



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Serving the communities of Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley

Darren Tilley – Chief Executive & Town Clerk

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Braunstone Town & Thorpe Astley “*Citizens Advisory Panel*”INFORM.....CONSULT.....INVOLVE.....

20th November 2024

Dear Citizens’ Advisory Panel Member

A meeting of the **BRAUNSTONE TOWN CITIZENS’ ADVISORY PANEL** will be held in the **Ravenhurst Room** at **Braunstone Civic Centre** on **Thursday, 28th November 2024** commencing at **7.30pm**, the agenda for the meeting is set out below.

The Council extends an invitation to any interested local residents and user’s groups to attend the meeting to participate in the debate either by attending **Braunstone Civic Centre** or by video link using **Zoom Video Conferencing** (details below).

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88532445207?pwd=3la8oFMFGBSA0FVIMcBpoxNkrhOC3r.1>

Meeting ID: 885 3244 5207

Passcode: 827251

Yours sincerely,

Chief Executive & Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive apologies for absence.
2. **Disclosures of Interest**
To receive any disclosures of Interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting**
To confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2024 to be signed by the Chairperson (**Enclosed**).
4. **Feedback/Progress with issues raised at previous Open Sessions**
To provide feedback and progress with pursuing issues raised at previous Citizens' Advisory Panel Open Sessions (**Enclosed**).
5. **Open Session**
To provide an opportunity for Panel members and attendees present to raise matters of public interest.
6. **Braunstone Village Conservation Area Extension**
To receive an update on implementation of the Conservation Area to the South of Braunstone Lane and consider the Council's role in implementing the Joint Management Plan (**Enclosed**).
7. **Braunstone Town Council Results from Surveys**
To receive the results of the Town Council's surveys, including feedback on current initiatives (**Enclosed**).
8. **Sexual and General Harassment Policy & Procedure**
To consider responding to the consultation on Braunstone Town Council's proposed Sexual and General Harassment Policy & Procedure (**Enclosed**).
9. **Priorities, Projects and Financial Planning**
To receive the Council's Medium Term and Financial Planning Strategy, along with the current priorities, objectives and Capital Plan (**Enclosed copy of Report to Council on 21st November 2024**):
 - a) to determine whether the current priorities, objectives and Capital Plan are relevant to address current and emerging issues faced by the Council and the community;
 - b) to consider and comment upon progress during the current year; and
 - c) consider and identify any new issues and projects for 2025/2026 and beyond for recommendation to Policy & Resources Committee.
10. **Draft Climate Change & Environmental Action Plan**
To consider a proposed annual action plan to deliver the Climate Change and Environmental Strategy's Objectives (**Enclosed**).

Next Scheduled Meeting: 27th February 2025

NOTE:

CRIME & DISORDER ACT 1998 (SECTION 17) – The Council has an obligation to consider Crime and 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.

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL
THURSDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2024

PRESENT: Councillor Leanne Lee (Vice-Chair in the Chair) and local residents John Dodd, Andrzej Jablonski, Susan Metson, Talent Nyandoro and Geoff Simmonds.

Officers in Attendance: Darren Tilley, Chief Executive & Town Clerk and Pauline Snow, Deputy Chief Executive & Community Services Manager.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Gary Sanders and from local resident Jeanett Essex.

2. Disclosures of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting

The Panel received the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2024 and 20th June 2024 in order to confirm their accuracy and be signed by the Chairperson.

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd May 2024 and 20th June 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairperson.

4. Feedback/Progress with issues raised at previous Open Sessions

The Panel received feedback and progress with pursuing issues raised at previous Citizen's Advisory Panel Open Sessions (Item 4 on the agenda).

It was suggested that the issue regarding the Highway signs, Kingsway Crossroads and Kingsway central white lines be removed from the list since no response had been received from the County Council.

It was noted that a quotation to remark all the car park lines at Braunstone Civic Centre had been received and accepted. The work would be scheduled into the Winter Works 2024.

Further details about the seeded balls had been received but as the local resident who proposed the project could not attend the meeting, this item was postponed.

It was noted that information and support regarding Women's Screening was available at the Town Council's Summer Fete on 10th August.

AGREED that the issue regarding the Highway signs, Kingsway Crossroads and Kingsway central white lines be removed from the list since no response had been received from the County Council.

5. Open Session

This provided an opportunity for Panel members and attendees present to raise matters of public interest.

The Chief Executive and Town Clerk provided an update on a distressing incident that had occurred on 1st September 2024 on Franklin Park where it was alleged that an elderly gentleman had been attacked and had subsequently died from the injuries.

The Town Council was working closely with the Police with the investigation and supporting the local community in this very distressing time. The Leader of the Town Council had provided updates and information to the media regarding the Town Council's response.

The Town Council was working with the Police Liaison Team who were supporting the family, to facilitate community responses including the offer for flowers to be left at Braunstone Civic Centre Memorial Garden and to support a vigil proposed by a local resident.

Discussions had been held on Apple Day that was due to take place on 5th October. The Town Council felt this would be an event to bring the community together and proposed to continue with the event. The Police and NHS Neighbourhood Lead Mental Health officer from Blaby District had been invited to attend the event to support and reassure residents.

The Police, Braunstone Town Council and Blaby District Council had confirmed that there had been no recent incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour at Franklin Park and this was an isolated case of such severity and certainly not representative of the Town.

A local resident advised that when coming out of the Community Orchard on Franklin Park there was an area of overgrown shrubs that prevented a line of sight to the path and suggested that the shrubs be cut back to open the area up to provide reassurance to residents in the park. This work had been included in the Town Council's Winter Work programme that would commence in October.

It was also confirmed that CCTV cameras were installed on Franklin Park and were fully operational. Images from the period when the incident had alleged to have taken place were forwarded to the Police investigation team.

Other issues raised included the availability of Shakespeare Park Pavilion for hiring following the setting up of a café in the function room and use of recently installed hardstanding by the pavilion that vehicles were using to access the main park area.

6. Braunstone Village Conservation Area Extension

The Panel received an update on progress with proposals to extend the Braunstone Village Conservation Area to the South of Braunstone (Item 6 on the agenda).

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk provided an update regarding the Conservation Area:

- i) following the consultation periods, the results were now being assessed and amendments drafted to both the proposed Character Appraisal and Management Plan;
- ii) a meeting was due to take place between officers at Blaby District Council, Leicester City Council and Braunstone Town Council, to consider and finalise the proposed amendments;
- iii) a recommendation, based on the evidence gathered, the appraisal, and the consultation results, was due to be considered by Blaby District Council on 24th September 2024; and
- iv) in accordance with resolution 3 of minute 14, an extraordinary meeting of Planning & Environment Committee had been scheduled on Thursday 19th September 2024 prior to the District Council meeting to consider the proposals and recommendations.

The Chief Executive & Town Clerk confirmed that there were no proposals to amend the proposed boundary for the conservation area.

It was noted that should Blaby District Council approve the proposal then the conservation area would immediately come into effect and would be considered material when determining planning applications. However, notifications and registration as a local land charge would take a few weeks to process.

AGREED: that the progress with considering the area of Braunstone Village to the South of Main Street/Braunstone Lane for designation as a Conservation Area be noted.

7. Library – Community Engagement/involvement and social inclusion

The Panel received an update on community involvement and social inclusion initiatives at Braunstone Town Library (item 7 on the agenda).

It was noted that the library continued to thrive with groups still meeting and providing vital social activities for the community along with day events organised by the Family Learning Team.

It was noted that the Fire Service had attended one of the Wednesday morning Coffee Mornings to provide support and advice for residents. The Fire service could be contacted to replace fire alarms and carbon dioxide detectors in homes and it was agreed that information regarding this be obtained and promoted.

AGREED: that the report be noted.

8. Improvements to Impey Close Play Area

The Panel received and commented on proposals for the refurbishment and enhancement of Impey Close Play Area and surrounding Open Space (item 8 on the agenda).

Tender documents for the refurbishment and enhancement of Impey Close playground had been circulated to appropriate contractors and site visits arranged for assessments to be undertaken. The closing date for submission of tender documents had been 13th May 2024. Six tender documents had been received and a shortlist of three of the plans would be forwarded to Policy and Resources Committee on 12th September 2024 for consideration (see Appendices 1 to 3).

Tender documents for the refurbishment of the footpaths had been circulated to appropriate contractors with a closing date of 12th August 2024. No tender applications had been received to undertake the work. Options for the Town Council staff to carry out repairs to the path were currently being investigated.

Investigations into potential grant funding schemes that would cover the cost of the Impey Close Play Area refurbishment had been undertaken and two schemes had been found including the National Lottery and Suez Community Fund that the Town Council could apply to. No Grant schemes were currently available for the Footpath Refurbishment work.

The proposed timescales for the proposed works is shown below:

Date	Proposal
September 2024	Policy & Resources to consider three shortlisted proposals and contractor agreed
October – December 2024	Grant funds to be investigated for work to be carried out on the Impey playground Investigations into options for Town Council staff to undertake repairs to footpaths to be undertaken
Spring 2025	Improvement works to Impey playground to be carried out

AGREED: that the progress and options to improve Impey Play area and surrounding Open Space be supported.

9. Mossdale Meadows Flood Alleviation and Drainage Improvements

The Panel received and commented on proposals for rebuilding the Culvert and carrying out flood alleviation and drainage improvements to Mossdale Meadows (item 9 on the agenda).

Tender documents had been made available on the Town Council website, suitable contractors advised of the tender and details posted on the government contract website. The closing date for submission of tenders was 12th August 2024.

Three tenders had been submitted for consideration. However, the costs proposed were substantial and it was recommended that only items of high priority be considered to be undertaken and the three contractors be contacted to ascertain if they would be willing to undertake work to part of the proposed work.

The original purpose of the works was to replace the vehicular culvert bridge over the brook to ensure its suitability for use with the parks' vehicles. The current culvert itself has two pipes which cause blockages with trees and debris blocking the pipe despite regular clearing. This had contributed to a rise in incidents of flooding on the park from the brook.

Works had also been proposed to the car park entrance to reduce flooding in the car park and distribute standing water into the brook.

Other work was also included in the Capital plan as above, to be included in the project but with the tender quotations received the works have been considered on a priority basis as shown in the table below.

Work to be considered	Priority
Replacement of vehicular culvert bridge over the brook	Top Priority
Works to the brook banks as previously proposed	Ideal if this can be included
Inclusion of drainage channels down the Lubbesthorpe bridle path adjacent to the pavilion building to alleviate flooding issues in the workshop	Ideal if this can be included
Drainage work to the entrance of Mossdale Meadows car park to drain water from the car park into the brook as the car park entrance was prone to frequent flooding that was raised during the Walking & Cycling route construction.	Top Priority
Resurfacing of Mossdale Meadows car park with tarmac. Currently the car park consists of hardcore and stone which frequently gets washed down towards the brook in heavy rain	To do if funding would allow

The following was a proposed amended timescale and work schedule for comment.

Date	Proposal
September 2024	Further quotes to be obtained to carry out high priority items

November 2024	Policy & Resources to consider amended plans and costings
Spring 2025	Work to be carried on the culvert bridge and flood alleviation work in the car park

AGREED: that the proposed works to the Mosssdale Meadows Flood Alleviation scheme and the proposed order of priority, be supported.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

NOTE:

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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 minutes are a draft and are subject to consideration for approval at the next meeting, scheduled for 28th November 2024.

CITIZEN'S ADVISORY PANEL

OPEN SESSION – ACTION UPDATE

TITLE	ISSUES RAISED	DATE RAISED	PROPOSED ACTION	TIMESCALE	UPDATE
<p>Disabled Parking Spaces at Braunstone Civic Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to the centre not displaying Blue Badges when parking in disabled spaces • Braunstone Town Council staff parking in disabled spaces; • Contractors using disabled parking spaces to store equipment during recent work to the library; • Delivery vans using disabled parking spaces to drop off items to the Civic Centre and library. 	<p>31st August 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All visitors to the Civic Centre/ Library be advised that unless they display a Blue Badge they should not park in disabled bays. • All staff to be reminded that parking in disabled parking bays without displaying a Blue Badge is prohibited. • That contractors be advised that equipment compounds to be set up in the agreed locations • Clear signage required showing disabled bays. 	<p>Before next meeting of Citizen's Advisory Panel</p>	<p>Remarking of parking bays and signage to be considered as part of Capital Plan</p> <p>Email sent on 11th August to all staff advising not to park in disabled bays.</p> <p>Contractors contacted on 11th August to advise about parking and setting up in disabled parking bays</p> <p>To remark out disabled parking bays</p> <p>QUOTATION RECEIVED TO MARK OUT ALL DISABLED AND PARKING SPACES AT CIVIC CENTRE CAR PARK. TO BE CARRIED OUT IN WINTER WORKS PROGRAMME</p>

TITLE	ISSUES RAISED	DATE RAISED	PROPOSED ACTION	TIMESCALE	UPDATE
Seeded papers	At a previous meeting, Panel members discussed ways to encourage residents to plant more seeds and plants in their gardens. It was proposed that seeded paper could be purchased and distributed in the Braunstone Life to household to commemorate the 80 th Anniversary of D-Day Landings. Costs were suggested proposals to meet the editor of the Braunstone Life to discuss distribution.	29 th February 2024	Proposed action: to look further into costs and arrange meeting with editor of Braunstone Life to discuss distribution	Before next meeting of Citizen's Advisory Panel	Further investigations had been made into the cost of providing the seeded papers and was found to be more than previously reported. Other options were investigated including seed balls that could be purchased for local schools and for collection at Braunstone Town Council venues. Options include 2500 loose balls of seeds costs approximately £200 Or 120 boxes of seed balls could be provided for £200 Further discussion to be held on this proposal UPDATE INCLUDED

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL – 28th NOVEMBER 2024

Item 6 – Braunstone Village Conservation Area Extension

Purpose

To receive an update on implementation of the Conservation Area to the South of Braunstone Lane and consider the Council's role in implementing the Joint Management Plan.

Background

Blaby District Council on 24th September 2024 unanimously approved the designation of the part of Braunstone Village to the South of Main Street/Braunstone Lane as a Conservation Area. The District Council adopted both the Character Appraisal and Management Plan. This new Conservation Area complements the existing Conservation Area on the northern side of Main Street/Braunstone Lane (within Leicester City's administrative area), which was designated in 1974.

The Conservation Area designation is designed to preserve and enhance the existing townscape, alongside individual buildings, due to its special historic and architectural interest. The designation has immediate effect and will be considered material when considering planning applications.

The approved Character Appraisal highlights the area's historic, architectural, archaeological and townscape interest, which is considered sufficient to merit its protection.

The approved combined Management Plan sets out proposals and actions to preserve and enhance the special character of the whole of Braunstone Village.

The designation imposes additional planning controls, including on 'Permitted Development' rights (rights that allow certain works to be carried out without a planning application). They do not prevent development from taking place but help manage it to ensure it maintains and enhances the area's special qualities.

Next Steps

With designation of the conservation area, a 'non-immediate' Article 4 Direction has been approved. This applies to specific properties (19 in total) and would restrict Permitted Development rights further as an additional control.

The Direction does not come into force for a period of 12 months. Prior to coming into force there will be a 6 week consultation involving letters to the affected properties,

site notices and a press notice. Blaby District Council as the Planning Authority will confirm within 6 months of making the direction (i.e. immediately following the conservation area designation) whether it is decided to proceed with its implementation or allow it to lapse, in light of any representations to received.

Further discussions will be taking place between all three Councils regarding any guidance that can be given to residents, the Article 4 direction consultation, and any future action as described in the Management Plan.

Discussions have also taken place about an opening/designation event, which potentially would be held at Shakespeare Park. This may involve gathering round a sign for a picture.

Liaison has also taken place with the local history and heritage groups to ascertain whether designation of the Conservation Area is an opportunity to explore whether anyone would be interested in taking on the role of Volunteer Heritage Warden, previously held by John Dodd and currently vacant. The adoption of the Joint Management Plan may present an opportunity to consider a single Heritage Warden for Braunstone Village.

