows car park with tarmac; currently the car park consists of hardcore and stone which frequently gets washed down towards the brook in heavy rain;
- as highlighted at Appendix 1.

Reason for Decision

To recognise that problems with flooding at various locations on Mosssdale Meadows had been reported on several occasions and it made sense to include these items on the Capital Plan so they could be included and funded as part of the same Capital works as two other Mosssdale Meadows Capital Plan Schemes: replace vehicle and pedestrian culvert bridges and “Improve drainage on Lubbesthorpe Bridleway”.

6146 Announcements

a) Town Mayor

The Town Mayor announced that she had attended the following events in her first six weeks:

- “on 19th May, I was welcomed to The Friday Social Group and had a good chat with those in attendance”;
 - “on 20th May, was the Vaisakhi celebrations at Braunstone Civic Centre”;
 - “on 24th May, I attended the Coffee & Chat Session at Library and was able to chat with our hard-working volunteers”;
 - “on 19th June, I visited the DWP Help Desk at Blaby District Council’s offices”;
 - “on 22nd June, with the Chair of the District I formally opened the new link for pedestrians and cyclists between Mosssdale Meadows and Meridian Leisure; and we had people attend on their bikes and pass through while we were there – which was great to see”;
 - “on 27th June, I hosted the first launch of a Chatty Café in Braunstone Town, at Gilly’s Sandwich Shop and I would like to thank Carl and his staff for embracing this initiative and providing a warm welcome; I look forward to further Chatty Café’s opening soon”.
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- “I would like to thank the Deputy Mayor for hosting the flag raising ceremony at the Civic Memorial Garden to mark the week running up to Armed Forces Day”.

The Town Mayor announced forthcoming events including:

- “Thorpe Astley On the Beach on 1st July at Thorpe Astley Park and Community Centre; I will be hosting a Chatty Café in the Centre on the day, please come and support the event and help if you can”; and
- “Summer Fete on 5th August at Mossdale Meadows, again I will be hosting a Chatty Café, this time in a gazebo, and hope that members may be able to help at the event”.

b) Leader of the Council

Councillor Nick Brown reported on the following items:

Climate Initiatives

1. “Electric Vehicle Charging Points now fully installed; contract with service provider signed and approved prices submitted; a meeting was due shortly to finalise all the arrangements for the Charging Points to be switched on and available for use. Bays marked at Civic Centre. Bay marking at Thorpe Astley and signage at both sites due to be installed in August”.
2. “Air Source Heat Pump: Installation was due mid to late July 2023”.
3. “Solar PV Panels: The company have done their own structural assessment of the Civic Centre roofs. Currently waiting for confirmation that assessment says they are suitable. Estimated timescales for installation was now September 2023”.

Cycle Path

1. “The Town Council had signed up with an electricity supplier for the lighting/CCTV on Mossdale; arrangements were being made for the installation of the meter in the timescales reported to Committee therefore lighting would be turned on by the end of July and CCTV installed beginning of August 2023. The Leader thanked the Chief Executive & Town Clerk for his hard work on progressing the project”.
2. “Aylestone Meadows scheduled for October: the designs were now done and now waiting for next available opportunity when the contractor could undertake the work”.
3. “Kingsway path improvements were scheduled to be completed before the end of the year. Blaby District Council were happy with the designs for their part; County Council need a Section 8 order and, again awaiting for the next available slots for the contractor to undertake the work in the autumn”.
4. “Meridian Way: the designs remain to be finalised, approved and signed off by County. There then needs to be a trial of the road narrowing. The County Council had confirmed that the exact kerb line and width had to be trialled to assess the full impact on motorists, cyclists and pedestrians which can only take place once the designs are finalised and approved. Work on this section is now estimated to be Spring 2024”.

Civic Centre

1. "Some minor snagging remains outstanding".
2. "Issues with some of the equipment ordered for the Café Kitchen which were currently being addressed. Fridge/Freezer has a long lead in time so alternatives being explored. Items were being ordered from different suppliers due to the risks associated with the liquidity of the original supplier".
3. "A meeting with JAAAK, the bar contractor, had been arranged for 30th June to discuss their proposals for delivering the Café Service".
4. "Plaque for Changing Places Toilet now ordered".

Shakespeare Park Playground

1. "All funders are happy with the alternative play equipment".
2. "Currently chasing the discharge of the Planning Condition followed by a lead in time of a couple of months for the equipment to be ordered and works therefore will be in September 2023".

c) Chief Executive and Town Clerk

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk confirmed that an outstanding Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the annual meeting held in May 2023 had now been duly signed and witnessed.

It was noted that a member of the library staff would be completing 50 years' service in the library services on 5th July. The Town Mayor had been invited to present a bouquet to the staff member on 5th July and congratulate her on an outstanding service record and commitment to library services for the community.

6147 County and District Councillor Reports

a) Leicestershire County Council

Councillor Amanda Hack, as County Councillor for Braunstone Division, reported on the following matters:

Walking and Cycling Route

Councillor Hack confirmed that Leicester City Council were the lead authority on the Walking & Cycling Route project and County Council were awaiting responses from the City Council before work could proceed at Meridian Way. Dropped kerbs in the area would be undertaken at the same time as the cycle path work once this commences.

Town Mayor

Councillor Hack congratulated Tracey Shepherd, Town Mayor on the launch of the first Chatty Café in Braunstone Town.

