BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

6th OCTOBER 2022 at 8.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Satindra Sangha (Town Mayor), Councillor Tracey Shepherd (Deputy Town Mayor) and Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Nick Brown, Sam Fox-Kennedy, Amanda Hack, Paul Kennedy, Leanne Lee, Rebecca Lunn-Scoppie, Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Dipen Nathwani and Christiane Startin-Lorent.

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

There were six members of the public present at the meeting.

COUNCILLOR SATINDRA SANGHA, TOWN MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR

6056 Tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The Town Mayor, Councillor Satindra Sangha, opened the meeting with a tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as follows:

"Along with many in our community, across the country and around the world, it was with great sadness that I received the news on 8th September that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away".

"Despite our sadness and loss, the overwhelming sense of pride and loyalty to Her Majesty for her 70 years unwavering service as the longest reigning monarch in British history has highlighted our shared sense of community and values as well as our shared feelings of both sadness and joy".

"It was an honour to be able to read out the Proclamation of our new King Charles III at the Civic Centre Memorial Garden and thank you to those who attended to show support for our new Head of State and to reflect on the life and service of our former Queen".

"Many shared their thoughts, memories and appreciation in books of condolences at our Community Centres, which have now been sent to the County Records Office for safe keeping".

"I'm sure the Council will join with me as we remember that while our Queen was a Head of State, she was a mother, grandmother and great grandmother and send our sympathy and condolences to the Royal Family as they come to terms with their loss".

The Town Mayor invited those present to join in a minute's silence in remembering Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's contribution to public life and sending the Royal Family the Town Council's best wishes as they came to terms with their loss.

6057 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Ajmer Basra, Parminder Basra, Sohan Johal, Darshan Singh, Marion Waterton and Robert Waterton.

6058 <u>Disclosures of Interest</u>

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

6059 Public Session

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

There were six members of the public present at the meeting.

6060 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 30th June 2022 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 Meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 30th June 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

6061 Co-option to Vacancy on the Council

The Council considered expressions of interest in order to co-opt a member to fill the vacancy on the Council for the Thorpe Astley Ward (item 5 on the agenda).

A Notice of vacancy in the Office of Town Councillor was published on 5th July 2022 for the Thorpe Astley Ward, due to the expiry of the membership of Alex DeWinter under Section 87(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. A request for an election was not received within the required 14 days.

Public elections will not be held until May 2023; therefore, for the interim period the vacancy can be filled by co-option, voted for by the incumbent members of Braunstone Town Council.

On 8th August 2022 the Town Council published a notice setting out its intention to co-opt to the vacancy. The deadline was initially 12th September 2022 for the scheduled meeting of Council on 22nd September 2022. Due to the death

of HM Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022, meeting schedules were rearranged and as a consequence Council was rescheduled to 6th October 2022 and the deadline for expressions of interest in being co-opted as a Town Councillor was extended to 9am on Monday 26th September 2022.

Two applications were received in the following order:

- 1. Callistus Fonjong, received 11th September 2022; and
- 2. Richard Forrest, received 21st September 2022

The candidates addressed the Council explaining how they intended to serve as a Town Councillor and answered questions from members of the Council. Both candidates agreed to leave the room while the other candidate addressed the Council and the merits of the applications were considered.

Since there were more applicants than vacancies, the Town Mayor called for a secret ballot to take place. Having counted the 13 votes cast, the Town Mayor declared that Callistus Fonjong had received a majority of the votes cast and therefore, it was proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by the Deputy Town Mayor and was:

RESOLVED that Callistus Fonjong be co-opted as a Town Councillor to fill the vacancy for Thorpe Astley ward.

Reason for Decision

The submission provided background on Callistus Fonjong, who had set out how he would serve as a member of the Town Council and the Council considered him suitable to serve as a Town Councillor.

In accordance with the resolution above, Councillor Callistus Fonjong made the formal declaration of acceptance of office before both the Council and the Proper Officer and duly took up his seat on the Council.

6062 Civility and Respect Pledge

The Council considered making a commitment to the "Civility & Respect Pledge" developed by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks (item 6 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and was seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and was

RESOLVED that Braunstone Town Council sign up to the "Civility and Respect Pledge" developed by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

Reason for Decision

To demonstrate the Council's commitment to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles.

6063 <u>Civic Centre Facilities Improvements – Borrowing Application</u>

The Council considered whether to seek approval from the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities to borrow up to £114,297 towards the cost of refurbishing Braunstone Civic Centre toilets and Civic Community Lounge kitchen (item 7 on the agenda).

