

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2018 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Parminder Basra, Phil Moitt, Gary Sanders, Darshan Singh and Robert Waterton.

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

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

62. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sharon Betts.

63. Disclosures of Interest

Declarations of Non-Pecuniary Interest were made in agenda item 15, Park and Stride Scheme for Millfield Academy as follows:

- a) by Councillor Nick Brown as Chair of Millfield Academy Governors and as a parent of a child at the school,
- b) by Councillor Parminder Basra as a parent of a child at the school, and
- c) by Councillor Robert Waterton as a grandparent of a child at the school.

64. 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.

65. Minutes of the Meeting held 11th January 2018

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th January 2018 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

66. Braunstone Town Library - future management arrangements

The Committee considered arrangements and timescales for the transfer of the management of Braunstone Town Library to Braunstone Town Council (item 5 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the outline business cases submitted in September 2015 by Braunstone Town Council to run Braunstone Town Library remain available to Leicestershire County Council to accept;
2. that the principles set out in Braunstone Town Council's Mission Statement and the motion approved by the Annual Towns Meeting on 15th May 2014, be the basis upon which the Town Council reaches agreement with Leicestershire County Council to manage Braunstone Town Library;
3. that the Executive Officer & Town Clerk negotiate the detailed legal, financial, governance and management arrangements in order to progress towards transfer; and
4. THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that subject to an acceptable offer being received from Leicestershire County Council, Braunstone Town Council take over responsibility for the management and operation of the Braunstone Town Library service under the Town Council's corporate governance, decision making and management structures; and in accordance with the Town Council's policies and procedures and allocation of resources and responsibilities.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The Town Council's proposals were viable, fully costed and were supported by the local community. The second option to manage the service based on the current service provision was compliant with the County Council's support package, since the premises lease represented an existing and separate party legal agreement.*
2. *It was recognised that Leicestershire County Council was the commissioning and responsible authority for Library Services; while Braunstone Town Council would work with public bodies, service providers and the community to meet its aims and objectives to protect and enhance public services, including the Library service.*
3. *To ensure that practical arrangements concerning the transfer and the requirements going forward were in place and appropriately reflected in the legal agreements and that the necessary finance would be in place to ensure continued improvement and the long term sustainability of the service.*
4. *To approve the principle that the Town Council should formally accept an offer from Leicestershire County Council to manage and operate the Braunstone Town Library service, enabling Policy & Resources Committee and the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to enter into the detailed legal arrangements and make provision for the necessary resources and ongoing management of the Library service.*

67. Shakespeare Park - Improvement & Development

The Committee considered for approval the business case and plan, funding arrangements, tender and next stages of the project (item 6 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the Tender Specification documents and drawings, produced for inclusion in the tender package, as set out at Appendix 1 and included in the Annex papers for this item, be approved and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to finalise the General Specification and Bill of Quantities and make minor alterations and corrections to the Tender Documentation to ensure compliance and consistency;
2. that the Form of Tender to be used be approved based on the template attached at Appendix 2;
3. that revised timescales for the project, attached at Appendix 3, be adopted; and
4. that the updated emerging Business Case attached at Appendix 4 be approved and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to finalise the Business Case and Business Plan in preparation for funding applications.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that the tender package was complete and provided all necessary plans and technical specifications and that the tender process would be undertaken in compliance with legislation and financial regulations.*
2. *To ensure each tender response received would be standard for compliance and assessment purposes.*
3. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*
4. *To ensure that the Business Case and Business Plan reflect the overall objectives for the project while ensuring that the documents could be adapted in line with the tender and funding application processes, avoiding undue delay.*

68. Citizens Advice Bureau - Service Level Agreement for Braunstone Civic Centre

The Committee considered arrangements for the Citizens Advice Bureau Service at Braunstone Civic Centre post 31st March 2018 (item 7 on the agenda).

A report on the service provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau to residents of Braunstone Town in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to date was circulated (filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED that Braunstone Town Council enter into a three year Service Level Agreement with Citizen's Advice Bureau from 1st April 2018 up to 31st March 2021 based on the current Service Level Agreement and with an annual grant payment of £3,000.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Citizens Advice Bureau to continue to provide free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to local residents beyond 31st

March 2018 without delay or a break in service, in order that residents could receive assistance with a wide range of issues, including benefits, housing, money advice, employment, consumer, relationships, taxation and many more.

69. Alignment of Hire Charges for Community Centres Facilities

The Committee considered aligning hire charges to category of room (item 8 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the proposed aligned Community Centres charges according to Category of Room, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be applied from 1st April 2018 to all new bookings and where payment would be made on or after 1st April 2018.

Reason for Decision

To simply and align Community Centre charges, while ensuring sustainability of the Council's services in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning objectives.

