

## **BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY 24th August 2017 AT 7.30PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Parminder Basra, Roger Berrington (substituting for Sharon Betts), Berneta Layne (substituting for Anthea Ambrose), Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Tracey Shepherd (substituting for Robert Waterton) and Darshan Singh.

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

There were 61 members of the public present at the meeting.

#### **17. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Sharon Betts and Robert Waterton.

#### **18. Disclosures of Interest**

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

#### **19. 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 61 members of the public present.

In respect of item 5 on the agenda (minute 21), Provision of Primary Care Services in Braunstone Town, the following was raised by members of the public:

- a) GPs – the surgery had various locums and these had left to go to other practices; also three GPs had been allowed to leave the surgery at the same time.
- b) Missed Appointments – suggestion the surgery charge patients for missed appointments.
- c) Appointments – a query why an appointment couldn't be made in advance when the GP had requested the patient was seen again; the telephone system would request details and then advise no appointments were available and cut off, there should be an option to speak to a person; some patients find it difficult to use the appointments system, particularly the elderly and then have to queue for appointments.
- d) Emergency Clinic – query about why patients had to queue.
- e) Payment to Surgery per patient – statement that 32p per day per patient (as per the statement at minute 21) was a misleading figure.

- f) NHS Authorities – query as to why NHS authorities were not in attendance at the meeting.

Kingsway Surgery Practice Manager, Stephen Samson, responded to the queries as follows:

- a) GPs – locums were able to move to different clinics and often chose a clinic closer to home; and as an employer it not possible to prevent staff leaving the organisation at a time of their choosing.
- b) Missed Appointments – the Government do not allow charging for missed appointments.
- c) Appointments – refer to the statement (at minute 21) detailing changes to the appointments and booking system; the surgery was not aware that the phone system cut off and this would be investigated.
- d) Emergency Clinic – by definition these appointments couldn't be booked and therefore patients would have to queue.
- e) Payment to Surgery per patient – statement that 32p per day per patient (as per the statement at minute 21) was not a misleading figure.

Councillor Amanda Hack, Deputy Leader of Braunstone Town Council and County Councillor for Braunstone Division responded to the query concerning the attendance of NHS Authorities stating that Clinical Commissioning Group representatives had previously attended the Committee. At the meeting of the Committee on 15th June it was decided that Leicestershire County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be formally requested to scrutinise East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group's response to under provision of Primary Care Services across Braunstone Town and surrounding area. Leicestershire County Council agreed to this and the meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th September 2017 will have an agenda item on the Summary Plan for the Future of Primary Care Health Services in the North Blaby area of East Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

**20. Minutes of the Meeting held 15th June 2017**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th June 2017 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

**21. Provision of Primary Care Services in Braunstone Town**

The Committee received an update on the provision of primary care services in Braunstone Town and received details of future plans for Kingsway Surgery from Practice Manager, Stephen Samson (item 5 on the agenda).

Kingsway Surgery from Practice Manager, Stephen Samson, reported to the Committee on the issues faced by Kingsway Surgery and their plans for the future. He apologised for the issues and frustrations patients have been facing at Kingsway Surgery and thanked them for their understanding adding it had been difficult for the surgery too. Mr Samson assured the Committee that the Surgery wanted to provide good clinical care to all patients whenever

they needed it, but unfortunately it was proving very difficult in the present climate with a shortage of GP's and Nurses nationwide. Mr Samson added that they were putting into place systems and clinics to try and make gaining access to a clinician at the surgery easier.

Mr Samson summarised the initiatives as follows:

- a) Invested in a new telephone booking system to make it easier for patients to book appointments at a time more convenient for them. One of the challenges faced with the on the day system was that a large number of patients were unable to make an appointment as they were either commuting to work or doing the school run. The Surgery felt that this new system would be fairer for all patients.
- b) Increasing the number of pre-bookable appointments and introducing an Emergency clinic each morning. This would be for emergencies only otherwise patients should book one of the pre-bookable slots. The easiest way to do this was either on-line or through the new telephone booking system.
- c) Introducing new clinics to ensure those patients with long term conditions get better medical care. It was appreciated that the times of these clinics may not be suitable to all patients but ask patients to try to make arrangements to attend when contacted. This should reduce the high demand and ensure better medical care.
- d) One of the clinics being introduced was for the more frail patients (elderly and more vulnerable patients). By providing a clinic designed for these patients they would be able to see a GP a nurse and a social/care worker all in one afternoon ensuring that they get the help and support they needed without the difficulty of having to make numerous trips to the surgery with all that entails.
- e) The Surgery were currently working with 2 Partner GP's and 4 Nurse Practitioners and were looking to recruit more GP's which was not proving to be easy. The Surgery has signed up to the government initiative whereby Doctors could be employed from abroad who have passed the necessary checks to practice in this country. This Government initiative was in the early stages and there was no date for when a doctor may arrive, the Surgery were doing everything in their power to engage new GP's.
- f) A TV screen has been installed (and a new website) with Practice and Health information displayed.

