

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 11th JANUARY 2018 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Parminder Basra, Sharon Betts, Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Gary Sanders, Darshan Singh, Robert Waterton and Bill Wright (Town Mayor ex-officio).

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

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

46. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Anthea Ambrose.

47. Disclosures of Interest

A declaration of Non-Pecuniary Interest was made by Councillors Sharon Betts, Nick Brown, Amanda Hack and Robert Waterton in agenda item 14, Jo Cox Memorial, as members of the General Committee of the South Leicestershire Constituency Labour Party.

48. 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 present.

49. Minutes of the Meeting held 26th October 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th October 2017 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

50. Council Objectives

The Committee considered the Council's Priorities and Objectives and determined whether they were relevant to address current and emerging issues faced by the Council and the community (item 5 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

1. that the Council Priorities for 2018/2019 be based on the 2017/2018 Priorities; and
2. that the Council Objectives set out in Appendix 1, as amended, be approved.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The Council's priorities continued to be the focus for delivering a vision for local services and an environment which reached the highest possible standards, and the approach was supported by the Town's Citizens' Advisory Panel and the Council's Standing Committees.*
2. *To ensure that the Council's objectives were relevant and reflected changing issues within the community.*

51. Updated Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning

The Committee received an updated report, which set out the context for the Council's medium term priorities and financial planning prior to setting the budget and precept for 2018/2019 (item 6 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 Commuted Sums Reserve be used in 2018/19 and 2019/20 to offset the loss of Council Tax Support Grant and avoid significant increases in the precept in one year; and
4. that the Priorities and Financial Planning process be revised to medium term, updated at least on an annual basis, and covering a rolling 5 year period.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To provide a foundation for preparing budget estimates for 2018/2019 and beyond.*
2. *To ensure the Council focusses its activity and spending given the future financial uncertainties.*
3. *Following the withdrawal of Council Tax Support Grant, to use reserves to protect services, while phasing the equivalent in precept increases over a period of 3 years to avoid any adverse impact a single large precept increase would have on residents.*
4. *The current economic and political climate meant that long term predictions was an exercise projecting over ten years the impact of existing and known pressures and this had limited value.*

52. Capital Plan 2018/2019

The Committee considered priorities and projects for 2018/2019 Capital Plan (item 7 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

1. that the Completed Projects (section a), having now been completed, be removed from the rolling programme of Capital Projects;
2. that the projects due for completion (section b) be removed, assuming their completion prior to the end of the plan period, otherwise to be included on the 2018/2019 Capital Plan;
3. that the Current Projects (section c) be rolled forward on to the 2018/2019 Capital Plan;
4. that the Proposed New Projects (section d) be added to the 2018/2019 Capital Plan; and
5. that the Project proposed for Deletion (section e) be removed from the rolling programme of Capital Projects

Reasons for Decision

1. *To confirm that the projects had been completed and there was no further work outstanding.*
2. *To ensure the plan was updated accordingly reflecting progress with its delivery.*
3. *To confirm that the projects were outstanding and were still required.*
4. *To recognise the need to undertake investment and improvement as identified.*
5. *To recognise that, following review, this Project was no longer required.*

53. Revenue Savings Projects 2018/2019

The Committee considered savings to meet projected increases in expenditure and to enable continuous improvement (item 8 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that progress be noted with the implementation the capital investment projects which generate revenue savings, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report;
2. that the post of Cleaner & Premises Operative be reduced by 390 hours per annum to 4186 hours per annum;
3. that the Town Council end the financial contribution for the provision of purchasing Highway Grit Bits from April 2018;
4. that clarification be sought from Blaby District Council as to whether it intended to offer in 2018/2019 the scheme where both the District and Parish part fund the seventh seasonal highway verge cut and if so the cost to Braunstone Town Council; and that a report be submitted to the Committee to determine whether the Town Council should continue to part fund the seventh seasonal highway verge cut; and
5. that the ongoing savings generated on parks and grounds equipment,

as a result of decisions by Policy & Resources Committee earlier in the financial year, be approved.

Reason for Decision

1. To note that those which had been implemented had produced predicted savings and that there was a plan in place for the implementation of the other projects identified.
2. Post holder surrendered 390 hours per annum (7½ hours per week) to take up the same number of hours as a Duty Officer. The Cleaning & Premises Service has been effectively delivered over the last 6 months while the 7½ hours per week has been frozen and therefore, the deletion of the vacant hours should not have a negative impact upon the service.
3. No requests had been received for funding Grit Bins in the last 3 years and it was unlikely unless there was a significantly prolonged cold winter, in which case the budgetary provision of £200 would be insufficient to meet demand.
4. To determine whether the scheme to part fund the seventh seasonal highway verge cut would be offered in 2018/2019 and whether it would represent good value for money, given financial pressures on other services.
5. To recognise previous decisions made by the Committee concerning parks equipment would result in ongoing savings.

54. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st December 2017 (item 9 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 2017/2018.

55. Estimates for Budget and Precept 2018/2019 and beyond (including Fees & Charges)

The Committee considered the budget and precept for 2018/2019, including fees and charges and to set out proposed estimates for future years (item 10 on the agenda).

