



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

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Braunstone Town

"Citizens Advisory Panel"

.....INFORM.....CONSULT.....INVOLVE.....

25th November 2015

Dear Citizens' Advisory Panel Member

A meeting of the **BRAUNSTONE TOWN CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL** will be held in the Fosse Room at Braunstone Civic Centre on **Thursday, 3rd December 2015** commencing at **7.30pm**, the agenda for the meeting is 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**
To receive apologies for absence.
2. **Disclosures of Interest**
To receive any disclosures of Interest in respect of items on this agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Meeting held 8th October 2015**
To confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held 8th October 2015 to be signed by the Chairperson (**Enclosed**).
4. **Update on the Library and Customer Service Shop**
To consider the latest position with the County Council's proposals to replace Braunstone Town Library with a mobile library service and to receive an update on progress with renewing the Service Level Agreement with Blaby District Council (**Enclosed**).
5. **Update on Holmfield Park Improvements**
To provide feedback on the recent improvement works to the play facilities at Holmfield Park.

6. Shakespeare Park Improvement Project

To receive the outline proposals, including timescales, for improvement to the pavilion, sport, recreation and play facilities at Shakespeare Park (**Enclosed**).

7. Improving the Appearance of Braunstone Town

To note that a group of local residents have formed a group, which aims to take initiatives to improve the appearance of the Town, including verge planting, replacement signs and planters.

8. Termination of the Meeting

To note that future meetings of the Panel are scheduled as follows:

- Thursday 3rd March 2016

All meetings are scheduled for 7.30pm.



NOTE:

CRIME & DISORDER ACT 1998 (SECTION 17) – The Council has an obligation to consider Crime and 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 favourable treatment on the basis of race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity.

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL
THURSDAY 8th OCTOBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillor N Brown (Chair), Councillors A Ambrose and A Hack, and local residents Mrs N Blight, Mr J Jameson, and Mrs S Zastawky, Mrs B Hazelgrove, Mr J Hazelgrove, Mrs L Spick and Councillor Betts (substituting Councillor R Waterton).

Officers in attendance: Mr D Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk, Mrs Anita Barrand, Community Engagement & Events Coordinator and Roo Peake, Local Area Coordinator.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received Councillor R Waterton and from town residents Mr J Johnson and Mr T Smith.

2. Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held 17th September 2015

The report of the meeting held on 17th September 2015 was received and noted.

4. Future Options for the Library and Customer Service Shop

The Advisory Panel considered Leicestershire County Council's proposals to consult on replacing Braunstone Town Library with the mobile library service and received an update on the Town Council's position and response (item 4 on the agenda).

The Executive Officer and Town Clerk confirmed that there was a continued dialogue between the Town Council and the County Council concerning the matter and that arrangements were being put in place to discuss with Blaby District Council the terms of the Service Level Agreement to deliver Council Customer Services and Social Inclusion services from the proposed combined Community Hub.

Town Resident, Mr J Hazelgrove, read out the following statement to the Panel:

"The County Council statement which contained the threat to close the Braunstone Town Library and replace it with a Mobile Library is plain daft and should be challenged, both directly and through the media. Whoever prompted this ridiculous idea has no understanding of Mobile Library operation and has probably never been inside one or used one.

I have done some fact finding and was helped this week by a friend, now retired, who was a Mobile Library Driver/Librarian in Leicestershire for over 40 years.

Some Main Points:

- 1. Mobile Libraries were designed from the outset for the purpose of providing a book lending service to rural communities with populations of less than 2,000.*
- 2. In order to comply with size and weight restrictions applying to use of roads and residential areas, the standard mobile is based on a maximum 5 tons or less chassis. This in turn governs the design and size of the body and the average total stock of books is limited to around 2,500. This number has to cover the reading needs of adults and children and is in no sense comparable with the size of the book stock in Braunstone Town Library.*
- 3. The impact on children's reading could be disastrous. In our present library, peak borrowing in term time is between 3.45pm and 5pm. If mobile library schedules were earlier, children would be denied access to the already limited stock of children's books on the mobile.*
- 4. Space within a mobile library is tight. If I stood in the centre aisle with arms outstretched I would damage my knuckles and my mobile library friend gave the maximum number of readers that could use the mobile at any one time as seven to eight. With population the size of Braunstone Town it would need a Kingsway Surgery style advance booking system to sort that one out.*
- 5. A mobile library has to operate to a published regular timed schedule of stops so that people can assemble to exchange their books. That might work in a rural area but there would be major problems with time keeping in Braunstone Town which, as we know only too well, is at times strangled with traffic congestion.*
- 6. Leicestershire County Council currently has a fleet of 5 mobile libraries, based in different parts of the County. These were never designed or intended for use in densely populated urban areas and are completely unsuited to that role.*
- 7. To put this into context – many authorities have attempted in the past to introduce the mobile library concept into urban areas and imaginative experiments using articulated units and trailer libraries were all eventually abandoned because of insoluble operational reasons. The truth dawned that the larger the mobile library, the less mobile it became because of associated traffic and parking problems.*
- 8. To the best of my knowledge they have no computer or IT provision.*

The Officers who advise Cabinet at County Hall have not done their homework and should talk to the very people employed in running the mobile library service. The mobile library service is very popular and highly valued by the rural community but is wholly inadequate to meet the needs of an urban population of our size.

What they are proposing is about as logical as suggesting to our local Co-op shop that they should close down and start selling goods to customers from a large van!"

In addition, the following issues were raised by members of the Panel:

- i. to implement their proposals for a mobile library service, Leicestershire County Council would need more vans and staff;
- ii. Leicestershire County Council's Corporate Assets Management Plan makes provision for 3 extra rooms at Coalville Library, 2 extra rooms at Hinckley Library and in partnership with the District, for a joint Library and Museum at Market Harborough Library; therefore, why were the County Council against a partnership arrangement with Braunstone Town Council for Braunstone Town Library;

- iii. the best way forward would be to develop a sustainable mixed market approach offering choice and providing for a diverse community, alongside school libraries;
- iv. it was wrong for the County Council to claim the proposals for a Joint Community Hub was not viable, all other partners were supportive;
- v. Braunstone Town Library served the eighth largest population in Leicestershire County and given the legal agreement, it should be supported;
- vi. the mobile library was at Thorpe Astley for 45 minutes, this was not sufficient time for all the users of Braunstone Town Library;
- vii. the mobile library does not cater for wheelchairs – a full impact assessment need to be carried out;
- viii. Leicestershire County Council was required to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service, it was questionable whether serving Braunstone Town with a mobile library was efficient; and
- ix. it was disappointing and inappropriate that Leicestershire County Council had issued a press release on the proposals prior to Cabinet consideration and approval.

Members of the Advisory Panel discussed the feeling of residents and the need to form a resident's action group to oppose the proposals to replace the Town Library with a mobile library service.

AGREED that the statement by Mr J Hazelgrove be included in the minutes and on the Town Council's website.

5. Termination of the Meeting

AGREED that the following items be included on the agenda for the next Panel meeting, scheduled for 3rd December 2015:

- i. update on the future of Braunstone Town Library; and
- ii. views of members of the community, which were included in Braunstone Life to brighten up the Town with plants/flowers, planters and new welcome signs.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.



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BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL – 3rd DECEMBER 2015

Item 4 – Update on the Library and Customer Service Shop

Purpose

To consider the latest position with the County Council's proposals to replace Braunstone Town Library with a mobile library service and to receive an update on progress with renewing the Service Level Agreement with Blaby District Council.

Update on Library Services

Leicestershire County Council's Cabinet on 7th October approved a proposal for consultation to replace Braunstone Town Library with a mobile library service.

The consultation runs from 19th October 2015 until midnight on 17th January 2016.