Mr Samson provided some context in which the surgery operated as follows:

- g) NHS income was £1,179,992.55, other income was £36,675.54; total income was £1,216,668.09. The patient list was 10,637, amount per patient £114.38, amount per day per patient £0.32.
- h) For this money patients were able to access the service as many times as they like; there was no cap and when appointments were available, no patients were turned away.

- i) Last year the Surgery saw 8,448 (out of the registered list of 10,637) patients a total of 46,959 times (not including 34,408 additional patient contacts). That meant that the 8,448 attended on average 5.5 times during the year. 2,189 patients were not seen at all. A group of patients presented over 40 times last year and 2 over 100. While patients may feel it was necessary to visit to the surgery, it may not be necessary and patients could be taking an appointment away from someone who really does need it.
- j) Last year the surgery lost 38% of appointments due to non or inappropriate attendances. Patients unable to attend should cancel appointments so that someone else who needs it could be booked in. Also patients should be aware of the reason for seeing a GP or nurse, who may not be the right person. Self-referral to a number of specialties was now available or alternatively see a pharmacist.
- k) The Surgery was only able to offer a certain number of appointments per clinician. They also have to look at results, do prescriptions, make referrals and check reports from consultants. Like anyone else they get tired and could make mistakes.
- l) Many of these issues were nationwide.

The Committee considered and took into account issues raised by members of the public (see minute 19 above).

Councillor Sam Maxwell confirmed that the request sent earlier in the year to Blaby District Council, in response to their invitation to submit ideas for scrutiny topics, to scrutinise the response of the relevant public bodies to under provision and lack of access to primary care services across Braunstone Town and the surrounding area, since it was a matter of concern to local residents which was having a negative impact on community well-being had been accepted and would commence this autumn.

The Leader thanked the Practice Manager of Kingsway Surgery for taking the time to attend the meeting, explain the situation and their plans for the future and for answering questions.

**RESOLVED** that the statement made by Kingsway Surgery Practice Manager, Stephen Samson, along with the comments of members of the public and the responses (at minute 19 above), be received and noted and that Mr Samson be thanked for his openness and willingness to attend the meeting.

*Reason for Decision*

*Kingsway Surgery were taking a proactive approach to dealing with the issues within the constraints they faced and were keeping the community and local elected representatives informed.*

## **22. Shakespeare Park – Improvement & Development**

The Committee considered progress with the project and to determine the process for approving the contract specification and inviting tenders for the site and pavilion works (item 6 on the agenda).

### **RESOLVED**

1. that delegated authority be given to the Shakespeare Park Improvement Project Management Sub-Committee to approve and amend the Business Case and Plan, subject to further consideration at the next scheduled meeting of Policy & Resources Committee; and
2. that revised timescales for the project (attached at Appendix 1) be adopted.

#### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that the Business Case and Business Plan would incorporate detailed information relating to funding, cost and future management arrangements and that the documents could be adopted avoiding undue delay to the project.*
2. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*

## **23. Personal Policies Update**

The Committee considered new, revised and updated personnel policies for consultation with staff (item 7 on the agenda).

### **RESOLVED**

1. that the proposed revised personnel policies:
  - Absence Management (Appendix 2.1),
  - Disciplinary (Appendix 2.2), and
  - Grievance (Appendix 2.3)be approved for consultation with staff and Councillors;
2. that the proposed new personnel policies:
  - Internet Use (Appendix 3.1),
  - Lone Working (Appendix 3.2),
  - Officer Code of Conduct (Appendix 3.3), and
  - Whistleblowing (Appendix 3.4)be approved for consultation with staff and Councillors;
3. that the principle of deleting the Council's Retirement Policy (Appendix 4) be approved, subject to consultation with staff and Councillors;
4. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to undertake the consultations (listed in 1-3 above); and
5. that the timetable for the consultations (listed in 1-3 above) be as follows:
  - prior to Friday 1st September documents to be circulated to all staff and available for Councillors,
  - Consultation Period, including consultation meetings with staff: Friday 1st September – Monday 2nd October at 12noon,
  - Thursday 26th October, Policy & Resources Committee meets

- to consider and adopt final policies,  
Monday 30th October 2017 (proposed) New and Revised Policies take effect.

