

**BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE**

**THURSDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Leanne Lee, Darshan Singh (substituting for Councillor Sohan Johal) and Robert Waterton.

Observing the meeting, via Zoom Video conferencing, was Councillor Christiane Startin-Lorent.

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

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

**42. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sohan Johal, Sam Maxwell and Tracey Shepherd.

**43. Disclosures of Interest**

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

**44. 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.

**45. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (item 4 on the agenda) were circulated.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

#### **46. Medium Term Priorities & Financial Planning**

The Committee received a report setting out the context for the Council's medium term priorities and financial planning (item 5 on the agenda).

Following the publication of the Supplementary Report for agenda item 18, which included estimated savings/income from the proposed Solar PV Panels and proposed Air Source Heat Pump, the projected savings/income generation in the 5 year Income/Expenditure Projections at Appendix 1 had been updated and was circulated (filed with these minutes).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to update the Report and the financial projections at Appendix 1, if necessary, following the announcement of the Government's Medium-term Fiscal Plan and publication of the Office for Budget Responsibility's "Economic and fiscal outlook" report, due to be published on 17th November 2022;

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

2. that the current projections attached at Appendix 1 as updated, based on known financial pressures identified in the report, be noted;
3. that the Council's Strategic Aims, Delivery Objectives and Committee/Service Objectives, attached at Appendix 2, be used as the basis for calculating the annual budget and any external funding sought;
4. that the Council's Reserves be used to invest in infrastructure and assets and in the development and remodelling of services, including the Town Council's operations; and
5. that the Financial, Treasury Management, Investment and Reserves Strategies, as set out in the report, be adopted.

#### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that the latest economic and fiscal assessments were considered as part of the Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning process prior to its adoption.*
2. *To provide a foundation for preparing budget estimates for 2022/2023 and beyond.*
3. *To ensure the Council focusses its activity and spending on its key priorities and objectives given the future financial uncertainties.*
4. *To ensure the highest possible standards within the resources available in the future.*
5. *To effectively manage the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, taking into account the associated risks.*

#### **47. Shakespeare Park – Improvement & Development**

The Committee received a progress report on the improvement project and financing for phase 2; and received an update on arrangements for future management of the pavilion and site (item 6 on the agenda).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. that progress with the Project: *Pavilion and Site Works, Tennis Courts improvements, Playground Improvements and Future Management Arrangements*, as set out in the relevant section of the report, be noted; and
2. 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. *To provide a guide for the progression of the project, which could be amended accordingly as appropriate.*

#### **48. Queen's Green Canopy**

The Committee considered suitable locations in Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley for the planting of new trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy (item 7 on the agenda).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. that the two potential sites for planting trees for the Queen's Green Canopy, as shown at Appendix 1 of the report, be endorsed;
2. that suggested types of trees for each site be approved and that the trees be planted to form an appropriate design/layout;
3. that a short survey be undertaken with residents to ascertain their views on the potential sites and the results forwarded to the meeting of the Citizen's Advisory Panel on 24<sup>th</sup> November;
4. that delegated authority be approved for the Chief Executive & Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader to confirm the final planting areas; and
5. that consideration be given to initiatives which give a common identity to the Town's Public Open Spaces.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To consider appropriate planting areas for the Queen's Green Canopy.*
2. *To ensure that the type of trees selected to be planted at each site were appropriate and that the plantations would be identifiable as a special feature.*
3. *To ensure that the community would be consulted on the proposals for the Queen's Canopy initiative to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.*
4. *To ensure that the final two planting areas for the trees would be appropriate and suitable.*
5. *To connect the community with all of its parks and open spaces.*

**49. Parks and Open Spaces Winter Works Programme 2022/2022**

The Committee considered items for inclusion on the Winter Works Programme for 2022/2023 for the Councils Parks, Open Spaces and Grounds (item 8 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the Winter Works Programme 2022/2023, attached at Appendix 1, be approved; and
2. that consideration be given to including an item on the Capital Plan to make improvements to the Gravel Path at the Village Green (Thorpe Astley).

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure that parks and open spaces in Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley would be maintained to a high level.*
2. *To recognise that there was continuous erosion and surface water run off and that a permanent solution would be needed.*

**50. Dignity at Work Policy**

The Committee considered, following consultation, adopting a Dignity at Work Policy setting out principles and standards of acceptable behaviour, relevant processes for raising complaints and a register of complaints and incidents (item 9 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Dignity at Work Policy, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved and adopted with effect from Monday 7th November 2022.

