

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE

THURSDAY 16th JUNE 2022 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Sohan Johal, Leanne Lee, Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt and Robert Waterton.

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

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

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Tracey Shepherd.

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 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

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2022 (item 4 on the agenda) were circulated.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5. Climate Change & Environmental Action Plan and Capital Plan Update

The Committee considered for approval an action plan to deliver the Climate Change and Environmental Strategy's Objectives and considered updates to the Capital Plan (item 5 on the agenda).

A Supplementary Report was submitted setting out feedback and comments of the Planning & Environment Committee, along with an updated action plan

for consideration and approval (filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that the *Climate Change & Environmental Action Plan*, as amended and attached at Appendix 1 of the Supplementary Report, be approved for June 2022 to March 2024; and
2. THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the amended Capital Plan 2022/2023, as attached and highlighted at Appendix 2 (pages 10 – 14 of item 5 on the agenda), be approved.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To set out proposals to deliver the objectives set out in the Climate Change & Environmental Strategy and the Environment & Biodiversity Strategy, along with the recommendations of the Carbon Audit in order to deliver the Council's commitment to make its activities carbon neutral and embed climate and environmental awareness in its decision making.*
2. *To ensure that the Council's Capital Plan was updated accordingly to reflect the both the recommendations of the Carbon Audit and the delivery objectives in the Climate Change & Environmental Action Plan.*

6. Internal Audit Report 2021/2022 and Internal Audit Arrangements 2022/2023

The 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 2022 and considered appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2022/2023 (item 6 on the agenda).

The Committee noted that the item had been considered in detail by the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED 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 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 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 2021/2022

The 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 2022 and to recommend to Council adoption of the Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022 (item 7 on the agenda).

The Committee also received proposed amendments to the Council's Corporate Risk Register (Appendix 1).

The Committee noted that the item had been considered in detail by the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee, who had also considered under Governance Statement 5, assessing and mitigating risks, the Council's response to the outcome of a recent public liability claim relating to an accident at Shakespeare Park tennis courts in 2013.

RESOLVED 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 2021/22, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/2022, 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 2022, there were sound systems of internal control and management of risk.

8. Accounting Statements 2021/2022

The Committee received the End of Year Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2022 in order to recommend to Council adoption of the Accounting Statements 2021/2022 (item 8 on the agenda).

The Committee noted that this item had been considered in detail at the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that Section 2, Accounting statements 2021/22, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022, 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. Shakespeare Park – Improvement and Development

The Committee received a progress report on the improvement project and financing for phase 2, along with an update on arrangements for future managements of the pavilion and site (item 9 on the agenda).

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk updated the Committee on the potential option being investigated for the Management Committee to be a wholly owned subsidiary of the Council. VAT advice had been received which was not to pursue this option since there was a risk that the Secretary of State could apply the “controlled company” rules to Charitable Incorporated Organisations (the legislation permitted this), at which point the Council would become liable for the reclaimed VAT since it would effectively be leasing the building to itself. Therefore, the original proposals approved by the Committee for a separate charitable organisation would be pursued.

RESOLVED

1. that progress with the Project: *Pavilion and Site Works, Tennis Courts improvements, Playground Improvements and Future Management Arrangements*, as set out in the relevant section of the report, be noted;
2. that the revised timescales for the project, attached at Appendix 1, be approved; and
3. that the arrangements for booking the tennis courts be actively publicised, over the summer months.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that the project, which would enable an increase in sport participation and improve recreation and play facilities in a Ward which had high rankings of multiple deprivation across a range of domains, including income, employment and education and had the worst proportion of overweight or obese children in the County of Leicestershire, was delivered efficiently and effectively.*

2. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*
3. *To ensure that residents were aware of the arrangements for using and booking the refurbished tennis courts, including the membership, discount and concessionary arrangements.*

