

**BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE AND USING ZOOM VIDEO AND WEB  
CONFERENCING SOFTWARE**

**THURSDAY 8th OCTOBER 2020 AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Sam Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Tracey Shepherd, Darshan Singh and Robert Waterton.

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

Also in attendance was Councillor David Di Palma. There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

**124. Apologies**

No apologies for absence were received.

**125. Disclosures of Interest**

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

**126. 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.

**127. Minutes of the Meeting held 20th August 2020**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th August 2020 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th August 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

**128. Shakespeare Park - Improvement & Development**

The Committee received a progress report on the pavilion and site improvement works, along with an update on interest and repayment rates for Public Works Loans, and considered the future management arrangements (item 5 on the agenda).

The Executive Officer & Town Clerk reported on progress following the recent Project Meeting on 2nd October 2020, as follows:

- the Blockworks were now approximately 60-70% complete, the side walls were up to the wall plate;
- facing brickworks had been completed apart from the gable ends which would be completed following installation of the roof trusses;
- internal blockworks was progressing and was approximately 50% complete – it was anticipated that this would continue for another week;
- scaffold installation has been erected;
- roof trusses were in manufacture and should be delivered to site on Monday 12th October 2020; and
- the Mechanical & Electrical 1st fix installation has been programmed for the second week in November 2020.

Progress has been made to catch up and the works were now on schedule, as set out at Appendix 1. The latest valuation of the works was £181,929.45.

## **RESOLVED**

1. that progress with the *Pavilion and Site Works*, including payment, as set out in the relevant section of the report, be noted;
2. that the funding update, including the interest and repayment rates, attached at Appendix 2, be noted;
3. that the proposed arrangements for the Shakespeare Park Pavilion Management Committee, as set out at Appendix 3, be amended to clarify that there was not a Group and that the Committee Members would be drawn from the Clubs and the Council, and progressed with the Sports Clubs through the Shakespeare Park Improvement Project Working Group;
4. that the proposed Lease arrangements for Shakespeare Park Pavilion Management Committee, Shakespeare Park Bowls Club and Braunstone Juniors Football Club, as set out at Appendix 4, be progressed with the Sports Clubs through the Shakespeare Park Improvement Project Working Group; and
5. that the revised timescales for the project, attached at Appendix 5, be approved.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that the project, which would enable an increase in sport participation and improve recreation and play facilities in a Ward which had high rankings of multiple deprivation across a range of domains, including income, employment and education and had the worst proportion of overweight or obese children in the County of Leicestershire, was delivered efficiently and effectively.*
2. *Appropriate funds were committed and were drawn down when required; the Committee would continue review the project payments and the drawing down of funds to ensure the long term financial stability and sustainability of the project.*
3. *To clarify the intention that the Management Committee would operate the facility on behalf of the Clubs and the Council and there was no intention to create another Group. To ensure that the long term management arrangements of the Pavilion would be sustainable and maximise revenue opportunities, detailed proposals would need to be*

*considered by the Clubs and if approved more detailed work on the legal text undertaken.*

4. *To ensure that the Sports Clubs had the certainty of longer term tenure in order to expand sporting provision, detailed proposals needed to be considered by the Clubs and if approved more detailed work on the legal text undertaken.*
5. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*

## **129. Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning**

The Committee received a report which set out the context for the Council's medium-term priorities and financial planning (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; 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*

## **130. Revenue Savings Projects 2021/2022**

The Committee considered savings to meet projected increases in expenditure and to enable continuous improvement (item 7 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; and
2. that the recommended savings as detailed in the table under Revenue Savings in the report be included in the budget preparations for 2021/2022.

*Reasons 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. *To enable the 2021/2022 Financial Strategy ongoing savings to be delivered.*

### **131. Review of Flexible arrangements for Covid-19 Secure Facilities Hirers**

The Committee reviewed the arrangements for Covid-19 Secure Facilities Hires, including capacity, terms & conditions and pricing, taking into account experience and operations alongside updated Covid-19 Secure Guidance and Regulations. The Committee also received an update on availability of Thorpe Astley Community Centre for hires and considered making Hybrid meetings equipment available for use by Centre hirers (item 8 on the agenda).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. that the decision of the Executive Officer & Town Clerk under delegated authority to postpone Phase 5 of the Outline Plans for Phased Reopening of Services, which was due to reopen on Monday 28th September 2020 (Appendix 1), be endorsed;
2. that the current Covid-19 Secure Room Capacity, Room Hire terms and conditions, specific Covid-19 Terms & Conditions of hire and pricing be continued; and
3. that the Video Conferencing (Hybrid Meetings) Equipment be made available for hire by organisations/constituted groups for meetings as set out in the section of the report "Video Conferencing Equipment" and that the proposed charges be agreed.

#### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To recognise Covid-19 presented uncertainty and reintroducing Room Hires available for events which were open to the public in a multi-use community centre increased the risks of multiple conflicts of use and users and it was important to provide community users with confidence that the facilities were Covid-19 Secure.*
2. *To ensure that the Centres remained attractive to hires, taking into account experience and operations alongside updated Covid-19 Secure Guidance and Regulations.*
3. *To recognise that the Covid-19 situation restricted organisations and community groups meeting, particularly for some individuals, and to provide an opportunity for organisations and community groups to offer meeting at Braunstone Civic Centre while others joined remotely.*

**132. Business Continuity Plan - Covid-19 Incident: Modifications and Feedback**

The Committee reviewed the critical function analysis in the Business Continuity Plan relating to the Library and pandemics and reflected on how the response was applied during the Covid-19 incident (item 9 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the analysis of how the Business Continuity Plan was applied during the Covid-19 incident and response, be noted and endorsed;
2. that the proposed revisions to the Business Continuity Plan, including those relating to the Library and pandemics, attached at Appendix 1, be approved; and
3. that references be included in the plan relating to engaging Councillors in the incident and response.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *The application of the Business Continuity Plan in respect of the Council's response to Covid-19 provided both a legal structure and focus for an effective and efficient response.*
2. *To ensure that the Plan reflected the nature and scale of the Town Council's activities and the likelihood and risk of disruption to its critical functions.*
3. *To ensure that the Councillors, who did not have a specific role as set out in the plan, were engaged and were able to input into the process.*

**133. Update on Thorpe Astley Culvert and legal transfer of Thorpe Astley Park**

The Committee received an update on the current position with Thorpe Astley Culvert and the legal transfer of Thorpe Astley Park (item 10 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the Council engage the local County Councillor to support efforts to obtain the necessary closures and diversions for the works to commence; and
2. that an update report on progress with Thorpe Astley Culvert be submitted to the Committee in February 2021.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *Given the delays and length of time which had elapsed since the application for a temporary footpath closure/diversion order had been submitted to Leicestershire County Council to enable the works to take place, to expedite the process and avoid any further delays.*
2. *To keep a watch on progress with implementing the Town Council's desire to complete the transfer of Thorpe Astley Park, a significant*

*asset that should be owned by the Town Council, without further delays and additional cost.*

**134. Future of Customer and Reception Services**

The Committee received a report, following the end of the Service Level Agreement for Customer Services with Blaby District Council, to consider how the Town Council would provide access to its services for residents while being flexible with resources and ensuring that all its services and associated costs remained sustainable (item 11 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the outline of the future shape of the Town Council's Customer, Enquiries and Reception services, as detailed in the report, be approved; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to determine an implementation date, taking into account any changes and modifications to the staff establishment.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that the Town Council continued to provide access to its services for residents while being flexible with resources to ensure all its services and associated costs were sustainable.*
2. *To ensure that the service could be refocussed and developed alongside the provision of appropriate skilled staff resources.*

**135. Park & Open Spaces Winter Works Programme 2020/2021**

The Committee considered items for inclusion on the Winter Works Programme for 2020/2021 for the Councils Parks, Open Spaces and Grounds (item 12 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the Winter Works Programme 2020/2021, attached at Appendix 1, be approved; and
2. that Merrylees Park area of Mossdale Meadows be the chosen park/open space to be maintained in the Winter Works Programme 2020/2021.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that parks and open spaces in Braunstone Town were maintained to a high level.*
2. *Work was required to the area to ensure that it was maintained to a suitable standard for safety reasons and to provide an attractive place for local residents to enjoy.*

**136. Complaints Monitoring**

The Committee received details of formal complaints dealt with and determined as a result whether policy or procedural changes were required to ensure that future reoccurrence would be minimised (item 13 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

*Reason for Decision*

The Procedure by including all complaints, whether minor or major, simple or complex, and providing for the informal stage and formal stage to deal with these as appropriate results in complaints being resolved and/or closed effectively.

**137. External Audit 2019/2020**

The Executive Officer & Town Clerk reported that the outcome of the external audit of the Town Council's accounts and governance arrangements for the year ended 31st March 2020 remained outstanding and, therefore, the item would be reported to the next scheduled meeting on 14th January 2021.