Joint Management Plan

The Joint Management Plan is attached at Appendix 1 and sets out Blaby District Council's and Leicester City Council's approach for preserving and enhancing the two designated areas known as Braunstone Village Conservation Area.

While there is no formal group; both principal councils and the Town Council have agreed to keep in regular contact concerning the delivery and monitoring of the Management Plan.

Designation of the Conservation Area was the first step in ensuring that the special character of Braunstone Village would be protected and enhanced in the medium to long term.

Therefore, the Panel are invited to consider the Joint Management Plan and make suggestions as to the Town Council's role in implementing and monitoring it.

Action Requested

Consider the Braunstone Village Conservation Area Joint Management Plan, attached at Appendix 1, and make suggestions concerning Braunstone Town Council's role in implementing and monitoring it.



Braunstone Village Conservation Area

Management Plan

September 2024



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Management Plan sets out Blaby District Council's and Leicester City Council's approach for preserving and enhancing the two designated areas known as Braunstone Village Conservation Area. The Conservation Area to the north was designated by Leicester City Council on the 29th January 1974. The Conservation Area to the south was designated by Blaby District Council on the 24th September 2024.
- 1.2 Conservation areas make a significant contribution towards the urban fabric of the city and county. These historic areas are important to the area's cultural inheritance, economic wellbeing, and quality of life. It is important to recognise that these places are not static and are subject to change. The aim of the Management Plan is to ensure that change is managed in a way that maintains and enhances the special qualities of the conservation areas.
- 1.3 This document sits alongside the two character appraisals for the Braunstone Village Conservation Area on either side of the administrative border. The character appraisal documents provides detailed analysis of what is positive and negative in the areas under consideration and identifies opportunities for beneficial change or the need for additional protection.

2. Planning Policy Background

2.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework details the importance of identifying and managing heritage assets. It details that local planning authorities should set out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

2.2 Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 details that:

Braunstone Village Conservation Area: Management Plan

- It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.
- Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.
- The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting.

2.3 Government policy is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It requires the significance of heritage assets – both its historic buildings and historic areas – to be understood by local authorities and by those who propose change. Changes that cause harm to significance will only be permitted where the harm is outweighed by public benefits. Further guidance on the use of the NPPF is provided in the National Planning Practice Guidance and in advice published by Historic England.

2.4 Local Policy

The protection and positive use of the historic environment within new development is a theme which runs through the **Blaby District Core Strategy**. It is mentioned as a key component in Policies CS2, CS12, CS14, and CS16 and is the subject of a comprehensive policy on the Historic Environment and Culture CS20 and in the Blaby District Local Plan Delivery DPD in Development Management Policy 12 (Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets). Within the administrative boundary of Leicester City Council, the protection and positive use of the historic environment within new development is a theme which runs through the **City of Leicester Core Strategy**. It is identified as a key component in spatial objectives 7 and 9. This is further strengthened in a number of policies. The Core Strategy also makes an explicit commitment to the preservation and enhancement of Leicester's heritage in Spatial Objective 10. This is amplified in a wide-ranging policy (CS18) for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

2.5 There is a general presumption against the demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, and the policy expects new developments and conservation-led regeneration to reflect the character and value of the historic environment. Both local and national policy puts the emphasis on the enhancement of heritage assets and positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness that should be made through new development.

3 Local Consultation

- 3.1 There is a requirement under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for the local authority to consult the local community about any management proposals for conservation areas.
- 3.2 A draft version of the document was published for public consultation in 2024. The Council sought to consult those with an interest in the subjects covered by the document. Details of the consultation were sent to all local heritage and community groups and efforts were made to reach a wider audience through local media and the respective councils' websites. Partnership working with Braunstone Town Council was a key focus. A public display relating to the draft Management Plan was arranged. Responses received helped to shape the final version. Following adoption of the Management Plan, the local authorities will endeavour to consult on any relevant changes in their respective administrative areas with each other.

4 Publicity and Information

- 4.1 Public consultation relating to conservation areas in Blaby and Leicester has revealed that many property owners and occupiers are unaware of the extent and implications of conservation area coverage. Ambiguity about restrictions increases the likelihood of inappropriate development occurring and damages the integrity of the conservation area designations.
- 4.2 Given the complexity of legislation relating to heritage designations, such as conservation areas, the two councils will look to work with Braunstone Town Council on producing guidance detailing both the rights and responsibilities of living in such areas for property owners and occupiers. As national legislation on restrictions relating to conservation areas is liable to change, the best medium for guidance is on the respective councils' website, which have the capacity to be easily updated.
- 4.3 Another potential issue is the turnover in residency and ownership of properties in the conservation areas. To ensure that all property owners and occupiers are aware of both the conservation area designation and any significant changes to related planning controls, a 'conservation area guidance leaflet' will be sent to all properties in the conservation areas.

ACTION G1

Guidance and Information

Each council has produced a Conservation Area Character Appraisal and will make guidance available on its website.

- 4.4 A number of cast-iron conservation area signage roundels are attached to lampposts in the area. To provide greater clarity over the boundaries of the conservation areas, these signs should potentially be installed at the various entry points and renovated/replaced where appropriate.
- 4.5 Heritage interpretation panels have been located within the conservation areas. If appropriate, additional panels should be installed making the history of the areas more legible. New technology may also present opportunities for improving the accessibility of information regarding conservation areas.
- 4.6 Local heritage groups may arrange events to promote the heritage of the areas, including walking tours, seminars, and expert talks. Such work should be supported, such as through additional publicity.

ACTION G2

Raising the profile of the conservation areas

Each council will look to raise the profile of conservation area by potentially installing new street signs, working with local community groups and exploring the potential of media/technology.

5 Development Management

- 5.1 Demand for new housing, residential extensions and alterations can impact on the character of conservation areas through unsympathetic or poor design. The role of each councils' development management function in overseeing future changes to conservation areas is therefore crucial.
- 5.2 As detailed in Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, all development within each conservation area should

ACTION G3

Delivering effective development management

Each council will use strategic policy and guidance documents to ensure that development respects the character of the conservation area as outlined in the character appraisal.

preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Development within conservation areas should be in keeping with local character and this is summarised in the character appraisals.

6 Setting and Views

- 6.1 Some sites, which are outside the boundary of the conservation areas, have an impact on its character through setting and framing. Should development on these sites come forward the impact on the conservation areas will be a material consideration.
- 6.2 As detailed in the character appraisals, there are also important views which are part of the significance of the conservation areas. The impact on these identified views will be a material consideration of any planning application. Care must be taken at an early stage to prevent harm to these key views through new development. Opportunities should be sought to enhance the setting of the conservation areas through appropriate and attractive development.

ACTION G4

Setting and views

Each council will ensure that development, which affects the setting of the conservation area, respects its character and that important views are protected.

7 Building uses

- 7.1 As detailed in the character appraisal for the conservation area in the City Council administrative area, the buildings in that conservation area, with the exception of the church, are residential in character, being largely consistent with their historic uses. The surviving commercial elements of the former village are located within the boundary of the conservation area in Blaby District, which also has a significant residential element.
- 7.2 Where a change of use is proposed, this should be appropriate to the architectural character of the property. Conversion or excessive subdivision of a property can harm the amenity of the conservation areas through structural alterations and associated developments, such as large bin and cycle stores. Each council will not support changes of use that harm the character of the conservation areas.

- 7.3 Should a property become long-term vacant each council will pursue appropriate steps to ensure the condition of the building is maintained and to encourage re-use. In exceptional circumstances, the use of enforcement powers will be considered. Long-term vacancy will not be a justifiable reason to allow for demolition unless it can be demonstrated that all options for re-use have been investigated.

ACTION G5

Building uses

Each council will seek to protect the residential character of their conservation area and ensure any new uses are consistent with this.

8 Building features

- 8.1 Within the conservation areas there are examples of unsympathetic alterations to the external fabric of buildings. This includes the removal of original chimneys, windows, doors, and other features/detailing, as well as the addition of rooflights and satellite dishes. External painting, cladding, and rendering of brick elevations, while limited has also had a detrimental effect on the conservation area.
- 8.2 A notable problem is the replacement of timber windows with poorly suited plastic or composite units. Such alterations may now be restricted, through the introduction of an Article 4 Direction.
- 8.3 In general, the councils advocate for the refurbishment of historic features, particularly windows and doors, with replacement considered as an option of last resort. Where original features have already been inappropriately altered or lost, any new development should aim to respond meaningfully to the architectural composition, design, and proportionality of the building under consideration, as well as to the wider streetscene within the conservation area. For example, poorly suited uPVC windows should be replaced with alternative windows that are more in keeping with the original building.
- 8.4 Historic England has carried out research which shows that replacing windows with uPVC in an appropriate style is not significantly cheaper than timber equivalents. Moreover, it should also be recognised that property values are generally higher where properties retain their original features. Enhancing the energy efficiency of properties can be delivered in a way that is sympathetic to

building character through the repair of windows and/or additional measures, such as secondary glazing or draught proofing.

- 8.5 The councils will work with property owners to encourage the use of traditional materials that preserve or enhance the historic environment. The use of 'mock' or synthetic materials will be resisted, as these do not adequately replicate the natural materials in finish, quality and weathering. In addition, such materials are not historically appropriate to the conservation areas. This is especially important to elevations and roof slopes fronting public highway and open public spaces.

ACTION G6

Traditional materials

Traditional external materials and finishes will be expected in all new development in the conservation areas.

Each council will seek to encourage the use of traditional, contextual materials through pre-application advice, as well as in information in relevant planning documents and on the councils' websites.

9 Boundaries

- 9.1 The loss of original front boundaries is a particular issue within the conservation areas. As noted in the character appraisals, garden walls, railings and hedges make an important contribution to the character of the conservation areas. Where they have been removed the distinction between the public and private domain and the visual edge to highway is weakened or lost to the detriment of the local townscape.
- 9.2 Where front boundaries remain these should be protected. Opportunities should be sought to reinstate historic boundaries where these have been lost or removed.

ACTION G7

Boundary Treatments

Each council will seek opportunities to retain existing boundaries and support the reinstatement of traditional front boundaries where they have been lost.

10 Highways and Footpaths

- 10.1 A number of issues in the Conservation Area relate to accommodating vehicular traffic, as well as measures required for traffic safety, control and calming. Given that the conservation areas were largely developed before cars were invented, there are longstanding issues within them over how car parking and traffic flow can be accommodated within restricted streetscapes.
- 10.2 In certain parts of the conservation areas surfaces are tired and in need of upgrading and where repairs have been carried out to the pathways these have not always been applied in materials to match the existing, resulting in an array of forms that are visually detracting.
- 10.3 The public realm should be carefully designed and improved to provide an uncluttered environment that sustains or enhances the special significance of the conservation areas. The core principles of the *Leicester Street Design Guide* will guide all future development in that administrative area. Its directives on place making, distinctness and creation of healthy and sustainable cities in particular will be a material consideration in all management and planning decisions.
- 10.4 As public realm projects develop, each council will pursue a policy of early engagement with stakeholders to help identify traffic management designs that are sympathetic to the historic environment. Where appropriate, traffic management measures should be integrated into the historic environment effectively by retaining features such as walls, trees, hedges and railings, as well as traditional floorspace materials. Where new features are introduced, the observance of existing design principles and use of local traditional materials should be considered to ensure they are in keeping with the existing townscape and character of the area.
- 10.5 Statutory undertakers are responsible for carrying out the permanent reinstatement of the highway, where they disturb it, with the existing materials. Where existing materials cannot be re-used, new materials should be the closest possible match.

- 10.6 Each council will advocate the principles established by Historic England in *Streets for All: East Midlands*, as well as the two *Manual for Streets* documents to all those involved in highways works.

ACTION G8

Highway Works

Utilising national and regional best practice guidance, each Council will seek to ensure that any future highways works will bring a positive improvement to the character and appearance of the conservation areas.

- 10.9 A detailed audit of the public realm will be undertaken to identify the best way to minimise street clutter and better integrate street furniture in the conservation areas. The street audit should be developed with officers from the local councils and other interested parties to ensure they are accurate and the findings feasible. Proposals to remove street clutter will be actioned within 12 months of the adoption of this document.
- 10.10 Street furniture including bollards, bins, bike stands, electricity cabinets, information panels and other freestanding features within the highway should co-ordinate with each other and tie-in with similar features elsewhere in the area. An appropriate and sensitive colour palette should be chosen to achieve this. All new street furniture should be kept to a minimum and carefully positioned to avoid hindrance to pedestrian and sustainable transport flow.
- 10.11 The highway on Braunstone Lane and Main Street has a significant impact on the setting of the conservation areas. Requests will be made to Leicestershire County Council, as the relevant Highway Authority, should any aesthetic improvements be identified.

ACTION G10

Street clutter audit

An audit of the public realm to identify the best way to minimise street clutter and better integrate street furniture in the conservation areas will be undertaken. An Action Plan for reducing street clutter will be prepared and taken forward with the relevant highways authorities.

11 Green infrastructure

- 11.1 Blaby and Leicester’s green infrastructure network helps to support wildlife and delivers multiple environmental and health benefits. This includes improving air and water quality, storing carbon, providing opportunities for biodiversity net gain, facilitating urban cooling, and providing spaces for people to enjoy for leisure and recreation.
- 11.2 To help support local ambition to deliver an overall environmental net gain, each council will expect new development to achieve biodiversity net gain and improvements to the existing green infrastructure, wherever appropriate.

ACTION G11

Green Infrastructure

Each council will ensure biodiversity value is preserved or enhanced when considering development proposals in the area.

12 Trees and Green Spaces

- 12.1 There are many trees within the conservation areas which make an important contribution to the character of the local environment. These are located on public and private land, in open public spaces and private gardens. Every effort should be made to retain these trees in a healthy condition.
- 12.2 The value that trees make to the overall composition of conservation areas is acknowledged by the additional controls on tree works following conservation area designation. All trees in the Conservation Area are protected by its designation and no works should be done to trees within the Conservation Area without first contacting the City Council. Details of how to do this can be found on the City Councils website.
- 12.3 Trees which are subject to preservation orders have been identified in each conservation area character appraisal and are marked on publicly accessible mapping through each council’s website.

- 12.4 Where trees are lost through death, disease, highway works or other development, they should be replaced with suitable substitutes wherever feasible. Opportunities for more tree planting and enhanced green infrastructure will be explored by the each council, in line with the principles and aspirations of their respective Green Infrastructure Strategy. New green infrastructure will be carefully considered in the context of the existing character of the area and views into, within and out of the conservation areas.

ACTION G12

Trees

There is a presumption in favour of retaining trees which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Each council will monitor trees in conservation areas that have notable amenity value. Where appropriate, opportunities for additional tree planting will be explored.

- 12.5 The conservation areas includes areas of green space that are managed by the District Council and City Council. A collaborative approach to management should be undertaken between the relevant departments to ensure that opportunities to enhance the conservation aspects of these spaces are maximised.
- 12.6 Specific enhancement opportunities for some of these spaces are presented in the City Council's [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#).

ACTION G13

Open Spaces

Each council will seek opportunities to protect and enhance the open and historic character of each conservation area's open green spaces.

13 New Development

- 13.1 There are limited opportunities for larger scale infill development within the conservation areas, but sensitive enhancement schemes that sustain or enhance the local distinctiveness may come forward which can help to improve the quality of the local environment.

- 13.2 If the special interest of the conservation areas is to be protected in the future, development should only be allowed where it will fit in with the existing historic form of development; where it does not impinge on the setting of historic buildings; and where it does not result in the loss of important green open space.

14 Grant Funding

- 14.1 Leicester City Council will streamline the available funding into areas and buildings considered to be at risk or of considerable enhancement potential.
- 14.2 Each Council will also seek to support and assist, where practicable, groups or individuals seeking grant funding from alternative sources to carry out necessary works to historic buildings within the conservation areas.
- 14.3 Properties within the administrative boundary of Leicester City Council are eligible for the Historic Building Grant fund for the repair of original architectural features or the restoration of missing features. Details of this can be found on the City Council's website.

15 Local Community

- 15.1 Each council recognises that emphasis needs to be given to involving the local community in decisions about both the designation and the management of conservation areas. What is valued by the community may add a new perspective to what is considered as 'special' and worthy of preservation by the local authority. Local communities have a vital role to play in the development and implementation of management plans for proposals to succeed.
- 15.2 There are a range of existing community groups operating in the conservation areas whose local knowledge should be prioritised in the ongoing management of the area and provide opportunities for more proactive processes for enhancement and enforcement. The latter issue could potentially involve heritage wardens, who help to monitor change in the conservation areas.

ACTION G14

Community Groups

Each council should work actively with local community groups and elected councillors to improve the management and monitoring of each Conservation Area.

16 Enforcement Strategy

- 16.1 Monitoring and enforcement are important to the success of any management plan. Ensuring that permitted works have been executed as approved and that any unauthorised works are investigated and dealt with appropriately is important in maintaining the character and special significance of conservation areas. Part of this work is pro-active monitoring of the area to identify any breaches and to gather baseline evidence which can be used as evidence in any action.
- 16.2 Changes in the appearance and condition of the conservation areas should be monitored regularly by the Council to ensure that enforcement action can be taken promptly to deal with problems as they arise. A dated photographic record of the area should be regularly updated to ensure that there is the requisite level of evidence available to the Council. Street elevations would need to be photographed at least once every four years to ensure that enforcement action can be taken forward.
- 16.3 Where works have been done without the relevant permission(s), the Council will investigate if these breaches harm the amenity and significance of the local environment. If harm is found to have been caused, action will be taken. Where appropriate, the Council will pursue the use of additional enforcement powers to tackle issues within the Conservation Area, including Section 215 Notices, Urgent Works Notices, Planning and Listed Building Enforcement Notices and Building Preservation Notices.

ACTION G15

Enforcement and Monitoring

Each council will take steps to deal with the unauthorised development where it causes harm to the character and appearance of each conservation area. A record of the conservation areas should be regularly maintained to ensure that enforcement action can be successfully taken forward.

17 Article 4 Directions

- 17.1 Minor development, such as domestic alterations and extensions, can normally be carried out without planning permission under the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO).
- 17.2 Article 4 of the GPDO gives local planning authorities the power to restrict these 'permitted development rights', including where they have the potential to

undermine protection for the historic environment. Using the provisions of Article 4 of the GPDO brings certain types of development under the control of a local planning authority, which allows them to be considered on a case-by-case basis through planning applications.

17.3 Designation of a conservation area restricts certain permitted development rights but many works, such as replacing front doors and windows, remains outside the control of the local planning authority.

17.4 To help protect the character and appearance of the conservation areas, both are consulting on proposals to potentially introduce focussed Article 4 Directions for non-listed properties in the areas. This would mean most external works to properties within the conservation areas will require planning permission including:

- Removal, alteration or installation of windows and doors;
- Extensions or additions including porches;
- Roof alterations such as dormer windows, rooflights and changing the roofing materials or removal or alteration of a chimney;
- Painting the exterior of the property;
- Paving over a front garden;
- Removal of existing and installation of new boundary treatments.

ACTION G16

Article 4 Direction

Each council will explore the potential for a new Article 4 Direction to restrict external alterations for relevant properties within each Braunstone Village Conservation Area.

If made, each council will monitor the properties affected and provide adequate levels of publicity to ensure its successful application.

18 Links with Braunstone Park

18.1 As set out in the accompanying appraisal, the land which comprises the conservation area was formerly part of the wider Braunstone Estate. While there is some visibility between the park and the former village, the two were largely severed with the development of the housing estate in the 1930s.

- 18.2 There is now no direct route between the park and church, which is regrettable given their historic association. There is an opportunity to create a more direct link between the park and village through footpath improvement and better wayfinding, place marking and interpretation.

ACTION G17

Links with Braunstone Park

Leicester City Council will explore opportunities to create a more direct pedestrian route between the conservation areas and Braunstone Park and improve signage in both areas.

19 Monitoring

- 19.1 To assess the effectiveness of measures included in the Conservation Area Management Plan it is important that effective monitoring measures are put in place by the two local authorities. The Historic Environment Team at Leicester City Council will do a bi-annual inspection of the two conservation areas and detail actions for remedying identified issues. In addition, the following procedures will take place.

19.2 Document updates

In line with best practice guidance from Historic England, the two local authorities will review the two Conservation Area Character Appraisal documents every five years and where necessary, update the documents. This process will help to monitor change and ensure that the documents remain an accurate representation of the area in question. The councils will also review the Conservation Area Management Plan every five years.

19.3 Local Communities

The input of other stakeholders, such as local history groups, residents' associations and ward councillors, in helping to monitor the management of the conservation areas will be welcomed.

Bibliography

English Historic Towns Forum. 1998. Conservation Area Management: A Practical Guide.

Historic England. 2016. Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management.

Historic England. 2018. Streets For All: East Midlands.

Department for Communities and Local Government & Department for Transport. 2007. Manual for Streets.

Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation. 2010. Manual for Streets 2: Wider Applications of the Principles.

- Historic England

<https://historicengland.org.uk/>

- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

<http://www.spab.org.uk>

- Historic Environment Record

<https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/>

Braunstone Village Conservation Area: Management Plan

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Proposed Article 4 Direction within Blaby District Council administrative boundary:

The proposed Article 4(1) Direction for 228, 230, 230a, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 256, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278 Braunstone Lane is as follows:

The Direction restricts permitted development rights as set out in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 with regards to:

Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse comprised within the following classes of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

- Class A – enlargement, improvement, or other alteration;
- Class C – alterations to the roof;
- Class D – the erection or construction of a porch outside any door;
- Class F – hard surfaces incidental to the use of a house.

Minor development comprised within the following classes of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

- Class A – Erection of fences and gates;
- Class C – the painting of the exterior of any building or work.

Appendix 3

Proposed Article 4 Direction within Leicester City Council administrative boundary:

The proposed Article 4(1) Direction for St Peters Vicarage, Main Street and 7-9 Main Street is as follows:

The Direction restricts permitted development rights as set out in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 with regards to:

Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse comprised within the following classes of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

- Class A – enlargement, improvement, or other alteration;
- Class C – alterations to the roof;
- Class D – the erection or construction of a porch outside any door;
- Class F – hard surfaces incidental to the use of a house.

Minor development comprised within the following classes of Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the said Order:

- Class A – Erection of fences and gates;
- Class C – the painting of the exterior of any building or work.

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
CITIZEN'S ADVISORY PANEL – 28th NOVEMBER 2024

Item 7 - Braunstone Town Council Results from Surveys

Purpose of Report

To receive the results of the Town Council surveys, including feedback on current initiatives.

Background

Braunstone Town Council undertakes consultations and surveys on various matters throughout the year in order to give residents to comment on proposed projects and policies.

Various consultations and surveys have been undertaken in 2024 and the results reported back to appropriate committee. A summary of the surveys and responses received is detailed below along with an appropriate comment on the query.

IMPEY CLOSE PLAYGROUND AND FOOTPATH REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Deadline: 9am on Friday 1st December 2023.

Three responses were received as below.

Consultation Response	Council Response/Action
All the gravel footpaths need resurfacing not just the one from the top of Darien Way down to the sculpture. The one from the top of the village green next to the sculptured seating area down to Darien way is particularly bad. When it rains it sweeps stones and gravel down onto the footpath. This has been a particular problem for a few years now and it's getting worse.	Remedial work to the worst areas of the gravel paths would be taking place over the coming winter months by the Town Council Parks & Grounds staff. Professional advice regarding the repair of the two footpaths that form part of the Impey Close playground project will be sought.
A new swing seat for younger children and/or disabled children would be fantastic where they can be properly strapped in and any other equipment aimed towards young toddlers/young primary school age as most of the parks on Thorpe Astley don't have too much to them and my little boy would love it next Summer!	This can be considered when the tender requirements are drafted up.

Consultation Response	Council Response/Action
<p>This playground was designated for “older children” in the builder’s specification. The green topped fence needs surveying as there is at least one of the spindles missing/cut and some of the bolts are removable allowing the fence to be opened like a gate.</p> <p>If you are going to change the rubberised path for rubber mulch consider creating a complete circuit around the playground so the children can ride bikes etc. without going near the play equipment.</p>	<p>The annual ROSPA report has highlighted the loose bolts and fittings and work to the this is included in the Winter work maintenance schedule.</p> <p>The inclusion of the pathway around the playground can be considered for inclusion in the proposed work.</p>

CUSTOMER SERVICES STANDARDS

Deadline: 9am on Monday 18th December 2023.

Two respondents indicated their support for the proposed changes and did not suggest any other changes.

WORKING TIME POLICY & PROCEDURES

Deadline 9am on Monday 26th February 2024.

No responses received.

LEAVE ENTITLEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

Deadline 9am on Monday 26th February 2024

No responses received.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Deadline 9am on Monday 8th April 2024.

One response to the consultation was received.

Consultation Response	Comment
<p>It would be helpful to add that making false allegations against other employees is unacceptable. Accusers should be sure that they can back up their claims with evidence before making any accusations. Otherwise, it causes unnecessary stress on the person being accused,</p>	<p>The inference being that false allegations should result in disciplinary action against the accuser.</p> <p>The Disciplinary Policy & Procedure doesn’t give a list of what constitutes misconduct. Paragraph 22 recognises an act of Gross Misconduct includes “dishonesty in dealings with the Council and/or Management Implications”.</p> <p>References to disciplinary usually fall within the relevant policy, e.g. unauthorised absence can be</p>

Consultation Response	Comment
especially if the allegations turn out to be false.	disciplined and this is set out in the Absence Management Policy & Procedure. Therefore, it is proposed that this comment is picked up as part of the review of the Grievance Policy & Procedure.

GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Deadline: 9am on Monday 20th May 2024

Three responses to the consultation were received.

One respondent indicated their support for the proposed changes and did not suggest any other changes.

Two respondents made suggestions, which are set out in the table below.

Consultation Response	Comment
When an employee receives a letter stating that a grievance has been submitted against them and the outcome is unfounded, the complainant should also receive a letter stating the outcome is unfounded etc.	This is covered by paragraphs 30 and 35j of the Policy & Procedure
Clarification that Paragraph 8 refers to an Employee's Formal Grievance against a Town Councillor, where that complaint concerns an allegation that the Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct.	Recommended revisions to the text at paragraph 8 (Principles) and paragraph 24 (Formal Grievances).

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

Deadline: 9am on Monday 12th August 2024

One response was received. The respondent indicated support for the proposed changes and did not suggest any other changes.

OFFICER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Deadline: 9am on Monday 14th October 2024.

No responses received.

MOSSDALE MEADOWS FLOOD ALLEVIATION WORK

Deadline: 9am on Thursday 31st October 2024

Responses received from consultation attached at Appendix 1.


Action Requested

That the surveys and consultations be noted along with the responses and comments received.

MosSDale Meadows Flood Alleviation Work Survey 2024

Closing date for comments to be Wednesday 31st October 2024

Results taken from Survey Monkey – Online Survey 04/11/2024



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MOSSDALE MEADOWS FLOOD ALLEVIATION WORK

CONSULTATION

The Town Council has been looking to undertake flood alleviation work to MosSDale Meadows due to issues in several areas with flooding. Due to the costs received to undertake the work the Town Council has reduced the scope of the work and created an order of urgent priority as follows:

Vehicular Culvert Bridge	High Priority
Drainage repair work to car park entrance	High Priority
Work to brook bank	Medium Priority
Drainage work down Lubbesthorpe Bridle Path	Medium Priority
Tarmac and work to car park surface	Low Priority

The two high priority works as shown in the table above have been approved by the Policy & Resources committee on 12th September, to be undertaken, subject to funding.

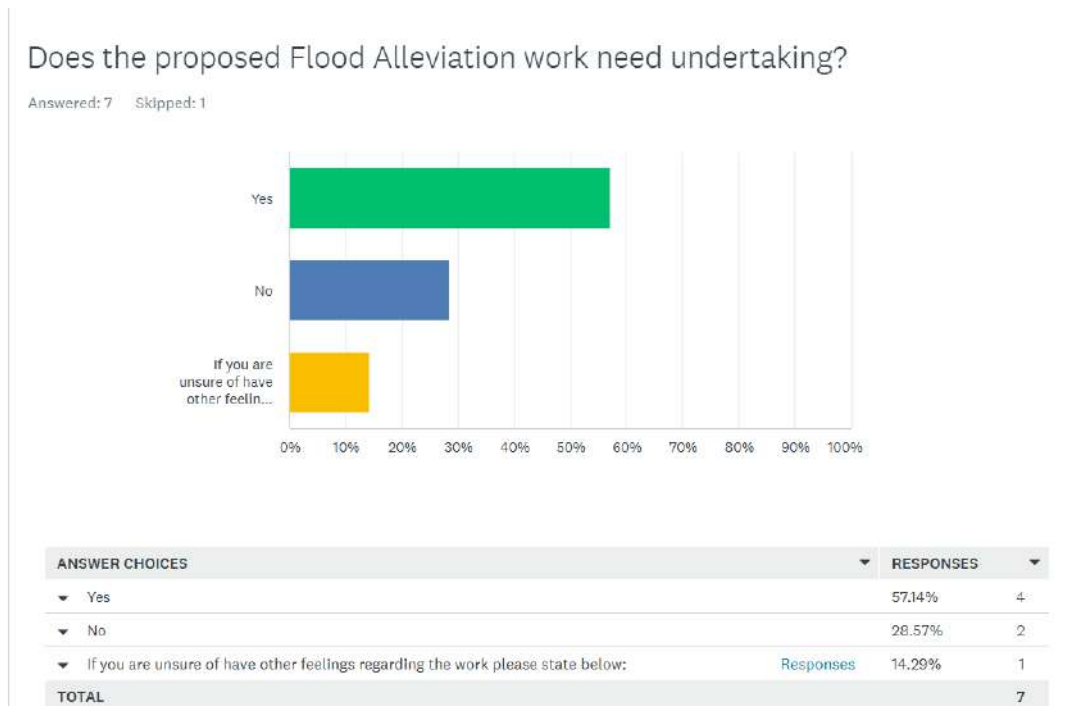
NOW WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Does the proposed Flood Alleviation work need undertaking?
Should the Town Council be undertaking this Flood Alleviation work at this time?
Do you agree with the priority order of the work to be undertaken?

HEAD OVER TO OUR SURVEY NOW TO TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS!
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QB2HHDV> - Link also available from our website.

0116 2890045 | enquiries@braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk
www.braunstonetowncouncil.org.uk

Q1. Does the proposed Flood Alleviation work need undertaking?



Yes – 4

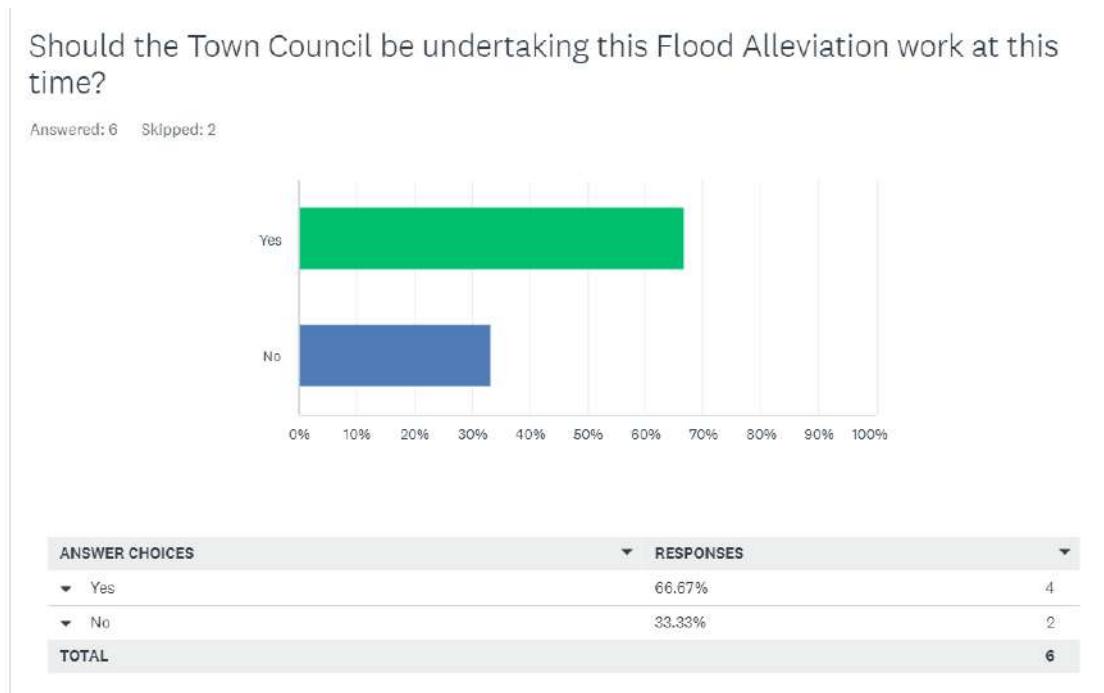
No – 2

If you are unsure or have other feelings regarding the work please state below:

I am not able to have an opinion because you do not provide enough detail on the benefits of the works. You do not say how, or to what extent, the works will alleviate flooding. You don't say where the 'vehicular culvert bridge' is, nor the benefit of replacing it with something different. You have not given us any idea of costs for each works.

- Answer given 29/10/2024 15:12

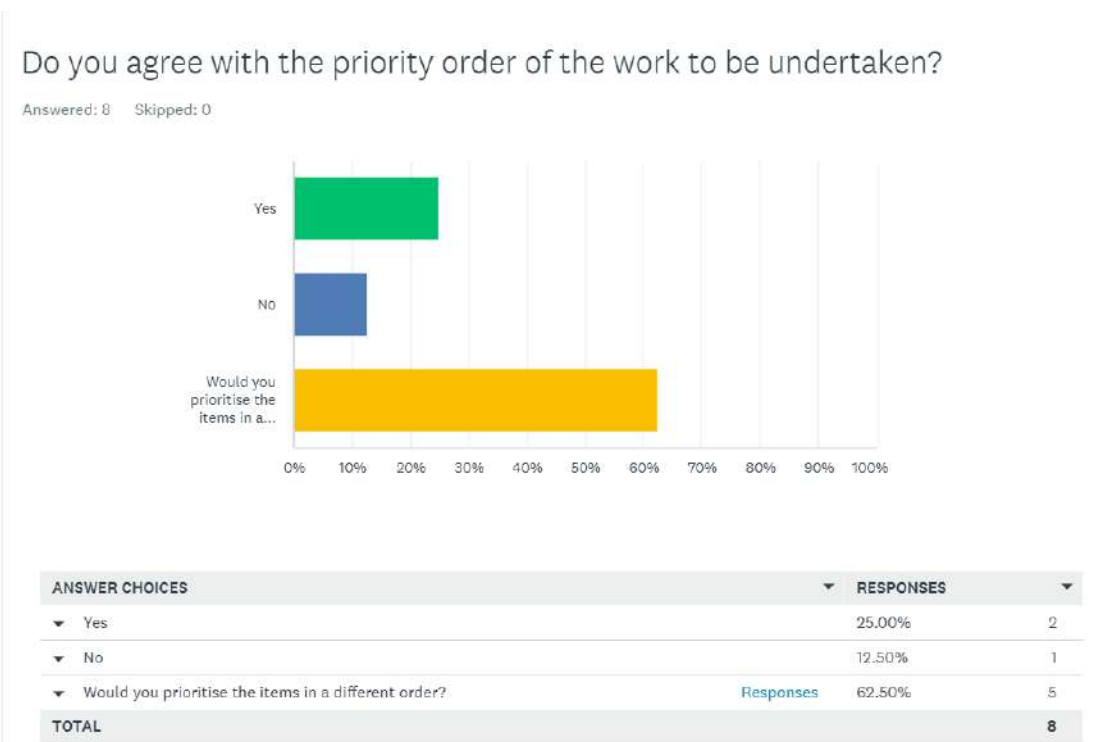
Q2. Should the Town Council be undertaking this Flood Alleviation work at this time?



Yes – 4

No – 2

Q3. Do you agree with the priority order of the work to be undertaken?



Yes – 2

No – 1

Would you prioritise the items in a different order? – 5

Bridge first but limit construction to have a maximum weight limit of 7.5 tonnes, this will prevent the use of the bridge by any development in the recently sold woodland where there is no current vehicle access to any highway. Limiting the weight will deter any use of large commercial Lorries gaining access via Mossdale meadows to get to any development of the woodland. The streams outfall culvert from the Meridian Leisure Area is/was supposed to have large flood underground interception chambers to prevent flooding downstream. If we are now having flooding problems it could be these chambers are full and the interception pumps have not been working to empty them during low flow conditions. Worth asking the management team of the leisure centre. I assume the Environment Agency has been consulted on the effect downstream of the proposed strengthening of the banks. Under the Lubbesthorpe development there was a condition that they re-appraise the use of the balancing lagoons to prevent flooding through the Osiers and onwards to Fosse Park

- Answer given 24/09/2024 16:51

It is hard for a lay person to comment, as although the various works can be undertaken independently of each other, there are various other factors that require consideration. For example, the replacement of the culvert, has implications down stream, for residents of Braunstone Town, particularly on Lubbesthorpe Road, for the houses that back on to the brook. If the new culvert allows faster flowing water, it sounds like that will also allow more volume to flow. I would suggest that the views of the Environment Agency are sought on the effect of any works.

- Answer given 03/10/2024 19:10

Disappointed to not see treatment of the path leading from Brockenhurst Drive path, which is damaged after flooding from the brook prioritised after alleviation measures completed. It is well used, arguably impacting more daily users as pedestrians and cyclists than the carpark. Between Nov and March the path is often not passible without wellies - hardly practical! Thanks

- Answer given 22/10/2024 13:00

I assume that this proposed work has got the blessing of the Environment Agency. Flooding at the rear of properties was improved by an EA scheme at the osiers in conjunction with the balancing lagoon for rain water overflow from the Thorpe Ashley development. The New Lubbesthorpe scheme will provide more rainwater run off requiring a major alteration to these balancing lagoons, details of this alternative have yet to be provided by the New Lubbesthorpe developers. With this in mind I believe the Town Coucils proposal should be delayed, any improvement of the flow of the brook will cause more frequent flooding to property further downstream. I have no problem with replacing the bridge.

- Answer given 22/10/2024 23:36

I am not in a position to say because of the same reasons I gave to Question 1 Flood alleviation involves slowing down the flow of water by creating ponds and wetlands - rather than speeding up the flow which will cause flooding downstream where flow is restricted, such as at bridges.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset->

[66787620#:~:text=A%20river%20has%20been%20reconnected,natural%20course%2C%20project%20managers%20said.](#)

- Answer given 29/10/2024 15:12

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL – 28th NOVEMBER 2024

Item 8 – Sexual and General Harassment Policy & Procedure

Purpose

To consider responding to the consultation on Braunstone Town Council's proposed Sexual and General Harassment Policy & Procedure.

Background

From October 2024 new legislation (s40A Equality Act 2010) places greater responsibilities and legal requirements on all Employers, to take proactive steps to prevent Sexual Harassment at work.

Current ACAS Guidance on Preventing Sexual Harassment sets out the following requirements for an organisation's anti-harassment policies and procedure to follow:

- the policy should provide a range of options for reporting sexual harassment, depending on who the person who has been subject to harassment feels comfortable with;
- the policy should provide a range of informal options for dealing with sexual harassment;
- the policy should contain a formal complaints procedure for the Employee to use if they wish;
- the formal procedure should allow Union representation;
- the procedure should be clear about when disciplinary action might be needed;
- only one investigation needs to be conducted into both the Employee's complaint and any subsequent disciplinary action;
- the policy should contain details of help and support available to the person who made the complaint; and
- someone who's been sexually harassed will be given paid time off to get help with any resulting physical or mental health problems.

In addition, specific guidance notes have been developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission for all Employers. In terms of how they apply, the following need to be taken into consideration:

- Employers will need to review existing procedures, including defining what constitutes harassment, steps to take should the problem arise, protection the Organisation will provide to those reporting it, and sanctions against offenders; as a result, a Policy and Procedure that is specific to the needs of the Organisation should be drafted;
- Staff should be consulted on the draft policy and procedure, to get their suggested adjustments, as well as commitment to the document; if the Organisation has a collective bargaining arrangement with one or more Union,

- they too should be consulted as part of the process of updating procedures;
- the procedure should be issued to Directors and staff and displayed in public areas;
- all staff should either attend a briefing session regarding how the new/updated policy and procedure works, or be required to read the document and sign it to confirm that they understand and will comply with it;
- this will need to be repeated on an annual basis to ensure that the training doesn't become outdated; provision of annual training would enable an Organisation to demonstrate that it has taken reasonable steps to prevent the problem; this can provide the Organisation with a valuable defence if it has to defend a claim of Sexual Harassment at the Employment Tribunal; and
- the Policy and Procedure should include a simple and user-friendly reporting process if problems occur, as well as set out what action will be taken against offenders; for example, employees who are found to have committed acts of Sexual Harassment would be accused of Gross Misconduct.

There are no particular criteria or minimum standards for Organisations when implementing their anti-harassment procedures. They must be practical and, most importantly, workable for the size of the organisation.

Consultation

Enclosed at Appendix 1 is Braunstone Town Council's Interim Sexual & General Harassment Policy & Procedure, adopted by Policy & Resources Committee on 7th November 2024. The Interim Sexual & General Harassment Policy & Procedure has been implemented with immediate effect and is subject to consultation prior to final consideration and adoption at the next scheduled meeting of Policy & Resources Committee on 16th January 2025.

The consultation will be open to anyone who wishes to comment; however, it is primarily aimed at Councillors, staff, unions, partners, stakeholders and residents.

Next Steps

Following the end of the consultation, a report will be drafted setting out the consultation comments and responses, along with proposed revisions to the Policy & Procedure, and submitted to the meeting of Policy & Resources Committee scheduled for 16th January 2025.

After the post consultation version is adopted, training and information sessions will be arranged for staff.

Action Requested

Consider whether and how to respond to the consultation on Braunstone Town Council's proposed Sexual and General Harassment Policy & Procedure.



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

SEXUAL AND GENERAL HARASSMENT

POLICY & PROCEDURE

Purpose and Scope

1. The aim of this Policy & Procedure is to inform employees of the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provide employees who are the victims of personal harassment with a means of redress.
2. This policy applies to all employees of Braunstone Town Council, including both paid staff (permanent, agency, temporary or casual), and volunteers.

Principles

3. Braunstone Town Council recognises that harassment and victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. As such, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
4. Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. For the purposes of this policy, it also includes bullying.
5. Bullying is understood to be targeted and persistent offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour and can include the abuse or misuse of power to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
6. Whatever form it takes, personal harassment is always taken seriously and is totally unacceptable.
7. Braunstone Town Council recognises that personal harassment can exist in the workplace, as well as outside, and that this can seriously affect employees' working lives by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant working environment.
8. The Council deplores all forms of personal harassment and seeks to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all employees.
9. The Town Council recognises that it has a duty to implement this Policy & Procedure and all employees are expected to comply with it.

Examples of personal harassment

10. Personal harassment takes many forms and employees may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another and examples of harassment include:
- a) insensitive jokes and pranks
 - b) lewd or abusive comments
 - c) deliberate exclusion from conversations
 - d) displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
 - e) abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour
 - f) name-calling
 - g) picking on someone or setting them up to fail
 - h) exclusion or victimisation
 - i) undermining their contribution/position
 - j) demanding a greater work output than is reasonably feasible
 - k) blocking promotion or other development/advancement.
11. These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at the appropriate level will be taken against employees committing any form of personal harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment

12. Sexual harassment can take place in many forms within the workplace and can go undetected for a period of time where employees do not understand that particular behaviour is classed as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour related to sex, or of a sexual nature, by one employee towards another and examples of sexual harassment include:
- a) lewd or abusive comments of a sexual nature such as regarding an individual's appearance or body
 - b) unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
 - c) displaying sexually suggestive or sexually offensive writing or material
 - d) asking questions of a sexual nature
 - e) sexual propositions or advances, whether made in writing or verbally.
13. Sexual harassment can also take place where an employee is treated less favourably because they have rejected, or submitted to, the unwanted conduct that is related to sex or is of a sexual nature. Whether less favourable treatment occurs as a result will be examined broadly and includes areas such as blocking promotion and refusal of training opportunities or other development opportunities.

Examples of victimisation

14. Victimisation takes place when an employee is treated unfavourably as a direct result of raising a genuine complaint of discrimination or harassment. Furthermore, any employee who supports or assists another employee to

raise a complaint is also subjected to victimisation if they are treated unfavourably.

Third party harassment

15. Braunstone Town Council operates a zero tolerance policy in relation to harassment perpetrated against one of its employees by a third party, such as a resident, customer, user or visitor. All employees are encouraged to report any and all instances of harassment that involve a third party in line with the reporting procedure, as outlined below.
16. If the Council finds that the allegation is well-founded, steps deemed necessary will be taken in order to remedy the complaint. This can include, but is not limited to:
 - warning the individual about the inappropriate nature of their behaviour
 - banning the individual from the Council's premises
 - reporting the individual's actions to the police.

In addition to this, Braunstone Town Council will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to deter and prevent any form of harassment from third parties taking place.

Responsibilities

Employee Responsibilities

17. Braunstone Town Council requires its employees to behave appropriately and professionally at all times during the working day, and this may extend to events outside of working hours which are classed as work-related such as social events. Employees should not engage in discriminatory, harassing or aggressive behaviour towards any other person at any time.
18. Any form of harassment or victimisation may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal if it is committed:
 - in a work situation
 - during any situation related to work, such as a social event
 - against a colleague or other person connected to the Council outside of a work situation, including on social media
 - against anyone outside of a work situation where the incident is relevant to their suitability to carry out the role.
19. A breach of this policy by will be treated as a disciplinary manner.

Council Responsibilities

20. Braunstone Town Council will be responsible for ensuring all members of staff, including seniors and management, understand the rules and policies relating to the prevention of harassing and bullying behaviour at work and

- during work-related social events. The Council will promote a professional and positive workplace whereby managers are alert and proactively identify areas of risk and incidents of harassment, sexual harassment and bullying.
21. The Council will also take into account aggravating factors, such as abuse of power over a more junior colleague, when deciding what disciplinary action to take.
 22. Where an incident is witnessed, or a complaint is made under this Policy, the Council will take prompt action to deal with this matter. All incidents will be deemed serious and dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Complaining about harassment and/or bullying

Informal method

23. Braunstone Town Council recognises that complaints of personal harassment, and particularly of sexual harassment, can sometimes be of a sensitive or intimate nature and that it may not be appropriate for an individual to raise the issue through our normal grievance procedure. In these circumstances individuals are encouraged to raise such issues with a senior colleague of their choice (whether or not that person has a direct supervisory responsibility for the individual) as a confidential helper.
24. If an individual is the victim of minor harassment, he or she should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop. If the victim feels unable to do this verbally then he or she should hand a written request to the harasser, and the confidential helper can assist you in this.

Formal method

25. Where the informal approach fails or if the harassment is more serious, the individual should bring the matter to the attention of their Service Manager or the Chief Executive & Town Clerk as a formal written grievance and again the confidential helper can assist in this. If possible, the individual should keep notes of the harassment so that the written complaint can include:
 - the name of the alleged harasser
 - the nature of the alleged harassment
 - the dates and times when the alleged harassment occurred
 - the names of any witnesses
 - any action already taken by you to stop the alleged harassment.
26. Where it is not possible to make the formal complaint to the above named person (in paragraph 25 above), for example where that person is the alleged harasser, then the complaint should be raised with either the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council; or if not possible, another Town Councillor.

27. On receipt of a formal complaint, the Council will take action to separate the individual from the alleged harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension with contractual pay until the matter has been resolved.
28. On conclusion of the investigation, which will normally be within ten working days of the meeting with the individual making the formal complaint, a report of the findings will be submitted to the person who will Chair the Grievance Hearing.
29. The individual raising the complaint will be invited to attend a meeting, at a reasonable time and location, to discuss the matter once the persons hearing the Grievance have had opportunity to read the report. The individual has the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by a colleague or a union representative and must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter.
30. You will be able to put your case forward at the meeting and the Chair of the meeting will explain the outcome of the investigation. There is a right to appeal the outcome, which is to be made to Appeals Committee within one week of receiving the outcome in writing. Appeals made after one week will be considered if the Employee has a reasonable explanation for having taken so long.
31. If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the harasser will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy & Procedure up to and including dismissal.
32. The Council is committed to ensuring employees are not discouraged from using this procedure and no employee will be victimised for having brought a complaint.

Review

33. The Council's Management Team, following advice from the Council's HR Advisor will review the Policy & Procedure annually in order to monitor its effectiveness. Where changes are needed, then a report will be made to the Council's Policy & Resources Committee and staff consulted as necessary.
34. In addition to the above, the Policy & Procedure will be reviewed formally at least every four years or following legislative changes.

DATE ADOPTED	7th November 2024	REVIEW DATE	16 th January 2025
REVISED DATE/S	16 th January 2025		

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

21st NOVEMBER 2024

Item 6 – Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning

Purpose

To set out the context for the Council's medium-term priorities and financial planning, alongside the Treasury Management, Investment and Reserves Strategies.

Background

Braunstone Town Council first considered and published its Medium to Long Term Priorities and Financial Planning assessment in 2014, since then it has been revised at least on an annual basis in order that changed circumstances and revised predictions can be incorporated.

The annual review takes place in November each year, including an update to the five year forecast, which is also reported/adjusted and reported with the budget and Council Tax precept proposals in January each year.

In January 2024, Policy & Resources Committee and Council received a report on the Council's Financial Position in regard to its cashflow and reserves. Due to the need to urgently address the predicted deficit, Council set a precept for 2024/2025 which was an increase of 26.59% compared to 2023/2024.

To ensure that the Council's medium term financial figures were kept up to date and were robust, both Policy & Resources Committee and Council reviewed and reassessed the 5 year projections, along with the Reserves Policy, in March 2024.

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.

Global Economic Context

In October 2024, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published its World Economic Outlook Update, which forecasts global growth to stay at 3.2% over the next two years. The IMF forecast that global inflation will decline from 5.8% in 2024 to 4.3% in 2025.

In short, while the global economy is forecast to grow, the rate at which it grows is forecast to steadily decline. The IMF Report states "*Although monetary policy is expected to return to a neutral stance by 2025 in the world's largest economies, growth in most economies is expected to remain feeble over the medium term*". Compared to the IMF report in 2022 and 2023, both the growth forecasts are slightly lower and the inflation forecasts are slightly higher.

UK Economic Context

The IMF predicts UK growth at 1.1% during 2024, rising slightly to 1.5% in 2025.

In September 2024, the OECD projected UK CPI inflation to average at 2.7% during 2024 and 2.4% in 2025; remaining slightly above the Bank of England's 2% target.

The Governor has stated that assuming inflation stays low in the coming months then it is likely there will be a further cut in interest rates.

On 30th October, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published the October 2024 Economic and fiscal outlook; alongside the Chancellor's Autumn Budget. The OBR report states "Having stagnated last year, the economy is expected to grow by just over 1 per cent this year, rising to 2 per cent in 2025, before falling to around 1½ per cent, slightly below its estimated potential growth rate of 1⅔ per cent, over the remainder of the forecast. Budget policies temporarily boost output in the near term, but leave GDP largely unchanged in five years. If the increased level of public investment were sustained, it would permanently raise supply in the long term and by significantly more than it does in the forecast period. Budget policies push up CPI inflation by around ½ a percentage point at their peak, meaning it is projected to rise to 2.6 per cent in 2025, and then gradually fall back to target".

On 7th November 2024, the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee cut interest rates from 5% to 4.75%. Rates had also been cut in August by 0.25%. While inflation fell below the Bank's 2% target in the year to September 2024, the Bank expects it to rise again with the tax rises announced in the Budget and a rise in gas and electricity prices last month. As such it was cautious about further interest rate cuts in the short term. The Bank now predicts inflation to hit the 2% target in 2027.

In short, UK economic growth is predicted to be limited and while both inflation and interest rates are set to steadily fall, Councils are likely to continue to face higher costs and funding pressures for the foreseeable future.

Rolling Five Year Budget Plan

Attached as Appendix 1 are the updated financial projections for the period until 2029/2030, which is based on the following assumptions:

- staff salary costs: to accommodate increases in the national living wage, and based on the average increase over the previous three years, costs increasing by 6% in the next couple of years, 5% in 2028/2029 and returning to inflation levels by 2029/2030; the forecast costs for 2025/2026 also includes an estimate for anticipated increases in Employer National Insurance contributions;
- pension scheme costs, taking into account the 2022 valuation with a 6% pay increase each year;
- ensuring the Council pays the foundation living wage, predicted to increase by 20% over the next 5 years;
- 3% inflation on operational costs during 2025/26 (CPI predicted to be between 2% and 3% during that period);

- savings from existing loans which mature during the period being reinvested in additional borrowing to finance projects included in the Capital Plan;
- funds being placed in the Revenue Contingency Fund from 2025/2026; and
- that the base budget predicted when setting the Council Tax equates to the actual income and expenditure.

The projections are based on the following being included in the base budget to replenish the Council's Reserves:

- £79,000 in 2024/2025 (included);
- a further £71,000 (totalling £150,000) in 2025/2026; and
- a reduction of £50,000 in 2026/2027 (totalling £100,000);

resulting in the Revenue (General Fund / Non-Earmarked) Reserve reaching the equivalent of three months net expenditure, as recommended by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance, during 2026.

These projections, using current tax base information, result in a 14.98% increase on the precept for 2025/26; a total for the year of:

- £23.33 on a typical band B property;
- £26.68 on a band C property; and
- £30.01 on a band D property.

Town Council Business Plan

The Council's Mission Statement sets out the Council's 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.

In addition to the Mission Statement, the Council has focused its resources on four main areas of activity (Strategic Aims) for the medium term to ensure effective delivery of initiatives and projects, given the limits on resources. The four Strategic Aims are supported by Delivery Objectives, which are reviewed annually. In addition, the Council has key objectives relating to its Committees and Service Areas, which are also reviewed annually.

The Council's Mission Statement, Strategic Aims and Delivery Objectives, and the Service Objectives for 2024/2025 are set out in the Business Plan, attached at Appendix 2.

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 the Council's Assets. The Capital Plan approved with the 2024/2025 budget in January 2024, is attached as Appendix 3. The Plan identifies projects, which the Town Council will need to deliver to both ensure the long term sustainability and efficiency of its services as well as responding to Climate Change.

The Capital Plan is a rolling document, which is reviewed annually alongside the

budget and identifies priority projects. Significant investment projects completed over in the last 3 years include:

- Shakespeare Park: site, new pavilion, tennis courts and play area;
- Braunstone Civic Centre: toilets, including installation of a Changing Places toilet, and kitchen facilities; and
- Climate Reduction initiatives: installation of solar PV panels, an air source heat pump and electric vehicle charging points.

Investment in the Council's infrastructure, measures to reduce the Council's Carbon footprint and in improvements to biodiversity and Council services 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.

Financial Strategy

Given the Council's Financial Position in 2023/2024 and the level of risk this posed to the ability of the Town Council to function and deliver its services, the following financial strategy is proposed to ensure the Council's finances are resilient:

- 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.

Treasury Management and Investment Strategy

Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks.

In April 2024, Braunstone Town Council sought a short-term loan to enable it to have the cash to function and meet its commitments. The Council took action to address the deficit through its 2024/2025 budget and council tax precept. However, the Council will gradually replenish its reserves, which won't reach recommended minimum levels until 2026. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, loss of income or significant increased expenditure, there is a risk the Council will need to borrow funds in April 2025.

Where the Council undertakes any short-term borrowing to meet expenses pending future income; it will do so by either approaching one of its principal authorities or a UK Bank.

The proposed replenishment of reserves by 2026, will if approved, mean that going forward the Council will only borrow for projects identified in the Capital Plan. When borrowing for Capital Projects, the Council uses the UK Debt Management Office Public Works Loan Scheme, which provides funds for capital projects with fixed

interest and capital repayments for the term of the loan. The Council provides for financing the capital and interest repayments on such loans through this annual Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning process.

Braunstone Town Council deposits its funds in UK Bank Accounts only. While the sums held in some bank accounts significantly exceeds the limit of protection (£85,000) afforded by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme; the risk of losing large sums of money is considered low since during the financial crises of 2008 the UK Government took steps to prevent UK Banks at risk from collapsing.

The Town Council will consider this risk level when reviewing Corporate Risks as part of the Annual Governance Review and will identify any mitigating actions necessary.

Reserves Strategy

Loss of funding, transfer of services, the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent economic pressures resulted in the Council using £117,000 from its reserves between 2018 and 2023 to offset significant increases in the Council Tax precept in one year; while each subsequent year it delayed replenishing the reserves.

As a result, the Internal Audit report of 2024, contained the following:

The level of general reserves at the end of the 2023/2024 financial year was insufficient and did not meet the guidelines laid out in the JPAG Practitioners' Guide 2024 paragraphs 5.31 to 5.39.

In terms of recommendations, the Internal Auditor recognised that the Council was implementing a plan to address the level of general reserves “reserves are critically low, however, Council is currently addressing the issue as outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy and Financial Planning to replenish reserves by 2026. The precept has also been increased for the 2024/2025 financial year, alongside revenue savings”.

The External Audit of 2024 also highlighted the position with the Council's Reserves:

Upon review, general reserves are being held at a very low level. We are aware that the council is aware and that the clerk is monitoring the position. Per Paragraph 5.33 of JPAG Practitioners' Guide, best practice suggests this level should be at least 3 months expenditure as a minimum. These cannot include ring fenced funds and should avoid including funds which are designated for another purpose. The council's policy anticipates that by 2026, the general fund will be of at least 3 months expenditure.

Given the expenditure pressures this year and the critical position with the Council's reserves, the Reserves Policy was revisited in March 2024 and contains arrangements for Monitoring, Managing and Maintaining the Council's Reserves (along with the Principles, previously adopted as part of this Strategy).

A copy of the Reserves Policy is attached at Appendix 4. Since its adoption, the Policy is considered to be working and fit for purpose. However, the Council has the opportunity to review this annually in November as part of this Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning Report.

The projections at Appendix 1 set out a plan to replenish reserves by 2026 and therefore, in accordance with the Reserves Policy, do not include any proposals to utilise revenue reserves to balance revenue budgets or offset precept rises in the short to medium term.

A list of Earmarked Reserves are set out at Appendix 5.

Income Pressures

1. Reduction in the Council Tax Base

As the cost of meeting Council Tax Benefit payments is a charged against billing authorities Collection Fund, any significant increase in the number of benefit claimants as a result of a recession and the rising cost of living will result in a reduction in the Council Tax Base figures; which means the Council Tax charge would have to increase to set the same budget as the previous year.

Coupled with the impact on the Council's finances resulting from the loss of the Council Tax Support Grant, a significant reduction in the Council Tax Base will have a severe impact upon the Council's ability to deliver Capital Projects, protect its services and recover its reserves, without a significant percentage increase on the precept.

2. Income from Facility Hires

The income budgets for Civic Centre Room Hire and Sports Pitch fees were approved by Council on 25th January 2024 to increase by 2.5% to take account of potential lost bookings. Thorpe Astley Community Centre hire income is based on the predicted slightly lower outturn plus 2.5%.

Table 1 below shows the pro-rata budget for community centres hire income (i.e. the fees subject to the price increase) from 1st April to 30th September 2024, the actual income received during the period (note this doesn't necessarily mean the booking was within the period), the total income received during the same period in 2023 and the percentage difference in income received this year compared to last year.

TABLE 1: Income April – September	Budgeted	Actual	Last Year	Difference
Braunstone Civic Centre	£37,750	£46,698	£36,287	28.69%
Thorpe Astley Community Centre	£5,712	£6,270	£4,504	39.21%

The table does not include income from contracts, such as the nursery/pre-school, doctors' surgery or Civic Community Lounge.

Given the economic pressures many are facing, so far the price increase does not appear to have had a negative impact on the net income from room hire and more widely on the offer and appeal the centres have in the community.

In the case of the Civic Centre, the facility is now more attractive with the delivery of the Capital Project to improve the toilet facilities and the kitchen facilities of the Civic Community Lounge to enable it to operate a Café service.

The projections at Appendix 1 assume that the income from facilities hires will remain steady; the figures do include the cost of a full staff establishment. There are currently some Duty Officer vacancies and this post has a regular turnover of personnel; therefore, in the short term there is potential to manage vacancies, staff recruitment and contracted hours to balance budgets in the event of a downturn in facilities income. Equally if hires/bookings and the associated income starts to climb, resources will be available to pay staff additional hours to avoid large accumulations of hours.

3. Pressure on Facility Operators

In addition to income from facility bookings; the Council receives income from partners and private operators who provide services from our facilities. This includes the Operator of the Civic Community Lounge, the provider of the Nursery/Pre-School at Thorpe Astley Community Centre, and Kingsway Surgery who provide the branch service at Thorpe Astley.

Both the operator of the Civic Community Lounge and the provider of the Nursery/Pre-School have faced a difficult business environment following the Covid-19 pandemic. Both have worked with the Council, which has approved fixed term reductions in their respective contract payments at various times in order that their operations continue to be viable. In both cases, the operators are likely to face pressures resulting from the increase in the National Living Wage and proposed increases in Employers National Insurance contributions.

Therefore, the predictions at Appendix 1 do not assume any additional income to the Council from these contracts. Continued pressure on household incomes could exacerbate pressures on these operators and the Council will similarly need to weigh up the economic value against the social value of these contracts if trading becomes difficult.

Expenditure Pressures

1. Inflation and Utility Costs

Inflation has reduced to 1.7% in the year to September 2024 (down from 2.2% in August); compared to 6.7% in the year to September 2023. The effect of increases in utility and fuel costs and in the cost of goods generally continues,

which remain high compared to 2021 levels, continues put pressure on the Council's finances.

The Council have agreed new two year electricity and gas supply deals from December 2024, which are estimated to save £28,495 per annum. However, due to utility budgets being insufficient to meet current costs and there being variables in respect of predicted energy generated by solar PV, exported and being reused via a potential battery storage system, at this stage it is recommended the Council remain cautious and simply freeze the utility budgets. Nevertheless, it will be a matter for Policy & Resources Committee and Council in January 2025 to determine based on the information available at the time.

With uncertainty remaining on the international markets, mainly due to ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine, it continues to be a priority to invest in carbon reduction initiatives in accordance with the Climate Change & Environmental Strategy and Action Plan. While such initiatives will reduce pressure on operational budgets, there are significant upfront costs to deliver the investment along with project management and delivery costs.

2. Cost of Borrowing

Public Works Board lending is offered at a fixed margin above the Government's cost of borrowing, as measured by gilt yields. The cost of this borrowing was between 1.7% and 1.9% (depending on the term of the loan) in January 2021; by October 2022, the interest repayments had increased to between 5.9% and 6.2%. In October 2023 rates stabilised between 5.5% and 5.8%. Current interest rates (October 2024) are between 5.01% and 5.68%.

One of the Councils loans matured in 2023; therefore, the annual repayment cost has been saved this financial year. Two further loans mature in May 2025, saving half the annual repayment next financial year (2025/2026). In addition, another two loans mature over the period of this plan and have been included in the projections at Appendix 1.

As things stand, Public Works Loans are the most attractive way to deliver many of the objectives set out in the Council's Capital Plan and including the actions resulting from the Carbon Audit under the Climate Change and Environmental Strategy.

3. Staff Salaries

Staff Salary and oncosts (including pensions) account for 60% of the Council's expenditure.

The NJC Employers' Pay offer for 2024/2025 was agreed on Tuesday 22nd October 2024 and is backdated to April 2024. Each scale point will be increased by £1,290 per annum (pro-rata for part-time staff). Overall, it amounts to £25,040 for the financial year, a 4.2% increase.

The 2024/2025 salaries and on costs budgets totalled £633,836. While the Council budgeted for a 5% pay increase, the base budget for staff salaries is short by £5,739 (includes on-costs). There are small differences on 19 posts in the figure listed in the base compared to the actual. The likelihood is that when the figures were worked out either the annual increment wasn't applied or last year's salary increase wasn't applied.

Taking into account fixed term changes to hours for the year, and the base budget shortfall above, then the extra cost will be £596 (therefore, the budget currently appears sufficient for this financial year).

This offer achieves a £12.85 hourly rate (from £12.18) on the Council's lowest scale point 5, a 5.5% increase.

The Chancellor in the Autumn budget on 30th October 2024 announced an increase in Employer's National Insurance contributions by 1.2% to 15% in April 2025, along with a lowering of the threshold at which payments are made from £9,100 per annum to £5,000. While the Employment Allowance has been increased, this doesn't apply to public bodies. An initial estimate of the additional costs to the Council is approximately £2,500 in 2025/2026, which has been built into the projection at Appendix 1.

The Chancellor also confirmed £12.21 per hour as the National Living Wage from April 2025.

Based on the form of pay settlement (i.e. fixed amount for each scale point), average overall pay increases over the last three years (approximately 6%), the need to meet additional Employer National Insurance Contributions, and ensure that the Town Council continues to meet the Living Wage Foundation rates; a 6% pay increase is estimated for 2025/2026 to 2027/2028, then 4% pay increase in the two subsequent years (2026/2027 & 2027/2028), 5% in 2028/2029 and then 3% in 2029/2030. This has been built into the income/expenditure projections at Appendix 1.

4. Pension Costs

All eligible staff have been auto-enrolled in the pension scheme and no eligible staff have opted out.

The actuarial valuation of the Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund is undertaken every three years, with that last valuation based on the position of each employing body at 31st March 2022. Therefore, the next review is due next year.

Braunstone Town Council's employers' contribution rates for the three year period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026 will be 21.4%. This is reduced from 22.1% in the previous period 2019/20 to 2022/23. However, remains up on the 19.79% contribution rate prior to 2019/20.

However, the current return on investment, coupled with the increase in salaries averaging around 6% over three years, with the potential for of slightly above inflation increases in the coming years, will put ongoing pressure on the Council's overall pension costs, which have been included in the revised and subsequent year projections at Appendix 1.

5. 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.

On 22nd September 2022, the Living Wage Foundation announced that the rate increased by 10.1% in the UK, more than ever in the Living Wage Foundation's 11-year history reflecting sharp increases in living costs.

The current Foundation Living Wage rate for 2024/2025 is £12.60 per hour. However, increases in the National Living Wage are likely to result in equivalent increases to the Foundation Living Wage rate, which over the period of this plan may exceed the lowest NJC pay scale on Braunstone Town Council's establishment. For example, scale point 5, was paid at £12.18 per hour prior to the salary settlement. This could result in the Town Council reviewing salary scales for some posts in the coming years.

6. Other Public Service Providers

Increasing costs and a squeeze on public spending has put significant pressures on the revenue budgets of Principal Authorities, the NHS and the Police. While the Town Council doesn't receive funding directly from Central Government, cuts to public services in the community provided by other bodies will continue to put pressure on the Town Council to either take on services directly or provide an alternative. Picking up principal authority services which have been either devolved or taken over by the Town Council will put further strain on the Council's revenue budgets and reserves and either lead to further rises in the parish precept and/or significantly restrict the delivery of the Council's Capital Plan.

Leicestershire County Council in particular is struggling and has been identified as a Council which may have to declare a Section 114 notice in the next couple of years. The current agreement with Leicestershire County Council to operate Braunstone Town Library, which includes a grant to cover Library building costs, ends in September 2029. Therefore, the arrangement for the Town Council to operate Braunstone Town Library will need to be reviewed and renegotiated in 2028.

Current Financial Year (2024/2025)

The actual position with the revenue budget for the current financial year (2024/2025) for 1st April 2024 until 30th September 2024 is set out in Table 2 below:

	Budget (Half Year)	Actual (Half Year)	Difference
Income	£573,350	£586,680	£13,330
Expenditure	£525,100	£530,408	£5,308
Difference	£48,250	£56,272	

Committee Consideration

Policy & Resources Committee on 7th November 2024 received an assessment setting out the Council's medium-term priorities and financial planning, alongside the Treasury Management, Investment and Reserves Strategies (Policy & Resources Committee minute 50).

The Committee resolved to recommend to Council that it approves the recommendations, for the reasons, set out below.

Recommendations

1. That the current projections attached at Appendix 1, based on known financial pressures identified in the report, be approved;
2. 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;
3. that once the revenue reserve reaches the equivalent of three months' net expenditure; the additional funds be earmarked to invest in infrastructure and assets, as identified in the Capital Plan at Appendix 3, and in the development and remodelling of services, including the Town Council's operations;
4. that the Financial, Treasury Management and Investment Strategies, as set out in the report, be adopted;
5. that the Reserves Policy, attached at Appendix 4, be approved; and
6. that the Earmarked Reserves be confirmed, as set out at Appendix 5.

Reasons

1. To provide a foundation for preparing budget estimates for 2025/2026 and beyond.
2. To ensure the Council focusses its activity and spending on its key priorities and objectives given the current financial constraints and future financial uncertainties.
3. To maintain the standard of the council's facilities and open spaces and to ensure the highest possible standards within the resources available in the future.

4. To effectively manage the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, taking into account the associated risks.
5. To ensure the financial resilience of the Council, that it would be able to function, invest in its assets and deliver services to residents; while avoiding significant increases in council tax precept in future years.
6. To ensure that reserves earmarked relate only to a commitment or a restricted use; maximising the level of funds to replenish the revenue (general fund) reserve.

APPENDIX 1 – 5 YEAR INCOME / EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS

	Original 2024/25	Revised 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Operational Requirement	£403,863	£327,797	£327,475	£334,095	£338,944	£355,891	£370,126
Plus Increase in costs	£12,116	£12,116	£9,824	£8,352	£16,947	£14,236	£11,104
Less Savings / Income Generation	£25,883	£12,438	£3,204	£3,504	£0	£0	£0
Total including Savings	£390,096	£327,475	£334,095	£338,944	£355,891	£370,126	£381,230
Pension Provision	£126,767	£123,467	£136,373	£144,555	£153,229	£160,890	£165,717
Staff Salaries	£507,069	£493,869	£549,566	£582,540	£617,492	£648,367	£667,818
TOTAL Staff Costs	£633,836	£617,336	£685,939	£727,095	£770,721	£809,257	£833,535
Existing Borrowing Repayments	£69,539	£69,539	£64,953	£58,367	£48,889	£45,997	£39,963
<i>Less Payments for Matured Loans</i>	<i>-£4,586</i>	<i>-£4,586</i>	<i>-£6,586</i>	<i>-£9,478</i>	<i>-£2,892</i>	<i>-£6,034</i>	£0
Civic Centre Improvements Borrowing	£10,511	£10,511	£10,511	£10,511	£10,511	£10,511	£10,511
Climate Initiatives Borrowing	£18,804	£18,804	£19,106	£19,106	£19,106	£19,106	£19,106
Potential Borrowing: Mossdale	£0	£0	£7,774	£7,774	£7,774	£7,774	£7,774
Potential Borrowing: Capital Projects	£0	£0	£0	£9,478	£22,370	£28,404	£28,404
TOTAL Borrowing Costs	£94,268	£94,268	£95,758	£95,758	£105,758	£105,758	£105,758
Contingency	£0	£30,990	£8,000	£30,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000
Capital Projects	£17,500	£9,575	£15,000	£40,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1,135,700	£1,079,644	£1,138,792	£1,231,797	£1,322,370	£1,375,142	£1,410,523
INCOME from Hires/Fees/Contracts	£232,816	£164,816	£164,816	£164,816	£164,816	£164,816	£164,816
Non-Earmarked Reserves (To/From)	£54,000	£54,000	£150,000	£100,000	£20,000	£0	£0
Revenue Reserves Balance	£64,451	£64,451	£214,451	£314,451	£334,451	£334,451	£334,451
<i>Revenue Reserve % of Net Expenditure</i>	<i>6.56%</i>	<i>6.65%</i>	<i>19.00%</i>	<i>26.72%</i>	<i>27.81%</i>	<i>27.41%</i>	<i>26.74%</i>
Earmarked Reserves (To/From)	£25,000	£25,000	£5,000	£10,000	£25,000	£10,000	£5,000
Capital Reserves Expenditure	£21,616	£21,616	£6,000	£10,000	£12,000	£12,000	£16,000
Earmarked/Capital Reserves Balance	£8,653	£8,653	£7,653	£7,653	£20,653	£18,653	£7,653
Net Precept	£981,884	£968,828	£1,128,976	£1,176,981	£1,202,554	£1,220,326	£1,250,707
Band D (scaled Tax Base)	4,901.85	£200.31	£197.65	£230.32	£240.11	£245.33	£255.15
% Increase	26.59%	N/A	14.98%	4.25%	2.17%	1.48%	2.49%
Average % Increase	N/A	N/A	5.07%				



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Serving the communities of Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley

BUSINESS PLAN 2024/2025

Strategic Aims & Delivery 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:

1. *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 and Thorpe Astley;*
2. *to provide a focus for civic pride;*
3. *to listen, identify and respond to agreed local needs; and*
4. *to help develop a strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident community, free from discrimination.*

"Spectemur. Agendo" translates "Let us be Judged by Our Actions"

Strategic Aims and Delivery Objectives (2024/2025)

The Council has four Strategic Aims for the medium term, which are set out below. Each Aim is supported by specific delivery objectives for the year, which are reviewed and developed as part of the annual review of the Council's Business Plan and Capital Plan and the annual setting of the budget and Council Tax precept.

1. Protect and Enhance our Parks and Open Spaces

Aim: To invest in and maintain high quality urban green spaces for sport, recreation and play, while enriching the natural environment.

Delivery Objectives for 2024/2025:

- (a) Support existing Clubs at Shakespeare Park to grow while supporting new sporting activities, such as Tennis and Petanque;
- (b) deliver tennis initiatives to enhance participation;
- (c) continue to work with Blaby District Council and the developer to ensure improvements are made to the culvert at Thorpe Astley Park;
- (d) carry out Flood Alleviation and Drainage Improvements at Mossdale Meadows; and
- (e) refurbish and enhance Impey Close Play Area and surrounding open space.

2. Provide Vibrant Community Facilities

Aim: To provide vibrant, accessible and cost effective community facilities, which continue to be used by and respond to the needs of our community.

Delivery Objectives for 2024/2025:

- (a) Deliver essential works on the Civic Centre building fabric; and
- (b) support the expansion of the Civic Centre Café Service, including at Thorpe Astley on event days.

3. Support and Connect the Local Community

Aim: To both nurture and enhance the Town's community life and connect our communities to reduce isolation and build community cohesion.

Delivery Objectives for 2024/2025:

- (a) Support new and existing community activities and initiatives through our Community Grants Schemes and Programme of Events;
- (b) co-ordinate community events, such as Apple Day, 80th Anniversary of D-Day, Shakespeare Park Open Day, Thorpe Astley on the Beach;
- (c) develop outreach Children's reading and activities at Thorpe Astley Community Centre; and
- (d) support the Local Area Coordination Project.

4. Respond to Climate Change and champion sustainable development

Aim: To embed climate and environmental awareness in our decision making and actions and play our part in supporting the community to do the same.

Delivery Objectives for 2024/2025:

- (a) Deliver actions identified in the Carbon Audit with a view to the Council becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030;
- (b) undertake surveys and produce Management Plans to enhance the biodiversity of our parks and open spaces;
- (c) support and facilitate initiatives to improve cycling and walking routes within the Town and to the City Centre, Fosse Park and Meridian;
- (d) work to ensure that development meets present needs, minimises air pollution and car journeys, while protecting the needs of future generations; and
- (e) recommission a carbon audit of our activities to ensure that all possible actions are being taken and that new and emerging technologies and approaches are utilised to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

Objectives

In addition to the Mission Statement and Strategic Aims and Delivery Objectives, the Council's Committees and Service Areas have operational objectives.

Planning and Environment Objectives

1. To ensure sustainable development, which meets the needs of the present generation without prejudicing the existing built environment and 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 from:
 - (a) traffic; and
 - (b) 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 Lubbethorpe 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
3. To maintain positive relations with local school, pre-school and education providers

Crime reduction services

4. Working with the Police, reduce opportunities for crime, increase public safety and establish a community spirit.

Social inclusion, recreation & culture

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

10. To encourage the formation of new community groups by promoting free/subsidised use of the Council's Community Facilities
11. 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 and Thorpe Astley
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 and climate change by planting trees on our parks



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Serving the communities of Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley

CAPITAL PLAN 2024/2025

The Council’s Capital Projects have been identified through emerging priorities, surveys and consultation, the Citizens’ Advisory Panel and the Council’s Committees. 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.

Capital Projects for 2024/2025 – 2025/2026

Parks and Open Spaces Projects 2024/2025 – 2025/2026		
Park	Project	Notes/Finance
Mosssdale Meadows & Merrileys	Replace culvert bridge at Mosssdale Meadows. <i>Existing culvert is not suitable for flow of water which causes flooding on the park on a regular basis</i>	Priority Project for 2024/2025 Estimated: £150k Borrowing
	Improve drainage on Lubbesthorpe Bridleway at Mosssdale Meadows <i>Length of concrete bridleway, which slopes down from Shakespeare Drive to Mosssdale Meadows floods and produces a heavy amount of surface water run off during heavy and prolonged rain causing flooding around the depot and football pitches, as well as on the bridleway.</i>	Priority Project for 2024/2025 Estimated: £50k Borrowing: Link to “Replace vehicle and pedestrian culvert bridges at Mosssdale Meadows”.
	Drainage work to the entrance of Mosssdale Meadows car park to drain water from the car park into the brook. <i>The car park entrance was prone to frequent flooding which was raised during the Walking & Cycling route construction</i>	Priority Project for 2024/2025 Estimated: £50k Borrowing: Link to “Replace vehicle and pedestrian culvert bridges at Mosssdale Meadows”.
	Resurfacing of Mosssdale Meadows car park with tarmac. <i>Currently the car park consists of hardcore and stone which frequently gets washed down towards the brook in heavy rain.</i>	Priority Project for 2024/2025 Estimated: £50k Borrowing: Link to “Replace vehicle and pedestrian culvert bridges at Mosssdale Meadows”.

Parks and Open Spaces Projects 2024/2025 – 2025/2026		
Park	Project	Notes/Finance
Mosssdale Meadows & Merrileys <i>Continued</i>	Replacement of Toddler swings (<i>estimated end of life – medium risk</i>)	Estimated: £10k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	New Roof and Roof Insulation at Mosssdale Depot and Sports Changing Rooms and installation of solar panels, new electric heating (explore air source heat pump) and LED Lighting. <i>A Structural Survey has identified that the roof is deteriorating and isn't strong enough to hold solar panels (as recommended by the Carbon Audit). There is currently no central heating at the premises, with electric heaters for the staff room at the Depot. The building is not energy efficient and needs to be both in the short and long term to reduce carbon, energy use and costs.</i>	Estimated: £100k <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget & Section 106</i>
	Refurbishment of Changing Rooms and Sports facilities at Mosssdale Pavilion. <i>The Changing Facilities and Social Facilities could make more effective use of the space and need improvement and modernisation.</i>	
Impey Close playground and Open Space	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resurface playground with rubber mulch under play equipment and pathway. 2. Install new and replace vandalised equipment. 3. Improve paths, including gravel path "yellow brick road" and planting in surrounding open space. <i>Rubber tiles damaged and in places missing. Surfaces damaged/vandalised and pathways eroded.</i>	Estimated: £100k <i>External Grants, Annual Capital Budget & Section 106</i>

Community Centres Projects 2024/2025 – 2025/2026		
Building	Project	Notes/Finance
Civic Centre	Installation of Battery Storage for Solar PV Panels. <i>Both Community Centres are used in the evenings. Civic Centre has electric cookers. Millfield Hall includes electric heating and air conditioning. Thorpe Astley Community Centre contains an electric Air Source Heat Pump.</i>	Priority Project for 2024/2025 Estimated: £20k <i>Borrowing Underspend, Annual Capital Budget.</i>

Community Centres Projects 2024/2025 – 2025/2026		
Building	Project	Notes/Finance
Civic Centre Continued	Replacement of Civic Centre foyer skylight and corridor frame and windows. <i>Both the foyer skylight and the corridor and windows are over 25 years old and do not meet modern insulation standards.</i>	Priority Project for 2024/2025 Estimated: £50k <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Installation of additional Solar Panels on Civic Centre Roofs – Council Chamber, Fosse Room, Ravenhurst Room and rear toilets. <i>New roof potentially allows for the installation of additional solar panels reducing the impact on climate change and making savings.</i>	Linked to Civic Centre Roof Refurbishment.
	Civic Centre Roof Refurbishment: Council Chamber, Fosse Room, Ravenhurst Room and rear toilets. <i>The roof on the Council Chamber and Fosse Room is leaking and has received several patches. Advice is that the roof has passed its life expectancy and will need refurbishing in the short term.</i>	Fundamental to building integrity Estimated: £100k <i>External Grants, Annual Capital Budget & Reserves</i>
	Replacement of Civic Centre Windows. <i>The windows are over 20 years old and do not meet modern insulation standards. Some are unsafe to open.</i>	Health & Safety Risk. Consider through next Carbon Audit Estimated: £50k <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Civic Centre radiator replacement and review of location. <i>Some areas of the building are well provided for with radiators and are hot, while other areas of the building have limited radiators and are cold.</i>	Consider through next Carbon Audit Estimated: £25k <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Millfield Hall – Creation of small external storage area next to the Millfield Hall and kitchen for furniture. <i>Providing space for hirers. This can be accommodated by relocating the bin store since the mini-bus compound is no longer in use.</i>	Estimated: £10k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>

Community Centres Projects 2024/2025 – 2025/2026		
Building	Project	Notes/Finance
Civic Centre <i>Continued</i>	Council Chamber internal refurbishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heating/Air Conditioning • Mood Lighting <i>The facilities need modernisation for users and hirers: the room is used for meetings, consultations, seminars, training and social events.</i>	Consider once roof replaced and through next Carbon Audit Estimated: £25k <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Refurbish/Replace Fire Doors in Fosse Room and Millfield Hall kitchen. <i>Doors and frames are rotten and doors stick when the frames swell in the damp. Potential to hinder exit in an emergency.</i>	Estimated: £5k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Millfield Hall and Council Chamber Floor stripping and revarnishing <i>Floors wearing and risk damage from use and liquid if not sealed and treated.</i>	Estimated: £10k <i>Maintenance Budget</i> See proposed replacement below (Medium to Long Term)
Both Centres	Installation of hearing loop systems in main rooms at both Community Centres. <i>Item already included where refurbishment of specific rooms has been identified.</i>	Rolling Programme from 2023/24. <i>Annual Budgets</i>

Short to Medium Term Projects (within the next 7 years)

Short to Medium Term Parks and Open Spaces Projects		
Park	Project	Notes/Finance
Thorpe Astley Park	Refurbishment of Thorpe Astley Park Tennis Courts <i>Tap4tennis installed and income being generated. Perimeter fencing regularly vandalised and playing surface improvements would enhance the facility for users.</i>	Estimated £30k. <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget & Section 106</i>
Franklin Park	Widen and make improvements to path. <i>Path connects residential areas of the Town with local amenities and is well used. The path would benefit from being a shared use path to facilitate movements on foot and by cycling. The path was identified in the Blaby District Open Spaces Audit as substandard and in need of improvement.</i>	Estimated £75k. <i>Explore external funding working with Walk & Ride Blaby.</i>

Short to Medium Term Parks and Open Spaces Projects		
Park	Project	Notes/Finance
Mosssdale Meadows	Widen and make improvements to path through Mosssdale Meadows & Merrileys from Shakespeare Drive to Brockenhurst Drive, including installation of lighting and CCTV. <i>Path connects residential areas of the Town with new GCW Phase 2 Cycle Route between Braunstone Town and Meridian and Thorpe Astley. The path would benefit from being a shared use path to facilitate movements on foot and by cycling.</i>	<i>External funding working with Walk & Ride Blaby.</i>
	Gateway Fencing Mosssdale Meadows – Brockenhurst Drive entrance <i>Fencing in need of refurbishment.</i>	Estimated £10k - £20k. <i>Annual Capital Budgets</i>
	Electric Wiring and installation of electric vehicle charging point at Mosssdale Meadows Depot and Changing Rooms. Electricians have confirmed that wiring is out of date and complex. Items have been added and rewired and potential fire hazard. Work should include electric vehicle charging point ahead of any change of the vehicle fleet to electric.	Estimated £10k <i>External Grant, Annual Capital Budget & Section 106</i>
All Play Areas	Rolling programme of identifying and replacing play equipment and installing mulch safety surfaces where these are near end of life. <i>Most of the Council's play equipment and safety surfaces are over 10 years old, a significant amount of equipment is over 20 years old. Overall many Play areas risk deterioration and maintenance costs increasing if equipment and safety surfaces are not replaced on a rolling basis.</i>	Prioritise to ROSPA reports, funding streams and increases in maintenance costs. <i>Annual Budgets</i> Franklin Park – remaining surfaces during 2024/2025 – 2025/2026
All Parks	Rolling programme of tree surveys and works <i>Currently maintenance budgets are stretched and tree maintenance and works are reactionary.</i>	Over a 5/6 year period undertake a rolling programme. <i>Annual Budgets</i>

Short to Medium Term Community Centres Projects		
Building	Project	Notes/Finance
Civic Centre	Civic Centre Ravenhurst Room & corridor – new floor <i>Consider replacing carpet with laminate floor or similar for multiple uses and users and for cleaning.</i>	Schedule following Building Improvements Estimated £5k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Fosse Room – Audio / Visual Equipment, including sound and loop system and fixed projector. <i>The facilities need modernisation for users and hirers: the room is used for meetings, consultations, seminars and training.</i>	Estimated: £5k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Installation of Air Source Heat Pump <i>Part of Building refurbishment, insulation improvements and commitment to become Carbon Neutral by 2030.</i>	Estimated: £45k <i>Borrowing</i>
Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Thorpe Astley main hall Mood Lights. <i>To make the facilities attractive for function hire. Hirers of the Millfield Hall provide positive feedback on the mood lighting.</i>	Estimated: £5k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Replacement of Carpet tiles in Foyer and Corridor <i>Carpet tiles wearing.</i>	Estimated: £2k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
Both Centres	Installation of Sound systems in the Millfield Hall, Council Chamber and Thorpe Astley Main Hall. <i>To make the facilities attractive for hire. Some regular hirers have commented that provision of a sound system means there is less need to move equipment or need storage.</i>	Estimated: £6-9k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>

Short to Medium Term Library Projects		
Project	Details	Notes
Installation of CCTV	<i>Only facility where there are no CCTV cameras. Have been a couple of recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour since the Town Council became the Service Operator.</i>	Estimated £5k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>

Short to Medium Term General Projects		
Project	Details	Notes/Finance
Civic Centre and Franklin Park Car Parks	Resurfacing/ Relining of Civic Centre, including exploring new handrails and lighting 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 not well lit and considered steep potentially presenting difficulties for wheel chair users and those who are less able.</i>	Estimated: £80k <i>Annual Capital Budget & Reserves</i> Refresh white lines at Civic Centre in 2024/2025
Gateway signage to the Town on the new road from Lubbesthorpe	The Town Council was responsible for the Town's place signs and would be responsible for installation of such signs at the new gateway and could explore incorporating speed reminders and/or safety messages.	Estimated: £3k <i>Annual Budgets</i>
Provide new, improved and enhanced notice boards at key locations	Over the past few years, many notice boards have fallen into disrepair and have been removed. Some existing notice boards need refurbishment and replacement. Some notice boards are located where there isn't a high level of footfall, while some key locations do not have notice boards.	Rolling programme over 5 years. <i>Annual Budgets</i>
Improved Signage in and around Community Buildings	Signage outdated, not dementia friendly. Sometimes signage not relevant, sometimes doesn't sign/advertise new services. Creation of Corporate Image.	Schedule after Civic Centre improvements. External signs may need planning permission. Estimated: £3-5k. <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
Improvements to Cycle Lock-Up facilities at Community Centres	Cycle lock-up rails are available at both Centres and will be available at the new Shakespeare Pavilion. To encourage cycling and to ensure parked cycles are safe – consider covers, lock ups, better signage and CCTV coverage	Estimated: £5k <i>Maintenance Budget</i>

Medium to Long Term Projects (within the next 12 years)

Medium to Long Term Parks and Open Spaces Projects		
Park	Project	Notes/Finance
Franklin Park	Improvement items identified by the Franklin Park Working Group: creation of path in orchard (to enable access to lower part when the ground is water logged)	Estimated: £10k <i>External Grant & Annual Capital Budget</i>
Mossdale Meadows & Merrileys	Bridle path resurfacing (from Kingsway entrance through to Jelson owned land)	Estimated: £10k <i>External Grant & Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Possible resurfacing of footpaths	<i>External Grant & Annual Capital Budget</i>

Medium to Long Term Community Centres Projects		
Building	Project	Notes/Finance
Civic Centre	Council Chamber internal refurbishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio / Visual Equipment, including sound and loop system and fixed projector. <i>The facilities need 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 and roof replacement Estimated: £10k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Civic Centre Kitchens refurbishment <i>Kitchens approximately 40 years old. Poor quality by modern standards and require extra cleaning and maintenance</i>	Estimated: £30k <i>External Grant & Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Millfield Hall and Council Chamber Floor replacement <i>Wooden floors 40 years old and maintenance costs are high. Need to replace with modern low maintenance flooring.</i>	Estimated: £50k <i>External Grant & Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Refurbishment of Millfield Hall Stage Area. <i>Lighting Box, sound system and casing old and constantly needs adjusting, difficult for hirers to use. Stage lighting needs upgrading to LED – can't get replacement bulbs.</i>	Estimated: £30k <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>

Medium to Long Term Community Centres Projects		
Building	Project	Notes/Finance
Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Additional Storage for Parks Service <i>Routine items need for maintaining the parks at Thorpe Astley needed. Currently stored at Mossdale. Option allows for reducing time and travel distances.</i>	Costs dependent upon solution. <i>Annual Capital Budget</i>
	Consider options for extending Thorpe Astley Community Centre, including the car park <i>With the success of the Nursery / Pre-School and with the Doctor's Surgery, there is both limited capacity for community meeting space during the weekdays and limited storage.</i>	Costs dependent upon solution. <i>Borrowing</i>

Adopted by Council 25th January 2024 (Minute Reference 6189).



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Serving the communities of Braunstone Town and Thorpe Astley

RESERVES POLICY

Purpose

1. Braunstone Town Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to ensure that the Council and its services are able to function.
2. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of reserves.

Principles

3. Braunstone Town Council will only maintain reserves for the following reasons:
 - a capital receipt from the sale of land or assets to be invested in capital projects identified in the Capital Plan;
 - commuted sums for the transfer of Public Open Spaces to offset significant one-off increases in precept and/or to invest in capital projects identified in the Capital Plan;
 - grants and/or loans received for delivering capital projects identified in the Capital Plan;
 - earmarked funds to meet the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecasts or for unexpected capital expenditure or emergencies;
 - earmarked funds received which are designated for a specific purpose, e.g. donations to the Town Mayor's Charity;
 - a sum approximately equal to 3-6 months of Net Revenue Expenditure should be maintained as the General (non-earmarked) Reserve, in accordance with good practice; and
 - other reserves which are earmarked for special purposes or future development, or to meet commitments, will be maintained as necessary.
4. Where, during and at the end of a financial year, an underspend occurs then the priority is to rebuild balances to ensure there is at least 3 months rather than find alternative spending. Therefore, except where there is a requirement or in exceptional circumstances, the underspend against the annual budget will be used to increase the level of the Council's general fund balances at the end of the financial year.

Scope

5. The Responsible Financial Officer will apply this policy when advising and reporting to Policy & Resources Committee and Council on using, maintaining monitoring and replenishing reserves.
6. Notwithstanding Section 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; in adopting this Policy, it is the Council's intention that both Policy & Resources

Committee and Council will operate with the framework and comply with the provisions of this policy when making decisions concerning the use, maintenance, monitoring and replenishing of reserves.

Types of Reserve

7. There are two types of reserve:
 - **General (Fund) Reserves** can be used as and when required for purposes determined and approved by the Council; and
 - **Earmarked Reserves** are funds 'ring fenced' for a specific purpose or project; this can either be allocated by the Council or restricted by law or some other conditions (e.g. grant award or donations to the Town Mayor's Charity).

General Fund Reserves

8. The general reserve comprises the Council's cash flow and contingency funds to cover unexpected inflation, unforeseen events and unusual circumstances.
9. The Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide advises that authorities with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should maintain a minimum level of general reserve at three months of net revenue expenditure. The maximum maintained should not exceed twelve months of net revenue expenditure.
10. The Council should review the level general reserve to ensure it is appropriate to the size of operation, situation and risks and should plan the budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained.
11. The minimum level of reserves requires not only consideration of level of income and expenditure but also the risks to that income. Where there is significant self-generated income (other than the precept), the Council should take into account situations that may lead to a loss in revenue as well as increased costs and adapt the general reserve accordingly.

Earmarked Reserves

12. Earmarked Reserves must be held for genuine and identifiable purposes and must be separately identified on the accounts.
13. An "identifiable purpose" includes funds towards delivering the Capital Plan, whether individual identifiable projects or for capital projects generally. However, the amounts earmarked must be justifiable and proportionate.
14. The level of Earmarked Reserves will be subject to review and justification as part of the Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning Process and when setting the annual budget and precept.
15. Subject to the above; there is, in practice, no upper or lower limit to the number or amounts held in Earmarked Reserves.

Monitoring Reserves

16. A summary financial report will be submitted to Policy & Resources Committee, at least quarterly, to include details of reserves and cash held at the bank.
17. The level of general reserve should be reviewed against the budget outturn figure during the financial year and measures identified to ensure that expenditure and income is both monitored and managed where the general reserve falls below the equivalent of three months net expenditure.

