

Councillors continue to be nominated on to various organisations, as representatives of N.H.D.C. and these include the May Fayre Committee, North Hertfordshire Homes, Royston Community Association, Royston Community Transport, Royston Day Centre, Royston First, Royston and District Twinning Association, Royston and District Volunteer Centre and Sport Royston. These are just a few of the huge number of organisations working to benefit the community.

I will end by thanking all the Council Officers for their invaluable support and advice, particularly Susanne Gow our Committee Clerk and Ashley Hawkins, our Community Officer. I should also like to thank Councillor Bill Davidson, Vice-Chairman of the Committee and all other colleagues on the committee for their support and contributions throughout the Civic Year. Thank you also to Susan Thornton-Bjork (Town Clerk, Royston Town Council) and all her staff, members of the Royston Town Council and the members of the public who have attended our meetings.

Mr. Mayor this concludes my report.

### **QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS:**

Gwillam McAdam: Mr McAdam, whilst recognising that the announcement about High Street renewal was great news, queried the present cleanliness of the pavement in the High Street. He said that he is aware that cleaners are required to remove litter and debris, but wanted to know who is responsible in deciding if the current cleaning regime is satisfactory. Councillor Hill responded by stating that the High Street is cleaned every day and Councillors do keep a close eye on this. An inspector at District Council is aware of residents' concerns and if the cleaning regime is unsatisfactory the inspector will take appropriate action. Mr McAdam was advised to contact District Council should he wish to speak direct to the inspector.

Dara: Stated that she worked at pharmacy in the town and was concerned about the Government's decision to reduce funding for pharmacies by 6% and wanted to know what impact on local services councillors believed this would result in. Councillor Hill replied and stated that County Council has made representations about this as they also shared the concerns just expressed – especially as pharmacies are taking on more and more responsibility within local communities for health care matters.

Sarah Ryan: Wanted to know why, on a recent visit to her local recycling centre, she was stopped from recycling plastic bags. Councillor Hunter replied and confirmed that, unfortunately, the company which originally accepted the bags no longer recycle them and a solution may be to find a new outlet which will – but on the plus side the recent legislation change where shoppers are now charged for plastic bags has meant fewer of these are now being discarded.

There were no further questions. The Town Mayor then thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 8.35 pm.

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
ROYSTON & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING**

Report from Chair of Royston & District Area Committee Councillor Fiona Hill

Mr. Mayor, Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all for attending the meeting this evening. The Councils still believe it is an effective way of engaging with the community in Royston and the surrounding villages. Our open air surgeries also remain busy with valuable feedback from residents.

The Royston and District Committee, which consists of six councillors from Royston and one representing the villages south of Royston, has been busy again this Civic Year. We have provided grants to a large range of organisations, including Barkway Parish Council, Barley Playground Refurbishment Committee, Barley Town House, Creative Royston, Home Start (Royston and South Cambs.), Make Lunch, May Fayre, Reed Cricket Club, Royston and Area Integrated Healthcare CIC, Royston Means Business, Royston Open Secrets, 10<sup>th</sup> Royston Scouts, Royston Town Council (Museum), Royston Rugby Club Women's Team and Royston and District Volunteer Centre. The Committee has also continued to provide a grant to continue with Free After Three parking. The grant recipients have presented to the Committee and then attended an event to advise how the projects have worked.

The Committee has also received presentations from Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley from Hertfordshire Police, Town Councillor Lindsay Davidson regarding school visits, Royston Community Transport, Royston and District Volunteer Centre, the Twinning Association and Young Enterprise.

Officers from North Hertfordshire District Council (N.H.D.C.) have presented on the Parking Review, which is currently taking place in Royston, covering issues in the town centre, industrial estate and also residential roads. We have also received our annual update on Section 106, which has been used across the town and provided funding towards improvements to the BMX, a nationally recognised facility and also to the Town Council, towards improvements in the Town Hall for the cinema. We have received regular updates on the new Museum, Art Gallery and Town Hall in Hitchin, which is for the benefit of all the residents of North Hertfordshire.

District councillors have continued to work with the Town Council on such initiatives as the Annual School Visit Programme and the Town Centre Working Party. The school visits, which are organised by Town Councillor Lindsay Davidson, have been successful, again, with a great insight into how children feel about Royston and what they would like to see. We are delighted that the Splash Park will be open this summer in Priory Memorial Gardens, a facility which the children are so looking forward to having. The Town Centre Working Party includes Town, District and County Councillors, the Town Clerk and Town Manager, officers from N.H.D.C. and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Royston Means Business and the W.I. Since its inception, we have seen improvements to street cleaning, street furniture and repairs/painting to the buildings. I should, at this point, like to thank the Town Manager, Geraint Burnell, for all his hard work, behind the scenes, to achieve the improvements we are now seeing to many of the buildings which were falling into disrepair.

