

## **BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

**21st NOVEMBER 2019**

### **Item 6 – Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning**

#### **Purpose**

To set out the context for the Council's medium term priorities and financial planning.

#### **Background**

Braunstone Town Council first published an assessment of long term financial considerations in January 2014, this was subsequently updated in November 2014, when it was agreed that the Medium to Long Term Priorities and Financial Planning be revised at least on an annual basis in order that changed circumstances and revised predictions can be incorporated into the Council's Medium to Long Term planning process.

The current economic and political climate makes it difficult to predict the medium term and therefore the exercise in predicting the long term was merely projecting over ten years the impact of existing and known pressures and this has limited value. Therefore, on 25th January 2018, the Council agreed "*that the Priorities and Financial Planning process be revised to medium term, updated at least on an annual basis, and covering a rolling 5 year period*".

By identifying medium term priorities and financial planning, the Council aims to safeguard the delivery of important local services whilst ensuring appropriate future investment in the Town's services and infrastructure.

#### **Economic and Political Context**

According to the IMF's World Economic Outlook Report (October 2019), the past year has seen global growth fall sharply. The report details that among advanced economies, the weakening has been broad based, affecting major economies (the United States and especially the euro area) and smaller Asian advanced economies. The slowdown in activity has been even more pronounced across emerging market and developing economies, including Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and Russia, as well as a few economies suffering macroeconomic and financial stress.

The IMF forecast Global growth at 3% for 2019, its lowest level since 2008/09 and a 0.3% point downgrade from the April 2019 World Economic Outlook Report. Growth is projected to pick up to 3.4% in 2020 (a 0.2% point downward revision compared with April), reflecting primarily a projected improvement in economic performance in a number of emerging markets in Latin America and the Middle East. However, the report identifies that with uncertainty about prospects for several European countries along with a projected slowdown in China and the United States, "a much more subdued pace of global growth and activity could well materialise".

In the UK, the Chancellor has announced that he is planning to hold a Budget on 6th November, unless the UK leaves the EU without a deal, in which case it will be delayed. Therefore, the Office for Budget Responsibility Autumn 2019 Forecast evaluation report, which was due to be published in October 2019, has been postponed.

However, their Economic and fiscal outlook, published in March 2019, revised UK GDP growth in 2019 down from 1.6% to 1.2%, while retaining forecast growth at 1.4% in 2020 and predicting 1.6% in 2021. The report predicts that borrowing in October 2019 will be £31.8 billion and in March 2020 will be £29.3 billion and anticipates it will be reduced to £14.4 billion (previously £21.4 billion) by 2022/23. The borrowing forecast was revised down by the Office for Budget Responsibility in March due to higher tax receipts and lower spending.

The Consumer Prices Index 12-month inflation rate was 1.7% in September 2019, unchanged from August 2019. This compares to 2.4% in September 2018 following a peak at 2.7% in August 2018.

In August, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, which sets monetary policy to meet the 2% inflation target, maintained the base rate at 0.75%, which it had raised a year earlier from 0.5% to 0.75%, the second rise in a decade. While not affecting existing loans, higher interest rates will impact on the Town Council's further borrowing costs. Nevertheless, many analysts predict that September's lower CPI figure would ease the pressure on the Monetary Policy Committee to make further increases.

The Office for National Statistics reported in August that annual average pay rose by 3.9% in the three months to June 2019, the highest rate since June 2008. There is further comment on employment cost pressures for the Town Council below.

The proposed withdrawal agreement for the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union involves a transition period with the UK remaining part of the Single Market and Customs Union currently until 31st December 2020. During this period it is intended that the final arrangement and ongoing relationship with the EU will be negotiated alongside other international trade agreements. To that extent there will continue to be some degree of economic uncertainty until the shape of these agreements is fully known. In the event that a withdrawal agreement cannot be reached and the Article 50 process isn't extended, then there are predictions of significant economic and financial uncertainties at least in the short term.

The 2017 General Election resulted in no overall control at Westminster. Since then the Government eased public sector spending controls such as increasing the percentage principal authorities can raise their Council Tax without having to hold a referendum and the ending of the requirement to keep public sector pay rises within 1%. With the agreed Article 50 extension and a further General Election on 12th December, the likelihood of any significant central directed restructuring of local government/local public services and the way they are financed in the short to medium term remains highly unlikely.

In short, for the Town Council, political and economic activity impacts on the amount

of money in the public finances and how far that money goes.

