



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

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Braunstone Town "Citizens Advisory Panel"INFORM.....CONSULT.....INVOLVE.....

27th November 2014

Dear Member

A meeting of the **BRAUNSTONE TOWN CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL** will be held at the Braunstone Civic Centre on Thursday 4TH DECEMBER 2014 commencing at 7.30pm, for the transaction of the business set out below.

The Council extends an invitation to any interested local residents, users groups and staff to attend the meeting to participate in the debate.

Yours sincerely

Executive Officer & Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST
3. REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9th OCTOBER 2014
To receive the report of the last meeting of the Citizens Advisory Panel held 9th October 2014 (Enclosed)
4. HOLMFIELD PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
 - a) To receive a progress report on the Holmfield Park Project.
 - b) To note that tenders had been invited from play equipment providers for improvements to Holmfield Park, the deadline date for tenders being 1st December 2014.

To receive the schemes for the tenders submitted for the Holmfield Park Improvement Project and make recommendations to the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting to be held 15th January 2015.
 - c) To consider any further consultation to be carried out with local residents.

5. **FUTURE OF BRAUNSTONE TOWN LIBRARY**

- a) To receive a progress report from the Executive Officer & Town Clerk on the future of the library services (**Enclosed**).
- b) To receive, as a reminder a copy of the Citizens Advisory Panel's Terms of Reference for the future provision of library service (**Enclosed**)

6. **NEXT MEETING**

- a) To consider what information, if any, is required for the next meeting.
- b) To note that the next meeting of the Panel was scheduled for 5th March 2015.

7. **TERMINATION OF THE MEETING**

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT OF CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL **THURSDAY 9th OCTOBER 2014**

PRESENT: Councillor Mr N Brown (in the Chair), Mr J Dodd, Local Resident, Councillor Mrs J Fox, Councillor Mrs A Hack, Mrs B Haselgrove, Local Resident, Mr J Haselgrove, Local Resident, Mr J Jameson, Local Resident, Mr J Johnson, Local Resident, Mr T Smith, Local Resident.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs P Hurd, Community Development and Centres Manager, Mr D Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mr T Chapman.

1. Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest

2. Report of the Meeting held on 12th September 2013

The Report of the Meeting held on 12th September 2013 was received and noted.

3. Annual Report Questionnaire Results

- a) The Annual Report 2013/2014 was received and noted.
- b) The Annual Report Questionnaire was received and noted. A document setting out proposed actions and responses to the comments received was submitted. Members were advised that 23 responses had been received and copies of comments and the Town Council's Actions/Responses to the comments were circulated to members. Mrs Fox queried if the Town Council external notice board indicated that only official Braunstone Town Council notices were to be put on the boards to discourage fly posting. It was noted that Blaby District Council posted notes saying Cancelled or closed on to unauthorised posting to discourage this. Members noted that comments had been received on Civic Centre events and it was noted that the events held at the Civic Centre were suggested by the local groups that were sponsored by the Town Council. Local groups could be encouraged to consider new events in the Programme but it was noted that new events tried in the past had not always been successful.
- c) Final Performance Indicators 2013/2014. The Final Performance Indicators for 2013/2014 were received and noted. It was noted that the levels of staff sickness were high and were being monitored.

4. Priorities for the Review of 2014/2015

Members agreed not to set any additional priorities at the present time.

5. Future of Braunstone Town Library

- a) The briefing report received by Policy & Resources Committee regarding the future of Leicestershire libraries was received and noted. Members were advised that a meeting of Leicestershire County Council would hold a meeting on 23rd September to discuss the response to the Consultation. A final decision on the future of the libraries would be made by the County Council in November 2014 and a Scrutiny Panel would be set up to discuss the support package to be set up to help communities and organisations if they wished to take over the running of local

libraries. Written responses from organisations had been invited to be submitted by 13th October 2014. The Town Council had also been invited to present oral evidence on 15th October 2014 regarding the future of the Braunstone Town library. Members noted that decisions on which libraries would remain County Council operated was based on the number of people using the library but it was noted that the Braunstone library was not open as many hours as other libraries and that Braunstone Town had a larger population than other communities. All members of the committee agreed that a wider range of criteria should have been used to decide which libraries would remain open. Members were assured that Braunstone Town Council would continue to fight the proposed changes to Braunstone Town library.