An updated version of the revised 5 year Income/Expenditure Projections (Appendix 3) was circulated (filed with these minutes). The Chief Executive and Town Clerk advised Council that the original version of Appendix 3 included with the agenda papers included the current year budget based on a prediction in the Medium Term Priorities and Financial Strategy, which had been approved in November 2021. Due to increased staffing costs, the Council approved a slightly higher budget and precept in January 2022. Therefore, the current year budget in the updated Appendix had been adjusted to reflect the actual approved budget, along with the adjusted precept base. The budget projections for future years remained unaffected, other than the percentage rise was lower due to a slightly higher base budget and increased Tax base.

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and was seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and was

RESOLVED

- 1. that the adjusted 5 year Income / Expenditure Projections, set out in the updated version of Appendix 3, be approved;
- 2. that the following resolutions be approved:
 - a) "to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £114,297 over the borrowing term of 15 years for the cost of the refurbishment of Braunstone Civic Centre toilets and Bar/Café kitchen; the annual loan repayments will come to around £11,090.86"; and
 - b) "it is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments"; and
- 3. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, to put together and submit the borrowing application with supporting evidence.

Reasons for Decision

- 1. To adjust the financial plan to cover loan repayments rather than reinvesting the £13,486 into the capital projects budget and towards replenishing the reserves; avoiding any increase in the Council Tax Precept as a result.
- 2. To enable the Council to fund improvements to Braunstone Civic Centre's toilet and kitchen facilities, which had been identified in the Council's

- Business Plan and Capital Plan and for which funds were available in the Council's annual revenue budget to finance the loan repayments.
- 3. To enable the detailed supporting evidence to be gathered and submitted with the Council's application without undue delay.

6064 Announcements

a) Town Mayor

The Town Mayor reported that she had attended several events over the last few months including:

- 6th August: Summer Fete at Mossdale Meadows;
- 13th August: Allotment Open Day;
- 3rd September: Chess Club Open Sessions/Taster Day at Braunstone Civic Centre;
- 11th September: Short Proclamation Ceremony for the new King Charles III at the Civic Memorial Garden;
- 17th September: Thorpe Astley Community Centre Open Day;
- 18th September RAF: 83rd Anniversary Battle of Britain ceremony at Christchurch: and
- 1st October: Apple Day at Franklin Park.

In addition, the Deputy Town Mayor had hosted a short ceremony at the Civic Memorial Garden on 25th August for Ukrainian Independence Day. The Town Mayor added that it was important to continue to show support and solidarity with all Ukrainian people.

Forthcoming engagements included:

- Diwali Celebrations at Braunstone Civic Centre on 21st October from 7pm;
- Children's Halloween Disco at Thorpe Astley Community Centre on 30th October from 7.30pm; and
- Christmas Craft Fair at Braunstone Civic Centre on 19th November between 11am and 3pm.

b) Leader of the Council

Councillor Nick Brown commented on the recent Apple Day on Franklin Park which had been well attended and also the sad news of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022.

c) Chief Executive and Town Clerk

No announcements were made.

6065 Questions from Councillors

No questions had been submitted.

6066 Reports of Standing Committees: Employing Committee - 7th July 2022

Council received the Report of the meeting of Employing Committee held on the 7th July 2022 (p7495-7497).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

6067 Reports of Standing Committees: Community Development Committee – 7th July 2022

Council received the Report of the meeting of Community Development Committee held on 7th July 2022 (p7498 – p7503).

It was moved by Councillor Tracey Shepherd and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

6068 Reports of Standing Committees: Planning & Environment Committee – 25th August 2022

Council received the Report of the meeting of Planning & Environment Committee held on 25th August 2022 (p7504– p7521).

<u>Page 7511 - 7514, Minute 20 – Planning and Licensing Applications dealt with</u> under Delegated Authority

Decision 10; reference: 22/0704/TEL to determine if Prior Approval would be required for the installation of one 15m telecommunication monopole, 3 equipment cabinets and associated ancillary works on Turnbull Drive/Kingsway.

Councillor Amanda Hack advised that many in the community were unhappy about the planning application to determine if Prior Approval would be required for the installation of one 15m telecommunication monopole, 3 equipment cabinets and associated ancillary works on Turnbull Drive/Kingsway for the following reasons:

- 1. the equipment would spoil a green space area;
- 2. a 1963 court case protected the Kingsway land for the community; and
- 3. the telecommunication company were not maintaining current equipment cabinets in the area which were covered in graffiti.

Decision 12; reference: 22/0625/FUL change of use from C3 (dwelling) to C2 (residential institution) children's home to accommodate a maximum of 3 children under the age 16 years old and the inclusion of bin store and cycle shelter at 54 Narborough Road South (amended)

Councillor Sam Maxwell expressed concern at the number of applications for change of use from private dwelling to commercial children's homes in Braunstone Town. Concern was raised about the density of these applications in Ravenhurst and Fosse Ward, particularly on Narborough Road South and that no policy was in place to balance the distribution of the applications for children's homes.