### Rolling Five Year Budget Plan

Attached as Appendix 1 are the financial projections for the period until 2024/2025, which is based on the following assumptions:

- the full cost of auto-enrolment of all eligible employees into the pension scheme, with a 2% pay increase each year;
- additional staffing costs as a result of TUPE of Library staff and the NJC scale point review;
- 2%, the Bank of England target inflation rate, being added to estimated expenditure;
- financing additional borrowing for the Shakespeare Park improvements;
- savings from existing loans which mature during the period;
- use of reserves in earlier years to offset increases in the precept due to the loss of the Council Tax Support Grant and replenishing the reserves in later years when there are less predicted pressures on the budget;
- that the Council will make diminishing savings (up to 2021/2022) to offset increases in cost and the loss of the Council Tax Support Grant; and
- that the base budget predicted when setting the Council Tax equates to the actual income and expenditure.

The projections make use of the contingency and annual Capitals Projects budget in the short term to offset larger percentage increases in the precept in the forthcoming financial years when the costs identified above need to be met and the Council has to deal with the loss of income resulting from the withdrawal of the Council Tax Support Grant.

These projections, using current tax base information, result in a 7.96% increase on the precept for 2020/21, £9.89 on a band D property and £7.69 on a typical band B property.

### Town Council Priorities and Objectives

The Council's Mission Statement sets out its vision to provide high quality services and support the needs of the community, while recognising that this is only sustained by ensuring that the resources to do it are available.

**Mission Statement** - *We exist to ensure that local services and the environment reach the highest possible standards within the resources available for citizens, visitors and those who work in Braunstone Town; to provide a focus for civic pride; to listen, identify and respond to agreed local needs; and to help develop a strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident community, free from unlawful discrimination. "Spectemur. Agendo" translates "Let us be Judged by Our Actions"*

In addition to the Mission Statement, the Council has key Priorities for 2019/2020 and key objectives relating to its Committees and Service Areas, which are attached as Appendix 2. This document forms the Council's Business Plan for the year and is reviewed on an annual basis.

## Capital Programme

The Council is responsible for a significant amount of physical assets and to assist with longer term financial planning, the Council approves, in consultation with the Citizens' Advisory Panel, a list of Capital Projects, which includes identified long term improvements to parks and open spaces. The Capital Plan approved with the 2019/2020 budget in January 2019 is attached as Appendix 3. The Plan identifies projects, which the Town Council will need to deliver to ensure the long term sustainability and efficiency of its services.

The Capital Plan is a rolling document, which is reviewed annually alongside the budget and identifies priority projects. The major ongoing capital project is to improve and redevelop the facilities at Shakespeare Park. Also included is refurbishment of the toilet facilities at Braunstone Civic Centre, alongside consideration to adapting the bar facilities to expand business and income potential by enabling the current bar to operate a café service during the daytime in the week.

Investment in the Council's infrastructure will continue to present pressures over the forthcoming years and the Council needs to make financial provision for replenishing its reserves and financing public works loans in order to deliver its Capital Programme. The current position with the reserves is attached at Appendix 4.

## Financial Strategy

Since 2014, the Town Council has adopted the following financial strategy:

- balancing of annual operational income with annual operational expenditure;
- continued monitoring of the level of reserves and assessment of future investment needs;
- regular monitoring of reserves and general fund expenditure with proposed actions to address any issues prior to it becoming structural;
- forecast future year's expenditure on previous actual income and expenditure; and
- yearly assessment of the financial constraints.

## Income Pressures

### *1. Loss of Council Tax Support Grant*

In 2013 there were changes in the way council tax was calculated and this resulted in a reduction in the council tax base figure. The Government provided a support grant to principal councils in order to bridge this gap, in Blaby the District Council decided to pass on part of the government grant to parishes. In 2013/2014 Braunstone Town Council received £56,820 in Council Tax Support Grant, which gradually reduced to £48,897 in 2017/2018.

However, Blaby District Council determined in February 2017 to discontinue the redistribution of this grant to parishes, along with ending the redistribution of the New Homes Bonus, from April 2018.

This decision has impacted upon the Council's finances, since in order to offset

the impact on residents of a single large increase in the precept, the Council has utilised some of its reserves and funds in the revenue budget allocated to capital projects and therefore, reduced its ability to deliver capital investment in the short to medium term.

## 2. Parish Precept and Referendum principles

*The Local government finance settlement 2020 to 2021: technical consultation*, published on 3rd October 2019 confirms that the Government proposes to continue the 3 year moratorium on the application of the referendum principles (sometimes known as "capping") to local parish and town councils for the 2020/21 financial year.

However the Government "remains concerned about the pressure placed on taxpayers from thousands of town and parish councils across England" and expects them to exercise "even greater restraint" for 2020/21. The national average local parish and town council Council Tax rate (Band D) for 2019-20 is £67.18. As in previous years the Government state they will keep the matter under "active review" for future years.

Given the highest projected increase in precept is during the next 3 years with lower increases in the subsequent years; while the extension of the referendum principles to parish precepts in subsequent years remains theoretically possible, any impact would at this stage appear to be much less severe on the Council's finances.