10. Procurement of Items identified in the Climate Audit

The Committee considered for approval, the procurement process for purchasing Solar PV Panels, Electric Vehicle Charging Points and a hybrid air source heat pump (item 10 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the invitation to Tender for Solar PV Panels and associated Battery Storage, as outlined in the relevant section of the report be approved;
2. that the invitation to Tender for Hybrid air source heat pump (Thorpe Astley Community Centre), as outlined in the relevant section of the report be approved; subject to inclusion of a requirement that the system installed be suitable for extension;
3. that the invitation to Tender for Electric Vehicle Charging Points, as outlined in the relevant section of the report be approved;
4. that the Next Steps and Timescales, as set out in the report, be approved;
5. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, for the procurement of the items set out in 1 – 3 above, to:
 - a) prepare the invitation to tender and supporting documentation, including accommodating the advice and technical requirements recommended by the company who provided the structural loading report in respect of the solar PV tender and the consultant who provided the heat loss assessment in respect of the hybrid air source heat pump tender, and
 - b) finalise the tender documentation, determine timescales and invite tenders; and
6. that, in the absence of confirmation that Parish & Town Councils would be eligible to apply to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, that the local MP, Secretary of State, LRALC/NALC, District and County Councils be lobbied to support efforts to ensure that Parish and Town Councils could access the benefits offered by the scheme.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To procure solar PV panels and battery storage in order to reduce the Council's carbon footprint by approximately 18% and make significant savings with energy costs set to rise significantly.*
2. *To procure a hybrid air source heat pump in order to decarbonise Thorpe Astley Community Centre heating and reduce the Council's carbon emissions by approximately 10%.*
3. *To provide fast charging for service users, hirers and staff who use an electric vehicle.*
4. *To provide an outline plan for the procurement process.*

5. *To accommodate any technical specifications required into the relevant tender documentation so that potential contractors would be fully aware of the requirements; and to provide flexibility and avoid undue delay.*
6. *To ensure that Parish and Town Councils had equal access to funding to decarbonise their assets in the same way as principal authorities.*

11. Training & Development Policy & Procedure

The Committee, following consultation, considered adoption of the revised Training & Development Policy & Procedure (item 11 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Training & Development Policy & Procedure, attached at Appendix 1 of the report (pages 3 – 11), be approved and adopted with effect from Monday 20th June 2022.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Council had a policy and procedure in place to meet the needs of both the Council and its Councillors, staff and volunteers, providing for a needs analysis to assess development and training needs, and a training plan and record to enable a journey of monitored continuous development.

12. Draft Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure

The Committee received a proposed revised Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure for consideration and consultation (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that a paragraph be included under “Requests for Reasonable Adjustments” to provide for the individual requesting an adjustment to refer to the nature of the impairment and to set out the requested reasonable adjustment proposed;
2. that the proposed draft Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure, attached at Appendix 2 of the report (pages 5 – 10), be approved for consultation with residents, customers, users, staff, Councillors, volunteers, partners and the Council’s HR Advisor, as detailed in the *Timescales and Implementation* section of the report; and
3. that any proposed amendments be presented to the next meeting of Policy & Resources Committee, proposed for 8th September 2022, for consideration and approval.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that clarity was provided on the situation and the proposed reasonable adjustment the individual had in mind for the avoidance of doubt.*
2. *To ensure that residents, customers, users, staff, Councillors, volunteers, partners and the Council’s HR Advisor could input into the proposed Equality & Diversity Policy & Procedure to ensure that it would be practical*

and fit for purpose.

3. *To ensure that the Council had a policy and procedure in place to meet its commitment to providing equal opportunities in the provision of its services and as an employer and was also committed to avoiding acts of unlawful discrimination.*

13. **ROSPA**

The Committee received an update concerning the annual ROSPA safety inspections on Parks and Open Spaces.

The ROSPA inspections were normally carried out annually in May and reported to Committee in June.

Following the outcome of a recent public liability claim in relation to an accident at Shakespeare Park tennis courts in 2013; the Council's Health & Safety Consultative Group had resolved to ask ROSPA to undertake annual checks on both sets of tennis courts, the Muga at Mossdale Meadows, Holmfield Park and Thorpe Astley and the outdoor gym equipment at Thorpe Astley Park and Mossdale Meadows.

These inspections have only recently being carried out and the reports were awaited.

