

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 14th JANUARY 2016 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Nick Brown (Chair), Councillor Amanda Hack (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anthea Ambrose, Shabbir Aslam, Alex DeWinter, Stuart Maxwell, Phil Moitt, Gary Sanders, Robert Waterton and Bill Wright.

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

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

67. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sam Maxwell.

68. Disclosures of Interest

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

69. 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.

70. Minutes of the Meeting held 1st October 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st October 2015 were circulated (item 4 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

71. Minutes of the Meeting held 5th November 2015

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

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

72. Financial Comparisons

The Committee received Financial Comparisons for the period 1st April to 31st December 2015 (item 6 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision

The Council's actual income was higher than predicted for the period. While expenditure exceeded income the Council had undertaken large Capital Projects in the period and money would be transferred from the reserves and income from Grants for the Capital Projects was still to be received.

73. Capital Plan 2016/17

The Committee considered priorities and projects for 2016/2017 Capital Programme (item 7 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

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 determine the work has been completed and to confirm 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.*

74. Estimates for Budget and Precept 2016/2017 and beyond

The Committee considered the budget and precept for 2016/2017 along with proposed estimates for beyond (item 8 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council:

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.*

75. Future options for the Library and Customer Service Shop

The Committee received an update concerning the Council's proposals to combine Library, Customer Service and Social Inclusion activities at Braunstone Town Library; along with the Town Council's response to the County Council consultation to replace the Town Library with a mobile Library Service (item 9 on the agenda).

The Executive Officer & Town Clerk provided an update on recent discussions with Leicestershire County Council. The Lease agreement, along with alternative services and partners were now being considered in order to find a solution. Once details were available, this would be reported to Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED

1. that Braunstone Town Council's response to Leicestershire County Council's consultation on the proposal to replace Braunstone Town Library with a mobile library service be approved, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, and be submitted to Leicestershire County Council's Cabinet Lead Member responsible for Libraries and copied to Leicester City Council and local press and media outlets; and
2. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to make minor modifications to the grammar, punctuation and spelling, prior to submission.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To ensure that the Leicestershire County Council had a full response on both the specific mobile library proposal as well as the context for the Town Council's proposals and that Leicester City Council were made aware of the mobile library proposal since it may have an impact upon Library Services provided by them and to ensure the local community were kept informed of events.*
2. *To enable the correction of typos and rewording of long sentences in order to add clarity to the meaning.*

76. Thorpe Astley Community Centre – Medical Rooms

The Committee received an update on progress for opening the Medical Facility at Thorpe Astley Community Centre and determined whether the Town Council needed to take any further action (item 10 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that a Press Release be issued by Monday 18th January 2016 concerning the current position with the Medical Rooms at Thorpe Astley Community Centre and expressing the Town Council's dissatisfaction with how the process had been handled by the NHS.

Reason for Decision

The medical rooms were identified as part of the Section 106 agreement for the Thorpe Astley Development as being required, provision for the facility was made within the Community Centre, which opened in 2010. The NHS undertook a procurement exercise to find a practice to deliver services in July 2014. The Town Council has supported and facilitated the process, including working with the NHS and the practice to agree a Memorandum of Understanding and timetable for engagement and implementation of services to be delivered from the Community Centre. It was now two and a half months since the Town Council agreed to the Memorandum of Understanding and timetable and there has been no progress.

77. Shakespeare Park – Improvement & Development

The Committee considered the next stages of the Improvement and Development Project for Shakespeare Park (item 11 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that the agreed approach and timescales as set out in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision

To facilitate the delivery of the project.

78. Narborough Road South Subways

The Committee considered progress with launching a community art project for the subways under Narborough Road South (item 12 on the agenda).

RESOLVED

1. that no further action be taken;
2. that the Council's partners be thanked for their support and involvement; and
3. that a summary of the work undertaken and the survey responses, along with the Council's decision and reasons for taking no further action be communicated to residents through the Braunstone Life and the Council's website and social media and also directly to those who responded to the consultation.

Reasons for Decision

1. *The cost and time involved in delivering a Community Art Project for the Narborough Road South Subways would be disproportionate given the number of local residents that engaged with the consultation was small and from among those that did, there was limited support for the proposals.*

2. To recognise the support of both Blaby District Council and the Local Police Beat Team in working in partnership with the Town Council to respond positively when the issue of the standard of the subways was highlighted by residents' letters in the local press.
3. To ensure that those residents who had initially raised the issue of the standard of the subways and those that were involved in the consultation were informed of the work and the reasons for reaching the decision.

79. Financial Procedures

The Committee received an update on resolving the transaction errors recorded on the system and action taken to ensure that processes were efficient to prevent future reoccurrences (item 13 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that a report covering the position and action taken during the 2015/2016 financial year, including the year end processes be given to Corporate Governance Sub-Committee when it considers the Statement of Accounts and Internal Audit, scheduled for June 2016.

Reason for Decision

To report on the effectiveness of the actions taken and to ensure that the processes put in place were sufficient to prevent future reoccurrences.

80. External Audit arrangements from 2017

The Committee considered determining the External Audit arrangements from 2017 following the abolition of the Audit Commission (item 14 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that Braunstone Town Council be part of the sector led body of The National Association of Local Councils, the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Association of Drainage Authorities for appointment of external auditors for a five year period from 2017.

Reason for Decision

The external audit fee of £1,300 - £1,600 was affordable and represented best value for the Council, since if the Council was to participate in its own or another arrangement it was unlikely to achieve the same economies of scale while incurring the governance and administration costs of managing the arrangements.

81. Provision of Website

The Committee considered Leicestershire County Council joint parishes procurement offer for website services beyond August 2016 (item 15 on the agenda).

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to enter into the joint parishes' website framework agreement for Leicestershire & Rutland from August 2016.

Reason for Decision

The basic and premium packages identified by the focus group were supported by Policy & Resources Committee on 1st October 2015 as meeting the Council's website requirements. The indicative costs outlined in this report were affordable. Should the Executive Officer & Town Clerk, having consulted the Leader and Deputy Leader, be satisfied that the selected supplier could deliver the Town Council's requirements then the Council would confirm participation in the framework to avoid any undue delay.

82. Organisation Review of Crime Reduction and Community Engagement & Events

RESOLVED that in view of the special / confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was in the public interest that the press/public be temporary excluded and be instructed to withdraw (Standing Orders 3.5 and 3.7 apply).

Reasons for exception – Personal Information / Legal Advice.

RESOLVED

1. that the post of Community Services & Engagement Officer (30 hours per week) be created for a probationary period on Monday 18th January 2016 until Friday 17th July 2016, with a Job Description, Person Specification and NJC pay scale as set out at Appendix 1 of the report;
2. that the Crime Reduction Coordinator post holder be slotted into the role of Community Services & Engagement Officer for the probationary period at the scale point identified in the section "Implementation" of the report;
3. that delegated authority be given to the Executive Officer & Town Clerk to determine whether the post holder slotted into the role of Community Services & Engagement Officer had successfully completed the probation;
4. that should the probationary period be successful, the following changes to the Organisation Structure be made permanent:
 - a) the post of Community Services & Engagement Officer (30 hours per week) be created with a Job Description, Person Specification and NJC pay scale as set out at Appendix 1 of the report,
 - b) the posts of Crime Reduction Coordinator and Community Engagement & Events Coordinator be deleted,
 - c) the Organisation Structure, attached as Appendix 2, including line management and reporting lines, establishment hours and salary scale points be adopted, and
 - d) the post holder of Community Services & Engagement Officer during the probationary period be slotted into the post; and
5. that should the probationary period not prove successful, the post holder be returned to their substantive post of Crime Reduction Coordinator on the previously established hours and NJC salary point.

Reasons for Decision

1. *To assess the practicality of a combined post of Community Services & Engagement Officer in line with the Council's Vision and objectives.*
2. *To enable the post holder to demonstrate competency in the role.*
3. *To undertake the probation assessment in accordance with the normal procedure.*
4. *To provide greater flexibility and efficiency by creating a synergy between Crime Reduction and Community Engagement and enabling a broader approach to partnership working and the development of social inclusion initiatives.*
5. *To avoid any compulsory redundancies and minimise the service impact of a vacancy by ensuring the continuation of the post holder in successfully delivering Crime Reduction initiatives.*

83. Termination of the Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

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 _____