

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

21ST AUGUST 2014 AT 7.30PM

Present: Mrs J Fox (In the Chair), Miss A Ambrose, Mr R Berrington, Mr N Brown, Ms A Hack, Mr G Sanders.

Officers in Attendance: Mr D Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk.

Apologies: Mr S Maxwell, Mrs S Maxwell, Mr W Wright.

1. Disclosures of Interest from Members or Officers

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

2. 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 two members of the public present at the meeting. The first member of the public, the Heritage Warden, made representation concerning item 7a – a letter from John Dodd, Heritage Warden, concerning the opening of the Community Orchard, which requested reconsideration of the decision to open the Orchard area of Franklin Park on a permanent basis. He expressed concerns about risks to health and safety, particularly in areas which had not been cleared. If the Community Orchard was to be opened he recommended that this should be on set days in order that appropriate maintenance could take place and adequate supervision provided.

A second member of the public, representing Kingsway Celtic Football Club, made representation concerning on item 6b – additional Pitch Allocation requests. He stated that Kingsway Celtic needed a pitch for home games for the forthcoming season otherwise they would not be able to play in the league. The club had agreed to all conditions set out by the Council and were looking forward to returning home.

3. Report of the Meeting held 12th June 2014

The report of the meeting held on 12th June 2014 was taken as read and signed by the Chairperson.

4. Publications

LRALC Newsletter.

5. Pitch Allocations

a) Report of the Sports Clubs Meeting held on 8th July 2014

It was noted that parking issues were being monitored, that there had been no complaints and that home teams had agreed to use other car parks leaving the car park at Mossdale Meadows for away teams. The meeting also considered whether it was possible to accommodate a Pitch allocation request from Kingsway Celtic to share with Braunstone Trinity and Kingsway Rangers. It was noted that no agreement could be reached between the clubs on this issue.

b) Additional Pitch Allocation Requests

A pitch allocation request had been received from Kingsway Celtic Football Club to be accommodated on Mossdale Meadows in the 2014/2015 season; however, agreement to accommodate the club with the existing clubs using Sports Pitch 1 could not be reached. Therefore, consideration was given to accommodating Kingsway Celtic by reopening the second adult football pitch in the top field of Mossdale Meadows, which had previously been closed to resolve parking issues in the local area on match days.

It was noted that Kingsway Celtic Football Club had confirmed in writing their agreement to the terms set out in the report of the Committee of 12th June 2014 (ref: 5a). Members were advised that depending upon the weather conditions it would take between 1 and 2 months to prepare the ground as a football pitch. It was also noted that the area concerned was used by walkers and dog walkers on a regular basis, who may not support the reopening of the football pitch.

RESOLVED

- i) *that the former adult pitch at Mossdale Meadows (top field) be returned for use as a Senior pitch as soon as practically possible;*
- ii) *that Kingsway Celtic be offered a pitch allocation on this pitch for the 2014/2015 season based upon the standard terms and conditions and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to determine the date on which the pitch becomes available for use;*
- iii) *that Kingsway Celtic work with the Town Council and the other football clubs to arrange their matches to avoid matches at peak times in order to prevent parking problems in the surrounding area and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to agree the dates and times when Kingsway Celtic play; and*
- iv) *that Kingsway Celtic work with the Council and the other football clubs to ensure a positive and constructive working relationship and appropriate sharing of the facilities.*

A pitch allocation request had been received from Kingsway Rangers Football Club stating that two of their clubs would not be playing at home in 2014/2015 Season and therefore pitches were no longer required, however, three of their clubs currently allocated to play at another location were no longer able to play at the location for the 2014/2015 Season and Kingsway Rangers requested that they be accommodated on the 9x9 pitches at Mossdale Meadows. It was noted that Kingsway Rangers had liaised with Braunstone Trinity and sought agreement for the teams to be accommodated. It was noted that the fees would be different and the club had agreed to pay the difference.

RESOLVED

That following the withdrawal of Kingsway Rangers under 8s and Kingsway Rangers under 7s, the following teams be accommodated at Mossdale Meadows for the 2014/2015 Season: Under 11s Celtic, Under 12s Rangers and Under 13s Rangers.

c) Ad-Hoc Pitch Hires

Members considered the merits of extending the ad-hoc pitch hire of £35 for three hours at Thorpe Astley to all of the Council's football pitches and to allow pro-rata charges, with a minimum hire time of two hours.

