

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE

29TH JANUARY 2015 at 8.00PM

Present: Mr M S Aslam (In the Chair), Miss A Ambrose, Mr R Berrington, Miss S Betts, Mr N Brown, Mr N Chamberlain, Mr T Chapman, Mrs S Fox-Kennedy, Mrs J Fox, Mr P Kennedy, Mrs S Maxwell, Mr P Moitt, Mr G Sanders, Mr W Wright.

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

There was one member of the public present at the meeting.

MR M S ASLAM, TOWN MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR

Prior to the meeting the Town Mayor and Members of the Council paid personal tributes to Councillor Mr David Widdowson who sadly passed away on 7th January 2015, and paid their condolences to his family for their sad loss.

Mr Widdowson had been a Town Councillor for over twenty years as well as serving as a District Councillor for two terms. He had held the unique position of being elected as Braunstone Town Mayor twice. Even before becoming a Town Councillor, Mr Widdowson had been instrumental in forming a Neighbourhood Watch Committee, and after becoming a Town Councillor continued to work hard on behalf of the residents within his ward. Prior to becoming a nurse, Mr Widdowson had also seen active service in the army and was a supportive member of the work of the Royal British Legion within the area. Members expressed their appreciation of the support that he had given them. He had been a prominent member of the community that would be sadly missed.

5276 Apologies for Absence

Mr A S Basra, Miss A Hack, Mr D Joshi, Mr S Maxwell, Mr P Patel, Mrs I Whailing.

5277 Disclosures of Interest

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

5278 Minutes of the Meeting held 6th November 2014

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held 6th November 2014 as previously circulated be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

5279 Items Dealt With Required by Statute

a) Estimates for 2015/2016

The Estimates for 2015/2016 were received, along with Guidance Notes for Members on Capital and Revenue Costs, Long Term Financial Planning Guide and proposed Capital Projects.

Mr N Brown proposed the Precept of £477,804.00 (not including the Council Tax Support Grant payable to the Town Council of £49,786) which would result in a total budget requirement to the Council of £527,590, with the average Council Tax Payer in Band 'B' paying £77.88 per year as Braunstone Town's share of the Council Tax in 2015/2016. This resulted in an increase of 2.2%.

Mr Brown made reference to how the Town Council had responded to the potential long term financial risks facing the Council when considering its long term budgeting, such as the potential removal of the Council Tax Support Grant, the introduction of auto-enrolment to the Pension Scheme, etc. However, the most significant challenge for the Council to respond to during the forthcoming year was with the future of the Library Service. At the public consultation events hosted by Leicestershire County Council, there had been around sixty residents present, expressing their objection to any proposals to close the library service, and again there had been a request from the Annual Towns Meeting for the Town Council to use its offices, powers and influence to ensure a continued library service in the Town.

The Town Council had now submitted its expression of interest to Leicestershire County in running the Braunstone Town Library, and the next step would be to enter into discussion with the County Council and key partners. By including an increase in the Council's precept requirement in past years, this had put the Town Council in a better financial position to be able to work towards providing this service for Braunstone Town.

It was unanimously:-

RESOLVED

- a) *That the Capital Programme for 2015/2016 be adopted as follows:-*
 - (i) *The Completed Projects (section (a) of the report), having now been completed be removed*
 - (ii) *The Current Projects (Section (b) of the report) be included*
 - (iii) *The Proposed New Projects (section (c) of the report) be added; and*
 - (iv) *The Projects Proposed for Deletion (section (d) of the report) be removed*
- b) *That the Estimates for 2015/2016 as circulated with the Agenda be adopted as the Council's Budget for 2015/2016; and*
- c) *That a Net Precept Requirement for £477,804 for the financial year 2015/2016 be submitted to Blaby District Council.*

5280 Town Mayor's Report

Mr M S Aslam reported on events that he attended in his capacity as Town Mayor since the last meeting. Mr Aslam had attended a number of Programme of Events over the Christmas period, including the Harvest Community Church carol service, a Christmas Fayre at the Thorpe Astley Community Centre, the Ratby Band Sing-a-long-a-Christmas evening, and the Panto.

Mr Aslam reported that he had attended a Workshop at Winstanley College, hosted by his chosen charity, Leicester Charity Link. There had been a presentation on the current issues surrounding poverty within the County with around 100 people a week accessing food banks, and Mr Aslam asked that Members look out for vulnerable people in the Town who may benefit from the service.

Mr Aslam highlighted that a Fashion Event was to be held at the Thorpe Astley Community Centre on 30th January 2015 to raise funds for his charity.

5281 Public Session

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.

Mr R Sherwin, Braunstone Life correspondent, echoed the Town Council's sentiments on Mr David Widdowson and passed on the Braunstone Life Committee's condolences to his family.

5282 Questions from Councillors

There were no questions raised by Councillors submitted in accordance with Standing Order 15.