*Reason for Decision*

*To ensure that the Council had a policy in place to meet its commitment to create workplaces that allow people to maintain their dignity at all times.*

**51. Draft Corporate Warning and Banning Policy & Procedure**

The Committee received, for consultation, the framework for a corporate warning and banning system (item 10 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the term “members of the public” should be used consistently in the proposed Policy & Procedure (as opposed to another description such as customer);
2. that, subject to 1 above, the proposed draft Corporate Warning and Banning Policy and Procedure, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved for consultation with residents, customers, users, staff, Councillors, volunteers, partners and the Council’s HR Advisor, as detailed in the *Timescales and Implementation* section of the report; and
3. that any proposed amendments be presented to the next meeting of Policy & Resources Committee, proposed for the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023, for consideration and approval.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To ensure clarity and consistency in the terms and descriptions used.*
2. *To ensure that residents, customers, users, staff, Councillors, volunteers, partners and the Council’s HR Advisor could input into the proposed Corporate Warning and Banning Policy to ensure that it would be practical and fit for purpose.*
3. *To define the process of either issuing a warning and/or banning a member of the public from using the Council’s services following an incident of inappropriate behaviour.*

**52. Complaints Monitoring**

The Committee received details of formal complaints dealt with and determined whether there should be policy or procedural changes to ensure that future reoccurrence is minimised (item 11 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

*Reason for Decision*

*The Procedure by including all complaints, whether minor or major, simple or complex, and providing for the informal stage and formal stage to deal with these as appropriate results in complaints being resolved and/or closed effectively.*

**53. External Audit 2021/2022**

The Committee noted that the External Audit for the 2021/2022 financial year was completed on 26th September 2022 (item 12 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that it be noted that the External Audit 2021/2022 was completed on 26th September 2022 and that no matters were raised concerning the Town Council's accounts and governance arrangements for the year ended 31st March 2022.

*Reason for Decision*

*An unqualified opinion was given by the External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP, on the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/2022.*

**54. Blaby District Parish Councils Group**

The Committee considered whether there was any feedback from the Blaby District Parish Councils Group and whether to identify issues to be raised at future meetings.

Councillor Waterton advised that there was nothing to report and that the next meeting was scheduled in December.

**55. Banking Arrangements**

The Committee considered changes to the Council's banking arrangements (item 14 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED**

1. that the principal of opening a third bank account to hold monies relating to the Council's major Capital Projects be approved; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Responsible Financial Officer to identify a suitable bank account with the Council's existing or alternative bank.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. *To add transparency to the Council's banking in terms of separating transactions for operational expenditure from those of its major capital projects.*
2. *To provide flexibility to officers to identify and open a bank account which offers competitive terms and meets the Council's needs.*

**56. End of Quarter Financial Positions – Cashbook and reserves**

The Committee received a summary of the Council's Cash and reserves for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (item 15 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.*

**57. Financial Comparisons**

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022 (item 16 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 2022/2023.*

**58. Approval of Accounts**

The Committee considered payments from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 until 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 (item 17 on the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the period 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 until 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 be approved.

*Reason for Decision*

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

**59. Procurement of Items identified in the Climate Audit**

**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 identified preferred contractors for the installation of Solar PV Panels, Electric Vehicle Charging Points and an Air Source Heat Pump and determined financing for the schemes (item 18 on the agenda).

A supplementary report, setting out costs and identified funding sources for the installation of Solar PV Panels and battery storage, Electric Vehicle Charging Points and an Air Source Heat Pump; along with timescales and milestones for delivery and an assessment of risks for the project, was submitted (filed with these minutes).

