

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF CITIZEN'S ADVISORY PANEL
THURSDAY 3rd MARCH 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Parminder Basra (in the Chair) and Councillors Ajmer Basra (substitution for Councillor Phil Moitt), Dipen Nathwani (substituting for Councillor Leanne Lee), Satindra Sangha (substituting for Councillor Marion Waterton), Christiane Startin-Lorent and residents Geoff Simmonds, Susan Metson, Jeanette Essex, John Dodd and Talent Nyandoro.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Darren Tilley, Chief Executive, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and Mrs Pauline Snow, Deputy Chief Executive and Community Services Manager.

1. Election of Chair

In the absence of either the Chair or Vice-Chair, nominations were sought for chair for the meeting.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Parminder Basra be Chair for the meeting.

AGREED that Councillor Parminder Basra be elected Chair for the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Phil Moitt (Chair), Leanne Lee (Vice Chair) and Marion Waterton.

3. Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

4. Minutes of the Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December 2021 were received and noted.

5. Draft Environment and Biodiversity Strategy

A copy of the proposed draft of the Environment and Biodiversity Strategy for Braunstone Town Council's Parks and Open Spaces was received by the Panel for consideration and comment as appropriate.

The Strategy would be available for public consultation from week beginning 7th March 2022 for six weeks. The Strategy and comments received would be received by the Policy & Resources committee at its scheduled meeting on 28th April 2022 for consideration and approval.

Comments received from members of the panel included clarification on the cutting back of hedges on Meridian Way in Thorpe Astley. It was advised that this land had been transferred from a developer and work had been undertaken

to very overgrown and tall shrubbery in order to make it more manageable for Braunstone Town Council staff in the future. The shrubbery would be allowed to grow back to a level that was manageable for staff and local residents had also asked for the shrubbery to be reduced in height.

Members also commented on the current density of trees in Merrylees and suggested that thinning out of the trees and shrubs would benefit the area and allow the trees and undergrowth to grow better.

It was also suggested that mapping technology could be utilised to inform residents of which authority was responsible for each park/open space. It was noted that the Customer Services Reception at Braunstone Civic Centre was able to record and follow up queries from residents and pass to the appropriate authority.

A resident advised that silver discs had been placed on some trees at Franklin Park and queried what these were for and concern was raised regarding the cutting down of trees in the Meridian Leisure complex. Investigations would be undertaken on the discs on the trees at Franklin. The Town Council had no influence with regard to trees cut down on private property. It was suggested that residents could more affectively raise concerns about this with the Meridian Complex.

Members were advised that the Environment and Biodiversity Strategy included plans for developing overall management plans for the open spaces and parks within Braunstone Town that would cover working with partners and agencies on an overall environmental and biodiversity issues within the whole area.

6. Proposed Conservation Area for Braunstone Village

The panel received the results of the recent resident's survey on the merits of designating as a conservation area, the area of Braunstone Village to the south of Braunstone Lane to coincide with the already designated conservation area within the Leicester City boundary. An amendment to section 13 of the draft Character Assessment was circulated at the meeting following Blaby District Council's response to the consultation. The panel was asked to consider responses from the resident's survey and Blaby District Council Planning Policy team report on the survey.

Blaby District Council were happy to support the proposals for the draft conservation area in Braunstone Town and future consultation, exhibitions and drop-in events for residents would shortly be arranged. The panel commented that the project should be seen as an extension to an existing conservation area rather than a new one. The overall responses from the initial consultation with local residents was positive. However, with a deeper involvement of other agencies in the proposed conservation area the timescales would be extended but input from other partners would provide a more thorough and robust proposal.

Concern was raised by local residents regarding on ongoing planning application to build 13 new homes within the conservation area and whether the draft

conservation proposals would delay or prevent the planning application process with Blaby District Council.

Residents suggested that the boundaries of the extension to the conservation area be reconsidered to include a small green space beyond current bungalows which is the last small area of Manor Farm. Inclusion in the conservation area would prevent development on the land and protect two old existing agricultural buildings that have conservation significance.

7. Library - Community Engagement

The panel received an update on events undertaken in the library following engagement with the community on what events and activities they would like to see in the library and the enrolment of community volunteers to help with running and supporting projects.

It was noted that a grant of £5000 had been received from the County Council Cultural Communities Network team to run events and projects to engage the community and support vulnerable residents in the community library.

A children's workshop had taken place over the summer of 2021 for four weeks, a friendly bench purchased and installed in the Civic Centre Memorial Garden. Workshops were currently underway based on vinyl records and music intertwined with artwork, yoga and creative writing involving residents and young people. A five-week workshop was currently in progress at the library which connected residents with nature and working in garden areas of the community library and Franklin Park community orchard.

The work with the Cultural Communities Network ends on 31st March and a celebration day, encompassing all the activities and projects, will be held on Saturday 26th March in the library.

The Town Council had actively engaged with the communities regarding events and activities in the library and a group of volunteer residents had now set up weekly coffee mornings in the library and a weekly children's Story Time sessions.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

NOTE:

CRIME & DISORDER ACT 1998 (SECTION 17) – The Council has an obligation to consider Crime and 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 minutes are a draft and are subject to consideration for approval at the next meeting, scheduled for June 2022.