

MINUTES of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSE & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE** held in Room 11, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30 pm on Monday, 15th October 2018.

PRESENT: Councillor Harrison in the Chair.
Councillors Brown, Coll, Hughes, Inwood, Perry, P Smith and Swallow.

In attendance: Town Clerk
Town Councillors Davison, FJ Smith and Stanier
District Councillor Green

Councillor Harrison reminded those present that the meeting would be recorded. Councillor Brown declared that she would be recording the meeting also, because she found it hard to remember three months later what was said. She stated that the recording would be deleted as soon as she had read the minutes and checked them.

208/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was none.

209/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Bourke-Waite and Phillips.

210/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

There were none.

211/19 MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the General Purpose & Highways Committee held on:

- 16th July 2018 (Minutes 112/19 to 121/19)

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

212/19 NATURALLY ROYSTON WORKING PARTY:

This item was introduced by Councillor Swallow who indicated the need for another Councillor to join the working party, due to the loss of several members from the group. Councillor Perry indicated an interest in joining the working party as he has a strong interest in environmental issues.

Members **AGREED** to receive the notes of the Naturally Royston Working Party meetings held on 7th August 2018 and 18th September 2018 into the workings of the Council.

213/19 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:

Report from County Councillor Fiona Hill: A report was received which was read out by the Town Clerk.

- **Police and Crime Commissioner:** The Hertfordshire P.C.C. has suspended his bid to take over the fire service. Instead, “collaboration arrangements” have been made with Hertfordshire County Council.
- **Social Prescribing:** Social Prescribing (linking patients in primary care with sources of support within the community, to improve health and wellbeing) is working well across Hertfordshire. Working with stakeholders, the aim is to encourage more referrals (non-medical) for residents in Royston and the surrounding villages. This can be particularly beneficial in cases such as isolation or mental health.
- **Consultation on the Green Paper for Social Care:** Hertfordshire County Council submitted a response to this consultation, stressing the importance of funding for Social Care.
- **R.S.A.T.:** The new headmaster is working hard to engage with staff, parents/carers, children and the community, to ensure the best possible outcomes for children attending the schools.
- **Funding:** The highways Locality and Community Budgets are proving very successful in bringing forward local schemes and helping organisations fund various projects. I am also currently working with other councillors and officers regarding appropriate use of Section 106 funds to benefit Royston and the villages in my division.
- **Safety Issues:** The investigative work on schemes to improve safety on the A505 between Royston and Baldock, Kneesworth Street and the A507 continues.
- **A Proposed weight limit scheme on Melbourn Street, Baldock Street and Baldock Road** remains on the list of schemes under the Highways Locality Budget, pending the outcome of the A507 consultation.
- **The crossing on York Way** is imminent and the A10 Group continues to work with councillors and various stakeholders to secure sufficient funding for a safer crossing (bridge) over the A505 to the A10. There are also concerns over crossing the A505 towards Bassingbourn.
- **The situation of parking, speeding and general safety in Mill Road** has also been raised again with officers to try and find a solution.
- **Additional Speed Indicator Devices** are now in place in Newmarket Road and Kneesworth Street. These will be turned in the opposite direction in six months and we will also review whether to turn/move any of the others. Traffic speed surveys will be taking place in Barkway Road under the Highways Locality Budget scheme and the Police have been carrying out speed checks in various areas of the town.
- **Further work** has been carried out on Royston High Street and I have raised a couple of issues which have still not been addressed.
- **The consultation** was started regarding yellow lines on the junction of John Street and the High Street but, unfortunately, under the legal framework, we are unable to place lines there as there is already an historical restriction order in place. This will be enforced.
- **Seating at Bus Stops in Royston:** This was raised at the recent Section 106 meeting held for Town, District and County Councillors, following a suggestion from F John Smith that a number of bus stops do not have suitable seating. The item has been added to the list for investigation by officers for funding. We will ensure this is monitored for progress.
- **Traffic Problems in Melbourn Road:** The problem with illegal and unsafe parking on this road is a longstanding and frustrating issue which has been raised a number

of times at Town Council and Royston and District Committee (N.H.D.C) meetings. The matter has been repeatedly reported to the Police and N.H.D.C. Enforcement. Although action has been taken, this does not appear to deter the parking. There is a problem with loading/unloading and also customers to the various businesses in the area. Following dialogue with the Town Clerk and Chairman, it has been suggested to, again contact the Police and N.H.D.C. Hopefully, the Committee will endorse this action.

Report from County Councillor Steve Jarvis: A report was received which was read out by the Chairman.

