

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD AT BRAUNSTONE CIVIC CENTRE

28TH JANUARY 2016 at 8.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Sharon Betts (Town Mayor), Councillor Berneta Layne (Deputy Town Mayor) and Councillors, Muhammad Aslam, Ajmer Basra, Roger Berrington, Nick Brown, Sam Fox-Kennedy, Amanda Hack, Paul Kennedy, Sam Maxwell, Stuart Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Chetan Parmar, Gary Sanders, 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

5385 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Alex Dewinter and David Di Palma.

5386 Disclosures of Interest

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

5387 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2015 were circulated (item 3 on the agenda).

It was proposed by Councillor Sharon Betts and seconded by Councillor Berneta Layne and was:

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5388 Capital Plan 2016/17

The Council considered priorities and projects for the 2016/17 Capital Plan (item 4 on the agenda).

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

RESOLVED

1. that the Completed Projects (section a), having now been completed, be removed from the rolling programme of Capital Projects;
2. that the Current Projects (section b) be rolled forward on to the 2016/2017 Capital Plan;
3. that the Proposed New Projects (section c) be added to the 2016/2017 Capital Plan; and
4. that the Projects proposed for Deletion (section d) be removed from the rolling programme of Capital Projects.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To confirm that the work had been completed and that there was no further work outstanding.*
2. *To confirm that the projects were outstanding and were still required.*
3. *To recognise the need to undertake investment and improvement as identified.*
4. *To recognise that, following review, these Projects were no longer required.*

5389 Budget and Precept for 2016/2017 and future estimates

The Council considered the budget and precept for 2016/2017 and estimates for future years (item 5 on the agenda).

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

RESOLVED

1. that the Estimates for 2016/2017, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved as the Council's Budget for 2016/2017; and
2. that a Net Precept Requirement for £495,653 for the financial year 2016/2017 be submitted to Blaby District Council.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To meet the Town Council's operating budgets for 2016/2017 along with funding for the Capital Plan and contingency for service pressures as identified in the report on Medium to Long Term Priorities and Financial Planning, adopted by Council on 5th November 2015.*
2. *The precept requirement for the year being the difference between expenditure and income, calculated in accordance with Section 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992*

5390 Announcements

a) Town Mayor

The Town Mayor, Councillor Sharon Betts, reported on recent events and engagements, including:

- i. Christmas Fair & Santa's Grotto on Saturday 12th December, when the queue to get in was through the main doors and outside;
- ii. the Town Mayor's Carol Service on 13th December 2015 at Saint Crispin's Church, 15 people were in attendance;
- iii. Beauty and the Beast Family Pantomime on Saturday 9th January, for which the Town Mayor had given a ten minute promotional interview on Radio Leicester; and
- iv. opening of new play equipment at Holmfield Park on 14th January, this was attended by the Chairman of Blaby District and staff and children of Saint Mary's Playgroup.

b) Leader of the Council

Councillor Nick Brown announced that Leicestershire County Council's consultation on their proposal to close Braunstone Town Library and replace it with a mobile library service had now closed and the Town Council was still in discussions concerning an alternative way forward that would retain the Library, however, detailed proposals and a decision was awaited from Leicestershire County Council.

Councillor Brown also alluded to the issue of the Thorpe Astley Medical Rooms and disappointment that further developments, which had not been communicated to the Town Council, had been released by the Clinical Commissioning Group to the press.

c) Executive Officer and Town Clerk

No announcements were made.

5391 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.

5392 Questions from Councillors

No questions had been submitted.

5393 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 5th November 2015

Council received the Report of the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 5th November 2015 (p5895 – p5896).

Page 5895, Minute 65 – Thorpe Astley Community Centre – Medical Rooms

Councillor Nick Brown requested an update on the position from the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, who confirmed that both NHS England and East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had been contacted to request clarification on the position set out in Statement which the CCG had issued to the BBC, and that the Town Council was still awaiting a reply.

Councillor Brown added that it was infuriating and disappointing that the NHS could respond immediately to an enquiry from the BBC with a detailed statement but could not respond in such detail to telephone calls and correspondence from a democratically elected body, which was also the body responsible for the building in which the medical rooms were provided. The NHS need to make a decision about the future of the medical rooms, while it would be a disappointment if they were to be unused, at least the community would be able to move on and know that primary care services would not be provided and the Town Council would be able to put the space to more effective use for the benefit of the community.

Councillor Gary Sanders stated that this latest setback and disappointment adds to the string of setbacks and disappointments accumulated over the past five and a half years. Councillor Sanders referred to the fact that the rooms had been built to NHS specifications using developer funds following an identified growth in need for which additional capacity was required. The Town Council had worked with the NHS, including a potential practice, to develop a memorandum of understanding and a timetable for service provision, for this progress to suddenly stop without any reasonable explanation from the NHS or any indicated timelines for its continuation was frustrating. Councillor Sanders concluded that for the NHS to then respond to the BBC stating the rooms were too small and not fit for GP services was farcical and that the NHS had let down the people of Thorpe Astley and that they should be ashamed.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5394 Reports of Standing Committees: Plans & Environment Committee – 19th November 2015

Council received the Report of the Plans & Environment Committee Meeting held on 19th November 2015 (p5897 – p5900).

It was moved by Councillor Gary Sanders and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5395 Reports of Standing Committees: Community Development Committee – 19th November 2015

Council received the Report of the Community Development Committee Meeting held on 19th November 2015 (p5901– p5904).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5396 Reports of Standing Committees: Plans & Environment Committee – 17th December 2015

Council received the Report of the Plans & Environment Committee Meeting held on 17th December 2015 (p5905 – p5916).

Page 5907, Minute 74 – Planning Applications dealt with under Delegated Authority

Councillor Amanda Hack raised concerns that applications for development at Lubbesthorpe were being submitted and subsequently several amendments were being submitted. She sought clarification on changes to the layout and the number and type of housing. Councillor Hack added that if changes were occurring to the type, and tenure of housing, its layout and the number of houses this would have an adverse impact on the services and facilities to be provided and there was a serious concern about democratic accountability if such changes were wrapped up in large technical documents which were resubmitted with no indication of the proposed changes or impact of those changes.

Councillor Wright added that at Blaby District Council changes could only be approved by the planning committee if there was a written explanation.

Councillor Waterton stated that these issues needed to be addressed when raising the issue of proper feedback on responses to planning applications.

Councillor Sam Maxwell added that the issue of accountability and feedback on planning applications had been raised at the district council in an attempt to avoid a repeat of the planning errors concerning Thorpe Astley.

Councillor Gary Sanders confirmed that the concerns raised would be discussed at Plans & Environment Committee on 25th February, when the Director of Place from Blaby District Council would be attending.

Councillors also raised concerns about the deficit across Blaby District in meeting the affordable housing targets and the need to ensure that the proportion of affordable housing on the Lubbesthorpe development was met including throughout the stages of the development.

It was moved by Councillor Gary Sanders and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5397 Reports of Standing Committees: Policy & Resources Committee – 14th January 2016

Council received the Report of the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting held on 14th January 2016 (p5917 – p5923).

It was moved by Councillor Nick Brown and

RESOLVED that the Report be adopted.

5398 Motions on Notice

No Motions on Notice had been submitted.

5399 Sealing of Documents

There were no documents for sealing.

5400 Outside Body Reports

Leicestershire County Council

Council had received apologies from Mrs J Fox, County Councillor for Braunstone Town Division, who had submitted a written report to the Council on County Council matters as follows:

i. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

“The county MTFS is considered to be the most challenging it has faced since it was established over 40 years ago. Delivery requires savings of £78m to be made by 2019/20. The council will have to make significant savings over the medium term”.

“This government’s latest spending review further restricts local authorities. The County Council will cease to receive any Revenue Support Grant by 2019/20. The draft MTFS is based on a 3.99 per annum increase in council tax in the years 2016/7 to 2019/20”.

“The estimated savings needed are £58.8m over the next four years with £26.8m to be made in 2016/17. Savings of £100m have already been made over the last five years”.

“The proposals include £8.8m Children and family services
£16.7m Adult social care
£13.4m Highways and Transport
£3.6m Environment
£8.4m Corporate resources”.

“Some savings are to be realised by proposed staffing reduction, better commissioning, service redesign and shared services collaboration”.

“Staff reduction could be approx. 500 full time equivalents”.

“To realise these savings the County Council will have to completely redesign the way it works, it will need to examine how its commercialism can be strengthened to maximise income”.

