



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

Darren Tilley – Executive Officer & Town Clerk

Email: enquiries@braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE, Kingsway, Braunstone Town, Leicester, LE3 2PP.

Telephone: 0116 2890045 Fax: 0116 2824785 VAT Reg No. 114762482

TO ALL ELECTORS OF BRAUNSTONE TOWN

ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

YOU are invited to take part. It will be held at
Braunstone Civic Centre, Kingsway, Braunstone Town

THURSDAY, 11TH MAY 2017

at 7.30pm

Chairperson:

Councillor B. Layne, Town Mayor

The Towns Meeting may by law discuss all town affairs
and pass resolutions about them

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the Towns Meeting 12th May 2016 (Enclosed)
3. Town Mayor's Report 2016/2017 (Enclosed)
4. Town Council Accounts and Budgets (Enclosed)
5. Leader's Report – Achievements 2016/17 and Priorities for 2017/18 (Enclosed)
6. Braunstone Town Heritage Warden's Report 2016/2017 (Enclosed)

Signed:

Councillor B. Layne, Town Mayor

Dated: 3rd May 2017

**There will be an opportunity to meet local Councillors later
in the evening**

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

Held on THURSDAY 12TH MAY 2016 at 7.00pm

In the Chair, Councillor Sharon Betts, Town Mayor.
There were 20 persons present at the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr John Dodd, Councillor Phil Moitt, Councillor Chetan Parmar and Mr Roy Sherwin.

2. Minutes of the Annual Towns Meeting – 14th May 2015

The Minutes of the Annual Towns Meeting held on 14th May 2015 were circulated with the agenda, which was made available to all persons present, and were taken as read.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Towns Meeting held on 14th May 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

3. Town Mayor's Report 2015/2016

Councillor Sharon Betts, Town Mayor for 2015/2016, reported on activities during her Mayoral year:

“Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our Annual Towns Meeting. This meeting gives residents of the Town an opportunity to reflect on the activities in our Town over the past year and look ahead to the forthcoming year. Later this evening, the Full Council will consider the Annual Report of the Town Council which details our achievements over the past 12 months and sets out our proposed activities for the next 12 months and the Leader of the Council will highlight some of these in his report”.

“For myself as Town Mayor it has been a very memorable year. It is a privilege and an honour to be chosen to serve as Town Mayor and experience first-hand the hard work and dedication of many in our community who serve and support the needs of others. I have been amazed at the wide variety of activities and the number of proactive community groups there are in Braunstone Town. It has been a real privilege to meet so many people who are committed to making our Town a vibrant place in which to live”.

“Throughout the year I have attended many events that have taken place to celebrate, honour and recognise achievements of our residents. In July I was proud to sponsor a race at the Braunstone Swimming Club's open meet and present a prize to one of the winning young contestants. I also attended the anniversary dinner of the TS Cutlass Navy Cadet force”.

“Our summer fete was, again, a huge success with plenty of activities going on for all the family to enjoy and a larger number of residents attending and again, we had glorious weather”.

“In October, I opened the annual Franklin Park Community Orchard Apple Day, which also saw the permanent opening of the Community Orchard, following extensive work to prepare the area for the opening. This has enabled many in our community to appreciate this community asset which was created by the hard work of enthusiastic volunteers since the land was passed to the Town Council in 2007”.

“In January, I opened new play facilities at Holmfield Park with the help of local nursery children who meet at Braunstone West Social Centre. It was a wet and cold day, but the children were very excited by the new play equipment and couldn't wait to have go”.

“This year I have been particularly proud to attend events that remember the brave service men and women who have sacrificed their lives during past and current conflicts. Again this year the Council was proud to help mark Remembrance Day with a service at St Crispin's Church and by commemorating Armed Forces Day, including the ceremony raising the Armed Forces Day flag”.

“In addition it was a privilege to support commemorations for:

- 70th Anniversary of VJ Day in August;
- Battle of Britain Parade and Service in September;
- Commonwealth Day in March by raising the Commonwealth Flag”.

“The year has also been filled with events arranged by our local community groups and volunteers. Such events included:

- The Scouts summer Fete in July at Thorpe Astley Community Centre;
- Allotment Society Open Day in August;
- Thursday Over 60s 40th Anniversary Tea Party in October;
- Shakespeare Park Bowls Club Annual Dinner and awards in October; and
- Braunstone's Got Talent here at the Civic Centre in December”.

“I was delighted to host the recent Town Mayor's Annual Awards of merit evening. It was an opportunity to recognise the deserving unsung heroes of our community, and to acknowledge the groups who had joined me in putting on the programme events which this year raised funds of £2346.44 for local groups and good causes. I hope that the Town Council will continue to play such a central role for many years to come in helping to bring people together and promoting the strong sense of community spirit that I have encountered”.

“On a personal note, I am grateful that my year as Town Mayor has given me the opportunity to raise the profile of my charities, Heartlink, which raises money to help improve facilities for children suffering from heart defects and for their families, the charity also raise funds to provide much needed valuable medical equipment; and also for the South West Leicestershire Scouts Association, to provide equipment for local scout groups. The generous people of Braunstone Town have helped me in raising a total of £2561.33 for these good causes and many events were held including a fashion show, a family pantomime and Christmas Craft Fair to help raise funds. I wish to thank everyone for supporting these events. I was

also pleased with the amount of media coverage the Town has received this year, I was interviewed by Radio Leicester for the Fete, Pantomime and Fashion Show, giving us the opportunity to show that Braunstone Town is a vibrant and active community with plenty of things to do throughout the year”.