20 mph signs will soon be installed in Garden Walk and if successful, we will investigate other roads, particularly near schools, for further work. We continue to seek replacement Crossing Patrols in Burns Road and Garden Walk, where we are having no luck in recruitment. The parking restrictions in Burns Road and Lumen Road are now in place, where dangerous commuter parking has caused issues, but objections to the Garden Walk proposals have caused a delay here.

We continue in our efforts for the bus operator to change the route of the 331 from Tannery Drift back through Kneesworth Street. Various meetings have taken place and officers are in discussions to move this forward and avoid the dangerous situation, which arises on occasions, of the bus mounting the pavements in Tannery Drift near the school.

Highways Locality Budgets and Community Locality Budgets have once again proved extremely useful and will continue next year. I have pooled funding with Councillor Tony Hunter, when the benefits have been to residents in both our divisions and we know this has helped many organisations.

I should like to thank all officers (Town, District and County) and my colleagues on the Town and District Councils for their support. Many thanks also to Royston Town Council for making me welcome at their meetings.

Mr. Mayor this concludes my report. Thank you.

delighted that, in partnership with Royston First, the Information Centre is now open in Royston Library which has resulted in additional opening hours. Partnership working with the Fire Service and Police is also strong with some libraries soon to be situated in Fire Stations. The Armed Forces Covenant Board, which supports veterans in the County, is going from strength to strength. We also have the Hertfordshire Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership which links countywide partners who work towards shared objectives in public health, sport, recreation, culture and volunteering.

The regular briefing sessions for our MP, Sir Oliver Heald, QC MP, local councillors, GPs, CIC, RHAG and the Friends of the Hospital continue and options are currently being explored for a solution to Health and Social Care in the town and surrounding villages.

Education is one of the key responsibilities of the County Council and the relationship between local County Councillors and the schools remains good. Schools are performing well and the children continue to participate in many inter school Sports events and also Youth Makes Music, Youth Speaks and the Technology Tournament which are arranged by the Rotary Club. There are school expansions taking place in Roman Way and Tannery Drift First Schools. The Children's Centre continues to work closely with partners such as Home Start, the N.H.S. and schools to help families who need support and this is not only related to deprivation.

I will now move on to another very key function of the County Council, namely Highways. We have had a number of challenges this year, not least the surface of the High Street. I have been working with Tony Hunter, who represents North Herts Rural and borders the division I represent and Highways officers, for a considerable period of time, in trying to find a solution to the problem and I would like to thank Sir Oliver Heald, QC MP, Geraint Burnell, Town Manager, Town and District councillor colleagues, together with the Chamber of Commerce and W.I. for supporting us. Some remedial work was carried out and disappointingly has broken up again, due to the fact that the road was opened every evening during the repair, in order to be accommodating and also the fact that large vehicles do use the High Street on a regular basis. I am delighted to report that we received confirmation yesterday that Highways officers have found a solution and identified funding. We are confident that a permanent repair will be carried out during the 2016/2017 financial year. The surface will be back to tarmac, which is safer, easier to maintain and more durable, if heavy vehicles are to continue using the High Street (and we have been informed that retailers require this). The contractor has, in the meantime, been instructed to repair any immediate hazards and I continue to encourage residents to report faults.

Also, in Highways, we have continued with the free salt for use in the community and thanks go to Royston Town Council for coordinating and storing the salt and Councillors Bill Davidson, Tony Hunter and Gerald Morris, together with Ashley Hawkins (Community Officer N.H.D.C.), for helping me with distribution. Hertfordshire Councillors and officers have continued working with Cambridgeshire Councillors and officers, in the mission to find safer crossings over the A505. A feasibility study has been carried out by H.C.C. and funding is being sought from various grants.

Speed levels on this road have been raised with the police, and Chief Inspector Julia Wheatley has said local resources are used to monitor speeds on this this, Newmarket Road, and the A10, and liaise with the speed watch team. Both myself and Cllr Peter Burt are members of this.

Weight limits have been discussed and referred to Hertfordshire Highways, and for a feasibility study to be made.

