

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 13th JUNE 2019 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Darshan Singh, Imran Uddin and Robert Waterton.

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

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

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt and Bill Wright.

2. Disclosures of Interest

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

3. 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.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held 11th April 2019

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th April 2019 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th April 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5. Shakespeare Park - Improvement & Development

The Committee received an update on progress with the project and considered setting out an outline plan to commence the delivery of the site and pavilion works (item 5 on the agenda).

The Executive Officer & Town Clerk updated the Committee on progress with the outstanding funding applications. A letter had been received from Leicester City Football Club advising that the outcome of the Vichai Srivaddhanprabha Foundation Gift of a Wish funding would be the middle of July. A further update from the Football Foundation was awaited.

RESOLVED

1. that progress with the project, including funding applications, be noted;
2. that the revised timescales for the project, attached at Appendix 1, be adopted; and
3. that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee, scheduled for 22nd August 2019, setting out an Outline Plan, including alternative options and an alternative strategy, to commence delivery of the site and pavilion improvement works, including:
 - (a) a deadline for signing the contract to commence the works,
 - (b) alternative funding options, in the event that the current applications were unsuccessful, and
 - (c) an updated Business Plan.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that updated funding information was considered prior to Council making a borrowing application.*
2. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*
3. *To ensure that a clear plan was set to deliver the site and pavilion improvement works, avoiding any further delays or additional costs to the project.*

6. Internal Audit Report 2018/2019 and Internal Audit arrangements 2019/2020

The Committee received the Internal Auditor's Report in respect of compliance with relevant procedures and controls in operation during the financial year ended 31st March 2019 and to appoint an Internal Auditor for 2019/2020 (item 6 on the agenda).

The Committee noted that this item had been considered in detail at the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

1. that the observations of the Internal Audit (attached at Appendix 1 of the report) be noted and that the recommendations for improvement, along with the proposed response, as set out in the Improvement Action Plan (attached at Appendix 2 of the report), be adopted; and
2. that the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils Internal Audit Service be appointed to undertake the Town Council's Internal Audit for the Year Ending 31st March 2020.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that the observations of the Internal Audit would be addressed with appropriate and balanced measures.*
2. *To ensure arrangements were in place for compliance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.*

7. Annual Governance Statement 2018/2019

The Committee received a report to enable it to review and ensure that there were sound systems of internal control, including the management of risk and the preparation of accounting statements, during the financial year ended 31st March 2019 and to enable it to recommend to Council adoption of the Annual Governance Statement 2018/2019 (item 7 on the agenda).

The Committee noted that this item had been considered in detail at the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the systems of internal control and management of risk be confirmed as sound and that Section 1, Annual Governance Statement 2018/19, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/2019, attached at Appendix 3 of the report, be completed, signed and submitted accordingly.

Reason for Decision

Having reviewed the control measures for each of the areas listed on the Annual Governance Statement and having undertaken an assessment of risks facing the Council and associated mitigating measures, the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee were confident that to the best of their knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31st March 2019, there were sound systems of internal control and management of risk.

8. Accounting Statements 2018/2019

The Committee received the End of Year Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2019 for consideration and to recommend to Council adoption of the Accounting Statements 2018/2019 (item 8 on the agenda).

The Committee noted that this item had been considered in detail at the Corporate Governance Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED

1. that the Executive Officer & Town Clerk conduct an investigation into the cost of utility bills, ahead of the 2020/2021 budget setting process;
2. that a report be submitted to a future meeting of Committee providing 5 years of comparative income figures for Room Hires; and
3. THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that Section 2, Accounting statements 2018/19, of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2019, attached at Appendix 9 of the report, be completed, signed and submitted accordingly.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The combined net payments for Utility Bills at both Community Centres were one-third over the budget. The Council needed to understand why in order to ensure it adequately budgeted for its costs.*

2. *Income from Room Hires had been below the budgeted amount for more than one financial year and it was important to understand trends in order to set budgets and determine whether any policy changes would be required.*
3. *The Corporate Governance Sub-Committee, having carried out an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's financial arrangements, concluded that there were sound systems of internal control. The Internal Auditor, having reviewed the annual accounts, found the Accounting Statements to have been prepared on the correct basis and were supported by adequate audit trails to underlying records.*

9. **ROSPA Reports**

The Committee received a report concerning the Annual ROSPA reports on Parks and Open Spaces in order to determine any action to be taken (item 9 on the agenda).

