

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 1st OCTOBER 2015 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Alex DeWinter, Gary Sanders, Roger Berrington (substituting for Robert Waterton) and Bill Wright.

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

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

43. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Robert Waterton, Sam Maxwell and Stuart Maxwell.

44. Disclosures of Interest

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

45. Public Participation

In accordance with Standing Order 3.6, members of the public may attend the meeting for the purpose of making representations, giving evidence or answering questions in respect of any item of business included on the agenda.

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

46. Minutes of the Meeting held 20th August 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th August 2015 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th August 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

47. Medium to Long Term Priorities and Financial Planning

The Committee considered a report setting out the context for the Council's medium to long term priorities and financial planning and considered making recommendations as appropriate to Council (item 5 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

1. that the current projections based on known financial pressures identified in the report be noted;

2. that the Council's Mission Statement and the Objectives for each Service Area be used as the basis for calculating the annual budget and any external funding sought;
3. that the Council's Reserves be used to invest in infrastructure and assets and in the development and remodelling of services, including the Town Council's operations;
4. that the Executive Officer and Town Clerk produce proposals to deliver more efficient services and operations; and
5. that the Medium to Long Term Priorities and Financial Planning be revised at least on an annual basis.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To provide a foundation for preparing budget estimates for 2016/2017 and beyond.*
2. *To ensure the Council focusses its activity and spending given the future financial uncertainties.*
3. *To ensure the highest possible standards within the resources available in the future.*
4. *To meet the identified savings equivalent to the projected reduction in Council Tax Support Grant for 2016/2017 and beyond and to enable continuous improvement.*
5. *In order that changed circumstances and revised predictions be incorporated into the Council's Medium to Long Term planning process to inform the Council's priorities and decisions.*

48. Future of the Library and Customer Service Shop

The Committee received an update in respect of an agreement with Blaby District Council on the Customer Service Shop and considered the impact of the recommendation of County Council Officers that the Outline Business Cases submitted by the Town Council to run Braunstone Town Library be rejected (item 6 on the agenda).

Leicestershire County Council had published the report to be considered by Cabinet on 7th October 2015. This recommended that in respect of Braunstone Town Library, the service be replaced with a Mobile Library Service and that a three month consultation be undertaken with the community concerning the proposal.

An extract from the Cabinet report relating to Braunstone Town was circulated along with a Press Release issued by the Town Council.

RESOLVED

1. that the Executive Officer and Town Clerk liaise with Blaby District Council on further detailed arrangements for the model, including service levels and standards, the mechanism for identifying and reviewing the costs of the service and the contributions made by each organisation and submit the final proposal to Policy & Resources Committee for determination; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to

continue a dialogue with Leicestershire County Council to move proposals forward for the mutual benefit of the Councils and the Community and to engage partners, community organisations, the public and the press as appropriate.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To enable those Council's which have a wider vision to direct resources to create community cohesion and social inclusion through maximising access to services, to ensure that the systems, processes and agreements would be made to avoid unnecessary delay.*
2. *To use our offices, powers and influence to keep the Braunstone Town Library open and also provide a better service that would be more responsive to the needs of local residents.*

49. Thorpe Astley Community Centre – Medical Rooms

The Committee received an update on progress for opening the Medical Facility at Thorpe Astley Community Centre and determined how the Town Council would assist the NHS with engaging with local residents (item 7 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, Communications Strategy, and Service Review Arrangement with the partners involved with the Thorpe Astley Community Centre Medical Rooms; and
2. that the Town Council use its offices, communication channels and events to engage with the community over the forthcoming months to ascertain from residents views on the potential future primary care service in Thorpe Astley.

Reasons for Decision

1&2. To deliver the Town Council's desire to ensure GP services would be provided as soon as possible to the Community and in particular that the community were informed, engaged and involved.

50. Narborough Road South - Subways

The Committee considered the progress with launching a community art project for the subways under Narborough Road South (item 8 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that progress with the project be noted; and
2. that businesses in the Narborough Road South area be approached to see if they would be willing to sponsor the project.

Reasons for Decision

1. To note that two quotes/proposals had been received and a third was being sought and that the consultation was now active.
2. To encourage involvement from local businesses in funding and supporting environmental improvements in the area.