Grass cutting on the central reservation of the A505 at its junction with Newmarket Road has been raise many times by myself and via this committee, as long grass cuts down visibility when turning right out of Newmarket Road onto the A505 to travel in an East Bound direction towards Duxford.

We have been advised of the old street lighting being replace by L.E.D. lighting over the whole of North Hertfordshire area.

We still have concerns over the 331 bus service using Tannery Drift, as this is a narrow road with a first school on it. A meeting has occurred with a school governor and councilors and Cllr Fiona Hill will deal further with this matter in her report this evening.

We have also had a request for a non-denominational memorial/plaque in Priory Gardens. This is however North Herts District Council property, and Cllr Peter Burt is to discuss the matter with them as a joint Town and District councilor and report back to us.

In closing I must thank many people for their help, and advice over the year. District Councillor Jean Green, District and County councillors Tonty Hunter and Fiona Hill. A very big thank you to you all, we do appreciate all your help and assistance. I must also thank my deputy Cllr Peter Burt and all the committee for their hard work over the year. Finally I must thank the Town Clerk, Susan Thornton-Bjork, her assistant, Caroline and Alison and Ian in the office. Without them we could not function. Thank you to them all.

## **8. REPORT FROM HERTFORSDDHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR FIONA HILL**

Mr. Mayor, Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to update the meeting on County Council issues. The Council continues to face challenging times and is still making efficiencies but, at the same time, looking at ways of increasing income. The Council Tax will rise by 1.9% plus 2% which is specifically for social care for the elderly.

My responsibilities in the County Council include Public Health, Localism and Libraries and I also sit on the Adult Health Cabinet Panel. Public Health is now back under Local Authority control and focuses on preventative work to avoid admissions into hospital and long term illness. The focus continues to be on obesity, drugs, alcohol and smoking and the harm caused by conditions, such as Diabetes. A considerable amount of awareness work takes place in the schools. The Inspiring Libraries programme is ongoing and I am

member can often be a thankless and difficult task, especially when we have to make decisions that residents do not like, however, we, like all local Councillors across the Country, have to stick to the current planning regulations which are now heavily weighted in favour of the Developer, whether we personally agree with them or not!

The Town Council staff also deserve my gratitude, especially our Town Clerk, Susan Thornton-Bjork and Ian Eastwell, our admin assistant and minute taker, who have long sufferingly put up with and made sense of our sometimes heated and often complicated meetings and also the frequent frustrations of the Chair!

### **Report of Cllr Mike Harrison, Chairman of the General Purpose & Highways Committee**

Good Evening ladies, gentlemen and fellow councillors.

Working parties report to this committee, and I wish to start by reading reports from Royston in Bloom, The Town Centre Working Party, and Schools visits made by councillors.

Royston in Bloom: The Royston in Bloom competition has been suspended for the moment due to falling entries and interest in it. The Royston in Bloom committee are looking for new members to join them with some fresh idea about bringing about much needed changes to the work that Royston in Bloom does throughout the town and even maybe a change of name and emphasis. Please contact the Town Clerk or Cllr Lindsay Davidson if you would be interested in helping the very small number of people left on the Committee to start again with a new vision for the very valuable work they do around Royston.

Annual School Visits: The very successful Annual School visits organized by Cllr Lindsay Davidson on behalf of the Town Council are well under way this year with a team of very committed Councillors from Town, District and County councils visiting Royston schools to explain their roles in local Government and discuss local issues and good citizenship with the children.

The Town Centre Working Party: Has met regularly over the past year with local representatives from the Community, relevant District Officers, Town, District and County Councillors, and street cleaning contractors and has worked hard to implement much needed improvements to the High Street area. Full reports have been posted regularly in the Town Crier which is published quarterly in the Listing with the latest being in the recent March issue, so please read this if you require full information on what has been achieved. Further work is still to be done but the working party is committed to continuing to move issues forward over the coming year.

The main committee has discussed various issues. Traffic matters have been taken up and raised with Hertfordshire Highways. They have been asked about lower speed limits on Baldock road. We have however been advised that they need to see what further housing developments take place, and the matter will be looked at again.

## **Report of Cllr Lindsay Davidson, Chairman of the Planning Committee**

A total of 96 planning applications have come before the Royston Town Council Planning Committee since I made my last report in March 2015, and so it has been another busy year for us.

Some of the building developments on sites like the White Bear and The North Star Pubs which I mentioned last year, have now been completed and to a very high standard, others are still not finished or indeed even begun. The building of further first and second floor flat accommodation in the Town Centre has continued apace, but we have objected when Landlords have applied for permission to convert ground floor offices and shops into housing, when they have failed to lease out their premises for retail purposes.

We still await the completion of the renovation of the Banyers Hotel, and we have been working extremely hard with our District Council colleagues to push through the developers requests for much needed internal alterations to this Listed building, in order to facilitate its final completion and the provision of another desperately needed quality Hotel for the town.

The second phase of the Ivy Farm development is now well under way and we had again raised concerns about the developers intention to lower the building regulation standards for this second site, we had also requested that the developer should maintain the legal agreements already agreed in the current approved planning application.

The Planning Committee had then been given a presentation by Bidwells estate agents, last November regarding the initial plans for the development of the third and final phase of the remaining Ivy Farm land to Macdonalds, for approx. 320 houses including provision for the possible siting of a new First School within its grounds. We were told that 40% of the dwellings would be set aside for affordable housing. A public consultation event was subsequently held on 16<sup>th</sup> November. The Committee raised many issues of concern about the development including sewage capacity, access to and from the development, consequent traffic flows along the Baldock road, Housing design and the retention of trees. We have now just received the Outline Planning application for this site and will be looking at it shortly and when we do, we will be working hard to ensure that any concerns we have on behalf of the town, will be taken into account by District Planning officers.

Finally, I also mentioned last year two local Plans that would be extremely important to us in Royston, one being the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, which is still to be finalised and we do hope that this will not take too much longer to complete- and the other the Cambridgeshire Local Plan, of which the amended version came before us recently. Although Cambridgeshire County Council acknowledged in this version that a proper Traffic survey would need to be carried out in view of the many thousands of new homes to be built in and around Cambourne, we once again made clear to them our serious concerns about traffic flows along the A 1198 and A10 into and out of Royston when these new homes are in place.

As always, I would like to thank all the members of the Planning Committee for their hard work, commitment and support over this past year. Being a Planning Committee

I want to pay tribute to the Council staff – they are a great team – and to thank all the volunteers who help to keep the town running successfully, as for example at the Museum, the Cave, the allotments, and via Royston First, together with fellow councillors, and the innumerable folk who maintain all the organisations who operate within our community.

Much of what the council does goes unreported in the media but at least this Town Meeting is an opportunity to comment on what local government is achieving for Royston via the County, District, and Town Councils. And my thanks go to *The Listing*.

Most of what we do on the Town Council is to maintain existing services in good order and I can report that our premises are in a satisfactory condition. Of course we have to spend money on them but there have been no great problems during the last year. The Town Hall is well used, especially by those who attend the popular Picture Palace. Likewise the Market Hill Rooms get plenty of bookings. The Museum is having a much increased number of visitors, partly due to special events; the new ramp to its front door is welcome. Also we have in place an updated agreement with the Museum Trustees, who own the collection. The market as usual is an attraction, and the allotments and plantations are receiving necessary attention.

Let me turn to the future. Our plans for the new cemetery at Wicker hall continue make steady progress as we sort out the planning conditions before site clearance and construction take place. We are in the process of planning an upgrade to the toilets at the Cross, subject to our receipt of an agreement with the District Council to acquire the building at a peppercorn rent. And I must thank Royston First for its drive to keep townspeople and visitors informed about opportunities via the Library.

Let me now draw your attention to our finances. Looking forward to the new municipal year commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April (no fooling intended!) our gross precept for 2016-2017 is £277,656. When this has been reduced by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) grant of £14,927 via the District Council, the net precept to be levied is £262,729, which has the effect of an annual cost to a Band D householder of £42.10, which has the amazing result of being down from £42.18 last year. Eight pence less!

The figures allow for interest payments on the loan which will be needed to cover the works on the cemetery and its approach at Wicker hall. They also allow for a very slight increase in our reserves, some of which might be needed for the cemetery project. Meanwhile, to balance the budget the sum of £4222 will be drawn down from reserves.

I must point out, however, that the CTRS grant from North Herts is to cease in 12 months' time, so the estimates for 2017-2018 may need an increased precept.

To sum up: the town's motto is true: *A bonis ad meliora*. We indeed are going *From good things to better*.

A Pop-Up shop was also delivered. This clothing retailer was opened in Angel Pavement during November/December 2015.

Over 15,000 copies of Royston Focus – a guide to consumer businesses – were distributed to households during February 2015.

There are a couple of projects awaiting completion. Firstly the Town Trail, 31 plaques have been re-engraved and with Councilor Hill's assistance the end is hopefully in sight. Secondly, Parking Initiatives. NHDC are carrying out a review of Royston parking. Royston First are involved in the consultation process and anomalies have been highlighted, new schemes have been proposed, including the use of parking "Season Tickets".

In addition 'business as usual' includes the 4 town trails (Easter Trial, new Music Trial, Pirate Trial and Rudolph's Christmas Trial) all of which are very popular. Operation Artemis, involving uniformed police patrols, window dressing of empty shops, Free-After-3 parking, parking scratch cards issued to businesses outside the Town Centre and continuing support for other events such as Royston Open Secrets and the Summer Street Fayre.

With regards to the future, there will be street cleaning, just before Easter. There will be the introduction of the Royston Web-Site, which will contain a great deal of community information in one place, including a business database and a 'what's on' section. This will be featured in the Information Centre within Royston Library. A new Royston video is being filmed containing useful information for residents and visitors alike.

Turning to the Royston Picture Palace – this goes from strength to strength and some recent performances have broken records. During February 2016 there were 15 performances and 1,849 tickets were sold – averaging 123 per performance. – which is close to being "sold out". This is very good news. A great many thanks go to the volunteers, caretakers, front office staff and the Town Clerk for making this success possible.

And a final comment regarding the High Street refurbishment. Royston First stands ready to assist/enhance any plans brought forward by the Highways Department and many thanks go to Councilor Hill for her efforts in this matter.

## **7. REPORTS FROM THE CHAIRMEN OF ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

### **Report of Cllr F J Smith, Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Finance Committee**

My third statement to the Town Meeting in my capacity as Chairman of the Finance Committee is similar in many respects to the previous two, in that I can report that steady progress has been maintained and that our finances are in good order.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Ben Lewis, then presented Community Service Awards to:

**David & Louise Atkins – Music & the Arts in Royston and surrounding District**

In recognition of their involvement with music and the arts with Royston and the surrounding area for many years. Individually and together, they have directed, musically directed, acted and taken part in many local productions staged by both Royston drama company, CADS, and the Meridian School. They have also made significant contribution to music, whether it be as part of schools performances, the Rotary Club's 'Youth Makes Music', or the Royston Arts Festival to name but a few. Louise also plays the church organ in Royston and surrounding villages, as well as teaching music to many young people in and around the area. Their dedication and contribution to music and the arts within our community is extremely valued.

**Sandra Restall – Royston In Bloom Committee**

In recognition of the fact that she has been part of the Royston in Bloom committee for many many years. Working hard behind the scenes to ensure that community projects and competitions are run smoothly for the benefit of our town, taking a lead in organising many Royston in Bloom evenings and events. She has recently retired from the Committee and this award is given in recognition of her hard work and commitment over many years.

**Samantha Walsh - Royston Swimming Club**

In recognition of her giving up her time to the Royston Swimming Club for over 10 years. For up to 3 nights each week, she coaches many young swimmers, helping develop their techniques, improving their confidence and safety in the water. Without volunteers like her, clubs like Royston Swimming Club could not survive and the contribution to the success of grass roots sport cannot be underestimated.

**5. REPORT FROM HERTFORDSHIRE CHIEF POLICE INSPECTOR JULIE WHEATLEY:**

Due to the unavailability of Police Chief Inspector Wheatley there was no report.

**6. REPORT FROM GERAINT BURNELL, TOWN MANAGER:**

The Town Manager provided a progress report covering the past year detailing how Royston First continues to support the Town Council in relation to various projects.

Taking up from the report delivered last year, the Visitor Information Centre has been delivered in the Royston Library. This is now the information hub for visitors to Royston and contains a Digital Display Screen featuring inter-active quizzes, new printed material, including tear-off maps, an accommodation guide and details of clubs in the Royston area. Royston Library has been able to extend its opening hours as a consequence of the rents received from the Information Centre.

A second project which has been delivered is a short retailer video which is now up and running in the Royston Picture Palace.

**4. PRESENTATION OF THE MAYOR'S COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS AND COMMUNITY TRUST FUND AWARDS:**

**Community Trust Fund Awards:** these awards help local organisations with funding for particular projects within the Town.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Royston Arts Society	To assist with funding towards the hiring of a venue for the Art Exhibition as part of the Royston arts Festival.	£200
Royston & Area Integrated Care Community Interest Company	To assist with funding the cost of printed letterhead stationery.	£100
Rotary Club of Royston	To assist with the funding towards the hire of a Concert Hall for the 'Youth Makes Music' concert held in March 2016.	£250
Royston Methodist Church	To assist with funding craft materials and equipment costs for the Holiday Club during half term for the children of Royston aged 4-11.	£150
Royston Photographic Society	To assist with funding towards hiring a venue for their exhibition as part of the Royston Arts Festival.	£140
Royston Food Bank	To assist funding the cost of a new printer.	£70
Royston Choral Society	To assist with funding for the hire of scores for their choral workshop as part of the Royston Arts Festival.	£100
Home-Start Royston & S.Cambs	To assist with funding the printing of programmes for their Charity fundraising event in April 2016.	£200
Royston Speak Out Stroke Club	To assist with funding to take a group for a day out to Duxford Museum.	£300

generated are spent wisely, invested in key areas that will have long reaching effect for future generations.

The high street is a huge part of what the town council in co-operation with NHDC and HCC want to focus upon. This takes time but we will see the results in the not too distant future.

Finally! Royston has a splash park! This has come about with the tremendous efforts of RTC and NHDC with the funds. The Town, District and County councillors in partnership with council officers have played a massive part in working to ensure this project went ahead.

The town is grateful to RTC for keeping our much loved cultural facilities open to the public. The Royston Cave has received money to help with restoration and preservation. Visitor numbers are up and the feedback is as positive as ever. The museum has a new curator and is now being used for a number of exciting community events.

A special mention of the Town Centre Working Party headed by Cllr Lindsay Davidson is needed to acknowledge their ceaseless efforts over many different initiatives. Of note recently is the "Clean for the Queen" pitched patriotically for our beloved Monarch.

The town has a large number of volunteer and community organisations to help better the lives of Roystonians. I am fortunate to be able to be involved and see the positive outcome of their activities. HomeStart is of particular importance as it is the charity supported by the Mayors Community Trust for the current civic year.

Remembrance is an important date in the Civic year and I was fortunate to be able to pay my respects with the town in laying wreaths at our war memorial and the 91st bomber group memorial in priory gardens. I am always impressed with the attendance and how perfectly we respect the sacrifice that was made on our behalf in the two great wars. It stirs the heart to stand with veterans on their day.

Royston in Bloom is to undergo some work and re-branding over the coming year and hopefully RTC can re-launch a competition that inspires and excites the town to get involved.

The Market is receiving some new stalls and will attract merchants to our town. We are fortunate to have a Town Centre Manager and I am confident The Town Centre Manager can succeed with his ideas and innovations. The Market is absolutely fundamental to Royston's history and community fabric. The Town Council will always work to manage and help preserve part of our town tradition.

Finally as I look to the future I can only see positivity on the horizon for our town. New homes new faces new families and vibrant working population engaged with each other to build a strong community bond and enjoy the town and the surrounding countryside. It has been a hugely enjoyable experience for me and I look forward to handing the chains to the new mayor in the summer.

**ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
AND  
NHDC ROYSTON & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING**

**Held in the Heritage Hall, Royston Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm**

**on**

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7.30pm**

**Present:**

Mayor of Royston, North Hertfordshire District and Town Councillor Ben Lewis.  
(Chairman)

Royston Town Councillors:

Lindsay Davidson, John Davison, Sarah Dingley, Mike Harrison, Mark Hughes, Victoria Hulström-Allen, Rod Kennedy & F J Smith

RTC Officers:

Susan Thornton-Bjork, Town Clerk, Caroline Mills, Assistant Town Clerk, Alison Bass, Administration Officer & Ian Eastwell, Administration Assistant

North Hertfordshire District Councillors Bill Davidson, Jean Green & Gerald Morris

Hertfordshire County Councillor and North Herts District Councillors Fiona Hill & Tony Hunter

Royston First Bid Company – Geraint Burnell

Approximately 30 members of the public

1 member of the press

**1. APOLOGIES:**

Apologies were received from:

Police Chief Inspector Julie Wheatley

Town Councillors, Les Baker, Peter Burt, Robert Inwood, Vera Swallow & Rita Turner

**2. MINUTES:**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015 were signed as a correct record.

**3. ANNUAL STATEMENT FROM THE TOWN MAYOR, COUNCILLOR BEN LEWIS:**

Another year races by bringing much to celebrate and also much ponder. Royston is changing, changing for the better however it is the duty of this council to make sure it is managed in the best interests of the townsfolk. Our town is growing bringing the benefits of a diverse and economically independent population, we have seen many new homes built with more to come. We must work together to make sure that the monies