“The worrying aspect of all of this is how services will be affected. Many of the services are a lifeline to the most vulnerable in the county and will have a huge impact on wellbeing. Each portfolio will have a scrutiny role in looking at these proposals and there is a schedule of dates agreed to do this”.

ii. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service

“Proposed changes in services - a minority report was submitted by the labour group which was all but ignored by the cabinet. The Tory group are pushing ahead with the cuts in staff and numbers of Fire tenders available throughout the city and county”.

iii. Libraries

“The next significant report is to go to cabinet in March. 7 libraries are now community run with 2 others in the pipeline Braunstone Town, Mountsorrel Narborough and Barwell are still on the closure list”.

iv. Transport

“The number of people killed on County roads increased last year which is very worrying particularly in view of the cuts proposed in this budget”.

Mrs Fox added that “I was very disappointed to hear the news about the Thorpe Astley medical rooms. This is shocking for the people in Thorpe Astley who have waited patiently for this service to be available to them. I know how hard Braunstone Town Council have worked to enable this and it is very sad to have such an unsuccessful result”.

Blaby District Council

Councillor Sam Maxwell reported on the following matters:

- i. Budget Scrutiny – it was proposed to reduce the budget for active lifestyles and sports, with a reduction in 4.5 posts. Councillor Sam Maxwell added that this was short sighted given it would reduce the preventative measures aimed at reducing obesity and promoting healthy living, which would ultimately result in increases in NHS care costs; and
- ii. Family living in Garage – while being sent an advance copy of the press release, Ward Councillors had not been involved at previous stages and to that extent were unaware of previous visits to the family and the property, which appeared to have been undertaken over a period of 3 months. Councillor Sam Maxwell added that over this period it was assumed the tenant had been paying rent and it was unacceptable that a

landlord who had provided substandard living accommodation could continue renting without enforcement action being taken immediately. Councillor Sam Maxwell concluded that the District Council was working with private landlords in a partnership forum and she would be seeking assurances that proper checks were carried out on the landlords in this forum to ensure that no rogue landlords were influencing Council policy.

Councillor Bill Wright reported on the following matters:

- i. Recruitment Panel – had recruited the Head of Finance to backfill the Director of People post, while Jane Toman was undertaking the Chief Executive role; and
- ii. Budget Scrutiny – there were proposed increases in Council Tax (average £5) which was mainly to cover additional costs in Neighbourhood Services, where further increased charges would apply, for example for the collection of garden waste. In addition, the funding implications of further welfare reform proposals remained unclear. The Scrutiny Panel noted additional planning enforcement officers had been recruited and they had explored the possibility of applying additional charges to retrospective planning applications.

Councillor Moitt stated that he was following progress with paperless payments and the roll out of online services to ensure the needs of those who were unable to make electronic payments and/or were unable to access the internet were taken into account.

Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils

There was no further update at the current time.

Braunstone West Social Centre

Councillor Moitt advised that the next meeting would be held on 5th February and that he would report to the next Council meeting.

Braunstone Town Community Minibus

Councillor Paul Kennedy provided an update following the recent Committee meeting and advised that the Group were in the process of setting budgets and had been in touch with Blaby District Council concerning funding. Volunteer drivers were needed. The Committee were exploring the possibility of obtaining an additional minibus. The next Committee meeting would be in February 2016.

Councillor Sam Maxwell advised that a Blaby District scrutiny working group was looking at community transport and Braunstone Town Community Minibus had submitted representations. Areas under investigation were depot provision, support with plating, which had to be undertaken every 10 weeks, and grant funding.

Councillor Amanda Hack added that the Leicestershire Economic Partnership was considering rural funding for services. Grants were only currently available for elderly and disabled groups; if other funding was available then

provision could be provided by voluntary and community groups where there was no existing or limited provision.

Councillor Berrington stated that a Section 19 permit was based on over 60s and people with disabilities.

Councillor Wright added that obtaining drivers who were over 70 proved difficult since it required them to take a separate mini-bus test.

Lubbesthorpe Strategic Consultative Board

Councillor Gary Sanders provided an update on the meeting held on 14th January 2016. A computerised visual presentation was given of the layout of the development. Medical services were discussed and it was noted that provision remained to be provided at Thorpe Astley.

Councillor Bill Wright stated that affordable housing was a standing item along with cemetery provision and that the churches had fed back on their proposals for their work with the community.

School governors

Councillor Nick Brown advised that Millfield School Governors had met the previous week. Concerning secondary provision there had been discussions concerning which schools Braunstone Town pupils were obtaining places at and the impact upon schools of the relationship between pupil numbers and funding.

5401 Approval of Accounts

Council received payments from 28th October 2015 until 19th January 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 28th October 2015 until 19th January 2016 be approved.

Reason for Decision

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

5402 Termination of Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.25.

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: _____