“Through our Town Mayor we continue to attach importance to our events programmes, significant anniversaries such as remembrance and civic events such as armed forces day. With arrangements for our annual Summer Fete progressing, we will continue to provide a wide range of activities for all in the community. Such events and recognition of anniversaries are important as we celebrate and recognise who we are as a community and continue to build a vibrant and socially inclusive Town”.

“I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to everyone for their support over the year, in particular to my consort Bill who has been there supporting me in this important role every step of the way”.

“I would also like to take this opportunity to wish Braunstone Town’s next Town Mayor a most enjoyable and successful year”.

4. Town Council Accounts and Budgets

Councillor Nick Brown, Leader of the Council, reported on the Town Council’s previous year’s financial position. The Town Council’s Accounts and Budget Report was circulated with the agenda, which was made available to all persons present, and were taken as read.

5. Leader’s Report – Achievements 2015/16 and Priorities for 2016/17

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Nick Brown, reported on the Town Council’s achievements during 2015/2016 and looked ahead to the Town Council’s priorities for 2016/2017.

“At the Annual Meeting of the Town Council following this meeting at eight o’clock, Town Councillors will be considering the Town Council’s Annual Report. This report sets out our achievements since last year’s Annual Towns Meeting, which I will reflect upon on as well as our priorities for the forthcoming year, which I will highlight”.

Achievements 2015/2016

1. **“Millfield Hall Refurbishment:** The roof of the Millfield Hall was over 40 years old and leaking, posing a serious risk to the roof structure as well as damage to the internal decoration of the room, affecting hires. The Town Council obtained climate change and environmental improvement grant funding totalling £48,000 towards the project and allocated just under £83,000 of its reserves. The refurbishment included replacement roof lining and insulation, installation of new and more efficient heating and air conditioning, installation of LED lighting and general improvements to the internal decoration including varnishing of the floor and replacement curtains”.

2. **“Improvements to Holmfield Park Play Area:** in the autumn, following extensive consultations, we delivered on our commitment to invest in improvements to the play facilities at Holmfield Park, the improvements included:-
 - New toddler play equipment
 - Installation of New Swings for older children
 - Improvements to safety surfacesThis was part-funded by both Braunstone Town Council and Blaby District Council and the improvements have received positive feedback from many in the local community”.
3. **“Permanent Opening of Franklin Park Community Orchard:** Last summer our parks staff, with the help of the Community Payback scheme, prepared the Orchard and Meadow to be opened permanently by the Town Mayor at the annual Apple Day in October. Local residents, many of whom were unaware of the project, have responded positively saying that it is a delightful and peaceful space to enjoy a relaxing walk and spot wildlife. Yet some have sought to destroy this by wilfully vandalising the pond dipping platform and boardwalk depositing safety warning signs and rails in the water. Not only have local school children and the local wildlife group lost a valuable amenity but Town residents are now faced with picking up the cost. I encourage Councillors and the community to spread the word and encourage anyone who knows or has seen anything to contact the police with information”.
4. **“Access to Public Services:** During the year we have reached agreement with Blaby District Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau to continue and further develop the joint services we provide through the Customer Service Shop at Braunstone Civic Centre until 2019. The agreements provide for Benefits and Housing advice surgeries, weekly Citizens’ Advice surgeries and support services helping the long term unemployed back into work. These services are valued by many in the community, particularly those who cannot easily travel out of the Town and those without internet access. It is however, extremely disappointing that the vision shared by both the Town Council and District Council to provide these services as part of a Community Hub including the Library was not shared or supported by Leicestershire County Council. Our proposals for a Community Hub not only enhanced the existing Library service through longer opening hours but also provided for a convenient accessible location from which improved support services to our residents could operate in a more efficient and effective way. It is still hard to comprehend what the County Council did not like about our proposals, they made an ongoing saving of £30,000 and for the sake of an additional ongoing commitment of £3,000 per annum over their current long term lease commitment, they could not see the potential to deliver better and more cost efficient services in the future”.
5. **“Efficiency Savings:** By contrast the Town Council’s approach to making savings is to invest in more efficient operations, thereby protecting front line services and, as already mentioned, in some cases improving on these. The Town Council invested £15,000 in installing LED lighting in its Community Centres, which produced just under £6,000 saving from August 2015, producing an anticipated ongoing annual saving of just under £9,000”.

6. **“Implemented an Organisation Staffing Review:** Within the existing budgets we streamlined the Council’s Management and Administration directing resources to the front line and most importantly ensuring that all staff working for Braunstone Town Council are paid the living wage, as promoted by the Living Wage Foundation, which is £8.25 per hour, with our lowest hourly rate at £8.29 per hour. This compares to the Government Living Wage of £7.20 per hour”.
7. **“Improvements to Shakespeare Park:** In November we launched a working group of Councillors and sports clubs using Shakespeare Park which has developed proposals for rebuilding the Shakespeare Park Pavilion facilities and improving the sports, recreation and play facilities on the park. The proposals include rebuilding of the Pavilion on a new site between the Bowling Green, Tennis Courts and Sports Pitch, along with installing sensory play equipment, improvements to the Tennis Courts and an extension of the car park. It has certainly been a pleasure to work with both Braunstone Juniors Football Club and Shakespeare Park Bowls Club to put together a shared vision for improvements, which will not only mutually benefit the clubs but will benefit all park users and local residents. I and my fellow Councillors on the group look forward to continued positive working during the forthcoming year to deliver the project”.