## 3. Pressure on income from Facility Hires

Since 2016/2017 fees and charges have been increased in line with precept increases. However, this has resulted in cancellation of some longer term hires, who have reported that year on year, slightly above inflation increases has meant that their activity is no longer viable. However, the income received from both centres has over that period remained steady. Nonetheless, given the economic pressures many are facing, to increase hire charges in line with the projected increase in precept over the next 3 years is likely to have a negative impact on the net income from room hire and more widely on the offer and appeal the centres have in the community.

## Expenditure Pressures

### 1. Public Works Loans

Public Works Board lending is offered at a fixed margin above the Government's cost of borrowing, as measured by gilt yields. The Treasury raised the margin over gilts to 100bps (one percentage point) in 2010, to better reflect the availability of capital finance, and lowered it to 80bps over gilts in 2013. Since then local authorities have substantially increased their use of Public Works Loans as the cost of borrowing has fallen to record lows.

However, on 9th October, the treasury increased the margin that applied to new

loans from the Public Works Loan Board with immediate effect to 100bps (one percentage point) on top of usual lending terms. The Government have stated that they will monitor the impact of this change and keep rates under review.

This change will have a significant impact on the repayment costs of new loans. Council on 26th September 2019 approved a request to borrow £936,936 towards the cost of the improvements to the Shakespeare Park Site and Pavilion. As a result of the increased margin, the annual repayment has increased from £34,678.30 by £7,411.62 to £42,089.92, an increase of 21.37%.

Two loans mature in May 2022, therefore, half of the annual repayment cost is saved in 2022/23 and the other half of the annual repayment cost is saved in 2023/24. In addition, another loan matures in November 2023 and therefore, the full annual repayment cost is saved in 2024/25.

These figures have been included in the projections at Appendix 1 from 2020/2021.

## **2. Library and Customer Service Shop**

On 22nd August 2019, Policy & Resources Committee approved the agreements, arrangements and timescales for the transfer of the management of Braunstone Town Library to the Town Council. The Town Council took over the management of the service on 1st October 2019.

Since the Town Council's model for running the Library includes paid staff, the existing Library staff, who have specific contracts to Braunstone Town Library, transferred to the Town Council's employment under TUPE. The establishment equates to 25 $\frac{3}{4}$  hours per week, 1,339 hours per annum, salaries including on-cost is £16,965 per annum. This figure has been included in the additional staffing cost from 2020/21 in the projections at Appendix 1.

Currently the Town Council received £15,000 per annum from Blaby District Council to provide access to its services through Customer Services, based at Braunstone Civic Centre. The original proposals for taking over the management of the Library were to make overall efficiency savings by combining these services. The Service Level agreement for Customer Services ended on 30th June 2019, although the both Councils are currently continuing to operate the agreement, while it is reviewed. In the event that the agreement isn't renewed, then this would add additional pressures to the budget.

## **3. Review of NJC Scales and Scale Points**

As part of the 2016-18 pay deal, the National Joint Council (NJC) agreed to conduct a review of the NJC pay spine. The primary reason for this review is the introduction of the Government's National Living Wage.

Designing a restructured pay spine that is capable of withstanding annual changes to the National Living Wage rate (without the need for regular fundamental reviews) whilst retaining its current flexibility for local employers to

apply local pay and grading structures and being compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and single status principals is a significant challenge for the Local Government sector. It is important to state from the outset that a restructured pay spine will not be possible without some additional cost for councils, with estimates around 10% over the first 5 years from 2019/20. However, the NJC is endeavouring to achieve an outcome that is financially viable for employers and fair to employees.

It is difficult in the absence of the conclusion of the NJC review to predict the impact on the Town Council's finances and whether further reviews would be required by the Town Council to continue to meet the Living Wage Foundation rates. On the worst case scenario of the NJC Review – 10% over 5 years, including the Library staff who are due to TUPE to the Town Council's employment, would result in an increase in salary costs of £51,000 by 2023/24, which has been built into the income/expenditure projections at Appendix 1.

#### ***4. Removal of 1% Public Sector Pay Cap***

Following removal of the 1% cap on public sector pay, most public sector pay review bodies have made recommendations in excess of 1%.

On 10th April 2018, the National Employers of Local Government Services and NJC Trade Unions reached agreement as follows:

- a two-year pay increase from 1 April 2018;
- the majority of employees - those on salaries starting at £19,430 per annum - to receive an uplift of 2% on 1st April 2018 and a further 2% on 1st April 2019, with those on lower salaries receiving higher percentage increases;
- the agreement also included the introduction of new national pay spines on 1st April 2019.

The NJC Trade Unions lodged their 2020 pay claim with the National Employers at a meeting on 24th July 2019. In summary, the claim is for:

- a 10% pay increase
- a one-day increase in annual leave
- a two-hour reduction in the working week
- a review of workplace stress and mental health.

The National Employers of Local Government Services and NJC Trade Unions are currently negotiating the details. Any increases in pay recommended by the NJC will need to be met out of the Town Council's budget.

