

**BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE**

**THURSDAY 13th JANUARY 2022 AT 7.30PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Nick Brown (Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Sam Fox-Kennedy (substituting for Councillor Leanne Lee), Sohan Johal, Paul Kennedy (substituting for Councillor Sam Maxwell), Phil Moitt, Satindra Sangha and Robert Waterton.

Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Amanda Hack and Tracey Shepherd observed the meeting remotely through Zoom Video Conferencing.

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

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

**66. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Leanne Lee and Sam Maxwell.

**67. Disclosures of Interest**

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

**68. 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.

**69. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2021 (item 4a on the agenda) and the extraordinary meeting held on 15th December 2021 (item 4b on the agenda) were circulated.

**RESOLVED**

1. that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record; and

2. that the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 15th December 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

## **70. Council Priorities and Objectives**

The Committee considered, for recommendation to Council, 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 5 on the agenda).

On 6th January 2022, the Planning & Environment Committee agreed that the Planning & Environment priorities and objectives should be the main areas of Planning & Environment activity for 2022/2023 (*Planning & Environment Committee Minute 73*).

### **RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. that the Council's Mission Statement be approved without amendment;
2. that the Town Council Priorities for 2021/2022 be consolidated into four medium term Strategic Aims, supported by annual delivery objectives, and be approved as the Council's Business Plan for 2022/2023 as set out at Appendix 2; and
3. that the Council Objectives, set out in Appendix 1, be approved; subject to Community Development Objective 9 being rephrased "*To encourage the formation of new community groups by promoting free/subsidised use of the Council's Community Facilities*".

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *The Mission Statement sets out the Council's vision to provide high quality services and support the needs of the community, recognising that this would be within available resources.*
2. *To focus the Council's resources on four main areas of activity in the medium term to ensure effective delivery of initiatives and projects given the limits on resources.*
3. *To ensure that the Council's objectives were relevant and reflected changing issues within the community.*

## **71. Capital Plan 2022/2023**

The Committee considered, for recommendation to Council, priorities and projects for the 2022/2023 Capital Plan (item 6 on the agenda).

On 6th January 2022, the Planning & Environment Committee agreed that the Planning and Environment service area Capital Plan items, as set out (and as amended) in the report, be rolled forward onto the 2022/23 Capital Plan (*Planning & Environment Committee Minute 75*).

## RESOLVED

1. that the following amendments be made to the notes column of:
  - (a) "Gateway signage to the Town on the new road from Lubbesthorpe" to read "To be scheduled"; and
  - (b) "Provide new, improved and enhanced notice boards at key locations" to read "Rolling programme over 5 years. Focus on Notice Boards on Council land in 2022/2023";

### THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

2. that the Completed Projects (section a), having now been completed, be removed from the rolling programme of Capital Projects;
3. that the projects due for completion (section b) be removed, assuming their completion prior to the end of the plan period, otherwise to be included on the 2022/2023 Capital Plan;
4. that the Current Projects (section c) be rolled forward, as amended, on to the 2022/2023 Capital Plan;
5. that the Proposed New Projects (section d) be added to the 2022/2023 Capital Plan; and
6. that the Projects proposed for Deletion (section e) be removed from the rolling programme of Capital Projects.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To update the notes to reflect the current situation and recent decisions.*
2. *To confirm that the projects had been completed and there was no further work outstanding.*
3. *To ensure the plan was updated accordingly reflecting progress with its delivery.*
4. *To confirm that the projects were outstanding and were still required.*
5. *To recognise the need to undertake investment and improvement as identified.*
6. *To recognise that, following review, these Projects were no longer required.*

## **72. Budget (including Fees & Charges) and Precept 2022/2023 and future estimates**

The Committee considered, for recommendation to Council, the budget and precept for 2022/2023, including fees and charges, and set out proposed estimates for future years (item 7 on the agenda).

Planning & Environment Committee on 6th January 2022 considered the draft budget estimates for its services and recommended:

1. that the *Waste Services* budget be increased from £5,300 per annum to £7,570 per annum;
2. that the *Street Furniture* revenue budget be reduced from £5,000 to £2,500; and that the £2,500 capital funds allocated in the reserves to *Gateway Signage* be retained;

3. that the draft Estimates for the Planning and Environment Committee [included at Appendix 1] be included in the Budget Estimates for 2022/2023.