Proposals for 2016/2017

1. **“Safeguarding Library Services:** Despite the setbacks mentioned concerning the Library, we will continue to work towards keeping Braunstone Town Library open. Leicestershire County Council as the commissioning and responsible authority are able to determine who the service provider for the Library is, however, as both the premises landlord and an elected body representing the community, the Town Council will work with public bodies, service providers and the community to meet our aims and objectives to protect and enhance public services. Therefore, we will be watching Leicestershire County Council and will expect them to ensure that Fabula, who have been selected to run our Library, meet the obligations set out in the County Council’s own criteria on opening hours and book stock”.
2. **“Thorpe Astley Medical Rooms:** We continue to work with the NHS to find a use for the Thorpe Astley Medical Rooms while consulting with residents on potential alternative uses should a health facility not be provided by the NHS; this will enable the Town Council to maximise the use of the Thorpe Astley Community Centre for the benefit of the community, should NHS services not be forthcoming”.
3. **“Shakespeare Park:** As mentioned, we have made significant progress with the sports clubs to redevelop and improve the sporting, recreation and play facilities at Shakespeare Park; during the year we intend to consult with the local community and the District Council in order to finalise our plans and seek grant funding, I anticipate also that the Council will seek to borrow monies through the Public Works Loan Board given the lifetime of the new pavilion will

be in the region of 30 to 40 years; thereby ensuring we invest in our infrastructure now to protect and enhance facilities for future generations”.

4. **“Thorpe Astley Open Spaces:** This year we look to complete the legal transfer of open spaces at Thorpe Astley to the Town Council and ensure improvements are implemented to the Culvert at Thorpe Astley Park; with the legal transfer completed the Town Council will be able to consult with residents on improvements to the play area and the open spaces”.
5. **“Community Development:** We continue to support crime reduction initiatives and Local Area Co-ordination, which focuses on identifying and supporting people who need help before they reach crisis, and working towards building an inclusive resilient community around them. We have a strong track record in this area and the work of the Local Area Coordinator will build on our community development initiatives aimed at bringing people together and helping to create a stronger sense of community in our area. Our Grants will continue to be available for community groups this year alongside our free use of community rooms scheme. The Town Council sees the work of community and voluntary groups as underpinning a vibrant and inclusive community and we will continue to provide capacity support and signposting for funding to assist groups with their work and initiatives”.
6. **“Community Facilities:** We will continue to implement improvements to community facilities at Braunstone Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre; both centres continue to be important providing a focus for community activity and access to public services”.
7. **“Lubbesthorpe:** As the new M1 bridge is completed and opened we will support residents to raise issues affecting their quality of life and we will be working with the principal councils and developer to ensure much needed highway and safety improvements around Meridian Way and Lubbesthorpe Way are implemented and the Town Council is considered for the transfer of public land adjacent to the new bridge in Thorpe Astley”.
8. **“Protecting Services and Making Efficiency Savings:** We have for the last three years undertook longer term financial planning, with the aim of trying to safeguard our existing services whilst building up our reserve, while continuing to find ways to deliver our services more efficiently. There remains a risk that Council Tax Support Grant will be reduced or discontinued in the future; combine this with the reductions in services by both the County and District councils and the increasing pressures on the Police, Fire and health services, the Town Council will be under increasing pressure to find local solutions to the provision of public services which could expose us to serious financial risks in the future”.

“Despite these difficult and financially stringent times, we have been able to continue to maintain our services and in some cases improve upon what we are doing; therefore we are better placed to face the financial challenges ahead – without the need to cut our existing services”.

6. Termination of Meeting

The Town Mayor thanked those present for attending and with no further business the meeting closed at 7.25pm.

DRAFT

BRAUNSTONE TOWN
ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

11th MAY 2017

Item 3 – Town Mayor’s Report 2016/2017

I (Councillor Berneta Layne) took up the role of Braunstone Town Mayor on 12th May 2016 and I have attended numerous functions to date to celebrate, commemorate and support a wide variety of events in Braunstone Town, Blaby and Leicestershire.

It has been a privilege and an honour to have been chosen to serve as Town Mayor for the last year and experience first-hand the hard work and dedication of many in our community who serve and support the needs of others.

Community Activities

I have been amazed at the wide variety of activities and the number of proactive community groups there are in Braunstone Town. It has been a real privilege to meet so many people who are committed to making our Town a vibrant place in which to live.

Early in my year I was invited to attend a Vaisakhi event at Braunstone Civic Centre organised by the Punjabi Society and the Allotment Society Open Day where I presented prizes.

I sponsored and supported the 82nd Leicester Scout Group Summer Fete at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, supported and organised by a committed group of volunteers, however, attendance was disappointing.

On Saturday 1st October, it was Franklin Park Apple Day, which due to bad weather wasn't held at the Community Orchard but relocated to the Civic Centre. Nevertheless, there was a reasonable turnout from among Councillors and the community despite the disappointing weather.

Community Achievement

Throughout the year I have attended many events that have taken place to celebrate, honour and recognise achievements of our residents, many deserving unsung heroes of our community.

On 29th September I attended the Blaby District Council Outstanding Achievement Award Evening to support Trevor Hincks who was nominated by the Town Council to receive an award for his support and work with Braunstone Swimming Club and Trevor was runner up in his category.

On Friday 5th May I hosted the Annual Town Mayor's Awards night at Braunstone Civic Centre, recognising the achievements of the Kingsway Flower Club, Leicester Forest Photographic Society, Nadine Blight and Jo Fox.

Recognising Service

In May, I attended a surprise lunch for Sandra Whiles, Chief Executive of Blaby District Council who retired from her role.

During my year as Town Mayor, I also attended the funeral of former Town Councillor Mrs Julia Cottrell-Gilhorly, who was Town Mayor in 1995/1996, who passed away following illness.

Thorpe Astley

On 10th March I hosted the annual Fashion Show at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, for which 25 tickets were sold. It was a very enjoyable evening but I have to say it was rather poorly supported.

I was also delighted to host a Spring Craft Fair on 6th May at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, this was well supported by stallholders many of whom attend the Christmas gift and craft fair at Braunstone Civic Centre and have been requesting a spring event. Proceeds from the event were donated to my charity.

Programme of Events

Thank you to the groups who joined me in putting on the Programme of Events, which raised funds for local groups and good causes. I hope that the Town Council will continue to play such a central role for many years to come in helping to bring people together and promoting the strong sense of community spirit that I have encountered.

Events included, as mentioned above, our 'Christmas Gifts and Craft Fair' on Saturday 26th November, which was well supported and well attended and raised over £590 for funds for my chosen charity, Arthritis Research UK. I would like to thank stall holders, Councillors and residents who supported the event.

Events in the programme that I and my consort Mrs Pansy Stevens attended include:

- Quiz & Games Night for Braunstone Minibus, 2nd December
- Gorse Hill Farm Event, 3rd December
- Harvest Church Carol Service, 11th December
- Ratby Mid Band Fun Christmas Concert, 16th December
- Family Pantomime "Aladdin" – all net proceeds from the Pantomime were donated to the Town Mayor's Charity
- Kingsway Flower Club Flower Demonstration 'Timeless Classics', 1st March - at the end of the event I was presented with a cheque for £100 for my charity.

Summer Fete

The Town's annual Summer Fete was held on 30th July on Mossdale Meadows, which was blessed with very good weather and was supported by so many local volunteers and was very well attended.

Anniversaries/Civic Events

I have attended events both here in Braunstone Town and I have represented the Town in both Blaby District and Leicester City. The events were mainly centred on the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations and the 100th anniversary of the significant events of May and June 1916 during World War One. I attended a service at Leicester Cathedral to commemorate the start of the Battle of the Somme which saw so many young men wounded and so many lose their lives.

I hosted events to celebrate HM Queen's 90th Birthday, including Kingsway Church Fellowship's Street Party. I also attended a service of Choral Evensong at Leicester Cathedral to commemorate the Queen's remarkable service.

In addition to hosting our own flag raising ceremony at Braunstone Civic Centre to commemorate Armed Forces Day in June, I also attended Leicester Cathedral for a commemorative service and a flag raising ceremony at Blaby District Council's offices.

Other commemorative events attended included the raising of the colours at Braunstone Civic Centre to commemorate the Battle of Jutland and a moving event put on by the Royal British Legion held at the De Montfort Hall on 29th October.

Remembrance events here in Braunstone Town were also moving and continue to be supported by the community. As Town Mayor I laid an official wreath on behalf of residents of the Town at the Armistice Day Service at Braunstone Civic Centre and the Remembrance Sunday Service at St Crispin's Church.

During the year I attended the following Civic occasions:

- Rainbows lunch with the High Sherriff and visited the Rainbows hospice;
- Blaby District Council Chairman's Afternoon tea;
- Blaby Civic Service and the "Anchors Aweigh" brass band concert;
- Town Mayor's Christmas Carol Service at St Crispin's Church.

I, together with a number of fellow Councillors, raised the flag at Braunstone Civic Centre on Commonwealth Day on 13th March as part of the international event.

Caribbean Evening

It was a significant highlight of my year that I had the opportunity to arrange a Caribbean Evening on Friday 24th March at Braunstone Civic Centre to raise funds for my chosen charity, Arthritis Research UK.

The event consisted of a hot buffet, live music from "Carab", dancing and loads of prizes and surprises. I am delighted the event was well supported by a lot of my friends and other visitors, along with Councillors, the Chairman of Blaby District

Council and the Vice-Chairman of Leicestershire County Council and many local residents – many of whom brought the whole family. Sixty tickets were sold for the event and I would like to extend my thanks to all those who helped me organise this memorable and successful community event.

Town Mayor's Charity – Arthritis Research UK

On a personal note, I am grateful that my year as Town Mayor has given me the opportunity to raise the profile of my charity, Arthritis Research UK, which invests in breakthrough treatments, the best information and vital support for everyone affected by arthritis. I myself suffer from Arthritis and during my year had an operation on my knee. I would like to thank Councillors and many in the community who supported me and sent their best wishes for my speedy recovery. Certainly, if it wasn't for the hard and dedicated work of Arthritis Research UK, such life changing treatment wouldn't be available.

Events were held including a fashion show, a family pantomime and Christmas Craft Fair to help raise funds and at the time of publication, still waiting for the final amount from the Spring Fair, the money raised totalled £2,216.49.

Upholding Community Values

However, my year has seen some horrific incidents, which has at times been hard to comprehend. On 16th June, MP Jo Cox was murdered by one of her own constituents following a constituency surgery. I along with many others find it hard to comprehend the loss of someone who had a passionate commitment to causes such as the plight of Syrian refugees and was selfless in her service to the community and our country.

Wednesday 22nd March, saw horrific events in Westminster, with many innocent people, over 40 people from 12 different countries, being randomly killed and injured and we continue to think about the families of loved ones who were tragically killed and those who suffered injury that day.

We are grateful to the police and security services for the risks they take in protecting our freedoms and we uphold the importance of our democracy in protecting our freedoms and of elected representatives being part of the communities in which they serve. Most of all, we stand together leading the community's determination to remain united, along with communities across the country, in upholding our values.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to everyone for their support over the year, in particular to my consort Mrs. Pansy Stevens who has been there supporting me in this important role every step of the way. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the next Town Mayor a most enjoyable and successful year.

*Councillor Berneta Layne
Braunstone Town Mayor, 2016/2017*

BRAUNSTONE TOWN
ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

11th MAY 2017

Item 4 – Town Council Accounts and Budgets

Statement of Accounts 2015/2016

The Accounts and Statement of Assurance prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations were approved by the Town Council on 30th June 2016. The Audit was completed on 29th September 2016.

A copy of the Statement of Accounts is available on the Council's website and can be obtained and inspected during the opening hours of the Customer Service Shop at Braunstone Civic Centre.

Unaudited Accounts 2016/2017

The Town Council has produced draft figures for the 2016/2017 financial year; these are subject to the Internal Audit (week commencing 15th May) and will be considered by the Town Council's Corporate Governance Sub-Committee, Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council in June, prior to submission for external audit.

In line with the Town Council's Medium to Long Term Priorities and Financial Strategy, working balances are being increased to help guard against uncertainties and future financial risks facing the Town Council. During 2016/2017, the Town Council invested £7,132 in upgrading play equipment and installing new durable and low maintenance mulch safety surfaces.

Budgets for 2017/2018

The Town Council continues to work hard to improve the services it provides to people living and working in the area while ensuring that it invests in infrastructure for future generations. The forthcoming year presents further challenges and uncertainty, with this in mind the Town Council approved its Capital Plan and budget for 2017/2018 at its January meeting. For 2017/2018 the precept for band B, which includes over half the properties in Braunstone Town, has increased by £3.56, this represents an increase of 4.4%.

Prudent financial management over many years has enabled the Town Council to establish reserves to invest for the future in our parks and community facilities along with investing in operational efficiency measures, which during the current year is estimated to deliver £3,000 of ongoing savings. However, beyond April 2018, the Town Council faces a funding gap of approximately £45,000, following Blaby District Council's decision to end passing on the parish share of Council Tax Support Grant to parishes. Further details of the challenges this presents and the Town Council's approach to addressing the issue are set out in the Leader's Report at item 5 on the agenda.

Accounts & Budgets

The following table indicates:

- the year end audited position for the years ending 31st March 2015 and 2016;
- the draft year-end figures for the financial year ending 31st March 2017;
- the Town Council's intended income and expenditure for the current financial year (ending 31st March 2018).

	31st March 2015	31st March 2016	31st March 2017*	31st March 2018#
Balances Brought Forward	£388,143	£424,269	£350,420	£311,349
Annual Precept (+)	£463,281	£477,804	£495,653	£519,556
Receipts (+)	£285,940	£329,155	£233,268	£1,261,277
Staff Costs (-)	£380,481	£373,275	£443,922	£440,579
Loan Repayments (-)	£64,164	£64,038	£63,912	£63,818
Payments (-)	£268,448	£443,495	£260,158	£1,276,436
Balances Carried Forward	£424,269	£350,420	£311,349	£311,349
Cash & Short Term Investments	£420,480	£323,741	£308,367	-
Fixed Assets & Long Term Investments	£4,525,391	£4,539,448	£4,542,473	-
Total Borrowings	£463,391	£422,628	£379,906	£835,639

* the year-end accounts for 2016/2017 have not been considered for approval by the Council and have not been audited.

the year-end figures for 2017/2018 are based on the budget, adopted by Council on 26th January 2017.

BRAUNSTONE TOWN
ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

11th MAY 2017

Item 5 – Leader’s Report – Achievements 2016/17 and Priorities for 2017/18

The Town Council’s Policy & Resources Committee on 27th April 2017 finalised the draft Annual Report for 2016/2017, a copy of which is attached as an appendix. The Annual Report summarises our achievements in 2016/2017 and sets out our plans for the forthcoming Council year (2017/2018). This report will be received by the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, which meets following the Annual Towns Meeting, for consideration and adoption.

Below is a summary of the significant and major issues currently facing the Town Council and the Town.

Town Council – Capital Plan

Parks & Open Spaces Improvement Projects

This year the Town Council has delivered improvements to its parks & open spaces through the provision of new play equipment at Franklin Park and investment in new durable and low maintenance mulch safety surfaces.

