

## **BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

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

**28TH JANUARY 2021 at 7.30PM**

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

Also in attendance was Councillor Ben Taylor (Blaby District Councillor for Winstanley Ward).

**Officers in Attendance:** Mr Darren Tilley, Executive Officer & Town Clerk and Mrs Pauline Snow, Deputy Executive Officer & Community Services Manager

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

### **COUNCILLOR PARMINDER BASRA, TOWN MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR**

#### **5889 Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Shabbir Aslam.

#### **5890 Disclosures of Interest**

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

#### **5891 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 were no members of the public present at the meeting.

#### **5892 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 12th November 2020 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

The Town Mayor moved approval of the minutes; which was seconded by Councillor Leanne Lee and was

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of Braunstone Town Council held on 12th November 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

**5893 Co-Option to Vacancy on the Council**

Council considered expressions of interest and determined whether to co-opt a member to fill the vacancy on the Council for the Winstanley Ward (item 5 on the agenda).

A Notice of Vacancy in the Office of Town Councillor was published on 27th November 2020 for the Winstanley Ward, due to resignation of David Di Palma. 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 18th December 2020 the Town Council published a notice setting out its intention to co-opt to the vacancy.

Two candidates had submitted expressions of interest for the co-opted position. One of the candidates, Mrs Charanjit Khera, had sent her apologies since she was not able to attend the meeting to address the Council given she had been admitted to hospital. Mrs Charanjit Khera had asked that her application be considered.

In the absence of any motion to postpone consideration of the matter; Council proceeded to consider both applications based on the information it had before it.

The candidate attending the meeting, Becca Lunn Scoppie, addressed the Council explaining how she intended to serve as a Town Councillor and answered questions from members of the meeting.

The Town Mayor advised Council that Standing Order 4.9, which sets out the process for co-opting to vacancies on the Council states at Paragraph f:

*"In the event that there are more applicants than vacancies, the Town Mayor will call for a secret ballot to take place and Town Councillors will be issued with a ballot paper and asked to vote for no more than the number of candidates required to co-opt to the number of vacancies".*

The Town Mayor stated that due to Covid-19 and remote attendance by Councillors at the meeting it was not possible to hold a secret ballot; therefore it was proposed by Councillor Parminder Basra and seconded by Councillor Nick Brown and

**RESOLVED** that Standing Order 4.9f be suspended for the duration of the item and that the voting be carried out in accordance with Standing Order 4.21 – Voting on Appointments.

The Town Mayor read out the two names and Councillors were asked to vote for one of the candidates and it was

**RESOLVED** that Becca Lunn Scoppie be co-opted as a Town Councillor to fill the vacancy for Winstanley Ward.

*Reason for Decision*

*The submission provided background on Becca Scoppie, who had set out how she would serve as a member of the Town Council and the Council considered her suitable to serve as a Town Councillor.*

Given the co-opted Councillor was in attendance remotely, it was proposed by Councillor Parminder Basra and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and

**RESOLVED** that, standing order 4.9h be varied to allow for Becca Lunn Scoppie to make her declaration before the Council but for her to sign the declaration in the presence of the Proper Officer at a later date, which must be no later than 15<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

*Reason for Decision*

*To allow Becca Scoppie to participate as a member of the Council in the Council meeting given her had joined through video link and would not be able to physically sign her 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 the resolution above, Councillor Lunn Scoppie made the formal declaration of acceptance of office before both the Council and the Proper Officer and duly took up her seat on the Council.

**5894 Committee Appointments**

Council considered Committee Appointments following changes in the membership of the Council (item 6 on the agenda).

The item included on the agenda incorrectly identified a vacancy on Policy & Resources Committee, which had been filled at the previous Council meeting (Minute 5876 refers).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Sam Fox-Kennedy and

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

- a) Councillor Leanne Lee to Appeals Committee; and
- b) Councillor Becca Lunn Scoppie to Community Development Committee.

*Reason for Decision*

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

#### **5895 Council Priorities and Objectives**

Council 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 7 on the agenda).

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

**RESOLVED**

1. that the structure of the Mission Statement be amended as proposed in the "Town Council Mission" section of the report;
2. that the nine Town Council Priorities for 2021/2022, based on the 2020/2021 Priorities and as updated, be approved as set out in the "Town Council Priorities" section of the report;
3. that a new Priority 10 "Responding to Climate Change" be approved, as set out in the "Town Council Priorities" section of the report; and
4. that the Council Objectives set out in Appendix 1, as amended, be approved.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To make the Mission Statement clearer and easier to read.*
2. *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.*
3. *To provide a framework for Climate Change response objectives to be at the forefront of the Town Council's service delivery and activities.*
4. *To ensure that the Council's objectives were relevant and reflected changing issues within the community.*

#### **5896 Capital Plan 2021/2022**

Council considered priorities and projects for 2021/2022 Capital Plan (item 8 on the agenda).

