

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING

Held on THURSDAY 18th MAY 2023 to 7.30pm

In the Chair, Councillor Satindra Sangha, Town Mayor.
There were 27 persons present at the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alex De-Winter, Marion Waterton and Robert Waterton.

2. Minutes of the Towns Meeting 12th May 2022

The Minutes of the Annual Towns Meeting held on 12th May 2022 were circulated with the agenda, which was made available to all persons present, and were taken as read.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Towns Meeting held on 12th May 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

3. Town Mayor's Report 2022/23

A report had been circulated with the agenda summarising the following:

- Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
- Community Activities
- Community Achievement
- Programme of Events
- Summer Fete
- Anniversaries/Civic Events
- Town Mayor's Charity – Rainbows

Councillor Satindra Sangha, Town Mayor for 2022/2023, reported on activities during her Mayoral year:

"It has been a privilege and an honour to have been chosen to serve as the Town's First Citizen and experience the hard work and dedication of many in our community who serve the needs of others and are committed to making our community a vibrant place in which to live.

I began my year as Town Mayor attending events in the community to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the sense of celebration at such an extraordinary achievement by a very special lady will remain in our hearts and minds for years to come. Therefore, it was with great sadness that we received the news on 8th September that Her Majesty had passed away. During the Platinum Jubilee year, the Town Council planted trees at Mossdale Meadows and Thorpe Astley Park as part of the national Queen's Canopy initiative. Not only does this initiative recognise Her Majesty's extraordinary achievement, along with contributing to

our objectives in our Climate Change & Environmental Strategy, but the project took on a new meaning acting as a permanent and lasting tribute in our community to our late Queen for the decades to come.

During the year I attended many events to celebrate, honour and recognise achievements of our residents and these are detailed in my report on the agenda.

On 19th June I opened the new Shakespeare Park Pavilion and hosted the open day. There was a good turnout from the community with many trying a game of bowls, having a go at the football penalty shoot out, and making use of our refurbished tennis courts. We had good feedback from the Clubs who reported that they had been able to sign up new members.

Thorpe Astley Community Centre Open Day on 17th September was similarly well supported. Many of the local clubs and organisations supported the event providing activities, performances, demonstrations and taster sessions.

Thank you to everyone who joined me supporting and putting on this year's Programme of Events, which raised funds for local groups, good causes and my charity.

Events included Craft Fairs a carol service, Christmas Panto and family Craft Day and a Community Quiz night.

Thank you all those who attended and helped to make the events a success.

My Award's Evening was an opportunity to recognise and thank the residents that contribute to the community and who really make a difference to other people's lives.

This year I was delighted to present Jack Haselgrove with an Outstanding Achievement Award in recognition of his contribution in recording the history of Braunstone Town and for his offer to assign the Copyrights to his two books, "Braunstone's Humble Past" and "When Life Was Transformed in Braunstone and the Role of the Parish Council in the 1920s/30s" to Town Council to support the Braunstone Community Library

I was able to recognise the work of 12 of our Library Volunteers for all their support, dedication and enthusiasm in making the Coffee Morning, Craft & Chatter and Children's Storytime groups in the Braunstone Community Library a success.

Finally I was able to recognise Raj Patel for over 10 years voluntary work running the karate school based at St Crispin's Church and providing a positive activity for children to participate in.

On a personal note, I am grateful that as Town Mayor I have been able to raise £4,430 for my Mayoral charity, Rainbows Children's Hospice to help them with their continued work with children and their families as they make the most of every precious moment.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to my son and consort Daniel who supported me in this important role every step of the way.

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the next Town Mayor a most enjoyable and successful year”.

4. Town Council Accounts and Budgets

Councillor Nick Brown, Leader of the Council, reported on the Town Council’s financial position. The Town Council’s Accounts and Budget Report was circulated with the agenda, which was made available to all persons present, and were taken as read.

5. Leader’s Report – Achievements 2022/23 and Priorities for 2023/24

A report had been circulated with the agenda, which was made available to all persons present. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Nick Brown, reported on the Town Council’s achievements during 2022/2023. A copy of the draft Annual Report for 2022, due for consideration and adoption at the Annual Council, was also circulated.

“The Town Council’s Policy & Resources Committee on 27th April 2023 finalised the draft Annual Report for 2023, a copy of which is attached as an appendix. The Annual Report summarises our achievements during the Council Year May 2022 to May 2023 and sets out our plans for the forthcoming Council year (2023/2024). The report will be received by the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, which meets following the Annual Towns Meeting, for consideration and adoption”.