Currently the projections at Appendix 1 are based on the advice relating to the NJC Scales Review.

#### ***5. Pension Costs***

All eligible staff having been auto-enrolled on the enrolment date of 1st October 2015 remained in the pension scheme, meaning the number of staff in the scheme has doubled. The 2017/2018 made provision for £85,010 to cover this,

which took into account pay increments and a 1% increase on salary scales.

The actuarial valuation of the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund was last undertaken, based on the position of each employing body at 31st March 2016. One of the key outcomes of the valuation is the setting of employers' contribution rates for the three year period commencing 1st April 2017. Therefore actuarial valuation will be undertaken prior to the end of the financial year for implementation from April 2020. Details are currently not available. Last time the Town Council's contribution rates increased from 18.47% to 19.79%.

In July 2019, the Supreme Court heard a legal challenge to Public Sector Pensions based on the move to career average schemes and whether this breached age discrimination law. The challenge has been decided in the Supreme Court and is often referred to as the McCloud/Sargeant judgment.

The remedy for Public Sector schemes are planned for December 2019 or early 2020. At this stage the remedy is not known. However, one key area that is being considered in the remedy for a recalculation of member benefits. This is likely to require all hour changes for certain scheme members since 1st April 2014 when the career average was introduced.

However, the most significant pressure placed on pensions will be the requirement to meet the extra entitlements resulting from any pay increases in excess of 2%.

## ***6. Potential rises in the Foundation Living Wage***

In February 2015, the Town Council decided to pay the Living Wage, according to the criteria used by the Living Wage Foundation – which is based on the cost of living linked to a basket of household goods and services. The current Living Wage is £9.00 compared to the National Living Wage of £7.83. The lowest NJC pay scale on Braunstone Town Council's establishment is new scale point 5, which is paid £9.74. The Government's National Living Wage will be £8.21 next year and is due to reach £9 per hour by 2020 and this has been covered in the new scale points implemented under the NJC from 1st April 2019. While the NJC review of the salary points will take account of this, predicted increases in the cost of living may result in a widening of the gap between the National Living Wage and the Living Wage Foundation rate, which could require the Town Council to review salary scales for some parks and centres staff posts.

## ***7. Investment in Asset and Infrastructure Improvements***

Pressures on the revenue budget have squeezed the amounts the Town Council has to spend on improvements to its buildings, parks and playgrounds. The Council has an ambitious Capital Plan, which it aims to deliver through a combination of borrowing, direct payment from annual budgets and grants. The speed at which this happens has been reduced as a result of trying to bridge the funding gap resulting from the loss of Council Tax Support Grant. Any subsequent unforeseen reduction in income or increases in expenditure could impact on the future implementation of the Capital Plan.

## Current Financial Year (2019/2020)

The actual position in the revenue budget for the current financial year (2019/2020) for 1st April 2019 until 30th September 2019 is as follows:

	Budget (Half Year)	Actual (Half Year)
Income	£402,222	£373,073
Expenditure	£411,222	£362,157
Difference	-£9,000	£10,916

Both income and expenditure to date is below anticipated levels and the finances are currently in surplus. Forthcoming expenditure includes insurance payments and income to be received includes Blaby District Council's contribution to the Customer Service Shop, the ring fenced commuted sums held by Blaby District Council in relation to Thorpe Astley Park and the Library grant from Leicestershire County Council. The most significant area of expenditure, salaries and on costs remains proportionate.

## Committee Consideration

Policy & Resources Committee on 31st October 2019 considered the Council's medium term priorities and financial planning (Policy & Resources Committee minute 32), as follows:

£21,306 had been allocated in 2019/2020 to fund the repayments on borrowing for Shakespeare Park; however, since the loan had not been drawn down and repayments would be due in May and November, no repayments would be made during the current financial year offsetting the projected £18,000 budget deficit. Therefore, the Committee noted that the Council was unlikely to need the funding allocated in the budget in the current financial year towards the repayment of the Public Works Loan for the Shakespeare Park Improvements and therefore this could be factored into the income/expenditure projections for 2020/21.

In addition, three loans would mature during the plan period, which could be reinvested into the Council's reserves and Capital Projects. Therefore, the Committee resolved that the report be updated to include the payment savings from Public Works Loans which mature during the projected period.