51. Franklin Park Playground – Replacement Balance Trail

The Committee considered options to implement the Capital Programme item concerning replacing the Balance Trail in Franklin Park Play Area (item 9 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the project to replace the Balance Beams in Franklin Park Play Area be initiated;
2. that the Council apply to receive Section 106 monies of £6,238.34 from a development on Ayston Road;
3. that at least three quotes be invited from suppliers to undertake the works;
4. that up to £2,500 be allocated from the Council's Reserves; and
5. that a report setting out the quotes, funding and timescales for the work be presented to Policy & Resources Committee (scheduled for 14th January 2016) for determination.

Reasons for Decision

1-5.To ensure that the work was undertaken and that appropriate funding and suppliers could be sourced.

52. Parks & Open Spaces – Winter Works Programme 2015/2016

The Committee received a report concerning the Annual ROSPA reports on Parks and Open Spaces and determined the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Winter Works Programme for 2015/2016 (item 10 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Parks & Open Spaces Winter Works Programme (2015/2016) as circulated, be approved.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that work identified could be prioritised and scheduled accordingly.

53. Local Council Award Scheme

The Committee received an update on actions taken to ensure compliance with the Foundation Award level criteria and received an assessment on actions required to meet the Quality Award level criteria. (item 11 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

1. that Braunstone Town Council publishes online the Foundation Level Award criteria 1 to 15 (as set out in Appendix 1); and
2. that Braunstone Town Council has in place the Foundation Level Award criteria 16 to 22 (as set out in Appendix 1).

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Town Council retains the level of award that it currently holds and was comparable to the award under the previous Quality Council Scheme and to recognise the important role the Council currently has and aspires to continue to develop in terms of reputation, competency and ability to lead a community and work in partnership with principal Councils to deliver local services and an environment which reaches the highest possible standards.

54. Complaints Procedure

The Committee considered amendments to the Council's Complaints Procedure (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the proposed revised Complaints Procedure, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted

Reason for Decision

To provide for a clear, transparent and fair process for handling and resolving complaints.

55. Provision of Human Resources Services

The Committee considered employing the services of Personnel Advice and Solutions permanently for all Human Resource advice and Support (item 13 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that specialist Human Resource advice and support services be commissioned for all aspects of the Council's Human Resource needs using Personal Advice and Solutions Limited of Sleaford, Lincolnshire, based on the agreement at Appendix 1 of the report.

Reason for Decision

To ensure appropriate Human Resource advice and support to the Council.

56. External Audit 2014/2015

The Committee noted that the External Audit was completed on 17th September 2015 (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be noted that the External Audit for 2014/2015 financial year was completed on 17th September 2015.

Reason for Decision

An unqualified opinion was given by the External Auditor, Grant Thornton, on the Council's Annual Return for 2014/2015.

57. Financial Procedures

The Committee considered a report from the Responsible Financial Officer concerning the operation of the Financial Procedures and an assessment of current and future actions to ensure the implementation of proper practices. (item 15 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the position and action taken be noted and an update be reported to Policy & Resources Committee on 14th January 2016.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that targets had been met to resolve the transaction errors recorded on the system and action taken to ensure that processes were efficient to prevent future reoccurrences.

58. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2015 to 31st August 2015 (item 16 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

The Council's actual income was higher than predicted for the period and expenditure was lower than predicted for the period.

59. Provision of Website

The Committee considered the Leicestershire County Council joint parishes' procurement offer for website services beyond August 2016 (item 17 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the features identified for the joint parishes website be supported; and
2. that the process be noted.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The features identified would provide improvements and meet the online needs of the Town Council.*
2. *The Council welcomed the opportunity to procure as part of a joint arrangement and would review its participation once the costs of the arrangement were confirmed.*

60. Executive Officer & Town Clerk – CiLCA Qualification

The Committee noted that the Executive Officer & Town Clerk passed the Certificate in Local Council Administration on 14th August 2015 and in accordance with the contract of employment was entitled to receive a salary increment of one point on the scale (item 18 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Executive Officer & Town Clerk be awarded a salary increment to scale point 50 and that this be back dated to 14th August 2015.

Reasons for Decision

The Executive Officer & Town Clerk has successfully achieved professional CiLCA qualification as required by the job description and in accordance with the employment contract would be awarded a one point salary increment.

61. 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 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.

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.

SIGNED _____ (CHAIR)

DATED _____