“Despite the current economic and financial pressures, the Town Council continues its work to protect, enhance and improve services for the residents of the Town and below is a summary of our work and achievements over the last year and our priorities for the coming year”.

Shakespeare Park – Improvement & Development

“The new Pavilion facility, site improvements and refurbished tennis courts at Shakespeare Park have been fully completed and delivered under budget by £32,735. The new facility includes modern changing facilities and a multi-function, multi-purpose club room providing a meeting room and a social facility”.

“A central aim of this project is for Clubs to increase participation and therefore, membership. The brand new much improved and enhanced facility acts as a catalyst in this respect providing modern facilities and meeting/social space. More members should mean more money collected in membership fees. The pavilion and site are able to support lawn bowls, pétanque, football and tennis providing for both sustaining and encouraging growth in sport participation. The Council and the sports clubs hosted a successful community open day in June showcasing the new facilities and the sports on offer”.

“Residents are able to use tennis courts using our Tap4Tennis bookings service, which is also available at Thorpe Astley Park tennis courts. The use of a pre-

booked court entry system will give certainty around court availability, as well as providing funds to invest in court facilities and provide training sessions, all with the aim of increasing participation in tennis and sport”.

“The new Pavilion building is a shared sports facility and a community association made up of representatives from the sports clubs and the Council has been formed to run the facility on a day to day basis. The first meeting of the Committee of the Shakespeare Park Management Association was held on Monday 27th March. The Committee appointed a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The Committee also adopted a constitution and authorised the Treasurer to set up a Bank Account”.

“Since then, two further meetings have been held. The Licence to Occupy and Manage the Pavilion has now been issued and accepted by the Association, which will enable the new Pavilion facility to be available for hire and community use during the coming year. In addition, 10 year pitch licences have been issued to the Clubs, providing security of tenure, which should unlock funding opportunities and enable the Clubs to continue to grow”.

“Also, in the coming year we aim to deliver the final stage of our improvements: refurbishment of the playground, which includes the installation of sensory play equipment, providing for those children with special needs to play alongside their siblings”.

“A grant from the National Lottery of £45,000 was awarded on 27th April. Along with Section 106 funding, Tesco Bags of Help funding and underspends from phases 1 and 2 of the project, funding for the playground improvements has now been secured. A planning condition on the playground remains to be discharged and with lead in times, it is expected that works will commence at the end of the summer holidays meaning the new play facilities will be available for use in October 2023”.

Braunstone Civic Centre Improvements

“Having secured funding and appointed a contractor, works to improve the toilet and kitchen facilities at Braunstone Civic Centre began in January 2023. The building works were completed last month with some snagging and fitting works in the new Café kitchen to be completed this month”.

“The refurbished toilets included a new Changing Places toilet. I am delighted that the Council was successful in bidding to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities for £19,941 funding towards the cost of providing a Changing Places toilet. Standard accessible toilets do not meet the needs of all people with a disability. People with profound and multiple learning disabilities, as well people with other physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis often need extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. Changing Places toilets meet these needs and it is right that we invest in these improvements to ensure that all in our community can access, enjoy and benefit from the services we provide at the Civic Centre site”.

“The internal reorganisation of the building provided an opportunity to improve the kitchen facilities. The new kitchen facility for the Civic Community Lounge

will expand the bar service to include the provision of a café service offering lunches and meals, utilising the Lounge more effectively and providing a wider community social and meeting space”.

Supporting our Community

“Following the Covid-19 pandemic and with the current cost of living crisis, the Town Council has continued to support and facilitate initiatives to support our community groups and those in our community who are most in need.

“With the support of our Library volunteers, we ran a Warm Spaces Lunch throughout the winter period. The initiative provided a hot soup and an opportunity to socialise, meet others and seek support and advice through the Town’s Local Area Coordinator”.

“In addition, the Town Council continues to provide support to our voluntary organisations and groups, who are at the heart of our community, by offering discounted arrangements, including free use, when using our community centres, and with additional funds available through our community grants scheme. Furthermore, following a generous gift from the trustees of the former Braunstone Town Community minibus, a new community and social inclusion projects grant scheme has been established”.

Climate Change and the Environment

“In recent years the impact of climate change has become increasingly visible and, therefore, in 2021 the Town Council adopted a Climate Change & Environmental Strategy. The Strategy sets out a roadmap for the activities of the Town Council to become carbon neutral by 2030; for promoting and encouraging awareness and action on climate change; to move towards renewable energy sources; and to ensure the protection and enhancement of the town’s green spaces”.