It was noted that there was a budget increase for Capital Projects at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, which should have been highlighted at Appendix 1. In addition, Waste Services at Braunstone Civic Centre and Room Hire income for both Centres were incorrectly highlighted, since there was no proposed change.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

1. that the Estimates for 2018/2019, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved as the Council's Budget for 2018/2019;
2. that no percentage increase be applied to Community Centres, sports pitches and miscellaneous fees and charges, while noting that some Community Centres fees may slightly increase as part of a proposed alignment of fees to category of room, to be determined by Policy & Resources Committee on 22nd February 2018; and
3. that a Net Precept Requirement for £574,107 for the financial year 2018/2019 be submitted to Blaby District Council.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To meet the Town Council's operating budgets for 2018/2019 along with funding for the Capital Plan and service pressures as identified in the report on Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning.*
2. *Given the economic pressures many are facing, to increase hire charges in line with the projected increase in precept over the next 3 to 5 years was likely to have a negative impact on the net income from room hire and more widely on the offer and appeal the centres have in the community.*
3. *The precept requirement for the year being the difference between expenditure and income, calculated in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*

56. Shakespeare Park – Improvement & Development

The Committee considered progress and revised timescales for the Shakespeare Park Improvement Project (item 11 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that revised timescales for the project (Appendix 1) be adopted.

Reason for Decision

To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.

57. Thorpe Astley Park Medical Rooms – Occupational Licence Agreement

The Committee considered arrangements for Kingsway Surgery to occupy rooms at Thorpe Astley Community Centre (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the expression of interest from Kingsway Surgery and East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group to provide NHS Primary Care Services, including a General Practitioner Service, from the Thorpe Astley Community Centre Medical Rooms be accepted;
2. that the proposed changes to Thorpe Astley Community Centre to accommodate an ancillary room (toilet and changing facilities) as an

- annexe to the Treatment Room, shown at Appendix 1, be approved in principle and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to finalise the detailed designs and specification for the works, seek any necessary approvals under the lease agreement and building regulations, invite quotes and appoint a contractor to undertake the works; and
3. that the proposed Occupational Licence Agreement, attached at Appendix 2, 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 amendments, finalise the agreement, including the operating hours and service charge, with Kingsway Surgery and East Leicestershire and Rutland NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and to enter into further agreements in respect of staffing and premises support services.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To enable an NHS provider to make use of the Thorpe Astley Medical Rooms, which were built to NHS specifications, providing accessible Primary Care, including General Practitioner Services for the benefit of the community.*
2. *To enable the Treatment Room to be used for minor surgery, where patients would need direct access to toilet and changing facilities.*
3. *To ensure that appropriate agreements were in place to ensure the effective running of services and their co-location at Thorpe Astley Community Centre.*

58. Completion of Legal Transfer of Open Spaces (Persimmon Homes Ltd) Thorpe Astley

The Committee received a report in respect of completing the legal transfer of open space at Thorpe Astley from Persimmon Homes Ltd to the Town Council (item 13 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the legal transfer of Open Spaces from Persimmon Homes Ltd, as shown on the HM Land Registry Plan attached at Appendix 1 and detailed in the Official Copy of Register of Title attached at Appendix 2, be completed and concluded and adopted by Braunstone Town Council;
2. that where parcels of land were initially offered by Persimmon Homes Ltd and subsequently maintained and managed by the Town Council, but not included in the final legal transfer and adoption set out in 1 above, the Town Council cease to manage and maintain such land and inform Persimmon Homes accordingly; and
3. that should Persimmon Homes Ltd seek to subsequently transfer additional open space and should Braunstone Town Council be interested in adopting, then this would be subject to:
 - a) Persimmon Homes Ltd picking up the cost of the Town Council's legal fees in full and providing a mutually agreeable commuted sum;

- b) the land being transferred in a condition agreeable to Braunstone Town Council; and
- c) the transfer of responsibility for management and maintenance taking place once the legal transfer had been completed and confirmed by HM Land Registry.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To enable the transfer to be completed and for the Town Council to become the legal owner of the public open space.*
2. *There was no evidence that Persimmon Homes would be in a position to transfer this land, nor was there any indication that other land originally identified would be transferred to Braunstone Town Council in the future.*
3. *To ensure that the Town Council nor the Town Council's Solicitor picked up additional legal costs due to the failure of Persimmon Homes Ltd to properly identify the open space for transfer and produce the necessary legal documentation. To ensure the Town Council was able to meet the initial costs of maintaining additional open space, particularly give the restraints on the Council's finances.*

59. Jo Cox Memorial

The Committee considered a request from the General Committee of the South Leicestershire Constituency Labour Party to plant a tree and install an associated brass plaque in memory of Jo Cox (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the request of the South Leicestershire Constituency Labour Party to plant a tree in memory of Jo Cox along with the installation of an associated brass plaque on Braunstone Town Council land be approved in accordance with points 3 – 7 listed in the background section of the report and paid for by the South Leicestershire Constituency Labour Party; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, having consulted with the South Leicestershire Constituency Labour Party, to determine the location of the tree and brass plaque.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The request had received the support of Jo Cox's family and the Jo Cox Trust and the Town Council supported the reasoning given in point 1 in the background section of the report.*
2. *To enable an appropriate location to be selected in order that planting could be undertaken prior to the spring of 2018.*

60. Approval of Accounts

The Committee considered payments from 18th October 2017 until 31st December 2017 (item 15 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the Period 18th October 2017 until 31st December 2017 be approved.

Reason for Decision

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

61. Termination of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

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 _____