Leicestershire County Council

It was noted that the County Council was struggling financially and were the lowest funded County Council in the country.

A decision had been made to cut the Shire Grant Scheme from 2024 which would have a huge impact on local community groups and projects.

The Scrutiny Panel had been reviewing complaints received and it was noted that there had been a 20% increase in complaints received in 2022/2023 particularly in Special Educational Needs services and education.

The Environment & Transport Scrutiny panel were currently undertaking a Flood Strategy Consultation including Braunstone Town. It was noted that Amy Street in Braunstone Town had been affected by recent flooding issues.

It was reported that work was currently being undertaken to recycle waste collected from gullies and drains on the highways. Work was also being undertaken with contractors to clear road work signs left in place after work had been completed.

Work was continuing to clear a large backlog in health screening following the Covid pandemic for breast, cervical and bowel cancer.

Concern was raised regarding the state of school buildings in the county with a report showing that 77 school buildings in Leicestershire were categorised as a risk to life and limb. Money had been made available for 38 educational buildings for urgent repairs.

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent raised concern at the end of the Shire Grant scheme and queried if any other funding may be available from the County Council.

Councillor Bob Waterton queried if anything else could be done to support residents once the Fosse Health Clinic closed and residents were transferred to the new Health Centre at New Lubbethorpe.

Councillor Amanda Hack advised that Leicestershire County Council had exhausted all routes to prevent the closure of the Fosse Health Centre. Talks regarding transport options for Braunstone Town residents to access the new health centre in New Lubbethorpe would not commence until the Fosse Health Centre was officially closed.

b) Blaby District Council

Councillor Nick Brown, as District Councillor for Braunstone Millfield Ward, reported on the following matters:

Councillor Nick Brown advised that the GMB union had organised industrial action by refuse collectors that would affect Braunstone Town, Leicester Forest East, Glenfield, New Lubbethorpe and Kirby Muxloe on three consecutive Wednesdays.

Councillor Brown expressed concern over voter I.D. requirements for the recent local elections where many residents had been turned away from voting as they did not have the required I.D. with them. There was no way of noting the extent of the problem as no records were available on the numbers that were turned away or returned with the required identification information. Many of these residents may not have access to the internet in order to access alternative identification required for voting.

Councillor Bob Waterton advised that a new housing development had received approval north of Kirby Muxloe which would have a huge impact on traffic to and from the A47.

Councillor Sam Maxwell asked whether Planning Committee had wished to defer comment on the planning application until more information from Leicestershire County Council highways was obtained regarding the impact on traffic from the new development.

In response councillor Bob Waterton advised that a presentation regarding the new development had been organised but Leicestershire County Council highways representatives did not attend in order to discuss the impact on traffic to and from the A47.

6148 Questions from Councillors

No questions had been submitted.

6149 Reports of Standing Committees: Community Development Committee – 25th May 2023

Council received the Report of the meeting of the Community Development Committee held on the 25th May 2023 (p7706-7711).

Page 7707, Minute 6 – Community Safety and Neighbourhood Policing

Councillor Anthea Ambrose reported that herself and County Councillor, Amanda Hack had recently met with the Police Crime Commissioner and highlighted concerns raised by the Town Council regarding the high turnover of police beat officers in Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley and the lack of a Police sergeant in the beat area for some time. This was having a negative

impact on the relationship between the Town Council, residents and the police due to lack of continuity.

It was noted that recruitment of more police officers was underway but all new officers were deployed in different areas then moved on in order to gain experience in different services and situations. It was therefore likely that the ongoing movement of officers from one beat to another would continue for some time.

Concern had also been raised regarding a number of serious knife crime incidents in the Town along with speeding and parking issues that did not appear to have been logged or followed up by the police.

A meeting was due to be arranged between Councillor Ambrose, the Police and the Town Council officers for an update on the current crime and operational arrangements for the beat.

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent commented that she had encountered difficulty logging crime or issues when contacting the Police.

Councillor Anthea Ambrose had discussed with the Police Crime Commissioner what specialist training officer had received in dealing with crime and issues relating to mental health.

Councillor Sam Fox-Kennedy commented on an incident of arson on Woodland Drive.

It was moved by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and was

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

6150 Reports of Standing Committees: Planning & Environment Committee – 8th June 2023

Council received the Report of the meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 8th June 2023 (p7712 – p7724).

Page 7722, item 10 – Braunstone Village Conservation Area Extension

Councillor Bob Waterton advised that Leicester City Council were now progressing with the proposal to incorporate the conservation areas from both sides of Braunstone Lane and was due to undertake a consultation in September.

Blaby District Council was also supportive of the proposals.

Councillor Alex DeWinter confirmed that two local residents had secured a judicial review of the proposed building of houses on Avon Road that would be considered in August 2023.

It was moved by Councillor Robert Waterton and was

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

6151 Reports of Standing Committees: Corporate Governance Sub-Committee – 15th June 2023

Council received the Report of the meeting of Corporate Governance Sub-Committee held on 15th June 2023 (p7725– p7728).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and was

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

6152 Reports of Standing Committee: Policy & Resources Committee – 15th June 2023

Council received the Report of the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee held on 9th March 2023 (p7729– p7739).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and was

RESOLVED that the report be adopted.

6153 Motions on Notice

No Motions on Notice had been submitted.

6154 Sealing of Documents

There were no documents for sealing.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

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.

SIGNED:

DATE: