

## **BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL – 23<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2024**

#### **Item 10 – Braunstone Town Council Surveys**

##### Purpose

To consider a programme of surveys.

##### Background

Following many years of undertaking Annual Surveys with residents of Braunstone Town, the Policy & Resources meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 agreed that the Annual Survey be discontinued (Minute 48, resolution 1) and that it be replaced by regular smaller surveys undertaken to ascertain satisfaction and feedback in specific areas. Surveys would also be undertaken following the introduction of new services or changes to current services and could include surveys to ascertain the need and type of community initiatives that residents require. The following surveys had been undertaken or proposed to undertake in the future.

- Conservation area on Braunstone Lane following detailed reports and discussion with Blaby District Council, a consultation was undertaken with local residents on the proposed plans.
- A survey on proposed changes to the Braunstone Town Community Library opening hours was held in February 2023.
- Plans to undertake refurbishment of Impey Close playground is currently underway and following receipt of documents and designs from contractors it is proposed to carry out a survey of residents for their comments on the shortlisted designs.
- Snap surveys could be undertaken on the new café service being provided by the Civic Community Lounge, Thorpe Astley on the Beach event and the Summer Fete on Mossdale Meadow to gauge resident's thoughts on the activities the Town Council provides.

It had been suggested that surveys be made available via the Town Council's website, social media and paper copies be available in community centres for residents to complete.

##### Action requested

To consider and comment on surveys undertaken and proposed suggestions for smaller, snap surveys.

1. To receive information on surveys undertaken to date.
2. To consider appropriate events, services or circumstances when short surveys could be undertaken to gauge residents' views and suggestions.



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT 2024

By Councillor Nick Brown, Leader of Braunstone Town Council



Despite these challenging times, the Town Council continues to provide important services to the community, this Annual Report provides a summary of our achievements during 2023/2024 and looks ahead to our aspirations for the next 12 months.

On 29th November, Braunstone Town Council was crowned Council of the Year 2023 at the National Association of Local Councils' (NALC) Star Council Awards. This is a fantastic and well deserved achievement for the whole Council and the community. Working with our partners and the local community, we saved and enhanced our community Library, facilitated an expansion of GP services, supported our neighbours through Covid, delivered enhanced sporting, recreation and play facilities, created a vital walking and cycling link and reduced our carbon footprint by approximately 40% this year. We know that Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley is a vibrant community and I'm delighted that what we are achieving here has been recognised nationally.

The widening of the footpath through Mossdale Meadows and the connection to Meridian Leisure was completed in time for the summer. This is a significant development for our community providing better access to Meridian Leisure and Business Park for Braunstone Town residents and to the Civic Centre, Library and Mossdale Meadows for Thorpe Astley residents. Further phases of the project, are now being delivered and this will continue into 2025, including improvements to the pathway and crossing points along Meridian Way and work to improve access to Aylestone Meadows from Kingsway.

By installing solar panels, electric vehicle charging points and an air source heat pump, we have reduced our carbon footprint by 40% this year. At Thorpe Astley Community Centre the initiatives reduce the carbon footprint of the building by approximately 90%. There is still much more to do with only 6 years to go. The Council chose to deal with the big initiatives first, which means the next stages of our plans will be more challenging.

Nevertheless, the Council is not immune from the financial pressures affecting public bodies and local authorities at all levels up and down the country. We know that residents have faced increased costs and therefore, over recent years we have sought to keep council tax as low as possible. As a result, each year the Council drew on its cash reserves with a view to replenishing these in subsequent years. Due to the ongoing economic situation, funding and inflationary pressures, it is no longer possible to draw on our reserves without running out of cash. Therefore, Councillors this year had to take the difficult decision to increase Council Tax to secure services and place the Council back on track to a stable financial footing.

A full list of the Council's Capital Projects and Delivery Objectives for the coming year, along with information on our services can be found on our website at www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk or by contacting Customer Services.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Mission Statement

We exist:

1. To ensure that local services and the environment reach the highest possible standards within the resources available for citizens, visitors and those who work in Braunstone Town;

2. To provide a focus for civic pride;

3. To listen, identify and respond to agreed local needs;

4. To help develop a strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident community, free from unlawful discrimination.

Table with 3 columns: YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023 (£), ACCOUNTS, YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024 (£). Rows include Balance Brought Forward, Annual Precept, Total other receipts, Staff costs, Loan interest / capital repayments, Total other payments, Balances carried forward, Total cash and short term investments, Total fixed assets and long term assets, and Total borrowings.



# BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

## Achievements (2023/2024)



The Council provides a wide range of services together with social and recreational facilities. The Council also promotes the interests of the town in its representation to other bodies. It works in partnership with the larger District Council and County Council to provide and supplement local government services within the town area.



# BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS 2023/2024

## 1. Protect and Enhance our Parks and Open Spaces

This year we have completed the third and final phase of the Shakespeare Park refurbishment - Improvements to the Playground. The refurbished and improved play area includes both new and refurbished equipment, new sensory play garden and new safety surfaces.

The Council also agreed a Licence to a new Management Association, made up of the Sports Clubs and Council, to manage the Shakespeare Pavilion, which has also enabled it to be opened for use by the community.

Worked with Blaby District Council and the developer, Persimmon Homes, to deliver essential safety improvements to the culvert bridge at Thorpe Astley Park.





### 2. Provide Vibrant Community Facilities

This year we have expanded the Civic Centre Bar Service to include a café service, including a weekly Chatty Café. This provides an informal social meeting place for both the community and users of the Civic Centre and Library.



### 3. Support and Connect the Local Community

- Supported new and existing community activities and initiatives through our Community Grants Schemes and Programme of Events.
- Co-ordinated community events, such as Apple Day, Coronation of King Charles III, and a Thorpe Astley Summer Event - Thorpe Astley on the Beach.
- Facilitated Library events, initiatives and community engagement; including children's reading, heritage displays and arts & craft events.
- Supported the Local Area Coordination Project, tackling loneliness and isolation.
- Worked with the Department of Work & Pensions to establish a Job Shop on Wednesday and Friday afternoons at Braunstone Civic Centre, where residents can get advice from a Job Centre work coach on employment, support, training opportunities, money advice and more.



### 4. Respond to Climate Change and champion sustainable development

Delivered actions identified in the Carbon Audit with a view to the Council becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030.

During the year we have reduced our overall Carbon Footprint by approximately 40% through the installation of solar panels, an air source heat pump and Electric Vehicle Charging Points. The installations at Thorpe Astley Community Centre reduce the carbon footprint of the building by approximately 90%.

Supported and facilitated the improvement of cycling and walking routes within the Town with the completion of the first phase of the Lubbethorpe to Great Central Way route, with the widening of the footpath through Mossdale Meadows and the connection to Meridian Leisure.



### Your Views

Throughout the year we undertake a range of consultations and surveys to ascertain the views of residents on major projects, such as our improvement proposals, other priorities and services and also to help us to articulate the needs and aspirations of the community.

We have a dedicated Consultation page on our website (found under Town Council).



# STRATEGIC AIMS AND DELIVERY OBJECTIVES (2024/2025)

**Aim: To invest in and maintain high quality urban green spaces for sport, recreation and play, while enriching the natural environment.**

## 1. Protect and Enhance our Parks and Open Spaces

- (a) Support existing Clubs at Shakespeare Park to grow while supporting new sporting activities, such as Tennis and Petanque.
- (b) deliver tennis initiatives to enhance participation.
- (c) continue to work with Blaby District Council and the developer to ensure improvements are made to the culvert at Thorpe Astley Park.
- (d) carry out Flood Alleviation and Drainage Improvements at Mossdale Meadows.
- (e) refurbish & enhance Impey Close Play Area & surrounding open space.



## 2. Provide Vibrant Community Facilities

**Aim: To provide vibrant, accessible and cost effective community facilities, which continue to be used by and respond to the needs of our community.**

- (a) Deliver essential works on the Civic Centre building fabric.
- (b) support the expansion of the Civic Centre Café Service, including at Thorpe Astley on event days.



## 3. Support and Connect the Local Community

**Aim: To both nurture and enhance the Town's community life and connect our communities to reduce isolation and build community cohesion.**

- (a) Support community activities and initiatives through our Community Grants Schemes and Programme of Events.
- (b) co-ordinate community events, such as Apple Day, 80th Anniversary of D-Day, Shakespeare Park Open Day and Thorpe Astley on the Beach.
- (c) develop outreach Children's reading and activities at Thorpe Astley Community Centre.
- (d) support the Local Area Coordination Project.

## 4. Respond to Climate Change and champion sustainable development

**Aim: To embed climate and environmental awareness in our decision making and actions and play our part in supporting the community to do the same.**

- (a) Deliver actions identified in the Carbon Audit with a view to the Council becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030.
- (b) undertake surveys and produce Management Plans to enhance the biodiversity of our parks and open spaces.
- (c) support and facilitate initiatives to improve cycling and walking routes within the Town and to the City Centre, Fosse Park and Meridian.
- (d) work to ensure that development meets present needs, minimises air pollution and car journeys, while protecting the needs of future generations.
- (e) recommission a carbon audit of our activities to ensure that all possible actions are being taken and that new and emerging technologies and approaches are utilised to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