RESOLVED

That ad-hoc pitch hires be available on all of the Council's football pitches at £35 for a three hour period, with pro-rata charges for additional or less hours, minimum period being two hours.

6. Parks and Open Spaces

- a) Community Orchard - letter from John Dodd, Heritage Warden
A letter was received from John Dodd, Heritage Warden, concerning the opening of the Franklin Park Community Orchard, this letter requested reconsideration of the decision to open the area permanently.

RESOLVED

- i) That the issues raised in the Heritage Warden's letter be referred to a meeting of the Franklin Park Community Orchard/Meadow Project, to be held on Thursday 11th September 2014, for further consideration and recommendations on the way forward; and*
ii) that to ensure that it would be safe to open the Community Orchard to the public on a permanent basis, risk assessments and an action plan be developed to address any issues identified.

- b) Legal Transfer of Open Spaces (Persimmon Homes) Thorpe Astley
An update was received on the legal transfer of the open spaces (Persimmon Homes) Thorpe Astley in respect of shared boundaries, which arose at the last meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED

- i) That the legal transfer of the open spaces be completed;*
ii) that the "Shared Boundary" Policy/Guidance Notes, circulated with the agenda for the meeting, be approved;
iii) that upon legal completion the boundaries on the Council's Assets Map be updated accordingly; and
iv) that the Council's Grounds staff be advised of the location of underground cables and sewers etc.

- c) Improvements to the bridge at the Culvert, Thorpe Astley Park
An update was received concerning improvements to the bridge at the Culvert, Thorpe Astley Park. Blaby District Council had contacted the developer, Persimmon Homes, stating that the transfer document contained the following clause "Amended culvert design specification requires agreeing with County Council". It had been stated that the cost of a replacement bridge was less than the cost of repairs to the culvert and if a new bridge was provided the commuted sum would not need to be paid. Persimmon Homes had responded by offering to meet Blaby District Council to discuss the matter further.

- d) Kingsway informal open space
The Committee considered an offer from Blaby District Council to take responsibility for the maintenance of the Kingsway open space. Blaby District Council had previously enquired as to whether the Town Council would be willing to take ownership of Kingsway, The Osiers and land adjacent to 119 Narborough Road South. However, detailed consideration by Blaby District Council had resulted in the withdrawal of the offer for The Osiers and land adjacent to 119 Narborough Road South. Concerning the Kingsway informal open space, the liability for the site would be the same as that of the Council's current open spaces, the maintenance costs

were estimated at £8.5k per annum, which included maintenance, repairs, surveys, inspections etc. It was noted that Blaby District Council would not be making any financial contribution following the transfer of the land.

RESOLVED

That the offer from Blaby District Council to take ownership of the Kingsway informal open space be declined, since the Town Council was not interested in taking ownership of public open space on a piecemeal basis.

7. Future of Leicestershire Libraries

- a) Report of the Future Library Services, Liaison Group Meeting – 16th June 2014
The report of the meeting of the Future Library Services, Liaison Group, held on Monday 16th June 2014 was circulated.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

- b) Progress Report on the Future of Leicestershire Libraries
The consultation on the County Council's proposals had closed on 9th July. It was anticipated that final proposals would be presented to the County Council's Cabinet in November 2014. It was also noted that the judicial review challenge to Lincolnshire County Council's Library proposals had been upheld on the grounds that the consultation was flawed since the Council hadn't fully considered an offer from a charitable organisation which ran libraries in two London Boroughs to take over the running of Lincolnshire's Libraries.

RESOLVED

That the current position be noted.

8. Community Centre Charges – Update

A report was submitted detailing the discount package scheme for Braunstone Town residents hiring the main hall and kitchen at Thorpe Astley Community Centre and the Council Chamber at Braunstone Civic Centre to encourage the use of the facilities and to support local community groups.

RESOLVED

That the discount rate be continued for a further six months and the bookings monitored and that the results be reported to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

9. Review of Polling Districts and Places 2014

Information was received concerning Blaby District Council's review of Polling Districts and Places, which requested the Town Council respond to the consultation in respect of polling stations in Braunstone Town.