Therefore, the following has been factored into the revised medium term financial projections attached at Appendix 1:

- *Less Savings / Income Generation:* financial years 2022/23 & 2023/24 include two loans which mature in May 2022, therefore, half of the annual repayment cost is saved in 2022/23 and the other half of the annual repayment cost is saved in 2023/24. In addition, another loan matures in November 2023 and therefore, the full annual repayment cost can be saved in 2024/25.
- While £18,000 which was expected to be drawn down from reserves in 2019/20, is anticipated to offset against the amount in the 2019/20 budget (£21,306) for Shakespeare borrowing repayments, since the Council has

earmarked this amount, it is retained in this year's assessment. However, in anticipation of this amount not being drawn down from reserves, half has been added to be drawn down from the reserve in 2020/21 and half in 2021/22 to reduce the impact of precept increases. Effectively, if the £18,000 earmarked this year is not used, the Council will have £179,075 in non-earmarked reserves on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

- In the years the Council makes savings on loan repayments, £18,000 has been allocated in 2023/24 to replenish the reserve (which is forecast to be used in 2020/21 & 2021/22) and £32,000 has been allocated in 2024/25 to replenish the actual reserve used in 2018/19.

Subject to these changes, Policy & Resources Committee approved the following recommendations to be submitted to Council for approval.

#### Recommendations

1. That the current projections based on known financial pressures identified in the report be noted;
2. that the Council's Mission Statement and the Objectives for each Service Area be used as the basis for calculating the annual budget and any external funding sought; and
3. that the Council's General Reserves be used to invest in infrastructure and assets and in the development and remodelling of services, including the Town Council's operations.

#### Reasons

1. To provide a foundation for preparing budget estimates for 2019/2020 and beyond.
2. To ensure the Council focusses its activity and spending given the future financial uncertainties.
3. To ensure the highest possible standards within the resources available in the future.

**APPENDIX 1 – INCOME / EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS**

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
<b>Total Requirement</b>	<b>£559,410</b>	<b>£567,098</b>	<b>£570,769</b>	<b>£574,977</b>	<b>£567,241</b>	<b>£559,427</b>
<b>Plus Increase in costs</b>	<b>£11,188</b>	<b>£5,671</b>	<b>£5,708</b>	<b>£5,750</b>	<b>£5,672</b>	<b>£5,594</b>
<b>Less Savings / Income Generation</b>	<b>£3,500</b>	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£13,486</b>	<b>£13,486</b>	<b>£4,586</b>
<b>Total including Savings</b>	<b>£567,098</b>	<b>£570,769</b>	<b>£574,977</b>	<b>£567,241</b>	<b>£559,427</b>	<b>£560,435</b>
<b>Additional Pension Provision (+2%)</b>	<b>£41,013</b>	<b>£41,833</b>	<b>£42,670</b>	<b>£43,523</b>	<b>£44,393</b>	<b>£45,281</b>
<b>Additional Staffing Costs</b>	<b>£28,400</b>	<b>£33,300</b>	<b>£39,200</b>	<b>£45,100</b>	<b>£51,000</b>	<b>£51,510</b>
<b>Additional Borrowing Repayments</b>	<b>£21,306</b>	<b>£42,090</b>	<b>£42,090</b>	<b>£42,090</b>	<b>£42,090</b>	<b>£42,090</b>
<b>Non-Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>-£18,000</b>	<b>-£9,000</b>	<b>-£9,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£18,000</b>	<b>£32,000</b>
<b>(Balance of Reserves)</b>	<b>£161,075</b>	<b>£152,075</b>	<b>£143,075</b>	<b>£143,075</b>	<b>£161,075</b>	<b>£193,075</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>-£20,000</b>	<b>-£20,000</b>	<b>-£15,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>(Balance for Financial Year)</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>£20,000</b>	<b>£20,000</b>	<b>£20,000</b>
<b>Capital Projects</b>	<b>-£15,000</b>	<b>-£15,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>(Balance for Financial Year)</b>	<b>£10,700</b>	<b>£10,700</b>	<b>£25,700</b>	<b>£25,700</b>	<b>£25,700</b>	<b>£25,700</b>
<b>TOTAL REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>£604,817</b>	<b>£643,992</b>	<b>£674,937</b>	<b>£697,954</b>	<b>£714,910</b>	<b>£731,316</b>
<b>Less Council Tax Support Grant</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>Net Precept</b>	<b>£604,817</b>	<b>£643,992</b>	<b>£674,937</b>	<b>£697,954</b>	<b>£714,910</b>	<b>£731,316</b>
<b>Band D (scaled Tax Base)</b>	<b>4,870.93</b>	<b>£124.17</b>	<b>£132.21</b>	<b>£138.56</b>	<b>£143.29</b>	<b>£146.77</b>
<b>% Increase</b>	<b>4.98%</b>	<b>6.47%</b>	<b>4.80%</b>	<b>3.41%</b>	<b>2.43%</b>	<b>2.30%</b>
<b>Average % Increase</b>	<b>N/A</b>			<b>3.93%</b>		
<b>£5 Increase on Band D (% increase)</b>				<b>£137.21</b>	<b>£142.21</b>	<b>£147.21</b>
<b>Receipt</b>		<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>3.78%</b>	<b>3.64%</b>	<b>3.52%</b>
				<b>£668,347</b>	<b>£692,701</b>	<b>£717,056</b>
						<b>£741,411</b>



**BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**BUSINESS PLAN 2019/2020**  
**Priorities & Objectives**

**Town Council Mission**

The Council's Mission Statement sets out its vision to provide high quality services and support the needs of the community, while recognising that this is only sustained by ensuring that the resources to do it are available.