Managing Reserves

18. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Policy & Resources Committee as part of the budgetary control process. The exception is where a matter is reserved to Council to determine, in which case Policy & Resources Committee will recommend changes to earmarked reserves for the Council to approve.
19. Earmarked Reserves restricted by law or some other conditions (e.g. grant award or donations to the Town Mayor's Charity) cannot be transferred to the General Fund or Earmarked for another purpose.
20. Earmarked Reserves can be transferred to the General Fund or Earmarked for another purpose where:
 - a) the funds were allocated by Policy & Resources Committee/Council; and
 - b) the funds are not committed (e.g. a completed project which has underspent).
21. During the budget year, unspent amounts in revenue budgets can be moved to an earmarked reserve with the approval of the Policy & Resources Committee, having considered fully forthcoming and ongoing commitments and the implications for public services.

Maintaining Reserves

22. Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
23. While there is no specified minimum level of general reserves; Braunstone Town Council will hold a minimum level of general reserve equivalent to three months of net revenue expenditure.
24. Therefore, the Responsible Financial Officer, when preparing both the Medium Term financial forecast and annual budget estimates, will not propose the use of reserves to meet general expenditure where to do so would result in the level of general fund reserves falling below the equivalent of three months net expenditure.

25. Notwithstanding Section 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, in adopting this Policy, it is the Council's intention that both Policy & Resources Committee and Council, in determining both the Medium Term financial forecast and setting the budget and precept, will not approve the use of reserves to meet general expenditure where to do so would result in the level of general fund reserves falling below the equivalent of three months net expenditure.

26. Where the level of general fund reserve falls or is predicted to fall below the equivalent of three months net expenditure, then the Responsible Financial Officer as part of the Medium Term financial forecast and annual budget setting will put forward proposals to replenish the general fund reserve in the following two financial years.

Review of the Policy

27. This Policy will be reviewed at least annually by Policy & Resources Committee and Council as part of the Medium Term Priorities and Financial Planning Report.

DATE ADOPTED	21st March 2024	REVIEW DATE	November 2024
REVISED DATE/S			

Reserve Status

	01/04/24	30/09/24
Earmarked		
Town Mayor's Charity	£2,548.83	£0.00
Earmarked Capital Project		
Civic Centre Capital Plan Priority Projects	£2,055.02	£2,055.02
Earmarked Capital Project		
Carbon Reduction Initiatives	£18,789.00	£18,789.00
Ringfenced - Donation		
Community / Social Inclusion Project Grant	£9,320.98	£8,820.98
Interim arrangements funding		
Shakespeare Park Sports Clubs	£219.94	£219.94
Town Mayor's Charity 2023/24		
Grants: Reducing Loneliness & Isolation	£0.00	£1,500.00
Town Mayor's Charity 2023/24		
Chatty Cafes - Promotion & Publicity	£0.00	£500.00
Town Mayor's Charity 2023/24		
Chatty Cafes - Registration & Expenses	£0.00	£548.83
	<u>£32,933.77</u>	<u>£32,433.77</u>
	<u>£32,933.77</u>	<u>£32,433.77</u>

BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL – 28th NOVEMBER 2024

Item 10 – Draft Climate Change & Environmental Action Plan

Purpose

To consider a proposed annual action plan to deliver the Climate Change and Environmental Strategy's Objectives.

Background

On 23rd September 2021, the Town Council adopted a Climate Change and Environmental Strategy. Section 8, Monitoring and Review, sets out that the Strategy should be reviewed at least every three years and, following consultation, Council adopted revisions on 26th September 2024.

Underpinning the Strategy is the need to take action and Chapters 7 and 8 set out details of the annual action planning and monitoring process, including the need to set appropriate timescales for review, depending upon the size and scale of the actions to be delivered.

The Strategy requires that Policy & Resources Committee will seek the input of the Council's Community Development Committee, Planning & Environment Committee and Citizens' Advisory Panel, particularly in respect of

- (a) Supporting the Local Community
- (b) Protecting and Enhancing Green Spaces.

(extract attached at Appendix 1).

Review of the Action Plan

The approved Climate Change & Environmental Action Plan for 2024/2025 is attached at Appendix 2. The Action Plan is reviewed on an annual basis as part of the Council's budget and business planning processes and an update on delivery of the projects is included in the *Timescales for Delivery* column.

Following consideration by the Standing Committees and the Citizens' Advisory Panel, Policy & Resources Committee on 16th January 2025 will review and update the Action Plan and adopt it for the next financial year (April 2025 to March 2026).

Once the final action plan is agreed, recommendations can be made to Council to update the Capital Plan accordingly.

Action Requested

With reference to the Chapters at Appendix 1, and the current Climate Change and Environmental Action Plan, attached at Appendix 2; the Panel are invited to:

- a) comment on progress with delivery and recommended updates (highlighted bold in the Timescales for Delivery column); and
- b) identify whether there are specific actions which should be considered for inclusion as part of the annual review of the Climate Change and Environmental Action Plan.

APPENDIX 1: Extract from Climate Change & Environmental Strategy

4. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE: Promote and encourage awareness and action on climate change, environmental protection and recycling by local residents, businesses and community organisations.

Braunstone Town Council actively supports the objective of Blaby District Council and Leicestershire County Council for the Town, District and County to become carbon neutral no later than 2050.

Being "carbon neutral" means that the carbon dioxide emitted by all the activities in the community, be they individual, domestic, commercial, industrial or transport related, are removed by some other means.

The Council will seek to provide leadership at a local level, including in partnership with the principal Councils (including the City Council) and other organisations, to support our community to respond to the climate change agenda; this includes:

- (a) raising awareness of and promoting "local"; be it local businesses and retail or local producers;
- (b) raising awareness of existing cycling and walking routes around the Town, particularly to community facilities, leisure facilities, employment locations, schools and neighbourhood parades;
- (c) supporting and facilitating initiatives to improve cycling and walking routes in order to provide sustainable transport connections between the various communities, facilities and services in our Town and also between the Town and the City Centre, Fosse Park, railway stations, bus stations and other surrounding retail and employment areas;
- (d) support and promote initiatives to improve air quality, recognising the importance of also preventing a deterioration in air quality in the context of the new developments at Lubbesthorpe and in and around the Motorway Retail and Employment Area;
- (e) supporting and promoting initiatives which help residents make sustainable life style choices, such as using low or zero carbon energy and transport;
- (f) support the community to be resilient to the effects of climate change;
- (g) support and promote efforts by the principal Councils for the Town to reduce its waste and recycle more; and
- (h) provide opportunities for residents to recycle more of their waste when visiting the Town's parks & open spaces and community facilities and work with the District Council to increase provision across the Town.

The long term aim will be for Braunstone Town to reach "net-zero". "Net-zero" means that all activities in the Town emit a small amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which are offset by other measures.

In the medium term the Town Council will need to assess where and how its residents access services, employment and education. The Town Council will need to work with the District and County Council's, as well as with the City Council, to either ensure this can be accessed by sustainable transport or alternatively can be provided for in the community.

6. PROTECTING AND ENHANCING GREEN SPACES

OBJECTIVE: To protect and enhance the town's Green spaces, promote and encourage tree planting, and seek to increase and enrich biodiversity.

The Town Council is responsible for most of the Town's Parks and Open Spaces. These urban green spaces not only provide for sport, recreation and play but also for an enriched natural environment protecting the Town from and mitigating the effects of climate change and air pollution.

The Council will:

- (a) help fight pollution and climate change by planting trees on our parks;
- (b) produce an Environment and Biodiversity Strategy for our Parks and Open Spaces, which will set out the Council's approach to tree planting and maintenance, along with the Council's commitment to enhancing and enriching biodiversity;
- (c) reuse more of the waste generated from the maintenance of our parks and open spaces (e.g. tree and hedge clippings and grass cuttings) to enhance the biodiversity and environmental aspects of our parks and open spaces;
- (d) where we cannot reuse the waste ourselves, develop arrangements where the waste could be reused by others, composted or recycled;
- (e) identify measures for the management of our land and assets, which reduce the likelihood of flooding and provide for a rolling programme of water course maintenance as part of the annual winter works programme;
- (f) take measures to future proof our parks facilities to ensure they remain fit for purpose and resilient to the effects of climate change;
- (g) encourage the involvement of local residents, particularly young people and schools, in projects and initiatives to enhance the natural environment; and
- (h) source materials, including play equipment, which is durable and long lasting, made from sustainable sources and compliments the natural environment.

In the medium term the Council will consider reviewing access to and provision of green space across the Town. In the long term the Council, in partnership with the District and County Councils, will need to develop plans to enhance the built environment across the Town, including tree planting, protecting hedgerows and encouraging wild flower and biodiversity.



BRAUNSTONE TOWN COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN 2024-2025

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Install solar PV at Mossdale Meadows depot and on other Civic Centre roofs	1. Reduction in Carbon footprint; 2. significant savings with high energy costs.	1. Reduction of Carbon Footprint; 2. savings reinvested in other carbon reduction actions and/or services.	Significant financial resources to purchase and install (potentially £50 to £100k) Consider working with partners.	Older roofs may need reinforcing;	1. Structural surveys of roof condition; 2. remedial action if necessary; 3. tender exercise; 4. obtaining finance.	2025 – 2026 Proposed Reschedule to 2025 - 2027	Medium
Install Battery Storage for Solar Panels at Community Facilities	Both Community Centres are used evenings. Thorpe Astley Community Centre has an Air Source Heat Pump. Millfield Hall has electric heating/air conditioning	1. Reduction of Carbon Footprint; 2. savings reinvested in other carbon reduction actions and/or services.	Estimated £20k £18,789 unused borrowing from 1 st round of carbon reduction initiatives.	Need data from solar panels and usage data to determine optimum battery size. No smart meters in place.	Obtain usage data Liaise with installer	By November 2024 Scheduled for Civic Centre January / February 2025	High

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Undertake a Further Carbon Audit of the Council's Activities	Committed to review as part of the Climate Change & Environment Strategy	Focussed plan to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030	Budgeted £4k	Actions previously identified and others in the Strategy and this Action Plan	Prepare Brief and Source supplier	Spring 2025 On track	High
Insulate roof at Mosssdale Meadows Changing Rooms/Depot	1. Capital Plan item; 2. Prevent energy wastage.	Reduce costs	Estimated below £10k	Roof not good quality and may need replacing or upgrading	1. Roof condition survey; 2. Obtain quotes	2025-2027 Retain	Medium
Install smart meters	For ongoing analysis of the buildings' energy performance.	Provide consumption figures for reviewing the Carbon Audit in 2024.	None	Some suppliers are not rolling out Smart Meters at the current time	Library completed Arrange with supplier for Community Centres	October 2024 Ongoing, Delayed: Waiting on Suppliers	High
Upgrade the electric heating at Mosssdale Meadows Changing Rooms/Depot	Maximise heating efficiency	Reduce costs	Estimated below £10k	Capital Plan item for refurbishment of changing facilities.	1. Assess deliverability with wider improvements; 2. Obtain quotes.	2025 - 2027 (Mosssdale Capital Project) Retain	Medium

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Install a hybrid air source heat pump at Braunstone Civic Centre and Mossdale Meadows Depot	Decarbonise heating.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction of Carbon Footprint; 2. savings reinvested in other carbon reduction actions and/or services. 	Significant financial resources to purchase and install (potentially £50k to £100k)	Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. heat loss calculation 2. tender exercise 3. obtaining finance 	2025 – 2027 Retain	Medium
Replace parks diesel pick-up trucks with electric or hybrid	Reduced pollution and carbon emissions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reduced pollution on parks & open spaces; 2. fuel cost savings 	Vehicles leased so no up front cost, although maybe slightly higher lease cost	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leases in place 2. Limited market availability 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review operational working arrangements 2. Review availability at renewal; 3. if limited consider shorter lease period. 	2028/2029 Retain	Low

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points at Shakespeare Park and parks depot	To provide fast charging for service users, hirers and staff who use an electric vehicle.	1. Electric vehicle becomes an option; 2. modest Income generation	Approximately £25k Consider working with partners.	Installation works could be significant at some locations.	1. Tender exercise 2. Identifying finance	2026/2027 (Mosssdale postponed until solar installed) Retain	High
Continue to reduce our waste and recycle more	To reduce overall carbon footprint and pressure on landfill.	Provides residents, users and staff with opportunities to recycle and therefore reduce waste.	Cost of new bins	1. capacity and finance to upgrade receptacles; 2. encouraging use and correct use.	1. Review receptacles in buildings and make more high profile 2. provide recycling receptacles on parks 3. Work with District Council and others to increase opportunities for residents to reuse and recycle more items	Rolling programme from 2022 to 2026 Retain 2024 - 2028 Retain 2024 – 2028 Retain	Medium

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Commission a study of the Council's Parks & Open Spaces in order to develop a Management Plan to deliver the objectives in the Environment & Biodiversity Strategy	To assess opportunities for the expansion of tree provision, and their nature and biodiversity potential, including wildlife and woodland corridors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To help fight pollution and climate change. 2. To stop the loss of habitats and to protect and enhance both nature and biodiversity. 	Cost of commissioning the study and developing an action plan.	Large study of 32 hectares of land, which is split into several parcels and includes varied use – may need to focus in on specific areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify areas for study 2. Commission study 3. Include an Audit of Wildlife Corridors to produce a map of Wildlife Corridors 4. Develop Management Plan 5. Consider objective to install Bird Boxes on newly planted trees with Children from the area painting the boxes as an activity. 	<p>Spring 2025</p> <p>On track</p> <p>2025/2026</p> <p>On track</p> <p>2024 onwards</p> <p>Roll Forward to 2025 onwards</p>	Medium

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Develop and implement sustainable Procurement objectives	No occasion should be missed to guide procurement expenditures towards efficient low-carbon choices in products, services and public works	Supporting sustainable supplies and suppliers for the long term benefit of both the Council and the Community	None specific, however, implementation of sustainable Procurement objectives in the short to medium term may increase the overall cost of procurement.	None to the Objectives; however, implementation could be difficult where there is limited choice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Initially prioritise implementation for new contracts and suppliers. Roll out to all contractors and suppliers 	<p>Delivered</p> <p>2024/2025 From April 2025</p>	Medium
Develop Sustainable Planning Policies	To ensure that new development and changes to existing development include carbon reduction measures and measures to mitigate any adverse impact on the environment and air quality.	The Community and residents benefit from carbon and energy efficient properties.	Committee and Officer time developing policies and liaising with the Planning authority to ensure they could be delivered through the development control process.	National Planning Policy Framework, legislation and the District Local Plan may not provide for or may limit sustainable conditions being considered as part of the planning process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consider potential sustainable planning policies Check deliverability Feed into local plan review and development control consultations 	<p>2024</p> <p>Proposed Reschedule Spring 2025</p>	Medium

Nature of Action to be delivered	Reason for inclusion	Benefits (Council and Community)	Resources Required	Potential Barriers to Delivery	Delivery Actions	Timescales for Delivery	Priority Level
Promoting actions residents could take to improve the environment and biodiversity	The Town Council was in a position to educate and support the community to consider the options and benefits available to them.	Residents collectively planting seeds and managing their own spaces would provide a better environment.	Officer time researching and developing resources, including liaising with partners and verifying information.	No barriers to delivery. The Town Council couldn't provide financial support, which is a barrier to effectiveness.	1. Identify Actions 2. Research and develop resources, 3. liaise with partners, 4. publicise	2024 – 2026 Proposed Reschedule 2025 - 2027	Medium
Promoting initiatives encouraging residents to reduce their carbon footprint	To consider the bigger impacts on the climate and things everyone could do to reduce their carbon footprint.	To ensure that residents understood the benefits and importance of adopting climate measures for themselves	Officer time researching and developing resources, including liaising with partners and verifying information.	No barriers to delivery. The Town Council couldn't provide financial support, which is a barrier to effectiveness.	1. Identify Actions 2. Research and develop resources, 3. liaise with partners, 4. publicise	2024 – 2026 Proposed Reschedule 2025 - 2027	Medium

Approved by Policy & Resources Committee 7th March 2024 (Minute 94 2023/2024).