

Royston Town Council Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference 2024/2025

Royston Town Council delegates the powers and duties to Committees as follows: -

- a. That the powers and duties of the Council in regard to:-
properties, insurance, civic functions, finance, accounts, Royston Market, Royston Cave, the cinema, events, staffing, entertainment, subscriptions and co-operation with voluntary bodies and charities, (with the exception of the power to levy a precept or to approve capital expenditure or to authorise the raising of a loan) be delegated to the Finance Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.

- b. That the powers and duties of the Council in regard to matters under the Town and Country Planning Acts be delegated to the Planning Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate. That the Chair and Vice Chair and the Clerk be delegated to give a response to planning applications if there is a time constraint on the response required.

- c. That the considerations, powers and duties in regard to:-
footpaths, street lighting, infrastructure, sustainable travel, open spaces and climate, biodiversity and environmental matters, together with the considerations in regard to Highways & Transport matters; and the delegation to make representation to the North Hertfordshire Council and Hertfordshire County Council, and such other bodies as they consider necessary, be delegated to the General Purposes & Highways Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.

Terms of Reference:

Royston Town Council Finance Committee

- a) The committee shall consist of the following:-
Ten Members of Royston Town Council, one of whom will become Chair and another Vice-Chair of the committee.
- b) A minimum of five Members will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- c) The powers and duties of the Council in regard to:- properties, insurance, civic functions, finance, accounts, Royston Market, Royston Cave, the cinema, events, staffing, entertainment, subscriptions and co-operation with voluntary bodies and charities, (with the exception of the power to levy a precept or to approve capital expenditure or to authorise the raising of a loan) be delegated to the Finance Committee;
- d) The Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.
- e) The Committee will also –
 - Review the Council's Financial Regulations.
 - Exercise control over the Council's insurance of its properties and liabilities
 - Review and manage the Council's risk management strategy
 - Review and submit for the Council's consideration its system of internal audit
 - Prepare and submit for consideration fees for all chargeable areas under the Committee's remit
 - The Committee has authority to act and spend monies in accordance with that agreed in the annual budget and within the terms of reference of this Committee

- The Committee will place before the Council annual estimates of expenditure (budget) relating to matters within its responsibility, in accordance with required timelines
 - Conduct the Town Clerk's annual appraisal
 - Handle staff grievances in accordance with the Council's Grievance Policy
 - Handle staff disciplinary matters in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy
 - Approve the payment of additional unbudgeted expenditure up to a limit of £15,000
 - Annually review staff salaries
 - Matters of an urgent nature requiring settlement before the next meeting of the Council may be dealt with by the Town Clerk after consultation with the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor and/or Chair/Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee but must be submitted for approval to the next meeting of the Council.
- f) Councillors' membership of the Committee and the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair is established at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.
- g) If the Chair or Vice-Chair retires mid-term the Committee shall elect a Chair or Vice-Chair from within their numbers.
- h) To act upon or commission any services as deemed appropriate and in accordance with the annual budget and terms of reference of the Committee, including applying for any external grant funding.
- i) Meetings will be called monthly (except August) in order to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council.
- j) Members of the public and press will be allowed to attend meetings under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Press and public will be asked to leave the meeting if items of a confidential nature are to be discussed.
- k) Accuracy of the Minutes from the meetings will be confirmed by Finance Committee. The minutes will be submitted to Full Council to be accepted into the workings of the Council.

Royston Town Council Planning Committee

- a) The committee shall consist of the following:-
Ten Members of Royston Town Council, one of whom will become Chair and another Vice-Chair of the committee.
- b) A minimum of five Members will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- c) The powers and duties of the Council in regard to matters under the Town and Country Planning Acts will be delegated to the Planning Committee.
- d) The Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.
- e) The Committee shall receive and examine applications for planning permission received from the Local Planning Authority, North Hertfordshire Council (NHC), having regard to:
- compliance with current planning policy guidance at both national and local level,
 - protection of the Conservation Areas,
 - effect on neighbours,
 - effect on amenity,
 - effect on traffic and highway safety,
 - prevention of inappropriate or over-development,

- effect on street scene and landscape,
- acceptable high standard of design, and
- effect on sustainability of services,

The Committee shall make suitable recommendations to NHC as to whether or not they have no objection, no objection subject to certain conditions or an objection and the reasons why.

