

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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THURSDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.45PM

PRESENT: Councillor Anthea Ambrose (Chair), Councillor Tracey Shepherd (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Ajmer Basra, Nick Brown, Sam Fox-Kennedy, Amanda Hack, Paul Kennedy, Becca Lunn Scoppie, Sam Maxwell and Christiane Startin-Lorent.

Also in attendance was the Town Mayor, Councillor Parminder Basra.

Officers in attendance: Darren Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk, Pauline Snow, Deputy Executive Officer & Community Services Manager and John Burrows, Communications & Events Officer.

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

110. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

111. Disclosures of Interest

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

112. 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.

113. Minutes of the Meeting held 3rd December 2020

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd December 2020 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

114. Town Mayor's Report

The Committee received a report on the activities of the Town Mayor and any proposals for initiatives during the Civic Year. The Town Mayor reported that due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions she had been unable to arrange any

fund-raising events. However, she was proposing a Walk & Talk event where residents could go for a walk with family members or one other person, where permitted, for exercise and to talk to help with both physical and mental wellbeing. Residents could ask to be sponsored to do this and then donate funds through a “Just Giving” page that the Town Mayor had set up. The Town Mayor would share the link to all Councillors and asked if they could support her with this by sharing to family and friends.

RESOLVED that the update be noted

Reason for Decision

To monitor and review the effectiveness of the Town Council’s community engagement activities.

115. Community Safety and Neighbourhood Policing Update

The Committee received an update from the Local Neighbourhood Police Beat team on local community safety and policing initiatives.

The Chair welcomed Sergeant Alex Goldsmith from the Police who gave an update on the current crime statistics and ongoing issues.

It was reported that 9 burglaries had taken place in Braunstone Town/Thorpe Astley including, domestic, commercial and from sheds. Sixteen vehicle crimes had taken place over the two areas that included taking of and from vehicles. Several arrests had been made in connection with these crimes. There had been an increase in the theft of electric bikes and enquiries were being made into suspects of these crimes. There had been a small minority of Covid restrictions breaches mostly with youths gathering on open spaces. Sergeant Goldsmith indicated that the Police priorities would focus on anti-social behaviour, issues with motorbikes, vehicle crime, road safety and traffic congestion around schools.

An update on the situation at Shakespeare Close was received and noted. Issues with anti-social behaviour were still ongoing. Sergeant Goldsmith reminded members that all issues with anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police, however minor, in order to ensure that the full extent of the problem could be recorded and action taken accordingly.

Issues with illegal motorbikes was also increasing which the police were aware of but it was very difficult to catch those responsible as they usually leave the scene before the police arrive and they have no way of catching them whilst on bikes. The police also face the problem that once a perpetrator has been caught and the motorbike confiscated, they just go out and buy or steal another bike. The Neighbourhood Police Team was working closely with the Neighbourhood Police Team for Braunstone Park to reduce the problem but good quality evidence was required from all sources to prosecute the offenders.

Members queried the quickest way to contact the police if they witness illegal motorbikes on parks and open spaces and it was confirmed that ringing 101 was the quickest way to report this.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that current community safety and policing updates were received.

116. Speed Sign Data

The Committee received an update on the Council's Speed Signs.

It was noted that there had been a problem with one of the Speed activation signs that was currently being investigated. The other sign had been in place and data downloaded to submit to the Committee. However, this data appeared to be inaccurate and had not recorded for the full duration that the sign was in place. The manufacturer of the signs had been contacted to undertake a full investigation of the problems with the signs.

It was noted that the drivers of speeding vehicles in Thorpe Astley were likely to be local residents and so it was suggested that other deterrents or education of residents be considered. Use of the speed activation sign may lose impact as residents become accustomed to seeing them in place. Members suggested that other types of deterrents be considered to encourage drivers to reduce their speed on Murby Way.

Leicestershire County Council was responsible for highway issues and it was suggested the authority be contacted to discuss implementation of safety measures to reduce speeding in the Thorpe Astley estate and particularly for vehicles entering Thorpe Astley from the new Lubbethorpe bridge.

RESOLVED

1. that the manufacturer of the speed activation signs be contacted to arrange for repair if possible;
2. that other forms of deterrents for drivers exceeding the speed limit be considered by a future meeting of the Committee; and
3. that Leicestershire County Council be contacted to discuss installation of speed safety measures.