70. Mystery Shopper Scheme

The Committee considered arrangements for a Mystery Shopper Scheme in order to maintain and develop standards of customer service (item 9 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that arrangements be made to invite Mystery Shoppers to take part in a Survey over a three month period, in person, by telephone or by email to cover Braunstone Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre, for Customer Services & Information Advisors and Duty Officers roles;
2. that approval be given to pay £5 for each Mystery Shopper report completed and submitted, up to a maximum of three reports per Mystery Shopper per survey; and
3. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to agree the Mystery Shoppers, report form, and detailed arrangements.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To gather first-hand, comprehensive feedback on the level of Customer Service Standards provided by reception staff in order to improve and maintain the services the Town Council provides.*
2. *To encourage Mystery Shoppers to take part in the survey and ensure that a sufficient number of reports would be returned.*
3. *To ensure a range of services would be represented in the survey and that appropriate days and times for each survey were coordinated.*

71. Extension of Civic Centre Licensed Bar Contract

The Committee considered extending the Civic Centre Licensed Bar Contract by 12 months in order to accommodate refurbishment of the space and review the future contract provisions to include café services (item 10 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the current Licensed Bar Contractor be offered a one-year extension of the current Licensed Bar Contract, made on 26th June 2014, until 9th July 2019, subject to the amendment of contract specification 3(i) as set out in the report.

Reason for Decision

The Licensed Bar contract provisions would need to be reviewed to take into account provision of Café Services, however, a decision on the extent and scope of the building refurbishment required to do this could not be made until completion of the Shakespeare Park procurement and conclusion of the future management arrangements for the Library. With a contract value of £19,000 per annum, a one year contract extension could be offered until 9th July 2019, without breaching the requirements of the Procurement Act 2015.

72. Standards and Criteria for Parks Works and Maintenance Programmes

The Committee considered a set of standards and criteria to ensure maintenance of hedges, trees and waterways across Town Council parks and open spaces was applied to a consistent criteria and standard (item 11 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the Standards and Criteria for Parks Works and Maintenance Programmes, attached at Appendix 1, be approved as the criteria for prioritising work for inclusion in the annual Winter Works Programme; and
2. that each request for work to be included in the Winter Works Programme, be assessed against the criteria set out in the policy.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To put in place a set of formal principles for including work in the Parks and Grounds annual Winter Works Programme.*
2. *To ensure that any work suggested for inclusion would be assessed against agreed criteria.*

73. Pitch Allocations 2018/2019

The Committee considered pitch capacity, setting fees and determined the allocations process for the 2018/2019 season (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that pitch type and capacity be approved, as set out in Table 1 of the Pitch Capacity section of the report;
2. that Appendix 2, Terms and Conditions for Shakespeare Park Bowling Green be amended to reflect Child Protection Policies being in line with the relevant Association's policies and best practice; and
3. that the pitch fees be confirmed and the availability of pitches be advertised, as set out at Appendix 3, with a closing date for applications on Monday 9th April 2018.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure a balance between quality of playing surface, the needs of local clubs for provision and the needs of parks users.*
2. *To ensure that the terms and conditions relating to Child Protection related to the appropriate association/governing body for Bowls.*
3. *To allow suitable time for applications while acknowledging clubs need the certainty by April of a home playing ground in order to participate in the league.*

74. Review of the Legal Transfer of Open Spaces, Thorpe Astley

The Committee received an update on the current position with the legal transfer of Parks and Open Spaces at Thorpe Astley from the developers to the Town Council, including the options available to the Town Council, the implications and associated costs (item 13 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the completion of the transfer of open spaces from Persimmon Homes and the progress to land registration stage on the transfer of open spaces from Barrett Homes be noted;
2. that David Wilson Homes be asked to provide timescales for the preparation of the transfers for consideration by the Town Council with a target completion and transfer date before the end of 2018;
3. that Braunstone Town Council adopt Thorpe Astley Park without Leicestershire County Council adopting the footpath, bridge and lighting, subject to:
 - a) confirmation that the balance of the commuted sums held by Blaby District Council would be paid on or before completion;
 - b) Persimmon Homes installing the proposed new bridge at the culvert over Lubbethorpe Brook; and
 - c) the new bridge referred to in b above being approved by a 3rd party Structural Engineer jointly appointed by the District and Town Councils and an inspection undertaken on completion to confirm drawings compliance;
4. that payment of the structural engineer (referred to in 3(c) above) and upgrade of the footpath lighting to LED be funded from the Thorpe Astley Park commuted sums budget (currently held by Blaby District Council);
5. that the position and proposals in respect of the transfer of land adjacent to the new road to the M1 Bridge, along with the adjacent land to the