**Mission Statement** - *We exist to ensure that local services and the environment reach the highest possible standards within the resources available for citizens, visitors and those who work in Braunstone Town; to provide a focus for civic pride; to listen, identify and respond to agreed local needs; and to help develop a strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident community, free from unlawful discrimination.* "Spectemur. Agendo" translates "Let us be Judged by Our Actions"

**Town Council Priorities (2019/2020)**

In addition, Key Priorities for the Town Council during 2019/2020 include:

1. **Shakespeare Park**

The Town Council has ambitious plans to invest in the redevelopment and improvement of sporting, recreation and play facilities at Shakespeare Park. A Working Group has been established involving both the Bowls and football clubs and plans, designs and a schedule of works has been approved and the subject of consultation with partners and the community. The next stages include planning approval, securing funding and appointment of contractors. This is a medium term project which is scheduled for completion in 2020.

2. **Community Centres**

The Town Council is working on improvements to our community facilities at both Braunstone Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre; this includes enabling the Civic Centre Bar to provide food and café services, as well as improvements to community rooms and conferencing facilities.

3. **Quality of Life Services**

The Town Council continues to provide and support important quality of life initiatives, such as crime reduction and grants for community groups, youth projects and individuals and on tackling poor air quality, recognising the importance of air quality in light of the new Luffesthorpe development, which could result in an increase in air pollution in Blaby District. Since 2014, the Town Council has supported the Local Area Co-ordination project connecting it with the community and by providing a base from which it can operate.

**4. Enhancing a Socially Inclusive and Vibrant Community**

To positively and proactively respond to the evolving and changing social demographic of the community through developing and supporting new and existing events and community/social inclusion initiatives.

**5. Meet the needs of Thorpe Astley residents by facilitating the delivery of services and events at Thorpe Astley Community Centre**

To enable consideration of whether there was a need to extend Customer Services to Thorpe Astley Community Centre in order to reduce isolation and provide better access to services for Thorpe Astley residents. To provide a vibrant community centre, a place for community groups offering a range of activities and events for the community.

**6. Braunstone Town Library**

The Town Council continues to work to keep Braunstone Town Library open, this involves, as a community leader, representing the views and aspirations of the community for the future shape of the Library Service, as a Landlord recognising the changing nature of Library service provision while ensuring the sustainability of all services provided from the Civic Centre site, and as the preferred provider for taking over the management of the service. It is anticipated that these roles will continue to evolve over the forthcoming years.

**7. Thorpe Astley Open Spaces**

The Town Council has been responsible for the management and maintenance of Thorpe Astley open spaces since 2014, having received the developer commuted sums. The Town Council aims to complete the legal transfer of open spaces at Thorpe Astley to the Town Council in order to enable future investment and improvement to the facilities, including ensuring improvements are implemented to the Culvert at Thorpe Astley Park.

**8. Lubbesthorpe**

The Town Council continues to represent the concerns of residents and monitor the impact upon their quality of life of the Lubbesthorpe construction, particularly the M1 bridge construction. Following a consultation, the Town Council is actively working with the developer and Blaby District Council to ensure that the land adjacent to the M1 bridge is suitably landscaped to provide protection for residents from the new road and to provide a leisure and recreation space.

**9. Efficient Services**

Having made £26,500 in ongoing savings since 2015/2016 without impacting on the delivery of services the Town Council continues to look to make efficiency savings while ensuring the existing services are safeguarded and where appropriate improved. Given the financial uncertainties identified in the

Council's Medium Term Financial Planning analysis, the Town Council will seek to make £7,000 in ongoing savings over the next three financial years.

## **Town Council Objectives**

In addition to the Mission Statement, the Council has key objectives relating to its Committees and Service Areas.

### **Planning and Environment Objectives**

1. To ensure sustainable development, which meets the needs of the present generation without prejudicing the needs of future generations.
2. To improve the environment, in pursuit of which, objectives 3 to 7 below are contributors.
3. To seek high standards of design and construction within planning applications and to ensure all developments are consistent with environmental objectives.
4. To inform and consult local residents about major planning proposals, Development Plans and other planning initiatives by central and local government.
5. To work with others to minimise the impact of traffic and from air and light pollution.
6. To promote responsible dog ownership and waste disposal.
7. To provide and maintain street seats and notice boards at key locations.
8. To monitor the New Lubbesthorpe development and to respond to any implications of that development for the environment of the Town.

### **Community Development Objectives**

Nurturing and enhancing community life, equal opportunities and social inclusion.

