

MINUTES of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall at the Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 21st June 2021.

PRESENT: Councillor Hughes (Town Mayor) in the Chair
Councillors Beardwell, Brown, Bylett, Coll, Davison, Harrison, Leggett, Perry, Phillips, FJ Smith, P Smith and Stanier.

In attendance: Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill

Canon Reg Bailey from St. John's Parish Church led the meeting in prayer.

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed those present that the meeting was being recorded.

63/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was none.

64/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Inwood and Squire-Smith.

65/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

Members were advised to declare any interests at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. No requests for dispensations were received.

Members **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 3i for the remainder of the meeting. This would enable councillors to remain seated whilst speaking which is more COVID secure.

66/22 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Mayor reported that he had attended the launch of the Royston Photographic Society exhibition which was held on Zoom and he had promoted National Carers Week and National Volunteers week. The Mayor had also attended a promotional photo shoot for the new bus shelter that had been installed in Icknield Walk which was a project initiated by the Town Council as part of the wider Sustainable Travel Town project.

67/22 MINUTES:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 17th May 2021 (minutes 1/22 to 25/22).

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

68/22 TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following minutes be adopted into the workings of the council:

- a) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:
 - 10th May 2021 (minutes 222/21 to 227/21)
- b) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:

- 17th May 2021 (minutes 52/22 to 56/22)

69/22 TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES WHICH HAVE NOT ALREADY BEEN APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD:

It was **RESOLVED** to receive minutes of Committee meetings, which have not already been adopted as a correct record, into the workings of the Council:

- (a) The meeting of the Finance Committee held on:
 - 17th May 2021 (minutes 26/22 to 44/22)
- (b) The meeting of the General Purpose and Highways Committee held on:
 - 17th May 2021 (minutes 45/22 to 51/22)
- (c) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:
 - 7th June 2021 (minutes 57/22 to 62/22)

70/22 TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

- (a) It was **RESOLVED** to receive the notes of the 4 Year Plan Working Party meeting held on 22nd April 2021 into the workings of the Council.
- (b) It was **RESOLVED** to receive the notes of the 4 Year Plan Working Party meeting held on 20th May 2021 into the workings of the Council.

Cllr Davison thanked Cllr Perry for his work on the cycle shelter and safe walking trails projects.

Cllr Davison expressed his dismay at recent political social media postings made on the subject of the cycle shelter.

The Chair advised Councillors to reflect on social media posts and remember they should be working together to serve their community.

71/22 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the report from the Internal Auditor for the audit for the year ended 31st March 2021 and accept it into the workings of the Council.

72/22 ACCOUNTS 2020-2021:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Year End Accounts and Supporting Statement for 2020-2021.

It was noted that income had been boosted by grants received and expenditure had been reduced due to having a decrease in staff numbers over the financial year.

The Clerk clarified that the Christmas lights had been disposed of as they no longer met the new regulations.

Members **RESOLVED** to place on record their thanks to the Town Clerk and her staff for their work during what has been a very difficult period.

In response to a question, The Clerk clarified that the council's reserves include £175,000 of earmarked reserves and £127,000 of capital reserves.

73/22 ANNUAL RETURN 2020-2021:

1. Members **RESOLVED** to agree the AGAR Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 (Section 1) and approve it for signing by the Chairman and Clerk.
2. Members **RESOLVED** to agree the AGAR Accounting Statements 2020/2021 (Section 2) and approve them for signing by the Chairman.
3. Members **NOTED** the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights as Thursday 24th June 2021 to Wednesday 4th August 2021.

74/22 BANK RECONCILIATION AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:

- (a) Members received and noted the bank reconciliation for May 2021.
- (b) Members received and noted the May 2021 Income and Expenditure report compared against budgets for 2021-2022.

Cllr Bylett suggested that the income and expenditure report should be reviewed and improved. Cllr Brown commented that Royston Town Council's documents were good and ranked in the top percentiles of those produced by parish and town councils. Cllr Davison said that a review would take place focussed on the variance figures.

75/22 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the May 2021 accounts for payment and the transfers between the Town Council accounts.

76/22 ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021:

Members **AGREED** to approve the Annual Report 2020/2021 for publication subject to a small change in the accounting section.

The Town Clerk thanked the Administration Assistant for her work on this project.

77/22 ROYSTON MUSEUM TRANSITION ROAD MAP AND COSTS:

Members **NOTED** the draft road map to convert Royston Museum to a CIO which will be approved by the working party.

Members **RESOLVED** to agree the estimated costs of £16,350 and any costs that are in excess of the Museum annual budget staffing allocation will be debited from general council reserves.

78/22 CODE OF CONDUCT:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the new Councillors Code of Conduct for Royston Town Council.

Members agreed that, as stated in the Code, all councillors should undertake training on the Code of Conduct and this will be investigated and arranged.

79/22 NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031 – CONSULTATION ON THE FURTHER PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS:

Cllrs Brown and Stanier declared an interest in this item and took no part in either the discussion or vote.

Cllr Phillips had researched the further proposed modifications and made the comment that no further delays can happen with the completion of the Local Plan as it needs to go

through to prevent more inappropriate development proposals, especially as the original housing need was 13,800 for North Herts and this has now been revised to 11,500 homes. Other comments were made on specific schedules of the consultation. Members **RESOLVED** to submit the comments on behalf of Royston Town Council.

80/22 DIVERSITY FORUM WORKING PARTY:

Members **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Bylett to serve on the Diversity Forum Working Party.

81/22 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Cllr Brown reported that Home-Start will be running a cake stall at the Meldreth Walking Market, the Conservators of Therfield Heath are trying to resolve the rat problem on the Heath, and the Town Twinning AGM will be held on Wednesday 23rd June at 6pm on Zoom.

82/22 CLERK'S REPORT:

The Clerk had nothing to report.

Date of next meeting: 27th September 2021.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.44pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____