The Committee thanked those officers involved in the Parks & Open Spaces Service for ensuring that the Council's play equipment continued to be maintained to a high standard.

RESOLVED that repairs to the items listed in the report be undertaken immediately and a work programme for other medium priority items with a risk factor of 9 be approved for completion during the summer; with Medium priority items with a risk factor of 8 and below to be included in the Winter Works Programme 2019/2020.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that all Braunstone Town Council's play areas and equipment were maintained to a safe standard.

10. **Arrangements for Implementing the Licensed Bar and Café Contract**

The Committee approved arrangements for implementing the 2019 - 2023 Licensed Bar and Café Contract (item 10 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that in respect of the transfer from the existing Licensed Bar Contract (which ended on 9th July 2019) to the new Licensed Bar & Café Service Contract (which commenced on 10th July 2019), delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council:

- (a) to vary the existing contract end date and new contract start date;
- (b) in the event of (a) to agree terms and payments due by the outgoing and incoming contractors;
- (c) to facilitate any stock/asset transfer and the potential transfer of staff employed in the Licensed Bar service, should this prove necessary, and to agree terms and payments due by the outgoing and incoming contractors; and
- (d) to take any action which facilitates, or would be conducive or incidental to, the discharge of the provisions set out in Licensed Bar & Café Services Contract.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Council, as the client, to work with the incoming and outgoing contractors to ensure a smooth transfer between contractors while ensuring limited or no disruption to the operation of the Licensed Bar and Café Service.

11. Bank Account Signatories

The Committee considered revisions and updates to the Bank Account Signatories list (item 11 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the following amendments be made to the approved accounts signatories list for the Co-operative Bank Accounts (linked):

- a) the following be removed: Mr RJ Berrington, Mrs BT Layne and Mr G Sanders; and
- b) the following be added: Mrs P. Basra, Mr. D. Singh, and Mr I Uddin.

Reason for Decision

To update the Councillor signatories in accordance with the Council's membership and roles.

12. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st May 2019 (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

There were no issues of concern with income and expenditure against the budget for 2019/2020.

13. Approval of Accounts

The Committee considered payments from 1st April 2019 until 31st May 2019 (item 13 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the Period 1st April 2019 until 31st May 2019 be approved.

Reason for Decision

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

14. Transfer of the Management Arrangements of Braunstone Town Library

RESOLVED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was 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 – Legal Advice.*

The Committee received an updated Grant Agreement from Leicestershire County Council for the management of Braunstone Town Library (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the proposed amendments to the Grant Agreement and associated schedules for Braunstone Town Library, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved, subject to the additional amendments proposed by Braunstone Town Council, as set out at Appendix 2 of the report;
2. that Leicestershire County Council's offer of an additional one-off grant at the point of transfer, to assist the Town Council in bridging the additional staffing costs, be accepted;
3. that in the event that Leicestershire County Council accepted the proposed amendments to the Grant Agreement and associated schedules, as set out in the report and Appendix 2, delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council:
 - a) to submit the documents to the Council's Solicitor for review, as detailed in the report,
 - b) to agree any proposed changes recommended by the Solicitor's review with Leicestershire County Council in order that the agreements could be finalised, approved and implemented, and
 - c) to approve a timetable for the management of Braunstone Town Library to be transferred from Leicestershire County Council to Braunstone Town Council; and
4. that, subject to the Town Council's solicitor's advice on the implications, the Town Council set out, with the signed agreement, its interpretation and application of the word "reasonable" and "reasonably".

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure improvement to the Library Service, recognising the Town Council's legal obligations and policies reached a similar standard as a local authority to those of the County Council and that the County Council had an absolute obligation under the lease to meet premises costs, irrespective of the grant payments, ensuring that the Town Council avoided significant costs, liabilities and commitments.*
2. *To enable the Town Council to employ staff at Braunstone Town Library, as set out in its proposed service model.*
3. *To ensure that practical arrangements concerning the transfer could be implemented without undue delay and that the legal agreements were both sound and adhered to the requirements of the existing Lease Agreement.*

4. *To protect the Town Council, as a public body, against requests which put additional requirements upon the Council and its resources and could be contradictory to its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and corporate policies.*

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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: _____

DATE: _____