#### *Young people*

1. To create opportunities for young people to have a voice
2. To identify young people's needs and give support to new local initiatives including summer holiday activities

#### *Crime reduction services*

3. Reduce opportunities for crime, increase public safety and establish a community spirit

#### *Social inclusion, recreation & culture*

4. To work with our partners to attract increased funding and the provision of a wider range of sporting and other services at local level
5. To provide support for the Office of Town Mayor
6. To assist local clubs and societies to undertake their work for the benefit of the citizens of Braunstone Town
7. To direct grants to organisations where this will be of greatest benefit to the citizens of Braunstone Town
8. To organise arts events/ entertainment's/ Civic Occasions which bring people together

9. To encourage the formation of new community groups by promoting free/subsidised use of the Civic Centre
10. To promote social inclusion

#### Corporate Management & Capital Project Objectives

1. To ensure effective management of the authority
2. To ensure effective implementation of the Council's policies and priorities
3. To ensure the Council's management arrangements, facilitate performance and efficient use of resources
4. To provide efficient and effective office services to support the Council's activities
5. To provide efficient and effective support to the democratically elected members to enable them to make policy decisions
6. To provide efficient and effective information to committees
7. To deal with telephone calls, and personal callers, promptly, courteously and efficiently
8. To ensure and arrange effective staff training
9. To develop a motivated workforce with the necessary knowledge, experience and skills to implement the Council's policies and services
10. To maintain adequate personal records, health and safety controls, and fire evacuation polices
11. To manage and control land and property belonging to the Council
12. To maintain an effective filing and retrieval system
13. To undertake capital projects for the benefit of the citizens of Braunstone Town
14. To ensure that major repairs and renewals are satisfactory and undertaken on Council owned buildings
15. To provide office accommodation for the Council's administrative staff
16. To ensure the Council engages with the Community concerning its activities, including with consultative bodies, such as the Citizens' Advisory Panel.

#### Community Centres Objectives

1. To provide and maintain high quality function rooms for use by hirers
2. To provide and maintain quality meeting rooms for Council and local community groups at low cost
3. To provide a Licensed Bar/Catering service for use by hirers and community groups at prices that are comparable with other similar establishments in the area
4. To maintain usage of the Centres for the benefit of the community

#### Open Spaces & Parks Objectives

1. To provide and maintain parks and open spaces to a high standard
2. To provide quality sports facilities to meet identified needs
3. To provide and maintain play equipment to a high and safe standard
4. To help fight pollution by planting trees on our parks

*Adopted: 31st January 2019*



## BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

### CAPITAL PLAN 2019/2020

The Council's Capital Projects have been identified through identified emerging priorities, the Annual Survey, the Citizens' Advisory Panel and the Parish Plan. A review of the Council's Open Spaces and Parks identified priorities for Capital improvements should external funding arise, as a result Policy & Resources Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2013 adopted "Proposals and Priorities for Improvements to Our Parks and Open Spaces", which form part of this programme.

Each year Policy & Resources Committee, when considering the budget estimates and precept for the forthcoming financial year, reviews progress with Capital Projects and updates the list according to funding and priorities. The Capital Plan forms the foundation of the strategic investment and improvement works undertaken by the Town Council in the year ahead. The Capital Plan proposals are considered and approved at Full Council in January when the budget and precept is set.

Parks and Open Spaces Projects		
Park	Project	Notes
Franklin park	Improvement items identified by the Franklin Park Working Group: completion of gravel path in orchard (to enable access to lower part when the ground is water logged)	
Impey Close playground	Resurface playground with rubber mulch under play equipment and pathway (Rubber tiles damaged and in places missing. Surfaces having been damaged subject to continued vandalism).	Once open space registered with the Council
Mossdale Meadows & Merrileys	Bridlepath resurfacing (from Kingsway entrance through to Jelson owned land)	On-hold pending review and availability of resources
	Possible resurfacing of footpaths	
	Mossdale: 2 x new litter bins and 2 x dog waste bins required	
	Toddler swings (estimated five year life span – medium risk) MM	
	Merrileys: 4 x new litter bins, 4 x dog bins, 4 x seats (replacements)	
	Refurbishment of Changing Rooms and Sports facilities at Mossdale Pavilion. The Changing Facilities and Social Facilities could make more effective use of the space and are in need of improvement and modernisation.	Once Shakespeare Park Improvements completed – scheduled 2018

