

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

17TH DECEMBER 2014 AT 7.30PM

Present: Mr N Brown (In the Chair), Miss A Ambrose, Miss S Betts, Mrs J Fox, Mr S Maxwell, Mr P Patel (substituting for Ms A Hack), Mr W Wright.

Officers in Attendance: Mr D Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk, Miss J Leech, Assistant Executive Officer – Admin.

Apologies: Mr R Berrington, Ms A Hack, Mrs S Maxwell.

1. Disclosures of Interest from Members or Officers

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

2. Report of the Meeting held 2nd October 2014

The report of the meeting held on 2nd October 2014 was taken as read and signed by the Chairperson.

3. Public Participation

In accordance with Standing Orders 16f and 70 the meeting was adjourned to give an opportunity for members of the public present to raise matters of public interest for the purpose of making representations, giving evidence or answering questions.

There were three members of the public present at the meeting to make representation on behalf of the item 3 regarding the Braunstone Town Library Service on behalf of the Braunstone Heritage Group. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk reported that a letter had been received by the Braunstone Heritage Group supporting the Town Council's proposals for the future of the Library. The Group expressed interest in acting as a partner and asked if it would be possible to have an area within the Library for a display.

The Heritage Group was also concerned about the County Council's proposals for the future of the book stock and that it will be relocating the local history stock from the Community Libraries to the Records Office. The Heritage Group expressed the importance that local history items should remain in the local area. It was acknowledged that it would be the Town Council's preference for local contributions to be kept within the Town and that these would be issues that would need to be negotiated with the County Council further along the process.

The Heritage Group also queried its position as a partner in respect of the lease. They were advised that, under the existing lease, Leicestershire County Council had exclusive use of the space. Should a side agreement be introduced, then partners could have access to the space, however, this would end at the point that the side agreement ended.

The representatives from the Heritage Group were thanked for their comments and proposals and it was expressed to them that the Town Council would welcome working with them in the future.

4. **Braunstone Town Library Service**

A report from the Executive Officer & Town Clerk setting out the latest position on the library services was received and noted. The report referred to the motion made at the Braunstone Town Annual Town's Meeting held 15th May 2014 in that the residents would oppose any action by Leicestershire County Council to close the Braunstone Town Library Service and secondly, that the Town Council would work with partners to aim to keep the Braunstone Town library open and provide a more responsive service to meet the needs of local residents.

Following the decision by Leicestershire County Council to proceed with transferring its 36 community libraries, the Town Council had set out outline options to put to the Braunstone Town Citizens Advisory Panel Meeting held 4th December 2014 for consideration. These were to combine the Connect Service Shop with the Library Service or by running the Library service as a separate service with paid library staff/volunteers or both. The Citizens Advisory Panel had supported the option of the model of combining the Connect Service Shop with the Library Service.

The Citizens Advisory Panel had also considered two options for the potential layout for combining the services, which were to relocate the Connect Service Shop to the Library or to reconfigure the Civic Centre and Library to create a single shared access. There was discussion about the possibilities and costings for any proposed reconfiguration of the premises. An architect had been contracted to come up with preliminary ideas and costings.

A preliminary Business Case had been produced by the Town Council setting out potential staffing and running costs for the provision of the Library Service, and also details of the obligatory costs to Leicestershire County Council as part of its existing lease agreement with the Town Council.

It was noted that Leicestershire County Council had produced reports for each Community Library setting out running costs, etc. This was available from the County Council's website.

The Executive Officer & Town Clerk that he had met with Officers from Leicestershire County Council for preliminary discussions on the Town Council's model. Whilst there was no commitment from either party, the County Council indicated that it would look into to the Town Council's model further. The Town Council would still need to go through the formal process for expressing its interest in running the Library as a community partnership library. Once the County Council had established if there was any interest from any other groups, then discussion on the detail of the agreement would commence.

There was discussion as to the staffing implications affecting both the Town Council and existing Library staff.

It was noted that Blaby District Council was currently looking to make savings from the existing Connect Service Shop services, so by entering into partnership as part of the Town Council's proposed model, the District Council would have potential to make savings. The Service Level Agreement with the District Council ended in 2017. The District Council was already reducing the cash payment facilities within the Connect Services Shops.

It was noted that the Town Council had already attended meetings with neighbouring parishes with regard to partnership working however, as yet, there had been no further indication of interest from them.

The Town Council would need to submit its expression of interest as acting in running the Community Library by 16th January 2015. Leicestershire County Council's Cabinet would receive a report on the expressions of interest at its meeting in April 2015.

RESOLVED

1. *that the Combined Public Services Facility model outlined in the report along with the estimated costs in Appendix 1 be approved as the Town Council's model for delivering both the Library Service and the Customer Service Shop in Braunstone Town and that this model be the basis upon which the Council negotiates with its partners;*
2. *that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader, to:*
 - a) *submit a formal expression of interest to Leicestershire County Council, in accordance with their procedure for registering an interest in running a Community Partnership Library, to run Braunstone Town Library based on the Combined Public Services Facility model,*
 - b) *liaise with Leicestershire County Council and Blaby District Council on detailed arrangements for the model, including service levels and standards, resource requirements, the mechanism for identifying and reviewing the costs of the service and the contributions made by each organisation,*
 - c) *identify new initiatives and potential partnership arrangements, including alternative sources of funding,*
 - d) *liaise with other organisations, including public, educational, voluntary and community, to fully explore the potential of a shared Public Services Facility and the role that other organisations could play, and*
 - e) *issue briefings, publicity and statements to keep the public informed of developments; and*
3. *that any final proposals be submitted to a future meeting of Policy and Resources Committee for recommendation to Council for approval.*

5. Tractor and Side-arm hedgecutter

RESOLVED:- *That in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press/public be temporary excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 79 and 84 apply). Reasons for exception – Commercial Interests and Information provided in Confidence)*

It was noted that tenders had been received for the provision of a four year lease of one 4 wheeled-drive tractor and sidearm hedgecutter, to include annual servicing and maintenance. It was noted that the specification was higher than the existing tractor, however, this would enable to the Council's groundstaff to carry out works in-house and reduce the need for external contractors. There was discussion about the merits of leasing a vehicle as opposed to buying.

RESOLVED

- i) *That the tender from Hallmark Tractors for the provision of the four year contract be accepted.*
- ii) *That delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to liaise with Hallmark Tractors as to the selected supplier, to award the contract and to agree timings and detailed arrangements for the commencement of the lease agreement.*

6. Signatories List

RESOLVED

That the Co-operative Bank No.1 Account Signatories List be updated as follows:-

- a) *That the following former Members of the Council be removed from the signatory list for the Co-operative Bank No.1 Account.*
Mr I Laughton
Mr R Ward
Mrs C Crowther
Mr P Fox
Mrs L Martin
- b) *That the following additional names be added to the signatory list for the Co-operative Bank No.1 Account*
Mr D Tilley
- c) *That the following amendment be made to the Co-operative Fixed Rate Deposit Account: Deletion of Mr I Laughton, Addition of Mr D Tilley.*

7. Termination of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

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 favorable 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.