On 17th November 2015, SOLAG, Save our Library Action Group, held a meeting at Braunstone Civic Centre, which was attended by County Council and Town Council officers and the Leader of Braunstone Town Council. The meeting was attended by approximately 150 residents. At the meeting, the Town Council had an opportunity to circulate and present its proposals for a Community Hub, which has the support of the Citizens' Advisory Panel.

Leicestershire County Council's consultation event is being held at Braunstone Civic Centre on Tuesday 1st December, a summary of which will be reported to the meeting of the Panel.

Update on Customer Service Shop

Blaby District Council approved their Customer Access Strategy at their Cabinet Executive on 21st September 2015 and approved in principle the plans to deliver their customer services and social inclusion services through the proposed combined Community Hub in Braunstone Town. A meeting to discuss the details of the Service Level Agreement has been arranged for Wednesday 16th December 2015.

Town Council Response to the Mobile Library Proposal

It is the intention of the Town Council to respond to the consultation on replacing the Town Library with a mobile Library Service, a response will be considered and approved at Policy and Resources Committee on 14th January 2016.

The Advisory Panel are invited to identify issues and themes which could be considered for inclusion in the Town Council's response.

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL – 3rd DECEMBER 2015

Item 6 – Shakespeare Park Improvement Project

Purpose

To receive the outline proposals, including timescales, for improvement to the pavilion, sport, recreation and play facilities at Shakespeare Park.

Background

On 25th January 2015, the Town Council adopted a Capital Plan, which identified priorities and a programme for investment in infrastructure during the 2015/2016 financial year and beyond. The items identified in the Programme in respect of Shakespeare Park are set out below:

1. Building

- a) Bowling Club Pavilion – (has an expected 10 – 15 year life span remaining) Consider options for the long term future of the building and possible future wider community use, and replacement of building, and the existing club's involvement in sourcing funding opportunities for the replacement.
- b) Consider alternatives to respond to problems of burst water pipes from the water tank currently sited on top of the football changing rooms (possible options, heating of tank or removal and installation of electric showers in the changing rooms)

2. Sporting Facilities

- a) Replacement to Perimeter fencing of Tennis Courts
- b) Provide additional basketball/netball nets/markings to existing tennis courts to provide an all-year use for the facility.

3. Playground

- a) Additional balance in play area (2-5 or 5 – 12 age group)
- b) Additional Spinning Equipment in play area (2-5 year or 5 – 12 year age group) including installation
- c) Safety Surface installed at toddler area
- d) Additional seat in play area
- e) Safety Surface in play area Option 1 - Additional play bark to toddler surface

4. Recreation Field

- a) Improvements to the entrance to the park area (access from the car park to the park)

A working group was established of Councillors and current stakeholders and met on 18th November 2015 and considered project options, the arrangements with users and stakeholders, funding sources and project timescales.

Agreed Approach

The Group agreed to explore:

- complete rebuild of the Pavilion facilities;
- creation of a multi-user space;
- provision of longer term agreements with the sports clubs; and
- to source external funding through both the Town Council and sports clubs.

Timescales

Initial indications of timescales are as follows:

November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial Working Group Meeting
December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioning of architects for potential options for the Pavilion• Exploring possibilities with the Playground with Partners
January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring options around long term leases with Clubs
February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtaining estimates for proposals
March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working Group meeting to consider: design options for the Pavilion and Playground and a full schedule of work, including timescales
April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of proposals by Policy & Resources Committee for public consultation and obtaining funding
May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Consultation• Applications for funding
June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working Group meet to consider consultation responses and potential amendments to the project• Open tendering / quotation process
July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deadline for Quotes and Tenders
August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of final proposals by Policy & Resources Committee, including contracts and funding and timescales for the work
September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awarding of Contracts
October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commencement of Building works on Pavilion• Closure of Car Park, to include Car Park Improvements (Public Right of Way to remain open)
November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commencement of works on Playground
December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of works on Playground
January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commencement of work on Tennis Courts
February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of work on Tennis Courts
March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of Building works on Pavilion• Reopening of Car Park
April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pavilion and Site becomes fully operational