It was noted that it would be the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Braunstone Library on 14th December 2014 and members agreed that this be publicised.

- b) The Terms of Reference for developing future Library provision was received and noted. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk advised that local parishes could work together to share resources to help run the local libraries. It was also noted that due to the close proximity of the Braunstone Civic Centre that services, staff and structures could be used in conjunction to continue running the library.
- c) An update on Leicestershire County Council's future library proposals was received and noted by members.

6. Holmfield Park

It was noted the Holmfield Park pavilion had now been demolished and that options to improve the play area would be considered. An outline timescale for the redevelopment of Holmfield Park was received by members.

7. Consultation

Members were advised that a policy on Pitch Allocations had been drafted for approval. Consultation on the new Pitch Allocations policy would be undertaken with local sports clubs and via the Braunstone Town Council website.

Formal consultation would also be carried out with local residents on proposals for the Braunstone Town library once a decision is received from Leicestershire County Council on whether the library would become a Community Partnership Library.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Citizen's Advisory Panel had been scheduled for 4th December 2014 which would remain depending on the information received from Leicestershire County Council regarding the future of the library service.

9. Termination of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

BRAUNSTONE TOWN CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL – 4TH DECEMBER 2014

BRAUNSTONE TOWN LIBRARY SERVICE – OPTIONS FOR SERVICE PROVISION

Leicestershire County Council's Cabinet met on Wednesday 19th November 2014 to make a final decision on the Future of Leicestershire Libraries. The Cabinet approved recommendations which included the County Council fully funding 16 main and shopping centre Libraries and for the remaining 36 Libraries, including Braunstone Town Library, inviting communities to take over the running of these facilities.

In this context, the Citizens' Advisory Panel's role is to support Braunstone Town Council to work with the community, other partners and stakeholders and to use its offices, powers and influence to keep the Braunstone Town Library open and to provide a better service that is more responsive to the needs of local residents.

The first stage of developing future Library provision is to develop options taking into account the aspirations of service users and the community and the availability of resources, to evidence this work and make appropriate recommendations to the Town Council's Policy & Resources Committee, which is due to meet to consider the way forward on Wednesday 17th December 2014 at 7.30pm at Braunstone Civic Centre.

The following outline options are designed to assist the Panel in this respect:

1. Combining the Customer Service Shop and Library Service Desk

The current agreement for the provision of Blaby District Services through the Braunstone Town Service Shop runs until 2017. The Library is currently open for 24 hours per week. The Service Shop is currently open for 40 hours per week. By combining the Service Shop with the Library it is possible to use Customer Service Advisors to operate the Library's issuing, returns and reservations during Service Shop hours. If the Library retained its current late opening until 7pm on one evening and Saturday morning opening of three hours then potentially additional resources would need to be found for the five Library only opening hours per week.

An assessment on whether additional resources would be required during the Service Shop hours would be made once further details became available from Leicestershire County Council on the workload and responsibilities of current Library staff.

There are a couple of ways in which the service could be potentially combined:

- a) **Locating the Customer Service Shop in the current Library** would result in the Library being open for an additional 16 hours per week, 21 hours per week if the late night and Saturday opening was retained. There would be no need to make physical changes to the exterior of the Civic Centre. However, works inside the Library would need to be carried out to accommodate cash payments. There would be set up costs associated with ICT provision and new signage. Additionally consideration would need to be given to building break out rooms if existing and new community initiatives were to continue in the Library, since these may interrupt Service Shop provision.
- b) **Re-engineering the Exterior of the Civic Centre to create a single reception and access point to both buildings** would result in flexibility of Library opening hours and enable the space to be used for hire and other events outside Library opening times. By combining the Service Shop with the Library it is possible to use Customer Service Advisors to operate the Library's issuing, returns and reservations during Service Shop hours. Architects have been commissioned to draw up outline options

and provide estimates of cost. Should the Town Council pursue this option, such works are likely to be costly and both services would be disrupted during the works. Currently there is no guarantee that the Service Shop will continue beyond 2017. Although, integrating both buildings into one in the long term would allow more flexible space and the potential to raise the revenue income of the Civic Centre.