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

**RESOLVED**

1. that the project due for completion (section b) be removed, assuming its completion prior to the end of the plan period, otherwise it be included on the 2021/2022 Capital Plan;
2. that the Current Projects (section c) be rolled forward on to the 2021/2022 Capital Plan; and
3. that the Proposed New Projects (section d) be added to the 2021/2022 Capital Plan.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure the plan was updated accordingly reflecting progress with its delivery.*
2. *To confirm that the projects were outstanding and were still required.*
3. *To recognise the need to undertake investment and improvement as identified.*

**5897 Budget (including Fees & Charges) and Precept for 2021/2022 and future estimates**

Council considered the budget and precept for 2021/2022, including fees and charges, and received proposed estimates for future years (item 9 on the agenda).

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

**RESOLVED**

1. that the following be included as one-year items in the 2021/2022 budget:
  - (a) £1,000 for the Covid-19 Community Response, either for the Town's Covid-19 Community Response Initiative or to provide financial support for associated services and support, for example, the Braunstone Town Community Foodbank;
  - (b) £2,000 in the Civic Centre budget and £1,000 in the Thorpe Astley Community Centre budget to replace and expand the provision of Christmas lights and decorations; and
  - (c) £3,000 in the Library budget to undertake conversion of lighting to LED;
2. that no percentage increase be applied to Community Centres, sports pitches and miscellaneous fees and charges;
3. that £9,000 be earmarked in the reserves in 2021/22 to be used to balance the general fund budget;
4. that £10,000 of the £25,000 one-off Library Transfer Grant received from Leicestershire County Council be earmarked in the reserves in 2021/22 to be used to offset the additional Library staffing costs transferred under TUPE;
5. that the Estimates for 2021/2022, as attached at Appendix 1 of the

6. report, be approved as the Council's Budget for 2021/2022; and  
that a Net Precept Requirement for £681,961 for the financial year 2021/2022 be submitted to Blaby District Council.

#### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To fund specific items identified as a priority:*
  - (a) *to provide resources during 2021 for services to support residents and the community in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic;*
  - (b) *to purchase Christmas lights for the Community Centres and the associated fixings (including the electrical installation); and*
  - (c) *to reduce cost and emissions and reinvest the Library Service grant into improving and enhancing Library services.*
2. *Following a review of the budgeted income from Room Hires, Policy & Resources Committee established a Community Centres Working Group, which was postponed due to Covid-19 and was due to commence its work once the impact on the business of the Centres becomes clearer.*
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 3-4 years to avoid any adverse impact a single large precept increase would have on residents.*
4. *To enable the Town Council to continue to employ staff at Braunstone Town Library, as set out in its proposed service model.*
5. *To meet the Town Council's operating budgets for 2020/2021 along with funding for the Capital Plan and service pressures as identified in the report on Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning.*
6. *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.*

#### **5898 Announcements**

##### a) Town Mayor

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

- i. due to the ongoing situation with the Covid-19 pandemic the Town Mayor was unable to arrange any fundraising events but would be considering the possibility of organising a Walk and Talk event around Easter if this was possible; and
- ii. the Town Mayor reported that it had been an honour to record a short memorial service for Remembrance Day.

##### b) Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Nick Brown, commented on the sad news that over 100,000 deaths had now been recorded in the UK due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he added that there would have been residents locally that had suffered losses.

The Town Mayor asked Councillors to observe a minute's silence to remember all those that had lost their lives due to the pandemic.

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 10c on the agenda).

The report set out details on the following matters:

- National Restrictions,
- Local Alert System - Impact on Council Services,
- Impact on staffing capacity
- Covid-19 Vaccinations at Thorpe Astley Community Centre
- Covid-19 Community Response Update
- Looking Ahead

In response to a question, the Executive Officer & Town Clerk agreed to look into telephone answering response levels to ascertain whether the staffing capacity was impacting on service levels.

**5899 Questions from Councillors**

No questions had been submitted.

**5900 Reports of Standing Committees: Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee – 5th November 2020**

Council received the Report of the Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee meeting held on 5th November 2020 (p7060 – p7061).

It was moved by Councillor Amanda Hack and

**RESOLVED** that the Report be adopted.

**5901 Reports of Standing Committees: Community Development Committee – 10th December 2020**

Council received the Report of the Community Development Committee meeting held on 3rd December 2020 (p7073 – p7079).

It was moved by Councillor Anthea Ambrose and

**RESOLVED** that the Report be adopted.

**5902 Reports of Standing Committees: Extraordinary Policy & Resources Committee – 9th December 2020**

Council received the Report of the extraordinary meeting of Policy & Resources Committee held on 9th December 2020 (p7080– p7083).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

**RESOLVED** that the Report be adopted.

**5903 Reports of Standing Committees: Planning & Environment Committee – 10th December 2020**

Council received the Report of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 10th December 2020 (p7084 – p7092).

Page 7987, Minute 172 – Planning Decisions

In respect of the request for a meeting with the Planning Case Officer, with the Chair and Vice-Chair and the Executive Officer & Town Clerk regarding “the decision for application 20/1002/FUL, Change of use of an existing outbuilding from ancillary residential use to that of a nail bar and beauty salon (Sui Generis class use), at 3 Shottery Avenue”

Councillor Robert Waterton asked if the meeting had yet been arranged. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk advised that this would be followed up.