Councillor Amanda Hack expressed concern that the increase in the children's homes in one particular area put pressure on other services in the such as schools which needed to support the children.

It was moved by Councillor Rebecca Lunn Scoppie and

RESOLVED that the report by adopted.

6069 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 27th September 2022

Council received the Report of the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee held on 27th September 2022 (p7522– p7534).

<u>Page 7523 - 7524, Minute 24 - Shakespeare Park - Improvement & Development</u>

Councillor Nick Brown advised that he had attended the first meeting of the Shakespeare Park Interim Management Committee on 3rd October 2022 with representatives from both the bowls and football clubs. He reported that the meeting was very positive and both clubs indicated they were keen to work together.

Page 7526, Minute 27 – Candidates Information Pack and Session

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent commented that the candidates information pack and session would be very useful for potential applicants seeking election or co-option to Braunstone Town Council.

Page 7528, Minute 31 – Community Centres Christmas Lights

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent commented that it was nice to see the Christmas lights up at the centres but advised that they had been left switched on for some time after the Christmas festivities had ended.

Page 7533 – 7534, Minute 41 – Improvements to Walking and Cycle Routes

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent queried when works to the new Walking and Cycle Routes were planned to commence. It was noted that work could commence in October and be completed before the end of the current financial year.

Councillor Amanda Hack advised that Leicestershire County Council highways had received the planning application for the link to Meridian Leisure for comments.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the report by adopted.

6070 Motions on Notice

No Motions on Notice had been submitted.

6071 **Sealing of Documents**

There were no documents for sealing.

6072 County and District Councillor Reports

a) Leicestershire County Council

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

- a) Highways Fund: applications submitted for funds but no confirmation yet received; some works such as line painting and carriageway markings had been undertaken;
- b) Street Lighting: 66,000 street lights in Leicestershire with 11,000 that were now old and needed replacing. Only a fraction of the lights were being repaired. Conversion to new lamps had provided a very good carbon savings and decreased light pollution:
- c) Highways report shows that use of cars has now returned back to precovid levels and bus use has declined;
- d) Scrutiny panel advised that money had been made available for domestic abuse services but refuges and emergency accommodation were in short supply. Funding had been made available for two years but concern was raised about what would happen when the two-year funding expires;
- e) Financial Position: The County Council's financial position was critical particularly in care services due to inflation.

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent welcomed the comments on savings made on street lighting costs and the reduction in carbon emissions.

Councillor Startin-Lorent also commented on the bus service at Thorpe Astley that appeared to have changed and could not find any information on where to catch buses into Leicester. Information could be made available to local residents regarding timetables and bus stops.

Councillor Sam Fox-Kennedy advised that she walked everywhere due to the lack of a reliable bus service. Councillor Louise Richardson, as County Councillor for Enderby and Lubbesthorpe Division, reported on the following matters:

- a) Financial position: the County Council's financial position was very poor with no more savings possible to make without impacting on services. All assets and services were being looked at to make possible savings, income or revenue;
- b) Police and Crime Commissioner grant funding was available for community projects to reduce violence and anti-social behaviour;
- c) Partnership work between, GP's, support services and local authority being undertaken to support residents.
- d) Highway fund: currently difficult to access and bus services were decreasing due to lack of use by residents although a new bus service to Fosse Park on Sundays had recently been introduced.

Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent queried if any significant work had been done in Thorpe Astley with Highways fund. Councillor Louise Richardson, responded advising that a Vehicle Activated Speed Sign and carriageway SLOW markings had been requested.

b) Blaby District Council

Councillor Sam Maxwell, as District Councillor for Ravenhurst and Fosse Ward, reported on the following matters:

- a) Cost of Living Crisis: Steps had been put in place to support residents in the cost of living crisis and a new Cost of Living officer had been recruited:
- b) Committee seats: a reallocation of committee seats had been undertaken;
- c) Council property: A report had been approved to undertake the swift acquisition of commercial property to provide emergency accommodation in the district but strict criteria still had to be met.

Councillor Amanda Hack queried if Huncote Leisure Centre had yet reopened.

In response, Councillor Sam Maxwell advised that it was now partially open to attract revenue and to welcome back community groups to the centre.

Councillor Ben Taylor, as District Councillor for Winstanley Ward, reported on the Hinckley Rail Freight Exchange: Monthly meetings were continuing with all partners

The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

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.

DATED.		