Our major parks improvement project – Shakespeare Park, has undergone a public consultation and received the support of the local sports clubs and the local community. We are now working with Blaby District Council to finalise the site layout and the plans for the new sports pavilion. We are also actively seeking grant funding and other funding sources to match the Town Council’s contribution. In the current financial climate, it is proving difficult to access external sources of funding as quickly as we would have liked and this has resulted in delays to the timescales for delivery of the project. However, the Town Council continues to work hard with its partners to move the project forward to the delivery stage and we remain confident that construction will commence on the site before the end of the year. With an anticipated construction of 12-18 months, once complete, the site will host improved play facilities, including provision of sensory play equipment, improved tennis courts, extending car parking and a new sports pavilion facility including modern changing facilities and a multi-function and multi-purpose club room, meeting room and social facility.

Community Centres

We have invested this year in improvements to the fabric of both our community centres with the installation of dado rails and by undertaking internal and external decorating. Due to financial pressures (see below), many of the capital projects were put on hold, however, in the forthcoming year we plan to refurbish the toilet facilities at the Civic Centre, while making improvements to the kitchen and storage

facilities at the Civic Centre bar to enable it to also operate as a café providing a social and meeting place for the community on weekdays.

Provision and Access to Public Services

Customer & Social Inclusion Services

Following rejection by the County Council to provide a joint Library and Public Services Hub, the Town Council has worked with its partner, Blaby District Council, to implement our vision through the Customer Service Shop at Braunstone Civic Centre. We have made improvements to the reception area with the relocation of notice boards, the provision of an information display screen and with a public computer to enable those without access to the internet to access services online. The installation of a new Customer Relationship Management system enables service requests, incidents and enquiries to be logged and tracked, providing an efficient first and one-stop service for residents. We have also built on the benefits and Citizens' Advice services provided with the provision of new employment advice surgeries.

Library Services

By contrast, we await a response from Leicestershire County Council concerning their plans for a community run library despite the Town Council having finalised terms for the sub-leasing arrangement and offered to set out our commitment to work together to enhance and improve services at the library and Civic Centre through a memorandum of understanding.

NHS Services

The lack of provision and access to NHS services for Town residents remains acute, despite the Town Council's efforts to highlight residents' concerns to the NHS commissioning bodies and to work with them on potential solutions, including the use of facilities at Thorpe Astley Community Centre. Work with the Leicestershire Partnership Trust to utilise the Thorpe Astley Medical Rooms for children's services, while looking initially positive, didn't progress to the implementation stage despite both sides reaching a provisional agreement for the NHS to occupy the space. The Town Council has put considerable effort in terms of time and resources working with the NHS to achieve the delivery of health services from the Community Centre, however, on every occasion since the Centre opened in 2010, there is nothing to show for it. Given the inability of the NHS commissioning bodies to effectively utilise this resource, the Town Council is now in the position of having to decide where it should concentrate its resources in the future, should it continue to try to work with the NHS in the hope that one day common sense will prevail and health services can be provided for the benefit of the community, or should we focus on utilising the space to enhance the community centre's services and facilities, including those offered to community groups and hirers?

Pressures on the Local Infrastructure

The Town Council is aware of the potential adverse impact of plans to provide more employment and housing in the area. While recognising the benefits of employment opportunities and the need for housing, the Town Council remains concerned that our principal councils have not recognised the potential adverse impact of increased traffic in terms of pollution and the adverse impact that it will have on health and quality of life. The Town Council has worked hard through its membership of the Lubbesthorpe Strategic Consultative Board to ensure these matters remain firmly on the agenda and the Town Council is committed to ensuring that proceeds from employment and housing growth in the area are invested back into community services and infrastructure in order that the town shares in the benefits of growth rather than simply suffering from its impact.

Financial Risks and Pressures

Since 2014, the Town Council has ensured that it protects public services and invests in the future, while taking mitigating action to avoid the impact of continued pressures on public resources. A programme of investing in measures to deliver our services more efficiently, while increasing Council Tax year on year slightly above inflation levels has ensured that residents have their town services protected while keeping tax rises gradual and affordable.

However, our approach, which has been successful and widely supported to date, is in jeopardy due to Blaby District Council's decision to remove the payment of the parish share of the Council Tax Support Grant and New Homes Bonus from April 2018. This equates to a loss of income of approximately £45,000, the equivalent of 17% increase on the Town Council's precept. For a typical household in a Band B property this would mean paying around £15 per year extra.

Policy & Resources Committee has already put in motion the process to review our options to deal with this hit to our Town Council's finances caused by Blaby District Council. As Leader of the Town Council I have written to the Leader of Blaby District Council to express the concern and dismay at their decision which disproportionately affects areas where there is a higher proportion of residents who rely on access to public and community services for their wellbeing; these services will be at risk while placing a greater burden of cost on the community, individuals and families, and could lead to even higher taxes or bigger cuts in the long term. I urged him to consider his wider responsibilities to the district as a place and not just use money meant for parish and town councils to bail out their financial problems.

Update Reports

Updates on the above matters are published in a regular Leader's report in the Braunstone Life and on the Council's website.

Councillor Nick Brown
Leader of Braunstone Town Council



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

Executive Officer & Town Clerk – Darren Tilley



Welcome to our Annual Report 2016/2017

By **Councillor Nick Brown**, Leader of Braunstone Town Council

The Town Council continues to provide important services to the community and this Annual Report provides a summary of our achievements over the last 12 months and looks ahead to our aspirations for the next 12 months. Our Annual Survey response this year was our highest ever and showed high satisfaction across our services. We valued your input and throughout the year have acted on comments you made. Therefore, I encourage residents this year to again respond to our survey, your input is valued in shaping our priorities and services to meet resident's needs. I would also like to extend our appreciation to all those local residents and partners who have, over the year, become involved in events and projects instigated by the Council and given their support to assist us in providing the high level of service to local people.