- f) To ensure that responses to planning applications are made within the time specified on the Planning Application notice or notify NHC of a delay.
All grounds for objection must be clearly supported by material planning considerations.
- g) The Chair, Vice Chair and the Clerk be delegated to give a response to planning applications if there is a time constraint on the response required. Any responses made must be submitted to the next meeting of the committee for information.
- h) The Committee shall act in respect of any other matter requiring any form of planning consideration and which is within the remit of the Committee.
- i) Councillors' membership of the Committee and appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair is established at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.
- j) In the event that the Chair or Vice-Chair retires mid-term the Committee shall elect a Chair or Vice-Chair from within their numbers.
- k) Meetings will be called monthly in order to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council.
- l) Members of the public and press will be allowed to attend meetings under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Press and public will be asked to leave the meeting if items of a confidential nature are to be discussed.
- m) Accuracy of the Minutes from the meetings will be confirmed by Planning Committee. The minutes will be submitted to Full Council to be accepted into the workings of the Council.

General Purposes and Highways Committee

- a) The committee shall consist of the following:-
Ten Members of Royston Town Council, one of whom will become Chair and another Vice-Chair of the committee.
- b) A minimum of five Members will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- c) The considerations, powers and duties in regard to:-
 - Footpaths, street lighting, infrastructure and open spaces be delegated to the General Purposes & Highways Committee together with;
 - Considerations in regard to Highways & Transport matters.
 - Considerations in respect of Royston being a Sustainable Travel Town.
 - Considerations in respect of climate, biodiversity and environmental matters.
 - Any other relevant matters within the remit of the committee.
- d) The Committee is delegated to make representation to the North Hertfordshire Council, Hertfordshire County Council and such other bodies as they consider necessary.
- e) To provide representatives for relevant NHC, HCC and other meetings and committees for seminars, briefing and training sessions appropriate to the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- f) The Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.
- g) Councillors' membership of the Committee and appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair is established at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

- h) If the Chair or Vice-Chair retires mid-term the Committee shall elect a Chair or Vice-Chair from within their numbers.
- i) Meetings will be called every two months in order to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council.
- j) Members of the public and press will be allowed to attend meetings under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Press and public will be asked to leave the meeting if items of a confidential nature are to be discussed.
- k) Accuracy of the Minutes from the meetings will be confirmed by the General Purposes and Highways Committee. The minutes will be submitted to Full Council to be accepted into the workings of the Council.

Royston Cave advisory sub-committee:

- a) The Sub-Committee shall consist of three Members of Royston Town Council and the Cave Manager.
- b) The aim of the Sub-Committee is to oversee and advise the Council on all matters relating to Royston Cave.
- c) The parent committee is the Royston Town Council Finance committee.
- d) A minimum of two Members and the Cave Manager will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- e) Membership of the Committee is established at the Annual Meeting of the Finance Committee. Non-members can be invited to join the committee. Non-councillors do not have voting rights.
- f) At the first meeting of the Sub-Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Finance Committee, members shall elect a Chair for the term. If the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As an Advisory Committee public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. As an Advisory Committee, full minutes of meetings are not required; however, notes from meetings will be submitted to the Finance Committee to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- h) Advisory committees are constituted to implement the decisions of Full Council/Finance Committee as are specifically identified in their Terms of Reference, may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council/Finance Committee, and have no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- i) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
 - Consider all matters relating to the operation of Royston Cave and make any relevant recommendations to the Finance Committee.
 - Advise the Council on matters that arise that may require investigation or funding.

Markets Advisory Sub-Committee:

- a) The Sub-Committee shall consist of four Members of Royston Town Council and the Market Manager.
- b) The aim of the Sub-Committee is to oversee and advise the Council on all matters relating to Royston Market.
- c) The parent committee is the Royston Town Council Finance committee.
- d) A minimum of three Members and the Market Manager will constitute a quorum for meetings.

- e) Membership of the Committee is established at the Annual Meeting of the Finance Committee. Non-members can be invited to join the committee. Non-councillors do not have voting rights.
- f) At the first meeting of the Sub-Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Finance
- g) Committee, members shall elect a Chair for the term. The Chair must be a Member of Royston Town Council. If the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from within their numbers.
- h) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As an Advisory Committee public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. As an Advisory Committee, full minutes of
- i) meetings are not required; however, notes from meetings will be submitted to the Finance Committee to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- j) Advisory committees are constituted to implement the decisions of Full Council/Finance Committee as are specifically identified in their Terms of Reference, may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council/Finance Committee, and have no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- k) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
 - Consider all matters relating to the operation of the market and make any relevant recommendations to the Finance Committee.