**138. LRALC Annual Meeting and Blaby District Parish Councils Group**

The Committee received feedback from Councillor Robert Waterton, Braunstone Town Council delegate, in respect of the LRALC Annual Meeting and considered whether to identify issues to be raised at future meetings of the Blaby District Parish Councils Group (item 15 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that a letter be send to the Chair of the LRALC Board of Directors urging that arrangements be made to fill the vacant positions on the Board as soon as possible.

*Reason for Decision*

*To ensure that a full board of members were in place, as set out in LRALC's constitution, enabling a broad range of experience and skills to be drawn upon in the management of the association, particularly during the current changing and uncertain times.*

**139. End of Quarter Financial Position - Cashbook and Reserves**

The Committee received a summary of the Council's Cash and Reserves for the period 1st April 2019 to 30th September 2020 (item 16 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** That the end of quarter financial position be noted.

*Reason for Decision*

*There were no issues of concern with management of the Council's Finances.*

**140. Financial Comparisons**

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2020 to 30th September 2020 (item 17 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 2020/2021.*

**141. Approval of Accounts**

The Committee considered payments from 10th August 2020 until 30th September 2020 (item 18 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the period 10th August 2020 until 30th September 2020 be approved.

*Reason for Decision*

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

**142. Shakespeare Park Playground and Tennis Courts Improvements**

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

The Committee considered and shortlisted tenders received for the playground and tennis courts improvements (item 19 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that Contractor C be selected as the preferred supplier for the Provision of New Play Equipment and Refurbishment of Existing Play Equipment at Shakespeare Park (as detailed at Appendix 1);
2. that Contractors E and G be shortlisted for further detailed examination in relation to the Refurbishment of the Tennis Courts at Shakespeare Park (as detailed at Appendix 2);
3. that the Next Stages and Timescales set out in the report be approved;
4. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, to prepare and submit applications to external funding bodies to access funding towards the projects; and
5. that in the event of any of the chosen contractors being unable to accept, withdrawing from the process, or the terms being unacceptable to the Council, then delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to provisionally select and liaise with other contractors or reopen the request for tenders in preparation for

recommendations to Policy & Resources Committee on 14th January 2020.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *The tender from Contractor C represented best value when balanced against the approved assessment matrix, including cost and ability to undertake the proposed works. The tender should be explored in more detail and the subject of consultation with residents and applications for funding.*
2. *Both Contractors E and G presented good value with all the information requested and scored in the top scoring ranges across the assessment matrix, which should be explored in more detail and the subject of consultation with residents and applications for funding.*
3. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*
4. *To enable appropriate funding options to be assessed and sought to ensure the projects could be delivered.*
5. *To avoid delaying the project in the event of withdrawal by preferred contractors or the terms being unacceptable to the Council.*

### **143. Staffing Organisation Review**

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

The Committee considered future arrangements for staffing in the context of changes to Services and the impact of Covid-19 (item 20 on the agenda).

### **RESOLVED**

1. that the Scope and Objectives of the Review, as set out in the section of the report “*Staff Organisation Review 2020/21*”, be approved;
2. that the *Next Stages and Timetable*, as set out in the report, be endorsed and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to make adjustments to the timescales to take account of any issues arising during the review;
3. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader & Deputy Leader of the Council to:
  - (a) propose amendments, if necessary, the Executive Officer & Town Clerk’s role,
  - (b) to develop a proposed staffing structure, job descriptions, person specifications, pay grades and terms and conditions of employment,
  - (c) to commission a Job Evaluation review of the roles to be retained and proposed new roles.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that the Council would have a flexible, resilient, knowledgeable and skilled workforce following service changes and recovery from the impact of Covid-19.*
2. *To provide a clear framework and timescales for undertaking the review.*
3. *To ensure that detailed development and evaluation of existing and proposed roles could be undertaken in order to assess the implications ahead of the Committee considering proposals for consultation.*

#### **144. Appointment of Third-Party Investigator to report on handling of internal disputes**

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

The Committee considered the merits of appointing a third-party investigator to review and report on the Council's handling of internal disputes and to report and make recommendations where appropriate (item 21 on the agenda).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. that the principle of appointing a Third-Party Investigator to report on handling of the internal dispute referred to in the report be approved;
2. that a scope for the investigation be developed based on the outline in the report and recommendations from Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils be sought on a suitable person to appoint; and
3. that the scope for the investigation and the proposed appointment be considered by a future meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee (which could include an extraordinary meeting) for approval.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *The issues raised refer to several named individuals over a period of time and there were wider implications affecting Braunstone Town Council as a body corporate.*
2. *To ensure that the investigation would be thorough and fair and recommendations would be made to conclude the matters and move forwards.*
3. *To ensure that the proposals were scrutinised and given due consideration by the Committee.*

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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: \_\_\_\_\_