However, there remains difficult decisions ahead for the Town Council, following Blaby District Council's decision to end the payment of the parish share of Council Tax Support Grant and New Homes Bonus from April 2018. This equates to a predicted loss of income of around £45k equating to an approximate increase of 17% on the Town Council's precept (£15 for a typical Band B property). We are already reviewing our options for service reductions, service efficiencies, generating alternative income and the future Council Tax charges.

More up to date information on the Council's services and the latest news can be found on our website at www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk or contact our Customer Service Shop at Braunstone Civic Centre where the Council's staff would also be pleased to help.

Once again, thank you for your time.

Councillor Nick Brown

Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2017

Year Ended 31 st March 2016		Year Ended 31 st March 2017
£		£
424,269.00	Balances brought forward	350,420.68
477,804.00	(+) Annual Precept	495,653.00
329,155.00	(+) Total other receipts	233,267.96
373,275.00	(-) Staff costs	443,921.98
64,038.00	(-) Loan interest / capital repayments	63,912.42
443,495.00	(-) Total other payments	260,157.85
350,420.00	(=) Balances carried forward	311,349.39
323,741.00	Total cash and short term investments	308,366.59
4,539,448.00	Total fixed assets and long term assets	4,542,472.99
422,628.00	Total borrowings	379,906.10
The Audit for 2016 was completed on 29th September 2016		

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2016/2017

The Council believes in openness and transparency, therefore, each year we publish the amount paid to Town Councillors in allowances and the amounts claimed in expenses. Below are the allowances paid and expenses claimed for the Councillors who were elected in May 2016.

	ALLOWANCE	EXPENSES	TOTAL
Cllr A Ambrose	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr M S Aslam	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr A S Basra	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr P Basra	£325	0.00	£375
Cllr R Berrington	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr S Betts	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr N J Brown	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr A DeWinter	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr D Di Palma	£375	18.00	£375
Cllr S Fox-Kennedy	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr A Hack	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr D Joshi	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr P Kennedy	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr B Layne	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr S Maxwell	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr P L Moitt	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr G Sanders	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr T Shepherd	£108	0.00	£375
Cllr D Singh	£325	0.00	£375
Cllr R Waterton	£375	0.00	£375
Cllr B Wright	£375	0.00	£375
The Town Mayor's Allowance	£750.00	18.00	£750.00

Our Mission Statement

"We exist to ensure that local services and the environment reach the highest possible standards within the resources available for citizens, visitors and those who work in Braunstone Town; to provide a focus for civic pride; to listen, identify and respond to agreed local needs; and to help develop a strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident community, free from unlawful discrimination."



BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE CUSTOMER SERVICE SHOP

Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm

Kingsway, Braunstone Town, Leicester, LE3 2PP TEL: 0116 289 0045 FAX: 0116 282 4785

EMAIL: enquiries@braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk



About Braunstone Town Council



The Council provides a wide range of services together with social and recreational facilities. The Council also promotes the interests of the town in its representation to other bodies. It works in partnership with the larger District Council and County Council to provide and supplement local government services within the town area.

The Council comprises 21 members who are elected every four years. Each year the Council elects from amongst its number the Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor, Leader and Deputy Leader

The Full Council meets six times a year. The Council has three standing committees: Policy & Resources, Community Development and Plans & Environment Committee. The Plans & Environment Committee meets approximately twelve times a year. All Meetings are open to local residents and include a public participation session on the Agenda. Agendas for the Council and standing committees are available to the public a week before the meeting date. Meetings are held at the Braunstone Civic Centre, Kingsway, Braunstone Town, Leicester, LE3 2PP. Further information is available on request by telephoning the Council on 0116 2899270 and can also be found on the notice board at the Town Council Offices, Thorpe Astley Community Centre and on the Council's Website

Our Achievements in 2016/2017

- Improvements to our **Parks & Open Spaces** – installation of replacement safety surfaces and new play equipment.
- Following consultation, formulated plans for additional services at **Thorpe Astley Community Centre**, in the event that NHS services are not forthcoming.
- Provided support and co-ordination for **community events** to celebrate HM **Queen's 90th birthday**.
- Co-ordinated and supported Community Groups to deliver a varied **programme of events to the community** including quiz nights, concerts and craft fairs.
- Undertook **successful Annual Survey consultation** (increasing responses from 24 to 55) helping us shape services to meet resident's needs.
- **Improved access to services for customers** through new CRM system enabling service requests, incidents and enquiries to be logged and tracked, providing an efficient first and one-stop service for residents.
- Working to **protect Library services** held discussions with both the County Council and the group who are due to take over the management of the Library to ensure that residents aspirations form part of future service delivery plans.
- Worked with Blaby District Council to deliver **summer sports and recreation activities** at Mossdale Meadows and Thorpe Astley Park and provided for the **BB19 Youth Bus** to continue to visit the Town each week.
- Following a public consultation, finalised plans for **improvements to the Pavilion, recreation and play facilities at Shakespeare Park**, aiming for work to commence in 2017/18.
- Continued to work with Blaby District Council to support initiatives aimed at **improving air quality** and mitigating impact of the Lubbethorpe development on residents.
- Following feedback, launched a brand-new **website**, improving navigation and page information and integrating information from social media.
- Worked to ensure the **continuation of pre-school services at Thorpe Astley Community Centre**.
- Commenced a review of the use and charging of **Community Centres** to ensure they remain accessible for all residents.