This option allows the Town Council to work in partnership with both Leicestershire County Council and Blaby District Council and to seek funding for the provision of the facility, while providing savings to both Councils. The option also allows for the addition of more partners to the table such as the Police and educational establishments.

2. Running the Library as a separate Service

The Council could approach continuing to run the Library as a separate service in a couple of ways:

- a) **Paid Library Staff** would enable expertise to be retained and on current opening hours with current activities would cost the Council approximately £36,000 next year rising to approximately £39,000 in 2019/2020. This equates to an increase on the precept of approximately 6-8%. This model allows for the easy transfer of the service back to the County Council in the future. However, it presents the Council with financial risks, should the financial climate become more uncertain and if changes to the Council Tax Support Grant result in reduced revenue income. The model however, results in double taxation, where local residents pay within the County precept for Library Services across the County and in addition pay through the Town precept for the Braunstone Town Library.
- b) **Volunteer Library Staff** is at the centre of the County Council's proposals and allows for reduced overheads. However, there is uncertainty about the availability of volunteers to sustain a reliable service, which potentially becomes harder in future years. At a County Council presentation evening on Community Library schemes, a representative of a successful Community Library Scheme, Harbury, Warwickshire stated that in Warwickshire's case it had been taken up in affluent areas; the Libraries which had closed were ones in the more deprived areas of the County. While it is often argued that more deprived areas tend to have more vibrant community activity and volunteering, and in the case of Braunstone Town there is certainly a strong community and voluntary sector, there may be limited capacity for additional community and voluntary activity, which risks a Community Library either not being sustained or other voluntary activity suffering in order to maintain a Community Library.

The Citizens' Advisory Panel are asked to consider the following:

- 1) Are there any other options for delivering the Library Service?
- 2) Which options are the most favoured?
- 3) Which options are the least favoured?
- 4) Should the Town Council undertake a consultation exercise on its proposal?

BRAUNSTONE TOWN CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL

BRAUNSTONE TOWN LIBRARY SERVICE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Braunstone Town
"Citizens Advisory Panel"
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PURPOSE: To support Braunstone Town Council to work with the community, other partners and stakeholders and to use its offices, powers and influence to keep the Braunstone Town Library open and to provide a better service that is more responsive to the needs of local residents".

The Citizens Advisory Panel shall have authority and consent to undertake its work in accordance with the general responsibilities delegated to it and in accordance with the Terms of Reference as set out below:

Developing future Library provision in Braunstone Town

- a) Develop options for Library service provision, taking into account the aspirations of service users and the community and the availability of resources.
- b) Identify appropriate and realistic service standards (including customer service and performance), including mechanisms for review and the continued engagement of the community and service users.
- c) Identify new initiatives and potential partnership arrangements, including sources of funding in order to provide a better and more responsive service.
- d) Promote the involvement of volunteers and community groups in providing Library services and make recommendations on the balance of resources between paid, volunteer and professional staffing and support.

Ensuring a better and more responsive Library service in Braunstone Town

- e) Assess emerging new priorities, undertake benchmarking and research best practice, assess the availability of resources and recommend improvements to Library provision.
- f) Assess the needs of the community undertaking consultation utilising a range of methods and tools and make appropriate recommendations where necessary to revise customer service standards and service provision.
- g) Make recommendations on appropriate performance measures and future targets and receive regular performance monitoring reports and make recommendations on improvements where necessary.
- h) Review the effectiveness of mechanisms to engage the community and volunteers in the provision of a Library Service.

The Panel will evidence its work and make appropriate recommendations to the Council's Policy & Resources Committee.