- south of Priestman Road, be endorsed; and
6. that a progress report on land transfers be submitted to the Committee in August and a future report be submitted detailing land ownership of public realm in Thorpe Astley.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To recognise that significant progress had been made with the completion and adoption of open space from Persimmon Homes and with the transfers being finalised and sealed with Barrett Homes.*
2. *To ensure that David Wilson was aware of the Town Council's desire to complete the transfer of the open space without further delays and additional cost.*
3. *Thorpe Astley Park was a significant asset, which should be owned by the Town Council, however, despite the best efforts of both Braunstone Town Council and Blaby District Council, Leicestershire County Council had retracted their commitment to adopt the footpath, lighting and any new bridge at Thorpe Astley Park and given the developers had agreed to install a suitable bridge to replace the existing culvert at Lubbesthorpe Brook, transfer of the ownership of the Park should be progressed.*
4. *To ensure that the new bridge met structural and safety standards and to ensure that the ongoing costs of the lighting was minimised.*
5. *To enable appropriate plans to be drawn up and determined which would benefit residents of Thorpe Astley with useable recreation space, while providing appropriate screening for local residents reducing any adverse environmental impact. To recognise that the transfer of the land south of Priestman Road as part of the wider site would avoid any additional legal costs.*
6. *To keep a watch on progress to in implementing the Town Council's desire to complete the transfer of the open space without further delays and additional cost. To consider whether any additional action was needed concerning public realm ownership and maintenance issues.*

75. Highways Grass Cutting

The Committee received an update on additional (7th) annual highways verge cuts (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that no further action be taken concerning additional seasonal highway grass cuts at the present time.

Reason for Decision

Blaby District Council were no longer responsible for Highways Grass Cutting in the District and therefore, the current arrangement with the District Council to part fund the seventh seasonal highway verge cut would end in March 2018.

76. Park and Stride for Millfield Academy

The Committee considered whether the Town Council should support the Park & Stride Scheme for Millfield Academy and authorise the use of

Mosssdale Meadows Car Park as an official Park & Stride location (item 15 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the request by Leicestershire County Council to use Mosssdale Meadows Car Park as an official "Park & Stride" parking location for Millfield Academy from 9th April 2018 for a trial period of six months during an experimental traffic order be approved; and
2. that the impact of the trial upon the car park, park and the community generally be reviewed by the Committee prior to the expiry of the trial period in order to determine whether or not Mosssdale Meadows Car Park could be used as an official "Park & Stride" parking location for Millfield Academy on a permanent basis and if so, under what conditions.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To allow Mosssdale Meadows Car Park to be used as an alternative parking location for Millfield Academy (the Winstanley Arms being the primary Park & Stride location) in order that a School Clear Zone, designed to reduce congestion, increase active and sustainable travel and safety by putting physical traffic management measures in place, could be trialled.*
2. *To ensure that the impact of the trial on the car park, park and surrounding area could be reviewed prior to making the arrangements permanent.*

77. Internal Audit Services

The Committee considered appointing a new Internal Auditor for 2017/2018, following the withdrawal of the offer of the originally appointed Internal Auditor to continue to provide internal audit services to the Town Council, and whether to join Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils Internal Audit Service from the next financial year (commencing 1st April 2018) (item 16 on the agenda).

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

1. that John Marshall be appointed through the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils to undertake the Town Council's Internal Audit for the Year Ending 31st March 2018; and
2. that Braunstone Town Council join the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils' Internal Audit Service from the financial year beginning 1st April 2018.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure arrangements were in place for compliance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.*
2. *To ensure that in future years the Council would be able to access an accredited auditor through a benchmarked local council sector Internal Audit service.*

78. Scattering of ashes on Town Council Land

The Committee considered a request of a local resident to scatter ashes on Town Council owned land and whether to give delegated authority to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to authorise future requests (item 17 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to determine requests to scatter / bury ashes on the Town Council's land in accordance with the Process for dealing with Requests set out in the report and that the scheme of delegation be amended accordingly.

Reason for Decision

To enable requests to be considered and dealt with in a controlled, dignified and appropriate way specific to the area of public open space, its use and users, while avoiding any delays.

79. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st January 2018 (item 18 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.

80. Approval of Accounts

The Committee considered payments from 1st January 2018 until 12th February 2018 (item 19 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the Period 1st January 2018 until 12th February 2018 be approved.

Reason for Decision

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

81. Organisation Review and Interim Arrangements

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 temporarily excluded and they be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply). *Reasons for exception – Personal Information / Legal Advice*.

The Committee set out proposals to reorganise staffing resources to utilise spare capacity and ensure the delivery of Library and Customer Services,

including timescales for consultation and implementation and interim arrangements from April 2018 for the period prior to implementation (item 20 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that temporary staffing arrangements, implemented until 31st March 2018, in respect of sickness absence and leave cover for the Customer Services Shop, be extended until 30th June 2018; and
2. that in the event of a transfer of the Library Service to Braunstone Town Council, delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to implement temporary staffing arrangements for the Library Service by consent using the Town Council's existing staffing establishment resources.

Reasons for Decision

1. *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 services and the staffing resource required was assessed.*
2. *To avoid any unnecessary delay with transferring the Library Service to the Town Council's Management, while ensuring that a proper assessment, including a staff consultation, was undertaken prior to confirming the future staff establishment and resources required.*

82. Termination of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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 _____