*(Planning & Environment Committee Minute 75).*

**RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. that a budget of £1,000 be included as a one-off in 2022/2023 budget for Grants for community events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee;
2. that the following be included as new items in the 2022/2023 budget:
  - (a) £5,500 for Special (non-Capital) Projects, for example Climate Change initiatives, for the Town Council's facilities and parks;
  - (b) £200 for Library Cleaning; and
  - (c) £1,000 for General Events;
3. that the following one-off budgets in 2021/22 be retained in 2022/23:
  - (a) Christmas lights and decorations at Braunstone Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre; and
  - (b) Library Capital Projects;
4. that the budget for the Covid-19 Community Response be deleted;
5. that no percentage increase be applied to Community Centres, sports pitches and miscellaneous fees and charges;
6. that £2,500 of the £25,000 one-off Library Transfer Grant received from Leicestershire County Council be earmarked in the reserves in 2022/23 to be used to offset the additional Library staffing costs transferred under TUPE;
7. that the Estimates for 2022/2023, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved as the Council's Budget for 2022/2023; and
8. that a Net Precept Requirement for £720,356 for the financial year 2022/2023 be submitted to Blaby District Council.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure appropriate financial support to enable Queen's Platinum Jubilee anniversary events to be organised and to ensure their success.*
2. *To fund specific items identified as a priority and to allocate a separate budget heading for Library Cleaning.*
3. *Due to other commitments in 2021/22, the budget for Christmas lights and decorations had not been fully utilised. With Climate Change and other initiatives; there was a need to continue with Capital Projects provision for the Library.*
4. *Financial Resources had not been required for the Covid-19 Community Response during 2021 and the scheme was winding down.*
5. *Following a review of the budgeted income from Room Hires, Policy & Resources Committee established a Community Centres Working Group, which would report in February 2022.*
6. *To enable the Town Council to continue to employ staff at Braunstone Town Library, as set out in its proposed service model.*
7. *To meet the Town Council's operating budgets for 2022/2023 along with funding for the Capital Plan and service pressures as identified in the report on Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning.*

8. *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.*

### **73. Shakespeare Park - Improvement & Development**

The Committee received a progress report on the Shakespeare Park improvement project and financing for phase 2; along with an update on arrangements for future management of the pavilion and site (item 8 on the agenda).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. that progress with the Project: *Pavilion and Site Works, Tennis Courts improvements and Playground Improvements*, as set out in the relevant section of the report, be noted;
2. that the revised quote for £64,420 of November 2021 for the tennis courts improvements be confirmed; and
3. that the revised timescales for the project, attached at Appendix 1, 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. *There had been significant increases in the price of raw materials due to supply chain issues; nevertheless the revised tender price of November 2021 was within the agreed budget and available funding.*
3. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*

### **74. Covid-19 Response**

The Committee received an update on the implications of Covid-19 for the Council's services and considered fixed term Covid-19 Delegations to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk (item 9 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Covid-19 Delegations to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, attached as Appendix 1 of the report, be approved on a fixed term until the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, scheduled for 24th February 2022.

*Reason for Decision*

*To provide flexibility to respond to the ongoing and evolving Covid-19 situation, providing an open and transparent approach for this to be achieved under the Council's existing governance arrangements and structures.*

**75. Schedule of Policy Reviews**

The Committee considered for approval a schedule of Policy Reviews to ensure effective delivery within the resources available (item 10 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the current Health & Safety Policy and Data Protection Policy be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for review; and
2. that, subject to 1 above, the *Proposed Schedule of Policy Reviews*, as set out in the report, be approved.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To determine whether the policies were fit for purpose and could be scheduled for review in 2023 or whether they needed review and updating in 2022.*
2. *To prioritise policy reviews in order to ensure they would be carried out in a timely fashion while not hindering the delivery of the Council's projects and services.*

**76. Blaby District Parish Councils Group**

The Committee received Braunstone Town Council's submission to the Blaby District Parish Councils Group on 1st December 2021 (item 11 on the agenda) and considered whether there were any issues, which needed to be raised at future meetings.