“Following adoption of the Strategy, the Council has also developed and implemented an Environment & Biodiversity Strategy for the Town’s parks and green spaces in order to promote and encourage tree planting and seek to increase and enrich biodiversity”.

“To ensure that the Council becomes carbon neutral by 2030, we also commissioned a Carbon Audit of our activities, which made 11 recommendations for reducing the Council’s carbon footprint by approximately 40% by 2024. An Action Plan was developed and approved by Policy & Resources Committee in June last year. Since then, work began a pace to deliver the recommendations and address the impact of our own activities on the climate”.

“Following a procurement process, this month work is due to commence on installing Solar PV Panels and Electric Vehicle Charging Points at our Community Facilities. In addition, an Air Source Heat Pump will also be installed at Thorpe Astley Community Centre over the summer. These initiatives will not only reduce our carbon emissions by around one-third but will also ensure the Council meets its budgeted £18,000 savings on utility costs”.

“Our climate and environmental commitments are not just about the Council’s carbon footprint, they are equally about supporting our community to respond. Therefore, the Town Council has been working closely with its partners to improve cycling and walking routes in order to provide sustainable transport connections between the various communities, facilities and services in our Town and also between the Town and the City Centre, Fosse Park, railway stations, bus stations and other surrounding retail and employment areas. Work began on phase 1 of these improvements in February with the enhancement of the pathway through Mossdale Meadows. Work on the lighting and CCTV is due to be complete by the end of this month. Shortly after the path will be linked through Meridian Leisure. Further works are due to be carried out in the autumn to improve the pathway and crossing points along Meridian Way. This is a significant development for our community providing better access to Meridian Leisure and Business Park for Braunstone Town residents and to the Civic Centre/Library and Mossdale Meadows for Thorpe Astley residents. Work to improve access to Aylestone Meadows from Kingsway is also due to take place this year”.

Strategic Aims and Delivery Objectives 2023/2024

“In 2021, the Council reviewed its ten key priorities refining and focussing them into four strategic aims for the medium term:

1. **Protect and Enhance our Parks and Open Spaces:** to invest in and maintain high quality urban green spaces for sport, recreation and play, while enriching the natural environment.
2. **Provide Vibrant Community Facilities:** to provide vibrant, accessible and cost effective community facilities, which continue to be used by and respond to the needs of our community.
3. **Support and Connect the Local Community:** to both nurture and enhance the Town’s community life and connect our communities to reduce isolation and build community cohesion.
4. **Respond to Climate Change and champion sustainable development:** to embed climate and environmental awareness in our decision making and actions and play our part in supporting the community to do the same”.

“Each Aim is supported by specific delivery objectives, which are reviewed and developed as part of the annual review of the Council’s Business Plan and Capital Plan and the annual setting of the budget and Council Tax precept. For 2023/2024 there are 17 specific delivery objectives”.

“A summary of the delivery objectives is contained in the Annual Report and full details are set out in the Council’s Business Plan, which is available on our website and from Customer Services at Braunstone Civic Centre”.

Capital Plan

“Alongside the Council’s Business Plan, the Council approves a Capital Plan, which sets out proposed improvements to our assets and infrastructure”.

“In the coming year, priority capital projects include:

- replacing the vehicle and pedestrian culvert bridges at Mossdale Meadows given the existing culverts are not suitable for the flow of water which causes flooding on the park;
- Shakespeare Park playground improvements and provision of sensory play equipment;
- enhancements to Impey Close playground and Open Space;
- installation of Solar PV Panels at the Council's Community Facilities, and an air source heat pump at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, in order to protect the public finances from the significant increase in energy costs and to address the impact of our operations on the environment by reducing our carbon footprint; and
- installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points and improvements to cycling facilities at our community facilities to support sustainable travel by our service users, hirers and staff".

"A full list of the Council's Capital Projects is available on our website and from Customer Services at Braunstone Civic Centre".

Getting Involved

"The Council welcomes the input of the community in shaping our services and initiatives. Residents can have their say on a range of service improvements, initiatives and projects through consultations, which are notified in the Braunstone Life, on our website, social media and notices around the Town".

"Residents can have their say at our Council and Committee meetings through the Public Participation item on each agenda".

"The Council also has a Citizens' Advisory Panel, which is open to all residents to join, which meets quarterly and discusses our Business Plan, Capital Plan, initiatives and projects and receives details of our consultations".

Update Reports

"Updates on the above matters are published in a regular Leader's report in the Braunstone Life and on the Council's website".

6. Termination of Meeting

The Town Mayor thanked those present for attending and with no further business the meeting closed at 7.50pm.

SIGNED:

DATE: