

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD USING ZOOM VIDEO AND WEB CONFERENCING SOFTWARE

12TH NOVEMBER 2020 at 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Parminder Basra (Town Mayor), Councillor Darshan Singh (Deputy Town Mayor) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Ajmer Basra, Nick Brown, Alex Dewinter, David Di Palma, Sam Fox-Kennedy, Amanda Hack, Sohan Johal, Paul Kennedy, Leanne Lee, Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Satindra Sangha, Tracey Shepherd, Christiane Startin-Lorent, Marion Waterton and Robert Waterton.

Also in attendance was Councillor Louise Richardson (Leicestershire County Councillor for Enderby & Lubbethorpe Division) and Councillor Ben Taylor (Blaby District Councillor for Winstanley Ward).

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

There was one member of the public present at the meeting.

COUNCILLOR PARMINDER BASRA, TOWN MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR

5870 Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

5871 Disclosures of Interest

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

5872 Public Session

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 was one member of the public present at the meeting.

5873 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 25th June 2020 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

The Town Mayor moved approval of the minutes; which was seconded by the Deputy Town Mayor.

The following amendments were proposed:

- (a) by Councillor Robert Waterton and seconded by Councillor Nick Brown; that the second sentence of the second paragraph under minute 5868, County and District Councillor Reports - Leicestershire County Council, be amended to read “Winstanley School offered free hot meals to encourage pupils to attend”;
- (b) by Councillor Leanne Lee and seconded by Councillor Nick Brown; that Councillor Leanne Lee be added to the list of those Councillors present at the meeting; and
- (c) by Councillor Sam Maxwell and seconded by Councillor Nick Brown; that Councillor Sam Maxwell be added to the list of those Councillors present at the meeting.

Upon being put to the vote, the above amendments were carried.

Therefore, the substantive motion, as amended, was put to the vote and was:

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 25th June 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record; subject to the following amendments:

- (a) that the second sentence of the second paragraph under minute 5868, County and District Councillor Reports - Leicestershire County Council, be amended to read “Winstanley School offered free hot meals to encourage pupils to attend”;
- (b) that Councillor Leanne Lee be added to the list of those Councillors present at the meeting; and
- (c) that Councillor Sam Maxwell be added to the list of those Councillors present at the meeting.

5874 Requests for Approved Absence

The Council received and considered a report setting out the process for considering and approving absence requests from Councillors (if any) in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 (item 5 on the agenda).

It was noted that no Councillors had submitted a request for approved absence.

5875 Co-Option to Vacancy on the Council

Council considered an expression of interest for co-option as a member to fill the vacancy on the Council for the Ravenhurst & Fosse Ward (item 6 on the agenda).

A Notice of vacancy in the Office of Town Councillor was published on 5th October 2020 for the Ravenhurst & Fosse Ward, due to resignation of Imran Uddin. A request for an election was not received within the required 14 days.

Public elections would not be held until May 2023; therefore, for the interim period the vacancy could be filled by co-option, voted for by the incumbent members of Braunstone Town Council.

On 27th October 2020 the Town Council published a notice setting out its intention to co-opt to the vacancy. An application was received from Dipen Nathwani of 64 Narborough Road South.

The candidate addressed Council explaining how he intended to serve as a Town Councillor and answered questions from members of the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and was

RESOLVED

1. that Dipen Nathwani be co-opted as a Town Councillor to fill the vacancy for Ravenhurst & Fosse Ward; and
2. that, standing order 4.9h be varied to allow for Dipen Nathwani to make his declaration before the Council but for him to sign the declaration in the presence of the Proper Officer at a later date, which must be no later than 30th November 2020.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The submission provided background on Dipen Nathwani, who had set out how he would serve as a member of the Town Council and the Council considered him suitable to serve as a Town Councillor.*
2. *To allow Dipen Nathwani to participate as a member of the Council in the Council meeting given he had joined through video link and would not be able to physically sign his declaration of acceptance of office at the meeting; a decision of the Council in respect of arrangements for signing declarations of acceptance of office being provided for under Standing Order 4.8.*

In accordance with resolution 2 above, Councillor Nathwani made the formal declaration of acceptance of office before both the Council and the Proper Officer and duly took up his seat on the Council.

5876 Committee Appointments

Council considered Committee Appointments following changes in the membership of the Council (item 7 on the agenda).

There were three vacancies on the Council's Standing Committees; one on Planning & Environment Committee and two on Policy & Resources Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and

RESOLVED that the following members be appointed to fill vacancies on the Council's Standing Committees:

- a) Councillor Dipen Nathwani to Planning & Environment Committee; and
- b) Councillors Leanne Lee and Satindra Sangha to Policy & Resources Committee.

Reason for Decision

To enable the efficient and effective transaction of the Council's business.

5877 Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning

Council received a report setting out the context for the Council's medium-term priorities and financial planning (item 8 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and

RESOLVED

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; and
3. that the Council's General Reserves be used to invest in infrastructure and assets and in the development and remodelling of services, including the Town Council's operations.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To provide a foundation for preparing budget estimates for 2021/2022 and beyond.*
2. *To ensure the Council focusses its activity and spending given the future financial uncertainties.*
3. *To ensure the highest possible standards within the resources available in the future.*

5878 Announcements

a) Town Mayor

The Town Mayor, Councillor Parminder Basra, made the following announcements:

- i. it was sad that Imran Uddin had to step down as a Town Councillor and on behalf of the Council, the Town Mayor thanked him for his service;
- ii. due to the Covid-19 pandemic there had been no functions; however, the Town Mayor had the pleasure of being involved in a Remembrance Video with the Reverend David Hover, which was made available on-line to enable the community to share in an act of remembrance; and
- iii. consideration was being given to efforts to raise the profile of the Town Mayor's charity and raise funds, potentially through on-line events and initiatives.

b) Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Nick Brown, made the following announcements:

- i. the Council's thoughts and best wishes were with the community during the second lockdown, particularly those who were struggling;
- ii. Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley's Covid-19 case numbers were moderately higher compared to other local communities and the Leader urged people to follow the rules, e.g. by wearing masks etc.
- iii. the Leader thanked the Community Response and the Community Foodbank volunteers for their commitment and much needed support for the community during difficult circumstances;
- iv. the Leader also thanked the Council's officers and staff for their hard work during the Covid-19 pandemic and commitment to adapting services and keeping them running; and
- v. the Leader had made a site visit to Shakespeare Park on 20th October 2020 and viewed progress with the building works, which he added would be a great asset for the community; the Leader looked forward to the new facility opening in 2021 with an event, especially given the loss of the Bowls Club season in 2020 due to Covid-19.

c) Executive Officer and Town Clerk

The Council received a report from the Executive Officer and Town Clerk providing an update on the Council's respond to the Covid-19 pandemic (item 9c on the agenda).

The report set out details on the following matters:

- Additional Restrictions,
- Local Alert System - Impact on Council Services,
- Thorpe Astley Community Centre,
- Covid-19 Incident Response and Recovery, and
- Looking Ahead.

Further to the report submitted with the agenda, the Executive Officer & Town Clerk circulated a supplementary report, which provided an update on the current position with the Council's services during the England wide Covid-19 national lockdown until 2nd December 2020 (filed with these minutes).

The supplementary report set out additional details on the following matters:

- Services / Facilities / Operations Closed,
- Services / Facilities / Operations Open,
- Councillors and Meetings,
- Civic Community Lounge,
- Thorpe Astley Community Centre, and
- Looking Ahead.

5879 Questions from Councillors

No questions had been submitted.

5880 Reports of Standing Committees: Employing Committee – 13th August 2020

Council received the Report of the Employing Committee meeting held on 13th August 2020 (p7000 – p7001).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5881 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 20th August 2020

Council received the Report of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 20th August 2020 (p7002 – p7012).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5882 Reports of Standing Committees: Planning & Environment Committee – 10th September 2020

Council received the Report of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 10th September 2020 (p7013 – p7024).

Page 7019, Minute 141 – Additional Planning and Licensing Applications

In respect of planning application 5 – 20/0799/TEL: “Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for the installation of one 20m telecommunication monopole supporting 6 antennas and 2 transmission dishes with a wraparound base and three associated equipment cabinets” at Meridian Way.

Councillor Robert Waterton advised that he had responded to the informal consultation by the mobile provider earlier, in addition to the response by the Committee to the application for prior approval. Councillor Waterton expressed disappointment that the application had been given the go ahead in the particular location given there were probably more appropriate locations on the nearby industrial estate which would have had less detrimental impact on the visual amenity.

Councillor Amanda Hack raised concerns that rules had been relaxed for the 5G roll out and that many such applications would not need planning approval going forward.

Councillor Parminder Basra highlighted the new 5G installation on Kingsway adjacent to Narborough Road South, which residents had stated was an eyesore.

Page 7021, Minute 145 – Welcome Signage to Thorpe Astley

In response to a question from Councillor Amanda Hack concerning timescales and implementation; Councillor Robert Waterton advised that Leicestershire County Council were undertaking a survey of the services at the locations where the signs were due to be installed and he anticipated the signs would be installed early in the new year.

Page 7021, Minute 146 – Leicestershire County Council – Highways’ Community Fund

In response to a question from Councillor Amanda Hack it was confirmed that the Town Council’s application to the Highways’ Community Fund had been submitted, acknowledged and was being assessed.

Page 7023, Minute 148 – Feedback on Discovery Workshop: Your Journey to Clean Air

Councillor Robert Waterton had attended this workshop; however there remained questions around implementation and roll out of charging points. No charging points had been identified as yet in Braunstone Town. In addition, Councillor Waterton stated it was important for the District Council to work with Parish and Town Councils on implementation and roll out.

Councillor Sam Maxwell added that the District Council had agreed to go ahead with a programme to roll out electric vehicle charging points and for simplicity; the first phase was to do this at car parks owned and operated by the District Council. Later phases would involve other land and car parks and on street locations, for which the District Council would need to work in partnership with the relevant organisations.

It was moved by Councillor Robert Waterton and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5883 Reports of Standing Committees: Community Development Committee – 24th September 2020

Council received the Report of the Community Development Committee meeting held on 24th September 2020 (p7025 – p7033).

Page 7027, Minute 82 – Braunstone Town Community Foodbank

Councillor Amanda Hack thanked the Town Council for providing facilities at Braunstone Civic Centre for the operation of a Community Foodbank. Councillor Hack added that the community was grateful and Community Life, who ran the foodbank, were making applications for funding to expand the service to meet growing need through the winter months.

Councillor Parminder Basra thanked the volunteers involved and suggested that the Group and volunteers received recognition later in the Council year.

Councillor Sam Fox-Kennedy acknowledges the hard work of the volunteers adding that many in the community were benefiting from the service. Councillor Fox-Kennedy was concerned that many of the local supermarkets

were not providing support to the Town's Community Foodbank but were supporting foodbanks in other areas.

Councillor Anthea Ambrose responded that the Council had written to local and major supermarkets requesting support and she would ensure this was followed up.

It was moved by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5884 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 8th October 2020

Council received the Report of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 8th October 2020 (p7034 – p7045).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5885 Reports of Standing Committees: Planning & Environment Committee – 29th October 2020

Council received the Report of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 29th October 2020 (p7046 – p7059).

It was moved by Councillor Robert Waterton and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5886 Motions on Notice

No Motions on Notice had been submitted.

5887 Sealing of Documents

There were no documents for sealing.

5888 County and District Councillor Reports

a) Leicestershire County Council

Councillor Amanda Hack, as County Councillor for Braunstone Division, reported on the following matters:

- i. Health Scrutiny has been looking at the proposals for Leicester Hospitals; in addition, there appeared to be gaps where some people had not received details of the consultation;
- ii. Covid-19 weekly briefings were being given by the Director of Public Health; infection numbers in Braunstone Town were proportionately higher than the average; Blaby District would be getting its own Covid-19 testing Centre at the District Council offices; and

- iii. Health Scrutiny had also been looking at the Covid-19 impact on dentistry and maternity services.

Councillor Louise Richardson, County Councillor for Enderby and Lubbethorpe Division, reported on the following matters:

- i. in respect of the Covid-19 response, the continued work, particularly in Social Services, to ensure that all relevant personnel continue to receive the Personal Protective Equipment they need;
- ii. in terms of the impact of Covid-19 in the Children's & families service, ensuring that schools and childcare settings could operate safely and effectively continued to be the focus; and
- iii. finance – originally it was anticipated that there would be 2 years before the Council would again face a deficit; however the Covid-19 pandemic has brought forward financial pressures and meetings were taking place to consider these; in addition, there was additional workload and commitments for grants for businesses etc.

Councillor Richardson concluded by adding that everyone at the County Council was doing the best they could to respond in difficult circumstances.

b) Blaby District Council

Councillor Nick Brown, as District Councillor for Millfield Ward, reported on the following matters:

- i. Government Planning Consultations: there was a danger that in trying to simplify and speed up the process that this would de-democratise the process resulting in people being less involved; and
- ii. Housing: Government proposals were likely to have a significant impact in the medium term and it was important to ensure that not just quantity but the right type and standard of housing would be provided.

Councillor Sam Maxwell, as District Councillor for Ravenhurst & Fosse Ward, reported on the following matters:

- i. Financial Situation: was similar to that reported by the Town Council and County Council; Blaby District Council's finances were currently reasonably healthy compared to other principal Councils;
- ii. Government Planning Consultations: good work had been undertaken by officer in preparing a response; the main concerns were that the proposals would remove local knowledge and democracy and impact adversely on the number of affordable homes and social housing provision; and
- iii. Covid-19: staff were working from home and meetings were being undertaken using Zoom; Environmental Health were the lead department ensuring Covid-19 rules and restrictions were adhered to, the department was busy and therefore Councillor Maxwell encouraged Councillors to involve their local district Councillors in any complaints which were awaiting response.

Councillor Ben Taylor, District Councillor for Winstanley Ward, reported on the following matters:

- i. Planning Consultations: there had been two large consultations on planning, which the Council had responded to in the form of a report and covering letter, which included the comments of scrutiny;
- ii. Planning Applications: due to Covid-19 there was approximately a 5 / 6 week backlog with planning applications;
- iii. Local Plan: preparations were being made to review the local plan with the involvement of scrutiny;
- iv. Work and Apprenticeship initiatives: resources would be allocated to support people back to work, including the provision of an apprenticeship scheme; and
- v. Finance: there was an approximate £2 million pressure on the finances due to Covid-19, both in terms of loss of income and additional costs, with a projected £200,000 deficit.

5889 Outside Body Reports

a) Braunstone Town Community Minibus

Councillor Sam Fox-Kennedy reported that she had recently attended a socially distanced meeting. The impact of Covid-19 was discussed, along with the furloughing of staff. Unfortunately, some staff had been unable to continue their roles due to age and health. Councillor Fox-Kennedy added that the Town Council needed to support the mini-bus in order for it to continue to do its work. The lack of business has meant that the second mini-bus would need to be sold.

b) Braunstone West Social Centre

Councillor Phil Moitt reported that due to Covid-19, no meetings had been held recently.

c) Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils – AGM

Council received a report from Councillor Robert Waterton, the Town Council's representative to the Annual General Meeting of the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils (item 15c on the agenda).

Councillor Waterton reported that Policy & Resources Committee had asked that a letter be sent to the Chair of the LRALC Board urging the vacancies on the Board to be filled. A copy of the response was included with the agenda and Councillor Waterton added that the LRALC Board would be reviewing the vacancies at their meeting in December in order to reconsider the current position and ensure they take a considered position on it, including the Town Council's input.

d) School Governors

Councillor Nick Brown reported that Millfield Academy Board of Governors was due to meet in December. Councillor Brown

congratulated the achievement of those pupils who had moved to secondary school this term and had missed out on their final term due to the Covid-19 pandemic; and he wished them well. Councillor Brown also thanked and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of all those working in education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

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: _____