The ROSPA reports for the Thorpe Astley playgrounds have been received and where remedial action has been identified, these will be dealt with immediately.

RESOLVED that a summary of the recommendations of the ROSPA inspections for all sites, along with proposed responses, be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 8th September 2022 for consideration.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that all Braunstone Town Council's play areas, sports courts and equipment were maintained to a safe standard.

14. **Sports Pitch Allocations 2022/2023**

The Committee considered redesignation of football pitches for the 2022/2023 season in order to accommodate additional applications from Football Clubs (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the existing football mini pitch on Mossdale Meadows be converted into a junior pitch for the 2022/2023 football season in order to accommodate all the applications received.

Reason for Decision

To accommodate new and existing teams on Mossdale Meadows for young players.

15. Blaby District Parish Councils Group

The Committee received feedback from Councillor Robert Waterton concerning the recent meeting of the Blaby District Parish Councils Group as follows:

- a) only six representatives were in attendance;
- b) Councillor Waterton had submitted a report to the Group on the Town Council's recent activities;
- c) LRALC had recently filled the 3 vacant positions on its Board, although another vacancy had recently arisen;
- d) there was a discussion about Councillors using private email addresses for Council business and the risks involved in doing so and whether Parish and Town Councils should be providing corporate email addresses for their Councillors; and
- e) ongoing concerns were voiced about the proposed Hinckley International Rail freight terminal.

RESOLVED that the feedback be received and noted.

Reason for Decision

To keep up to date with the discussions and work of the Liaison Group and to provide an opportunity to raise any relevant issues.

16. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st May 2022 (item 16 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

There were no issues of concern with income and expenditure against the budget for 2022/2023.

17. Approval of Accounts

The Committee considered payments from 1st April 2022 until 7th June 2022 (item 17 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the period 1st April 2022 until 7th June 2022 be approved.

Reason for Decision

To authorise payments in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations and the Council's Financial Regulations.

18. Improvements to Walking and Cycling Routes

RESOLVED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press/public be excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reason for exception – Commercial Interest.*

The Committee received an update on the delivery of the proposals for improvements to the connections between walking and cycling routes (item 18 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the update on the delivery of proposals for improvements to the connections between walking and cycling routes, as detailed in the report, be received and noted.

Reason for Decision

To note that outstanding matters which needed to be progressed in order for the project to be moved to delivery stage.

19. Civic Centre Facilities Improvements

RESOLVED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press/public be excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reason for exception – Commercial Interest.*

The Committee considered appointment of a preferred contractor to undertake the refurbishment for the Civic Centre Toilets and Civic Centre Bar/Café kitchen (item 19 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that *Option 1*, as set out in the *Assessment of Options* section of the report, be provisionally pursued;
2. that the tender submitted by Contractor D to undertake the refurbishment of the toilets, including the installation of a Changing Places Toilet, and Bar/Café kitchen at Braunstone Civic Centre, as detailed in the tender submission at Appendix 3 (pages 10 – 39 of item 19 on the agenda), be provisionally accepted;
3. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, to liaise with the architect and surveyor, along with the selected contractor (as set out in 2 above), to determine:

- a) whether there would be options to deliver part of the proposed scheme, and
- b) determine the detailed arrangements, timings, and work schedules;
- 4. that the *Funding* position set out in the report, including the borrowing options, be noted and endorsed;
- 5. that the *Timescales* for the project, as set out in the relevant section of the report, be endorsed.

Reasons for Decision

- 1. *To enable options to be discussed with the architect and surveyor, a grant application to be finalised and to provisionally explore the potential for a public works loan application.*
- 2. *The tender from Contractor D represented best value when balanced against cost, timescales and ability to undertake the proposed works.*
- 3. *To allow detailed arrangements for the work to be negotiated, enabling flexibility and minimising disruption to service users, and contracts to be signed.*
- 4. *To enable appropriate funding options to be assessed and sought to ensure the long term financial stability and sustainability of the project.*
- 5. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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 scheduled on 8th September 2022.

SIGNED:

DATED: