

MINUTES of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSE & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE** held in Room 11, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30 pm on Monday, 18th March 2019.

PRESENT: Councillor Harrison in the Chair.
Councillors Bourke-Waite, Coll, Hughes, Inwood, Phillips, P Smith and Swallow.

In attendance: Town Clerk
Town Councillor F J Smith, District Councillors Green and Hunter, County Councillors Hill and Jarvis

359/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was none.

360/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors Brown and Perry

361/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

There were none.

362/19 MINUTES:

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

- 14th January 2019 (minutes 300/19 to 310/19)

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman decided that the next scheduled agenda item, to receive reports from County Councillors and the Chairman of the NHDC Area Committee, should be moved to the last item on the agenda.

363/19 NATURALLY ROYSTON WORKING PARTY:

Members **AGREED** to receive the notes of the Naturally Royston Working Party meeting held on 29th January 2019 into the workings of the Council.

364/19 TOWN CENTRE WORKING PARTY:

Members **AGREED** to receive the notes of the Town Centre Working Party meeting held on 21st January 2019 into the workings of the Council.

365/19 CASUALTY REDUCTION SCHEME; A505 ROYSTON BYPASS ROUNDABOUT:

Members **RESOLVED** to respond saying that the proposed changes were welcomed but to request arrows to be placed on the A505 road surface before the roundabout

approaching Royston from Baldock, with a straight on arrow in the left hand lane and a right hand turn arrow in the right hand lane.

366/19 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL TOWN AND CYCLING AND WALKING IN ROYSTON:

The Chairman reported on the first meeting of the Sustainable Travel Town working party. The working party members agreed that the proposal to apply to become a sustainable travel town should be discussed further, and have asked for an information pack so that they can consider whether to apply or not. Councillors Harrison and Perry also attended a meeting with officers from NHDC about their cycling and walking infrastructure plan as this would link in with the sustainable travel town application which needs support from other organisations such as NHDC and HCC. The officers have offered to come to the next working party meeting. Members agreed to wait until the pack was received and then another working party meeting would be set up.

367/19 OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

A report was read out on behalf of Councillor Brown about her attendance at the Conservators public meeting:

Two new conservators have been elected and a new clerk has been appointed. Public meetings have been introduced and the next open evening is planned for April.

The car parks are increasingly busy resulting in wear and tear but repairs are scheduled and the access will be widened. The possibility of charging for Heath car parks is being investigated but no decision has yet been made.

Byelaws which were last revised in 1989 are being updated.

Gladman's entered into negotiation with Conservators regarding access via Briary Lane to their proposed development site. Planning permission has been refused and they are now looking at alternative access.

Friends of the Heath has been set up and membership is now open.

Sheep grazing is vital to the Heath but is has not been grazed since 2018. The grazier has a service agreement with Natural England and the Conservators do not have control over this.

Sports clubs are important to the Heath and the intention is to continue to balance the charitable aims regarding sport with conservation of the flora and fauna. It is hoped to bring cricket back to the Heath.

The Conservators are engaging with Natural England to gain funding for the SSSI.

368/19 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NHDC ROYSTON AREA COMMITTEE:

Members received a report from County Councillor Fiona Hill:

- County Councillor Hill reported to members that it had been good working with RTC and NHDC on the possibility of becoming a sustainable travel town.
- The bid to obtain more SIDs (speed indicator devices) for the town has been successful. Councillor Hill thanked the Town Clerk for her work on the project. A new SID will be located on Studlands Rise and the existing SID on

London Road will be upgraded. A new socket is being installed on Barkway Road, through the highways locality budget, and the existing SID will be moved into that location. Further SIDs may be obtained next year, a socket is already in place in Garden Walk. Councillor Hill asked members to promote the need for a crossing patrol on Garden Walk, leaflets have been distributed, but they have not yet had any success in recruiting. The SIDs in Newmarket Road and Kneesworth Street will be turned shortly.

- The integrated works programme is well underway. Old North road resurfacing, around the station area, is included in the programme and there may need to be road closures when this is carried out. There will be a crossing on York Way. A safety audit on Melbourn Street Crossing has taken place and improvements should be made.
- Budget: a big focus for the county goes on adult care and public health on mental health issues which remains the largest part of the budget. Councillor Hill informed members that she was personally working on raising awareness of sepsis, dementia and challenging issues for carers.
- Locality budgets are allocated for this financial year. They will be open again from mid May and applications are welcomed.

Members received a report from County Councillor Steve Jarvis:

- Road works: Tannery Drift will be resurfaced next Sunday. Sun Hill is also now on the list for the second part of the year.
- The A505 set of proposals has been received which includes a commitment to funding for the Litlington turning – this being the one with marginally the worst accident record. It is proposed to ban people from turning right out of the Litlington turn and they will have to turn left and go to the roundabout. Other turnings on the A505 are considered more difficult because of the distance to the roundabouts at either end. It is estimated that the full package of options will cost several million pounds. Councillor Jarvis has asked, in addition to the Litlington turning, if it is not possible to fund all of the improvements, what can be done in the short term to make the road safer.
- A507 proposed weight limit: it has been decided that there will be two short weight limits on the A507. One of the requirements with the implementation of the weight limit is to take measures to ensure that diversions do not send traffic down Baldock Road and through the middle of Royston. This should be carried out as part of the A507 proposals.
- Councillor Jarvis informed members about a document called The Growth and Transport Plan. Firstly, it sets out objectives to get people to use more walking, cycle and bus routes. Secondly, it plans how County will cope with the 25% increase in the population of the area. The plan for south-west of the County has been agreed today. North-central is likely to be up for consultation later in the summer. Councillor Jarvis said that he believed it will be beneficial not being first, as previous unpopular decisions have been amended. Members will all need to look at the document to see the proposals it sets out and turn the objectives into something with real progress.

Members received a report for District Councillor Tony Hunter:

- Councillor Hunter informed members that he had attended the last area meeting of the financial year recently, where a grant was awarded to U3A – which is now the largest charity organisation in Royston with over 700 members, and growing.
- The District budget has been finalised with over £200,000 going to local groups such as CAB and Age Concern. Health and wellbeing have been allocated £50,000 which Royston will see some benefit from. Councillor Hunter informed members that he would forward the list to the Town Clerk, detailing what will be happening in Royston over the next few months, these being different from what has been happening before. This enables the team to continue with some of the good work across the district. The Active Communities team is working with Royston Runners at the moment for a future event.

The Chairman thanked the Councillors for their reports. He informed members that it was the last meeting of the council year and he thanked everyone for their help and assistance.

Date of next meeting: 13th May 2019.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date _____