CENTRE		Year Ended 31 st March 2017
Braunstone Civic Centre	Hires	3400
	Income	£67,036.40
Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Hires	1339
	Income	37,569.34

Plans for 2017/2018

In addition to the continuing with the existing level of services, the Town Council aims to achieve the following during the forthcoming year:

- Invest in the redevelopment and improvement of sporting, recreation and play **facilities at Shakespeare Park**;
- **Improvements to our community facilities** at both Braunstone Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre;
- Continue to provide and support important **quality of life** initiatives, such as crime reduction and grants for community groups, youth projects and individuals and tackling poor air quality;
- Positively and proactively respond to the evolving and changing social demographic of the community through developing and supporting new and existing events and **community/social inclusion initiatives**;
- Meet the needs of Thorpe Astley residents by facilitating the delivery of **services and events at Thorpe Astley Community Centre**;
- Continue to work to **keep Braunstone Town Library open**;
- Complete the legal transfer of open spaces at Thorpe Astley to the Town Council in order to enable future investment and improvement to the facilities, including ensuring improvements are implemented to the **Culvert at Thorpe Astley Park**;
- Actively working with the developer and Blaby District Council to ensure that the **land adjacent to the M1 bridge is suitably landscaped** to provide protection for residents from the new road and to provide a leisure and recreation space;
- Continue to look to make efficiency savings while ensuring the existing **services are safeguarded and where appropriate improved**.

Braunstone Town Council Annual Survey – Free Prize Draw - £50

The views of Braunstone Town residents are vital in assisting the Council in providing services that people really want and also helps us to articulate the needs and aspirations of our local community to the larger District and County Councils or to other agencies and government bodies.

You can help us in making decisions on our services by completing the Council's Annual Survey. Hard copies can be obtained from Braunstone Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre, or if you wish we can post it to you. The survey is also available online at www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

CLOSING DATE FOR RETURNING YOUR RESPONSES FRIDAY 25TH AUGUST 2017.

BRAUNSTONE TOWN
ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

11th MAY 2017

Item 6 – Braunstone Town Heritage Warden’s Report 2016/2017

Natural Environment

Once more the change in the weather patterns has dominated our natural world, at the moment we can’t forecast one year to the next; which plants / trees will come into bud first, what and when migrant birds will arrive; even rainfall and snowfall seem to be getting less.

Despite this the community orchard has produced pretty scenes in all the four seasons. Sadly, the pond suffered damage from vandals but the area surrounding the pond has now been changed to make it less attractive to damage.

We managed to carry out some pruning of the fruit trees in the orchard area and hopefully this will provide a good crop of fruit later in the year.

Built Environment.

I have made very few heritage related comments on the planning applications passing through the Planning Committee, which is good news for any archaeological remains, they will not be disturbed or lost. The New Lubbethorpe development’s archaeological investigations have been completed with significant finds of Iron age / Bronze age settlements which have been recorded but eventually will need somewhere to display the finds. Please don’t let this part of the heritage of Lubbethorpe be left in dusty cardboard boxes in some basement area of a University or County Council store.

As you are all aware I’ve been the Chairman of Braunstone Heritage Archive Group (BHAG) for the last six years and this has taken up, quite rightly, most of my Heritage Warden Duties. Our small dedicated team have managed to stage an annual exhibition relating the all things Braunstone over these last six years.

BHAG’s presence has generated a lot of interest and donations which are now overflowing our limited storage space at the Civic Centre, BHAG’s constitution states that we should have a permanent place to store and display our items. Well this year we have, thanks to the generosity of Paul Pender and Son, been given free space and accommodation in his recently restored Shakespeare Pub, now Paul Pender’s main offices for his funeral director’s business.

We hope to gradually produce a small village museum, I say “gradually” as we are a small group with limited finances but we hope to make successful bids for funding

locally. Early days but we hope this partnership will blossom and attract other partners.

Paul Pender will be staging several open days not just to boost his business but to show off his investment in restoring the Shakespeare to a family home, BHAG will be there staging displays of the history of the building and of the village.

With both my chairman and Heritage Warden hats on we have embarked on a project to review and publish extracts from the old (older) parish minute books. This has been prompted by the forthcoming 90th anniversary of the creation of Braunstone Parish, with a view to have a comprehensive set of articles and display items for the 100th anniversary. (Probably by then we will qualify as exhibits!!). Also as part of this project we will take the opportunity to digitise these records so that many more people can view them online.

With the establishment of the village museum we this will stimulate Blaby into looking for a site for a Blaby District Museum. I would suggest that with the cooperation of the Lubbethorpe developer, the Abbey Farm building complex would make a fine venue not only for a museum but as a community hub and resource centre.

My Heritage Report would not be complete without a reference to Braunstone Town Library. It has been over twelve months since the County Council awarded the running of the library to the "Fabula" Company and nothing has materialised, still the County Council have to fund the £50,000 annual running cost, surely if Fabula have not been able to fulfil their contract the County Council should award it to the only other contender, Braunstone Town Council

Finally, can I extend my thanks and BHAG's to the Town Council for their continued support of the Heritage Warden facility and to BHAG.

John Dodd
Braunstone Town Heritage Warden