Allotments Advisory Sub-Committee:

- a) The Sub-Committee shall consist of four Members of Royston Town Council and an RTC officer.
- b) A representative from the RAGA committee and a representative from other plot holders will be invited to attend.
- c) Meetings will be held quarterly in the evenings via Zoom to allow all members to participate.
- d) The aim of the sub-committee is to oversee and advise the Council on all matters relating to the Allotments and to consult with interested parties.
- e) The parent committee is the Royston Town Council Finance committee.
- f) A minimum of three Members, an RTC officer and at least one representative from the allotment associations will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- g) Membership of the Committee is established at the Annual Meeting of the Finance Committee. Non-members can be invited to join the committee. Non-councillors do not have voting rights.
- h) At the first meeting of the Sub-Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Finance
- i) Committee, members shall elect a Chair for the term. The Chair must be a Member of Royston Town Council. If the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from within their numbers.
- j) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As an Advisory Committee public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. As an Advisory Committee, full minutes of meetings are not required; however, notes from meetings will be submitted to the Finance Committee to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- k) Advisory committees are constituted to implement the decisions of Full Council/Finance Committee as are specifically identified in their Terms of Reference, may only use the

resources as delegated by Full Council/Finance Committee, and have no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.

- l) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
- Deal with the day to day matters regarding allotments.
 - Approve work on site within the agreed annual expenditure budget for the allotments.
 - Advise the Council on matters that arise which may require investigation or funding from the earmarked reserves.
 - Review draft policies, procedures and agreements relating to the allotments including (but not limited to): tenancy, plot sharing, the waiting list, procedure on death of a tenant, rules and regulations. All documents will need to be submitted to Full Council or the Finance Committee for approval.
 - Formulate a recommendation to the budget working party in October annually, on the level of increase of rent for the next financial year. Future expenditure and current levels of reserves should be considered, and justification must be provided.
 - Provide support to the volunteer organisations.

Events Advisory Sub-committee:

- a) The Sub-Committee shall consist of a minimum of six Members of Royston Town Council.
- b) The aim of the Sub-Committee is to investigate, make all preparations for and run events including the Annual May Fayre, Remembrance Day, Royston Christmas Lights and other events that may be agreed from time to time.
- c) The Sub-Committee must ensure that all licence and legal requirements are adhered to. Licence and other applications can only be submitted by an officer of the council.
- d) The parent committee is the Royston Town Council Finance committee.
- e) A minimum of three Members and an RTC officer will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- f) Non-members can be invited to join the Sub-Committee. Non-councillors do not have voting rights.
- g) At the first meeting of the Sub-Committee, members shall elect a Chair for the term.
- h) The Chair must be a member of Royston Town Council. If the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from the councillors within their numbers.
- i) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As an Advisory Committee, public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. Also, full minutes of meetings are not required; however notes from meetings will be submitted to the Finance Committee to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- j) The Sub-Committee may appoint working parties as appropriate. Working parties are not permitted to approve any expenditure and must report back to the Sub-Committee for appropriate authorisation.
- k) The Sub-Committee may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council/Finance Committee and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- l) Budgets are allocated annually for the May Fayre, Remembrance Day, Senior events (including Silver Sunday) and the Christmas Lights. Sub-Committee members can approve expenditure within agreed annual budgets. If grants are received or earmarked reserves are held for specific events then the members can also approve expenditure within these limits. Budgets must solely be used for the event to which they are allocated and no others.

- m) If the Sub-Committee wishes to put on any events, other than those listed above, a proposal must be submitted to the Finance Committee for approval accompanied by all required costings and quotes as determined in the council's Financial Regulations.

Human Resources Sub-Committee:

- a) The Sub-Committee shall consist of four Members of Royston Town Council.
- b) A quorum will be three Members.
- c) The aim of the sub-committee is to oversee and advise the Council on matters relating to Human Resources.
- d) The parent committee is the Royston Town Council Finance committee.
- e) Membership and Chairmanship of the Committee is established at the Annual Meeting of the Finance Committee.
- f) If the Chair retires mid-term they shall elect a Chair from within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. Public admission to meetings is not permitted.
- h) All members must preserve confidentiality of all individual staffing matters pertaining to the business of the Committee.
- i) All members must act impartially and comply with statutory obligations.
- j) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
 - To manage all elements of recruitment to the posts of Town Clerk, Assistant/Deputy Town Clerk and Market Manager. The committee will be responsible for advertising the vacancy, short listing applicants, conducting interviews and deciding the outcome of the recruitment process. Full Council has to approve the appointment of the Town Clerk.
Recruitment of subordinate posts will be managed by the Town Clerk and relevant line manager.
 - Conduct the Town Clerk's annual appraisal.
 - Handle staff grievances in accordance with the Council's Grievance Policy.
 - Handle staff disciplinary matters in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy.
 - To receive information, advice and guidance on behalf of the Council for matters pertaining to employment issues.
 - To obtain independent professional advice if necessary, within agreed budgets.
 - To receive reports/updates on any Union matters as appropriate.
 - To consider any further policies or procedures for adoption on matters relating to HR issues, ensuring that full and open discussions have taken place with staff & Members as required.
 - To regularly review employment policies to ensure that they meet current legislation.
 - To consider training and professional development for staff & Members, as appropriate, and within the agreed budget.
 - Handle complaints received under the Council's complaints policy.

Cinema Working Party:

- a) The working party shall consist of five Members of Royston Town Council.
- b) The aim of the working party is to oversee and advise the Council on all matters relating to Royston Picture Palace cinema and liaise with other interested parties.
- c) The parent committee is the Royston Town Council Finance committee.

- d) A minimum of four Members will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- e) Non-members can be invited to join the working party. Non-councillors do not have voting rights.
- f) At the first meeting of the working party after the Annual Meeting of the Finance Committee, members shall elect a Chair for the term. The Chair must be a Member of Royston Town Council. If the Chair retires mid-term, again a Chair will be elected from the councillors within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As a 'Working Party', public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. Also full minutes of meetings are not required; however notes from meetings will be submitted to the Finance Committee to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- h) The Working Party may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council/Finance Committee and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- i) No budget has been allocated to the working party.
- j) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
 - To consider all matters relating to the operation of the Royston Picture Palace cinema and to make any recommendations to the Finance Committee or Full Council.

Communications Working Party:

- a) The working party shall consist of four Members of Royston Town Council.
- b) The aim of the working party is to:
 - Draw up a communications strategy for the next 4 years to incorporate existing and new methods of communication for the Town Council with the public, for approval by the Council.
 - Within the context of the strategy, review the format and delivery mechanism of the "Town Crier" to recommend any possible changes to the Council.
 - Deal with all other relevant communications issues.
- c) The working party will report back to Full Council.
- d) A minimum of three Members will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- e) External individuals or groups who have expertise in communications methods and channels can be invited to join the working party.
- f) At the first meeting of the working party, members of the working party shall elect a Chair for the term. The Chair must be a member of Royston Town Council. If the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from the councillors within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As a 'Working Party', public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. Also full minutes of meetings are not required; however notes from meetings will be submitted to Full Council to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- h) The Working Party may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council or the Finance Committee and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- i) No budget has been allocated to the working party.

Climate and Biodiversity Action Working Party:

- a) The working party shall consist of four Members of Royston Town Council.
- b) The aim of the working party is to agree strategies and actions to advise the council on all matters relating to the Climate and Biodiversity emergency.

- c) The working party will report to the General Purposes & Highways Committee.
- d) A minimum of three councillors will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- e) Non-councillors can be invited to join the working party as needed and members will work in partnership with all other relevant bodies including North Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council.
- f) At the first meeting of the working party, members of the working party shall elect a Chair for the term. The Chair will be a Royston Town Councillor. In the event that the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As a 'Working Party', public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. Also full minutes of meetings are not required; however notes from meetings will be submitted to the General Purpose and Highways Committee to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- h) The Working Party may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council/Finance/General Purposes and Highways Committee, and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- i) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
 - Estimate the Council's current carbon footprint, perhaps using a calculator such as <https://impact-tool.org.uk/> or <https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/sme-carbon-footprint-calculator> or by engaging a consultant to give a baseline of what changes may need to be made.
 - Make recommendations on how to reduce the Council's carbon emissions and investigate the feasibility of the Council being net zero by 2030
 - Preserve and enhance biodiversity currently present on Town Council land
 - Communicate these goals with the wider town by means of regular updates on a dedicated "Climate and Biodiversity" page on the Town Council website as well as via other channels
 - Take every reasonable opportunity to inform townspeople of the importance of the climate and biodiversity emergency and what they can do to help mitigate the situation
 - Educate and lobby for a net zero town by 2040, in line with aims set out by North Herts Council in 2019, and to work with other councils and local businesses to achieve this.