RESOLVED

That the following be the Council's response to the consultation:

- i) *"There is a need for a polling station on the eastern side of Narborough Road South, to address concerns about accessibility for these residents".*
- ii) *"The amalgamation of Ravenhurst and Fosse Wards into a single Parish Ward means that the three polling districts for this area should become one polling district".*
- iii) *The use of the Thorpe Astley Community Centre for a polling station is appropriate, however, it is located off the main routes through Thorpe Astley. Consideration*

should be given to signage to the Polling Station being located in thoroughfares around Thorpe Astley”.

10. Write-Off: Hire Fees – Thorpe Astley Community Centre

Consideration was given to writing-off outstanding hire charges of £212.25 owed by Mosaic for five cancelled room bookings at Thorpe Astley Community Centre between 17th July 2014 and 4th September 2014 (a six room booking was re-hired).

RESOLVED

- i) That the outstanding hire charges of £212.25 owed by Mosaic not be written off;*
- ii) that the outstanding hire charges must be paid in full prior to any further lettings being approved; and*
- iii) that the position be reviewed in 12 months.*

11. Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Delegated Powers

A report was submitted providing an update on the review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Delegated Powers.

RESOLVED

- i) That it be recommended to Council that amendments to Standing Orders 6 and 77 be approved, as set out at Appendix 1 of the submitted report;*
- ii) that a full review of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Delegated Powers be carried out and forwarded to the Full Council meeting on 14th May 2015; and*
- iii) that the Financial Regulations be amended and robust administrative processes be developed to allow the Council to take advantage of the repeal of Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the two signatory by Councillors cheque rule).*

12. Thorpe Astley Community Centre – Medical Rooms

RESOLVED:- *That in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was 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 – Information provided in Confidence).*

An update was provided on the procurement process and timescales. The deadline for expressions of interest had passed and currently the timescales for opening of the Medical Rooms by the end of the year was on track. Further updates would be provided in due course.

13. Customer Service Shop

RESOLVED:- *That in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was 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 – Information provided in Confidence).*

It was noted that within the Service Level Agreement with Blaby District Council, the fees and services provided through the Customer Service Shop could be reviewed in 2014 and discussions were currently taking place on outline options.

RESOLVED

That, while recognising the existence of financial pressures, the Council work with Blaby District Council to ensure that the services to Braunstone Town residents provided through the Customer Service Shop would be protected, including through options involving service co-location.

14. Holmfield Park Improvements

RESOLVED:- *That in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was 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).*

A report was submitted detailing the tenders received for the demolition of the changing rooms, requesting the virement of funds to meet the costs and outlining the next stages of the Holmfield Park Improvements Project.

RESOLVED

- i) *That the tender from Newline Midlands Ltd for the demolition of the Holmfield Park changing rooms be accepted and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, to liaise with Newline Midlands to award the contract and agree timings and detailed arrangements for the works;*
- ii) *that £6,000 be vired from budget 154/5 "Maintenance/Running Costs (Standard): Holmfield Park Building Expenditure to budget 155/1 "General Maintenance and Expenditure: Repairs, General Maintenance/Supplies" to cover the costs of the demolition works; and*
- iii) *that the next stages of the Improvements Project, including indicative timescales, be endorsed.*

15. Staffing

RESOLVED:- *That in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was 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 – Personal Information).*

RESOLVED

- i) *That a reduction in contracted hours from 64 to 40 per month for Employee reference 25 (Premises Officer) be approved;*
- ii) *that it be noted that the following employees had left the Council's employment:-
Employee reference 68 (Premises Officer)
Employee reference 94 (Cleaner)*
- iii) *that the redistribution of vacant Premises Officer and Cleaner hours be among the respective existing post holders on an ad hoc basis;*
- iv) *that a reduction in contracted hours from 37 to 33 per week for Employee reference 42 (Assistant Groundsperson) be approved; and*
- v) *that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk to agree an implementation date in consultation with affected employees.*

16. Signatories List

RESOLVED

That the following amendments to the No.1 Co-operative Bank Account (General Fund) Signatories be approved:-

- i) *Mr I Laughton – to be deleted.*
- ii) *Mr D Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk – to be added for the purpose of internet transactions.*
- iii) *Miss J Leech, Assistant Executive Officer (Admin) – to be added for the purpose of internet transactions.*

17. Financial Comparisons

The Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st July 2014 were received and noted.

18. Termination of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

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.