5283 Plans & Environment Committee

The Report of the Plans & Environment Committee Meeting held on 20th November 2014 (p5704/p5706).

Page 5705, Item 7 – Lubbesthorpe Strategic Consultative Board

Mr W Wright reported that Members continued to represent the Council on the Lubbesthorpe Strategic Consultative Board. The next meeting was scheduled for 12th February 2015 at which the developers would be showing their proposed designs for the development.

RESOLVED: That the Report be adopted.

5284 Community Development Committee

The Report of the Community Development Committee Meeting held on 20th November 2014 (p5707/5711).

Page 5709, Item 7 – Neighbourhood Watch

Mr N Brown reported on recent Crime Statistics that were due to be received at the next meeting of the Community Development Committee. He expressed his concern at the increase in car crime within the Town over the last twelve month period. He indicated that further investigation needed to be made as to the reason for the increase in crime, and whether the introduction of the part-night lighting scheme could have had any effect.

Mr W Wright reported that the figures had been received by the Blaby District Council Tactical Group and that car crime was an issue across the District. However, he was pleased to report that Braunstone Town had a lesser increase in other crimes than in other areas of the District. He confirmed that the police had made no change to their policing methods.

Mrs S Maxwell noted that a report on crime had been received at a previous meeting of the Leicestershire County Council Highways Forum as part of a report on the Part-Night Lighting Scheme.

RESOLVED: That the Report be adopted.

5285 Policy & Resources Committee

The Report of the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 17th December 2014 (p5712/5715)

Page 5713, Item 4, Braunstone Town Library

Mr N Brown referred to the update on progress as earlier considered in the meeting as part of the adoption of the estimates.

RESOLVED: That the Report be adopted.

5286 Plans & Environment Committee

The Report of the Plans & Environment Committee Meeting held on 18th December 2014 (p5716/p5720).

RESOLVED: That the Report be adopted.

5287 Policy & Resources Committee

The Report of the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 15th January 2015 (p5721/5726)

Page 5721, Item 5 (f) Thorpe Astley Community Centre – Medical Rooms

Mr N Brown was pleased to note that there appeared to be progress with the introduction of medical services at the Community Centre. NHS England had indicated that services would be in place by the end of January 2015.

RESOLVED: That the Report be adopted.

5288 To Consider Resolutions or Recommendations

There were no Resolutions or Recommendations received.

5289 Authorisation of the Sealing of Documents

There were no documents received.

5290 Reports from Representatives of Outside Bodies, District and County Councillors, LAPLC Representatives and School Governors Reports

Leicestershire County Council

Mrs J Fox reported on the budgeting process that had recently been carried out by Leicestershire County Council and the difficulties faced by the Council in meeting the cuts. Mrs Fox was disappointed to note that the key services that were facing cuts, such as young peoples and adults' services, were impacting on the most vulnerable people. The impacts of the cuts by the County Council were also impacting on services provided through the District Council.

Blaby District Council

Mrs J Fox reported that Blaby District Council had also gone through the process, through its Scrutiny Committee, to identify where the cuts could be met and funding gaps filled. Some of the outcomes would impact on the parish councils, for example if the District Council withheld paying over the New Homes Bonus to parishes, and it was also considering asking parish councils to carry out services on its behalf.

Mrs Fox reported that she had attended a Business event hosted by the District Council to network with local self-employed and small businesses, with a view to supporting them with grant opportunities. Blaby District Council recognised the importance of these businesses on the identity of the community.

Braunstone West Social Centre

Mr P Moitt reported on the last meeting of the Braunstone West Social Centre Committee. He noted that the facility continued to do well with its income from room hirings despite being small establishment.

Braunstone Town Community Minibus

Mr P Kennedy reported that the Braunstone Town Community Minibus' Quiz Night had been a big success, particularly in the income it had raised from the event. The Committee was working towards replacing one its minibuses.

Lubbesthorpe Development Strategic Group

Mr G Sanders reported on the last meeting of the Lubbesthorpe Development Strategic Group. At the meeting there had been discussions on the provision of a multi-faith cemetery, and also the highway infrastructure which would have an impact on a number of the surrounding parishes. Mr Sanders noted that the meetings were an opportunity for all affected parishes to be involved to ensure the best way forward with a view to limiting adverse impacts.

School governors

Mr M S Aslam queried the standards being achieved by Kingsway and Ravenhurst Schools. Mr N Brown responded that he had read the Ofsted reports for the schools and that, around eighteen months ago they had been graded as needing improvements, however, the subsequent Ofsted reports had shown improvements and were now achieving Good in all areas. Mr Brown noted that it was a difficult process for the schools to make improvements as, since moving to Academy status, they no longer received the support from the Local Authority.

5291 Approval of Accounts from 21st October 2014 to 7th January 2015

RESOLVED: That in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2003 the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the Period 21st October 2014 to 7th January 2015 be approved (copy filed with Minutes).

5292 Termination of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.