*Reason for Decision*

1. *To update existing personnel policies in line with legislation, good practice and experience and to clarify their purpose and the procedures.*
2. *To enable consideration of new policies to address issues which arise in the modern working environment and to ensure good governance and high standards of conduct in public office.*
3. *To recognise that flexible working regulations in effect make the Retirement Policy obsolete.*
4. *To fully engage staff and Councillors with the context for the proposed changes and to seek views on alternative models.*
5. *To enable staff and Councillors to identify any issues or gaps in the proposals, which may impact upon implementation and to set clear and realistic timescales to avoid any unnecessary delay with implementation.*

**24. Financial Comparisons**

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017 (item 8 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

*Reason for Decision*

*There were no issues of concern with the income and expenditure against the budget for 2017/2018.*

**25. Approval of Accounts**

The Committee considered payments from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017 until 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017 (item 9 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the Period 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017 until 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017 be approved.

*Reason for Decision*

*To authorise payments in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations and the Council's Financial Regulations.*

## 26. Requests for Reasonable Adjustments (Town Councillors)

**RESOLVED** that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the press/public be temporary excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reasons for exception – Personal Information / Legal Advice.*

The Committee considered a request and a process for dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments for Town Councillors in accordance with the Equality Act and Disability Discrimination Act (item 10 on the agenda).

### **RESOLVED**

1. that the request for a reasonable adjustment in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equality Act 2010, as detailed in the report, be approved;
2. that the Confidentiality and Conduct Agreement, attached at Appendix 1, be approved and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to make minor adjustments where necessary to the agreement to ensure its practical and effective implementation; and
3. that the Confidentiality and Conduct Agreement referred to in 2 above be used as the template agreement for any future requests received.

### *Reason for Decision*

1. *The request was a genuine adjustment in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equality Act 2010, and was not disproportionate or excessively costly.*
2. *To ensure obligations concerning confidentiality and adherence to standards of conduct, avoiding conflicts of interest, was adhered to and if broke, the Town Council was able to suitably address.*
3. *To ensure that any future requests were subjected to the same process to ensure equality and fairness.*

## 27. Insurance Claims

**RESOLVED** that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the press/public be temporary excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reasons for exception – Personal Information / Legal Advice.*

The Committee received an update the Council current and ongoing insurance claims (item 11 on the agenda).

### **RESOLVED**

1. that the report and the actions contained in it be noted; and
2. that the actions taken by the Executive Officer & Town Clerk under specific delegation 1 as a matter of urgency in respect of the damage caused to the wall at Braunstone Civic Centre on 6th July 2017 by a car crash, be noted and supported.

*Reason for Decision*

1. *The Committee were satisfied that the insurance claims were being handled appropriately and that sufficient insurance cover was in place and therefore, there would be no financial liability placed on the Council's finances.*
2. *The damage to the wall from the car crash resulted in the wall being pushed in and also cracked from the corner along both sides; in order to ensure this public area was safe, action needed to be taken to cordon it off and appoint a building repair company to ensure there was no risk of collapse.*

**28. Franklin Park - Replacement Play Equipment**

**RESOLVED** that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the press/public be temporary excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reason for exception – Commercial Interests.*

The Committee determined quotes to replace vandalised play equipment and safety surfaces at Franklin Park (item 12 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the quote from Company C to replace damaged play equipment and safety surface at Franklin Park Playground, as detailed in Appendix 3, be accepted; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, to liaise with the insurance company, the successful contractor, award the contract and determine the layout of the equipment, detailed timings, and arrangements for the works.

*Reason for Decision*

1. *The quote from Company C was the cheapest quote and the equipment was considered to be both high quality in terms of its resistance to vandalism and fire and suitable as replacement equipment.*
2. *To ensure the equipment selected was laid out appropriately providing adequate space between equipment on the site and to allow flexibility for the work to be carried out minimising disruption to service users and that the cost could be suitably reclaimed in accordance with the Town Council's Insurance Policy.*

**29. Interim Staffing Cover Arrangements – Customer Services**

**RESOLVED** that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the press/public be temporary excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reasons for exception – Personal Information / Legal Advice.*

To consider extending interim staffing arrangements for leave and sickness absence cover for the Customer Services Shop (item 13 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that temporary staffing arrangements, implemented until 31st August 2017, in respect of sickness absence and leave cover for the Customer Services Shop, be extended until 31st March 2018.

*Reason for Decision*

*To ensure that service levels could be retained in the event of long term sickness absence and staff leave, without adversely impacting upon the Council's management and administrative staff, while the future direction of the service and the staffing resource required was assessed.*

**30. Termination of the Meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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)

DATE \_\_\_\_\_