Reasons for Decisions

1. *To ensure that the signs would be repaired and in full working order.*
2. *To ensure all ways of reducing speeding vehicles was considered.*
3. *To ensure that responsible authorities were actively supporting the reduction of speeding vehicles.*

117. Covid-19 Community Response Coordination

The Committee received an update on the Council's coordination role for the Braunstone Town Community Response Scheme and to ensure that the scheme remained responsive to changes in circumstances and demand as well as meeting the needs of the community in the medium term (item 8 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the Community Response continue to offer support to local residents during the Covid-19 pandemic and respond to any changing situation that may occur; and
2. that ideas be considered to develop the Community Response Initiative into a potential Good Neighbour Scheme to allow the good work and ethos to continue beyond Covid-19

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that vulnerable residents and those who were isolating in Braunstone Town would be supported and helped in the current situation with the pandemic.*
2. *To ensure that the scheme and work already undertaken would continue and be developed to support residents in Braunstone Town on a permanent basis.*

118. Braunstone Town Community Foodbank

The Committee received an update on the Braunstone Town Community Foodbank and considered arrangements for the Council's future support for the initiative (item 9 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that space be provided free of charge at Braunstone Civic Centre to Braunstone Town Community Foodbank until 31st August 2021; and that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to determine which rooms should be made available and on what basis;
2. that the offer in 1 above be conditional upon:
 - (a) the Town's Community Response Scheme, Town Council and its partners being able to refer anyone in need;
 - (b) priority being given to residents of Braunstone Town (including Thorpe Astley) although the foodbank would not be limited by area; and
3. that the arrangements set out in 1 & 2 above be considered by the Community Development Committee in July 2021 in order to determine whether the offer could be extended beyond 31st August 2021 and, if so, on what basis.

Reasons for Decisions

1. *To provide a base for the Community Foodbank to operate, a vital support service providing food and essential supplies to residents who had suffered from the economic impact of Covid-19.*
2. *To support access to a community foodbank for Braunstone Town residents given that since the outbreak of Covid-19, Braunstone Foodshare had focussed on Braunstone, Leicester City, which had reduced options for accessing foodbank services for Town residents.*
3. *To review the ongoing demand for the service in the community and determine whether the Town Council needed to provide a base and any other support for the foodbank into the autumn and winter of 2021/2022.*

119. Local Area Co-ordination

The Committee received apologies from Katie Barradell, Local Area Co-ordinator, who was unable to attend the meeting. However, a progress report concerning the priorities and achievements of the Local Area Co-ordination Project in Braunstone Town to date was received (item 10 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Local Area Coordinator be asked to assist with signposting residents who were receiving food parcels from the Community Foodbank to relevant support services; and
3. that the Local Area Coordinator be invited to the next meeting of the Committee, scheduled for 15th April 2021.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that the Local Area Coordinator project was supported where possible.*
2. *To avoid reliance on food parcels by ensuring that residents either received support and advice or were signposted to appropriate support and advice to assist them with resolving their situation.*
3. *To receive an update on the priorities and achievements of the Local Area Co-ordination Project in Braunstone Town.*

120. Library - community engagement/involvement and social inclusion

The Committee considered further initiatives to develop community involvement in Braunstone Town Library and provide for social inclusion (item 11 on the agenda).

It was noted that a grant in the sum of £5,000 was available for community libraries to apply to through the Cultural Communities Network fund for activities in the libraries that connect communities and residents. The grant aimed to help community run libraries to bring local residents together and provide support to vulnerable residents in society. This support was offered through arts, culture and history projects by initially providing a launch event such as commissioning an artist to come and work with residents then recruiting volunteers to continue and expand to project.

RESOLVED that projects and ideas for initiatives, including the outline ideas set out in the report, for the community library be considered and appropriate grant funding be applied for.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that community projects could be progressed and available external funding applied for.

121. Summary of Grant Applications

The Committee received a list of grants paid to date and applied for from external sources (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

To monitor progress with supporting community groups with identifying sources of funding and with the award of grants under the Council's Community Grants scheme.

122. Community Grant Applications

The Committee noted that no Community Grant Applications had been received, and that an application for a grant from St Crispin's Church, deferred at the previous meeting, had been withdrawn.

123. Fixed Term Revisions to the Community Grants Scheme

The Committee considered extending the fixed term revisions to the Community Grants Scheme until October 2021 to account for the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on community groups and activities (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that the Fixed Term Amendment to the Community grant scheme be extended to the date of the Community Development Committee meeting scheduled in October 2021 to support groups once they were able to meet; and
2. that a review of the situation with the Covid-19 pandemic be undertaken by the Committee at its meeting in October.

Reasons for decisions

1. *To provide continuing, additional financial support to local community groups in the medium term whilst the Covid-19 pandemic continued and help support the restarting of groups.*
2. *To ensure that community groups could continue to be supported if the Covid-19 pandemic was still ongoing.*

124. Improvements to Parks and Open Spaces

The Committee received a progress report on current projects and funding.

It was noted that grant applications towards the funding of the Shakespeare Park playground project had been made to Tesco Community Fund and Severn Trent Community Fund.

Members queried progress on the work to the culvert bridge on Thorpe Astley

Park. It was noted that a meeting had been held with representatives of Blaby District Council and the contractor undertaking the work. It was agreed that work would commence on the culvert bridge in May once the application for the temporary footpath diversion had been approved by Leicestershire County Council.

125. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st January 2021 (item 16 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

There were no issues identified with income and expenditure to date.

126. Approval of Accounts

The Committee considered payments from 25th November 2020 until 31st January 2021 (item 17 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the period 25th November 2020 until 31st January 2021 be approved.

Reason for Decision

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

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

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: _____