**RESOLVED**

1. that the report be received and noted; and
2. that how Parish Councils were responding to Climate Change be raised at the next scheduled meeting of the Group.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To keep up to date with the discussions and work of the Group and to provide an opportunity to raise any relevant issues.*
2. *To ascertain what action other Parishes were taking to respond to the threat posed by Climate Change.*

**77. Automatic Payments (Direct Debit, Standing Order and BACS)**

The Committee received details of current direct debit, standing order and BACS payments for review and endorsement in accordance with Financial Regulations 6.6 to 6.8 (item 12 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the list of suppliers paid by variable direct debit, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be renewed;
2. that the supplier paid by use of a banker's standing order, as detailed in the table under Standing Order Payments in the report, be renewed; and
3. that the list of suppliers paid by BACS/CHAPS, attached at Appendix 2 of the report, be renewed.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that authorisations for variable direct debit payments were reviewed.*
2. *To ensure that authorisations for standing order payments were reviewed.*
3. *To ensure that authorisations for BACS/CHAPS payments were reviewed.*

**78. 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 2021 to 31st December 2021 (item 13 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.*

**79. Financial Comparisons**

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2021 (item 14 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 2021/2022.*

**80. Approval of Accounts**

The Committee considered payments from 20th October 2021 until 31st December 2021 (item 15 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the period 20th October 2021 until 31st December 2021 be approved.

*Reason for Decision*

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

**81. Civic Centre Facilities 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 received an update on the proposals for the refurbishment of the Civic Centre Toilets and Civic Centre Bar/Café kitchen (item 16 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the current position with regards to costs of and funding the project be received and noted; and
2. that the indicative timescales for the project, as set out in the *Timescales* section of the report, be approved.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To recognise the need to sustainably finance the project using a combination of earmarked funds and by accessing external grant funding.*
2. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*

**82. Organisation Staffing Review: Update on Job Evaluation and Implementation of the Proposals**

**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 results of an LRALC job evaluation review of the Management and Administration posts (item 17 on the agenda).

The Committee received a Supplementary Report to consider minor amendments to a couple of job descriptions in the form of cross references (filed with the confidential items on the agenda).



## RESOLVED

1. that it be noted that the implementation of the Organisation Review in the Library Service had been completed;
2. that the LRALC job evaluation review of the corporate management and administration posts, as detailed in Appendices 1 to 4, be endorsed;
3. that the *Financial Implications* be noted;
4. that the following posts be retitled:
  - (a) Executive Officer & Town Clerk to “Chief Executive & Town Clerk”; and
  - (b) Deputy Executive Officer & Community Services Manager to “Deputy Chief Executive & Community Services Manager”.
5. that the grades for the four posts evaluated by LRALC be approved and implemented from 1st April 2022 as set out in the *Allocating Grades* section of the report, noting for the relevant posts that CiLCA or equivalent qualification attracted an additional point at both the lower and higher end of the approved scale; and
6. that the proposed amendment to the Job Descriptions for Senior Customer Service & Centres Officer, highlighted at Appendix 5, and for Finance Assistant & Receptionist, highlighted at Appendix 6, be approved.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To note resources were in place to ensure the effective day to day operation of an efficient and high quality Library service, as well as actively promoting and developing the Library service.*
2. *To note that the Job Evaluation review of the Council’s Officer posts was now complete and steps had been taken to ensure that there would be equity in the grading of these posts.*
3. *To note that a large proportion of the cost would be covered by savings made in 2021 Organisational Review and proposals would be considered by Employing Committee which would result in any additional costs for 2022/2023 being within budget.*
4. *The roles provide officer-led strategic leadership similar to those in other large Town Councils and small district and borough Councils.*
5. *To recognise that the posts had been independently assessed against a nationally recognised evaluation scheme. To recognise that for those posts which allowed an additional scale point for CiLCA or equivalent, that the additional point was applied to postholders holding the qualification at both the bottom as well as at the top of the scale.*
6. *To recognise that the Senior Customer Service & Centres Officer allocated shifts and supervised the Finance Assistant & Receptionist in relation to the Service Desk part of the role.*

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

**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.

*These minutes are a draft and are subject to consideration for approval at the next meeting scheduled for 24th February 2022.*