**RESOLVED**

1. that tenders SP2 and SP3 for the installation of *Solar PV Panels and associated Battery Storage*, as detailed in Appendix 2, be shortlisted;

2. that tender HP1 to install an *air source heat pump* at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, as detailed at Appendix 3, be provisionally accepted;
3. that tenders EV3, EV5, EV6 and EV8 for the installation of *Electric Vehicle Charging points*, as detailed at Appendix 4, be shortlisted;
4. that further examination of the shortlisted/provisionally accepted tenders be undertaken, including clarification and obtaining omitted/missing information where appropriate;
5. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to;
  - a) select a preferred contractor and reserve contractors for the installation of *Solar Panels and associated Battery Storage* and for the installation Electric Vehicle Charging points, and
  - b) determine the detailed arrangements, timings and work schedules,
  - c) make minor modifications to the design and installation proposals, including requesting additional supplies and options within the delegated spending limits allowed under paragraph 11.1i of the Financial Regulations, and
  - d) award contracts and commission works.
6. THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the following resolution be approved “to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £196,056 over the borrowing term of 15 years towards the cost of installing solar panels and battery storage, an air source heat pump, and electric vehicle charging points at the Council’s Community Facilities; the annual loan repayments will come to around £18,128”;
7. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, to put together a borrowing application, with supporting evidence, including a financial appraisal, for submission to Council;
8. that the *Next Steps and Timescales*, as set out in the report, and the detailed timescales and milestones set out at Appendix 5, be approved; and
9. that the Risk Assessment, set out at Appendix 6, be adopted.

#### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *The tenders shortlisted represented best value when balanced against cost, timescales and ability to undertake the proposed works. These tenders could be examined further to ensure deliverability against the Council’s carbon reduction objectives.*
2. *The tender from Contractor D represented best value when balanced against cost, timescales and ability to undertake the proposed works and was recommended by the heat loss consultant.*
3. *The tenders shortlisted represented best value when balanced against cost, timescales and ability to undertake the proposed works. These tenders could be examined further to ensure cost and deliverability represented good value.*
4. *To ensure that tenders were properly assessed in order to determine which offered the best value in terms of cost/savings/income, quality, deliverability and achievement of the Council’s Carbon reduction commitment.*



5. *To allow detailed arrangements for the work to be negotiated, practical modifications to be made and additional miscellaneous items to be incorporated where necessary.*
6. *To enable the application assessment to be progressed and submitted for consideration by the Assessor on behalf of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.*
7. *To enable the detailed supporting evidence to be gathered and submitted with the Council's application without undue delay. To ensure best financial management to meet the Project's costs.*
8. *To provide an outline plan for the procurement and assessment process and for delivering the installations.*
9. *To identify the potential risks and barriers to delivering the project and to identify measures to mitigate these.*

## **60. Improvements to Walking and Cycle Routes**

**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 delivery of proposals for improvements to the connections between walking and cycle routes (item 19 on the agenda).

### **RESOLVED**

1. that progress on the delivery of proposals for improvements to the connections between walking and cycling routes (as shown at Appendix 1), and detailed in the report and schedule (attached at Appendix 2), be endorsed;
2. that the revised general arrangement for the Mosssdale Meadows section of the scheme, as set out at Appendix 3, be approved; subject to satisfactory resolution of the outstanding matters listed in the *Mosssdale Meadows* section of the report; and
3. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader & Deputy Leader of the Council, to approve the final designs and work schedules for Mosssdale Meadows and to determine the arrangements and timescales for the works to be undertaken at Mosssdale Meadows.

### *Reasons for Decision*

1. *The scheme would provide improvements for pedestrians and cyclists connecting facilities, amenities and communities across Braunstone Town, Meridian and Thorpe Astley.*
2. *The proposals would improve the standard of the pathway for pedestrians and cyclists, both users of Mosssdale Meadows and those travelling through.*

3. *To find a balance between ensuring that the outstanding matters identified would be included in the approved designs and schedules, while avoiding delays to the timescales for the delivery of the works at Mossdale Meadows.*

**61. 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 a schedule of works, determined financing and appointed a contractor to undertake the refurbishment of the Civic Centre Toilets and Civic Centre Bar/Café kitchen.

**RESOLVED**

1. that the provisionally accepted tender from Contractor D to undertake improvements to the facilities at Braunstone Civic Centre, be accepted; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive & Town Clerk to liaise with the selected contractor to
  - (a) determine the detailed arrangements, timings and work schedules,
  - (b) make minor modifications to the design and installation proposals, including requesting additional supplies and options within the delegated spending limits allowed under paragraph 11.1i of the Financial Regulations, and
  - (c) award the contract.

*Reasons for Decision*

1. The tender from Contractor D represented best value when balanced against cost, timescales and ability to undertake the proposed works.
2. To allow detailed arrangements for the work to be negotiated, practical modifications to be made and additional miscellaneous items to be incorporated where necessary.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

SIGNED: .....

DATED: .....

**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 on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023.*