- Release of the proposals for safety improvements on the A505 has been delayed whilst some additional options are investigated. These options exclude a second roundabout at Slip End with other changes to the road there instead. These are likely to reduce the cost and make it more likely that the other changes can be funded earlier.
- Proposals from the Police & Crime Commissioner to take over the Fire Service from the County Council have been withdrawn. The PCC and County Council are to work together on integrating these services better, including possible “rationalisation of the estate” so proposals to merge fire and police stations may still emerge.
- I am continuing to investigate ways of making it easier to cross the road to the Heath and have asked for the potential of a traffic island to be investigated to assist with this. This would also have the benefit of slowing traffic.
- A “smiley face” speed indicator device should be installed in Baldock Road shortly, along with improvements to the belisha beacons at the Baldock Street crossing to enhance their visibility.
- Discussion of a potential weight limit on the A507 between Baldock and Buntingford continues. I have made it plain (and I believe I have the agreement of the Highways and Environment Panel) that this would only be acceptable if accompanied by other weight restrictions to ensure that lorries are not diverted along unsuitable roads as a consequence. In Royston this would mean weight limits on Baldock Road, Baldock Street and Melbourn Street as a minimum.
- Proposals to transfer the management of libraries to a charitable trust are to be considered within the next week. The driving force behind these proposals is to save money by avoiding the payment of business rates. If the proposals are agreed by the County Council cabinet they are likely to take effect from next April.

Report from District Councillor Tony Hunter: A report was received which was read out by the Town Clerk.

- Parking Review: The Committee agreed a list of schemes in August 2017 to be investigated, and the phasing of the review. The list was compiled through workshops and information from residents, local councillors, the Town Manager, Hertfordshire Highways and the local police. The first phase is the Industrial area and the second phase the Town Centre. Work is currently underway with Opus appointed and mapping/survey work is being carried out. A consultation will follow. A point of interest is that the High Street is a restricted parking zone which was a Government initiative, now that the High street work has finished, signs will go up in the next few weeks and enforcement officers will action against poor parking (e.g. John Street).
- S106: A recent informal meeting was held to discuss and explain the process. This involved and invited all interested parties at District, Town and County level.

Officers in attendance also advised the extensive list already compiled and possible suggestions for further work was put forward.

- Committee September 2018: Recent meeting update: Grants have been awarded to Royston Cricket Club, North Herts MS Society, Make Lunch, and McSplash Swimming Centre. Our Community Officer reported his current projects e.g. BMX track, Royston Pageant, Therfield School, Barkway Parish Council, Scouts, Conservators and Coombes Community Centre's successful bid from the NHDC Capital Grant pot. Our next meeting is Wednesday 28th November and all Town Councillors are welcome.

- Footnote/Fly Tipping: NHDC is reminding residents to ensure that household waste is disposed of appropriately by an authorised person, as failure to do so can lead to a criminal prosecution. This August a Letchworth resident, who paid £10 to have waste removed, was prosecuted for illegal fly tipping and was fined £745.61.

214/19 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING PRINCIPLES CONSULTATION:

Members discussed their views on the Statement of Gambling principles. Members **RESOLVED** to respond to the consultation that they welcomed the new Statement of Licensing Principles as it strengthened the case against gambling, although they have strong views that no further gambling licences should be granted in the town of Royston.

215/19 SEATING AT BUS STOPS IN ROYSTON:

Members discussed the current seating provision at bus stops in Royston. It was agreed that the installation of more seating should be investigated as it would benefit all, including those less mobile and the elderly. The seating needs to be durable and sited in appropriate locations. Litter bins could also be installed next to the new seating.

Members **RESOLVED** that Richmond's Coaches should be contacted to get an idea of bus user numbers and the age demographic of passengers at the different bus stops in Royston.

216/19 TOWN CENTRE WORKING PARTY:

Members **RESOLVED** that Councillor Brown be appointed as the Town Council representative on the Town Centre Working Party.

217/19 TRAFFIC PROBLEMS IN MELBOURN STREET, ROYSTON:

Members discussed the continuing problem of illegal parking by delivery lorries, customers to businesses and drivers using cashpoint machines on Melbourn Street. A number of different possible ways were discussed to resolve the parking issues.

Members **RESOLVED** that the feasibility of double yellow lines along Melbourn Street with one delivery parking bay on either side of the road should be investigated.

218/19 NORTH HERTS BUS USERS GROUP:

Councillor Swallow reported on her attendance at the North Herts Bus Users Group meeting held on 4th October 2018.

- The 202 service is being retendered, although usage has been lower of late possibly due to the disruption of the train service and also commuters working hours do not always align with the buses. It was considered when retendering to consider not only London passengers but Cambridge users and align with the 90/91 service too.
 - The Trumpington Park and Ride car park is being used by construction contractors at Addenbrookes Hospital. 100 contractors have now moved out and more parking places will be available.
 - A bus will be running from Royston to Buntingford on Saturdays at 18.36.
 - Committee members have noticed that some bus drivers are not looking at bus passes and appear not to be registering how many passengers are getting on the buses. This could have an impact in usage of the service, showing less people than are actually using the buses which will effect whether the service is viable or not.
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- The problem of the buses using Tannery Drift seems to have abated for the time being.
 - A bus service, the no. 16, for the new housing developments off the Newmarket Road in Royston will be reviewed when monies are received from the new developments.
 - The next meetings will be held on Tuesday 8th January 2019 and 16th April 2019 at the Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth at 14.00.

219/19 OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

No reports were received.

Date of next meeting: 14th January 2019.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date _____