

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE

10TH MARCH 2016 at 8.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Sharon Betts (Town Mayor), and Councillors Shabbir Aslam, Ajmer Basra, Nick Brown, Alex Dewinter, David Di Palma, Sam Fox-Kennedy, Amanda Hack, Paul Kennedy, Sam Maxwell, Stuart Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Robert Waterton and Bill Wright.

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

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

COUNCILLOR SHARON BETTS, TOWN MAYOR, IN THE CHAIR

5403 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Roger Berrington, Dinesh Joshi, Berneta Layne, Chetan Parmar and Gary Sanders.

5404 Disclosures of Interest

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

5405 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2016 were circulated (item 3 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Bill Wright and was:

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5406 Local Council Award Scheme

The Council considered its eligibility for the Local Council Award Scheme Foundation Level (item 4 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and was:

RESOLVED

1. that Braunstone Town Council publishes online the Foundation Level Award criteria 1 to 15 (as set out in Appendix 1); and
2. that Braunstone Town Council has in place the Foundation Level Award criteria 16 to 22 (as set out in Appendix 1).

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Town Council retains the level of award that it currently holds and was comparable to the award under the previous Quality Council Scheme and to recognise the important role the Council currently has and aspires to continue to develop in terms of reputation, competency and ability to lead a community and work in partnership with principal Councils to deliver local services and an environment which reaches the highest possible standards.

5407 Write Off of Debtor Stock

The Council considered writing off £650 from the Council's Accounts, which had been attributed as debtor stock (item 5 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and was:

RESOLVED that £650 stock of *Fertilizers etc*, allocated to the Parks and Open Spaces budget, be written off.

Reason for Decision

The Council had no record of purchasing nor was able to verify the existence of £650 fertilizer stock for sale, which had been allocated on the accounts to the Parks and Open Spaces budget. Since this stock had featured on the Council's accounts for over 10 years, showing no movement, either the stock was purchased and had been subsequently sold or disposed of, or the goods were purchased for operational use and were incorrectly recorded as stock rather than expenditure in the relevant financial year. In both cases the entry needed to be written off the Council's Accounts.

5408 Announcements

a) Town Mayor

The Town Mayor, Councillor Sharon Betts, reported on the Fashion Show, held at Thorpe Astley Community Centre on 26th February and that Radio Leicester had promoted the event. The Town Mayor thanked all those involved, including Councillors Amanda Hack and Sam Maxwell who had modelled clothes.

The Town Mayor invited Councillors to join her on Monday, 14th March at 10am for the raising of the Commonwealth Flag at Braunstone Civic

Centre in recognition of cooperation and shared values across the Commonwealth. The short ceremony would last approximately five minutes followed by refreshments.

b) Leader of the Council

No announcements were made.

c) Executive Officer and Town Clerk

No announcements were made.

5408 Public Session

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 present at the meeting.

5410 Questions from Councillors

No questions had been submitted.

5411 Reports of Standing Committees: Plans & Environment Committee – 4th February 2016

Council received the Report of the Plans & Environment Committee Meeting held on 4th February 2016 (p5934 – p5940).

It was moved by Councillor Bill Wright and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5412 Reports of Standing Committees: Community Development Committee – 4th February 2016

Council received the Report of the Community Development Committee Meeting held on 4th February 2016 (p5941– p5945).

Page 5944, Minute 78 – Request to locate the Speed Sign on Narborough Road South West Service Road

Councillor Bill Wright followed up on whether a suitable site had been agreed with Leicestershire County Council for the location of the speed sign. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk advised that the Town Council was waiting for confirmation.

It was moved by Councillor Alex Dewinter and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5413 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 11th February 2016

Council received the Report of the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 11th February 2016 (p5946 – p5951).

Page 5946, Minute 88 – Future options for the Library and Customer Service Shop

Councillor Nick Brown sought clarification on whether a meeting had been arranged with representatives of the organisation seeking to base itself at and run Braunstone Town Library. The Executive Officer & Town Clerk confirmed that arrangements were still to be confirmed.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5414 Reports of Standing Committees: Plans & Environment Committee – 25th February 2016

Council received the Report of the Plans & Environment Committee Meeting held on 25th February 2016 (p5952 – p5957).

Page 5954, Minute 105 – Feedback on Planning Application Comments

Councillor Robert Waterton requested that the Executive Officer & Town Clerk followed up on the responses of Mark Alflat concerning items (d) training and (e) guidance notes.

Councillor Waterton added that he was concerned about the lack of transparency and accountability in decision making by Blaby District Council, particularly in respect of planning decisions taken by officers under delegated powers since Councillors were submitting responses which raised material concerns as listed in planning policy documents, but a planning officer was often arriving at a different view.

Councillor Bill Wright stated that he also had concerns about democratic accountability on how planning decisions were made given he had been refused a request to call in an item where Councillors and residents believed there were significant material considerations which were not being taken into consideration.

Councillor Sam Maxwell added that many Councillors and other parishes were frustrated with the planning process and the lack of understanding about the issue. She added that Councillors were aware that comments had to be material considerations and that the request was not to receive feedback on every single consultation response. Councillor Maxwell concluded that the District Council needed to be more open with Councillors and communities concerning how it applied national and local policy to individual planning decisions.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and Seconded by Councillor Robert Waterton and it was:

RESOLVED that a letter be sent to the Chief Executive of Blaby District Council raising concerns about public confidence in the planning process and the lack of accountability and transparency on planning decisions by the decision makers.

Page 5955, Minute 106 – Neighbourhood Planning

Councillor Robert Waterton encouraged Councillors to respond with issues and themes which a Neighbourhood Plan could address, the deadline for which was Thursday 31st March.

It was moved by Councillor Bill Wright and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5415 Motions on Notice

No Motions on Notice had been submitted.

5416 Sealing of Documents

Legal Transfer of Open Spaces (Barratt Homes) Thorpe Astley

Council received transfer documents and plans in order to adopt 12 areas of open space from Barratt Homes at Thorpe Astley, which had been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 20th August 2015 (Policy & Resources Minute Reference 33, 2015/2016).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Sam Maxwell and was:

RESOLVED that the legal transfer of the 12 open spaces from Barratt Homes at Thorpe Astley, having been finalised, now be completed and that Braunstone Town Council's Common Seal be applied to the transfer documentation.

Reason for Decision

To enable the transfer to be completed and for the Town Council to become the legal owner of the public open space.

5417 Outside Body Reports

Leicestershire County Council

Nothing was reported.

Blaby District Council

Councillor Sam Maxwell reported on the full meeting of Blaby District Council held on 18th February 2016. The meeting set the Council Tax for the forthcoming year with £5 on band D equating to 3.4%. Councillor Sam Maxwell stated that the same meeting approved a 22% increase in the Basic Councillor Allowance by £1,000 to £5,000. Councillor Maxwell added that the Conservative Group at Blaby District Council considered that the costs associated with being a Councillor, using an iPad, including a broadband connection and going 'paperless' along with the changes to the Pension Scheme, justified the increase to the Basic Allowance. The additional amount required for the Councillors Allowances budget was just short of 1% of the overall tax base.

Councillor Shabbir Aslam highlighted the support being given by Blaby Business Boost to local businesses during challenging economic times and stated that Councillors would be able to meet local business leaders at a series of business breakfasts held over the year. Councillor Aslam added that he had fed back to Democratic Services on the induction process for new Councillors and offered suggestions on how the skills of new Councillors could be improved.

Councillor Bill Wright advised of his work as chair of Scrutiny and that he would be meeting with the Scrutiny Officer and the Chief Executive to consider scrutiny's involvement in some of the current issues affecting the District.

Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils

Feedback was received from the recent branch meeting, which included:

- a) Blaby District Council was offering a free dog chipping service ahead of changes to the regulations which required all dogs to be microchipped;
- b) concerns among parishes of the transparency of the planning process; and
- c) potential for a rail hub near junction 2 of the M69 at Sapcote.

Councillor Waterton stated that he had attended recent Councillor training provided by the Association and that there was a useful monthly newsletter provided by the Association giving updates on legislation and new initiatives.

Braunstone West Social Centre

Councillor Phil Moitt stated that he had not been invited to a meeting for a while due to an administrative problem, however, would be attending further meetings in the near future.

Braunstone Town Community Minibus

Councillor Paul Kennedy had been away when the last meeting was held. He advised that the next meeting was to be held on 15th March 2016.

Lubbesthorpe Strategic Consultative Board

Councillor Bill Wright advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 6th April 2016.

School governors

There was nothing to report.

5418 Approval of Accounts

Council received payments from 20th January 2016 until 29th February 2016 (item 13 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Nick Brown and seconded by Councillor Amanda Hack and was:

RESOLVED that the list of Approved Expenditure Transactions for the Period 20th January 2016 until 29th February 2016 be approved.

Reason for Decision

To authorise payments in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations.

5419 Termination of Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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.

SIGNED: _____ (Chair)

DATED: _____