Page 7088, Minute 175 – Lubbesthorpe

In respect of road closure adjacent to The Osiers; Councillor Amanda Hack advised that there had been confusion over road closure signs that indicated that the cycle and footpaths would also be closed. Councillor Hack confirmed that the closure only applied to the highway and not to cycle and footpaths.

In respect of the proposal to arrange a meeting of local parishes to discuss the impact of the New Lubbesthorpe development on the local area; Councillor Robert Waterton advised that a meeting was held with local parish councils and it was agreed to arrange regular meetings to discuss the New Lubbesthorpe development.

Page 7090, Minute 179 – 5G Mast Installations

In relation to the processes around 5G mast installations; Councillor Robert Waterton queried if a letter of thanks had been sent to Blaby District Council for their work in getting the size of two masts in Braunstone Town, reduced to be more compatible with the street scene. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk confirmed that all actions requested by the Committee had been undertaken.

It was moved by Councillor Robert Waterton and

**RESOLVED** that the Report be adopted.

**5904 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 14th January 2021**

Council received the Report of the Policy & Resources meeting held on 14th January 2021 (p7093 – p7101).

Page 7098, Minute 161 – Blaby District Parish Councils Group

In respect of the “*suggestion to be made to the Board of Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils (LRALC) that at least two of the current vacancies on the Board be filled by persons from BAME backgrounds*”; Councillor Robert Waterton asked if the letter had been forwarded to the LRALC. The Executive Office & Town Clerk advised that it been sent but no response had yet been received.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

**RESOLVED** that the Report be adopted.

**5905 Motions on Notice**

No Motions on Notice had been submitted.

**5906 Sealing of Documents**

There were no documents for sealing.

**5907 County and District Councillor Reports**

a) Leicestershire County Council

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

- i. The budgets were currently being assessed by the County for 2021/2020 and budget pressures would continue for some time;
- ii. Weekly Covid-19 meetings were continuing and there was concern about the high rates of infections in Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley;
- iii. it was reported that due to the high rain and snow fall that the Narborough Road subways had flooded; the matter had been raised to be sorted as quickly as possible;
- iv. Shared pavements and cycle routes were not currently gritted in icy or snow conditions but the general principle of gritting would need to be reconsidered in view of the increase in the number of people using cycles;
- v. it was noted that the number of keyworker children attending schools in Braunstone Town during the Covid-19 pandemic was much higher than the national average and that local schools had undertaken bubble closures due infection in the schools; and
- vi. motions considered by the Council at Leicestershire County Council included:
  - a. Tree planting to increase;
  - b. Charter for Care Workers to be agreed; and
  - c. Hospital closures to be looked at as a whole including the proposal to close Melton birthing centre.

b) Blaby District Council

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

- i. budgets were currently being prepared by the District Council and there was funding shortfall from central government; the district council were considering requesting the maximum council tax increase; however, they were aware of the situation many families face due to the Covid-19 situation and propose a cross-party response to MP's and central government for a fairer deal for local authorities;
- ii. concern was raised about the increasing cost of clearing fly-tipping which had increased across the district due to the closure of the waste tips and the introduction of appointment times; the waste tips were managed by Leicestershire County Council but the cost of clearing up fly tipping falls under the district authorities;
- iii. a review of the District Council's Ward boundaries and number of Councillors was currently being proposed by the Local Government Boundary Commission; the district of Blaby had seen a 6% increase in population and yet the number of members remained at 39; the Local Government Boundary Commission would be working with the district and individual Parishes/Town councils on the proposed new boundaries.

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

- i. that a new Local Plan for Blaby District Council was being considered;
- ii. that more large development sites may get approved for the district and that meetings would be held on the economic side of development as retail was currently in a difficult situation; and
- iii. there was considerable pressure on the planning department at the moment due to home working and consultants may be employed to ease the backlog of work; it was noted that changes to the planning department were being considered but this was not the right time to be making decisions on changes to staffing.

## **5908 Outside Body Reports**

### a) Braunstone Town Community Minibus

Councillor Paul Kennedy reported that

- i. the minibuses were not currently being used due to the Covid-19 restrictions;
- ii. one of the Committee members and volunteer for the minibus had sadly, recently passed away; and
- iii. one of the drivers for the minibus had recently retired from the role now that his furlough period had ended.

### b) Braunstone West Social Centre

Councillor Phil Moitt reported that due to the covid-19 pandemic the centre was not open and no funding had been received. Currently the trustees were not meeting.

c) School Governors

Councillor Leanne Lee reported that she had now taken up the role of School Governor of Millfield School:

- i. Councillor Lee acknowledged the work of the teachers in the current, very difficult circumstances and noted that the list of designated key workers had now been extended increasing the number of children in school; and
- ii. Councillor Lee wished to thank all the staff of all local schools for the work they were doing and noted that the provision of on-line school was much improved from the first lockdown in April 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

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: \_\_\_\_\_