Parks and Open Spaces Projects (continued)		
Park	Project	Notes
<i>Mossdale Meadows &amp; Merrileys Continued</i>	Installation of bio-fuel boiler at Mossdale Pavilion for heating the Sports Facilities and Parks Depot. There is no heating at the premises. There are electric heaters for the staff room at the Depot, which are inefficient and a higher risk for fire. The parks staff also have to pay at the Waste Disposal site to tip hedge and tree cuttings, which could be reused to fuel heat.	Once Shakespeare Park Improvements completed – scheduled 2018
Shakespeare Park	Consider alternatives to respond to problems of burst water pipes from the water tank currently sited on top of the football changing rooms (possible options, heating of tank or removal and installation of electric showers in the changing rooms)	Part of Shakespeare Park Improvement and Development Project, currently scheduled for completion in Spring 2018.
	Replacement to Perimeter fencing of Tennis Courts	
	Bowling Club Pavilion – (has an expected 10 – 15 year life span remaining) Consider options for the long term future of the building and possible future wider community use, and replacement of building, and the existing club's involvement in sourcing funding opportunities for the replacement.	
	Provide additional basketball/netball nets/markings to existing tennis courts to provide an all-year use for the facility.	Part of Shakespeare Park Improvement and Development Project, currently scheduled for completion in Spring 2018.
	Additional balance in play area (2-5 or 5 – 12 age group)	
	Additional Spinning Equipment in play area (2-5 year or 5 – 12 year age group) including installation	
	Safety Surface installed at toddler area	
	Additional seat in play area	
	Improvements to the entrance to the park area (access from the car park to the park)	
	Safety Surface in play area	

Community Centres Projects		
Building	Project	Notes
Civic Centre	Refurbishment of both sets of Toilets. <i>The current toilets are approximately 20 years old.</i>	<b>Priority Project</b>
	Refurbishment of the Civic Centre Bar, Kitchen and Store Facilities (To enable the expansion of the facility to provide a café service during the day and additional lunches and meals, utilising the space more effectively and providing a wider community social space).	<b>Priority Project</b>
	Council Chamber internal refurbishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heating/Air Conditioning</li> <li>• Mood Lighting</li> </ul> Audio / Visual Equipment, including sound and loop system and fixed projector. <i>The facilities are in need of modernisation for users and hirers: the room is used for meetings, consultations, seminars, training and social events.</i>	On-hold pending review and availability of resources
	Sound proofing of Partition Doors between Ravenhurst / Winstanley Rooms. <i>Complaints from hirers about noise from adjoining room, potential impact on ability to hire both rooms separately.</i>	
	Refurbishment/Replacement of Fire Doors in Council Chamber. <i>Some doors and frames are rotten and doors stick when the frames swell in the damp. Potential to hinder exit in an emergency.</i>	
	Fosse Room – Audio / Visual Equipment, including sound and loop system and fixed projector (The facilities are in need of modernisation for users and hirers: the room is used for meetings, consultations, seminars and training).	
Both Centres	Repainting of Rooms in both Civic Centre and Thorpe Astley Community Centre where there is dirt or damage (to ensure rooms are attractive to hirers).	<b>Priority Project</b>

General Projects		
Location	Project	Notes
Civic Centre, Thorpe Astley Community Centre, Franklin Park and Thorpe Astley Park	Conversion of Footpath Lighting and Car Park Lighting to LED. <i>Included in Revenue Savings Projects and approved with Centre conversion. Delayed in order to undertake with County Council LED Lighting roll-out, however, County Council decided not to include Parishes at this time. The potential savings make it worth seeking an alternative company to undertake the work.</i>	
Civic Centre and Franklin Park Car Parks	Resurfacing/ Relining of Civic Centre, including exploring new handrails along footpath on entrance slope from Welcome Avenue, and Franklin Park Car Parks. <i>Poor quality of the surface, particularly near entrances and patching is costly and inefficient. Lines are currently fading and can be relined following resurfacing. The slope at the Civic Centre is considered steep and potentially presented difficulties for wheel chair users and those who are less able.</i>	

Adopted by Council 31st January 2019 (Minute Reference 5712).

## **APPENDIX 4 – RESERVES**

The table below summarises the movement during 2018/19 and the balance at the end of the financial year:

<b>Table A – Council Reserves 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019</b>	
<b>1. Balance at 31st March 2018</b>	<b>£268,198.63</b>
2. (+) Annual precept	£574,107.00
3. (+) Total other receipts	£188,870.62
4. (-) Staff costs	£463,923.55
5. (-) Loan interest / capital repayments	£60,891.04
6. (-) Total other payments	£269,579.65
<b>7. (=) Balance at 31st March 2019</b>	<b>£236,782.01</b>

The table below summarises the current balances and intended uses:

<b>Table B – Reserves 2019/2020</b>		
<b>Balance of Reserves</b>		<b>£236,782.01</b>
Earmarked Reserves	<i>Shakespeare Works</i>	£53,707.00
	<i>Shakespeare Play/Tennis</i>	£4,000.00
	<i>Balance Revenue Budget 2019/20</i>	£18,000.00
	Total	£75,707.00
Non-Earmarked Reserves	<i>Commuted Sums</i>	£38,375.12
	<i>General Reserve</i>	£122,699.89
	Total	£161,075.01