

MINUTES of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSE & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE** held in Room 11 at the Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Monday 18th July 2022.

PRESENT: Councillor Harrison (Chair)
Councillors Adams, Beardwell, Brown, Rees and Stanier.

In attendance: Assistant Town Clerk
County Councillors Hill and Jarvis and District Councillor Hunter

3 Members of the Public

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed those present that the meeting was being recorded. The Chair reminded Members of the Climate & Biodiversity Emergency declared by Royston Town Council and asked Members to be mindful of this when making decisions on behalf of the Council. The Chair announced that the Sustainable Travel Town item on the agenda would be deferred to the next meeting as further documents were due to be received.

100/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Susan van de Ven from South Cambridgeshire District Council spoke about the linking of the Royston and Cambridgeshire cycleways. She reported that the Melbourn Greenway is to be designated a team that is tasked with delivering the Royston to Cambridge cycleway project and they will be updating local residents and other interested parties about the plans for the cycleway once the engagement exercise begins in Autumn. She advised that the Melbourn Greenway had by far the best funding and engagement out of the 12 cycleways that are being delivered out of Cambridge and thanked Royston Town Council for their pledge made towards the project. She further announced that there will be an annual ride for the cycleway on the morning of Sunday 25th September.

A member of the public asked the Council to consider putting Swift nest boxes up on some of the buildings in the centre of Royston. She reported that Swifts migrate annually and stay to breed in the local area, but their population has declined by 58% in the last 23 years and they have been added to the UK's list of endangered birds. She stated that they nest in the eaves, gaps and cavities on buildings but as buildings have been renovated and replaced, their nesting sites have been lost. She showed a Swift Box that she said could be put up on the North, East or West facing side of a building and would help create a network to help revive the local population if enough of them were put up in the right places.

101/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Compton and Langdon.

102/23 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.

103/23 APPROVAL OF GENERAL PURPOSE & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the General Purpose & Highways Committee held on Monday 16th May 2022 (minutes 41/23 to 46/23). The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

104/23 PEDESTRIAN/CYCLE BRIDGE – MELBOURN GREENWAY:

Councillor Brown asked South Cambridgeshire District Councillor van de Ven whether the route for the annual ride would include Royston. Councillor van de Ven said that they felt going to Royston would be too dangerous but invited Councillor Brown to come up with some ideas with regard to an annual ride to get Royston involved. Councillor Brown enquired as to whether there was potential to broaden the outreach of the cycleway to appeal to more than just cyclists. Councillor van de Ven expressed her enthusiasm on all methods of transport that are not by car. The Chair asked about the timeline for the Melbourn Greenway project. Councillor van de Ven said that the cycleway would be built in stages and the council would be informed as to its progress.

105/23 SWIFT BOXES:

Councillor Brown proposed an amendment to add the phrase ‘and to refer to the Climate and Biodiversity Working Party to investigate further sites’.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amended proposal to agree to the installation of swift boxes at the Town Hall in principle, to recommend to the Finance Committee to use reserves to cover the costs of installation, and to refer to the Climate and Biodiversity Working Party to investigate further sites.

106/23 REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NHC ROYSTON AREA COMMITTEE:

Members received a report from County Councillor Hill:

- Parts of the A10 including Market Hill, Priory Lane, London Road and Barkway Street have been resurfaced.
- A new speed indication device will be installed on Melbourn Road near St. Mary’s school when the confirmation date is received.
- A new sign will be installed at Grange Bottom to advise articulated lorries that there is no exit.
- The poor road surface at Serby Avenue is going to be investigated.
- Having put yellow lines on some roads on the Grange Estate, a resident on one of the other roads has requested the entrances to their roads be investigated as they may also be unsafe.
- Priory Close and King James Way roads are due to be resurfaced as are the footpaths of Shaftesbury Way, Mill Road, Victoria Crescent, Serby Avenue, Morton Street and Parthia Close. The section of path between two houses on Studlands Rise was not included but is being looked at.
- Drainage works have been taking place on London Road and Queen’s Road.
- County Councillor Hill announced that she had attended the HAPTC AGM with Councillor Harrison which included a presentation on tackling climate change.

- The summer reading challenge was launched in all libraries across Hertfordshire on 9th July.
- The 'My Story' exhibition was launched in Hitchin library on 17th July.
- Work on both COVID-19 and Ukraine is ongoing.
- The deadline for a grant fund called Your Station, Your Community is 30th July and Cllr Hill said she could send the link to councillors if they wanted to apply.
- Councillor Hill was concerned by reports of people being knocked over by mobility scooters as well as people on mobility scooters being knocked off themselves. E-scooters are another issue but the police should deal with this as they are illegal in Royston.
- Feedback on the Hertslynx service would be welcomed by HCC.
Members received a report from County Councillor Jarvis:
- The diversion of footpath 17 is being progressed by Network Rail and there are plans to link Hampshire Road and Ivy Lane to encourage children to walk to school when it is built. Solar powered lights are being considered for the Ivy Lane part of this footpath, however there will be no lighting in the narrow part of the footpath that leads onto Green Drift as it is not wide enough to put any lights in.
- There was a proposal to implement a 20 MPH speed limit on Tannery Drift with speed humps, however the residents of Tannery Drift did not want speed humps so there will be an advisory speed limit of 20 miles per hour put in place on Garden Walk first before this happens on Tannery Drift.
- There are some proposals to extend Hertslynx by giving it more vehicles and experimenting with later services on Fridays and Saturdays.
- The Roysia Surgery is currently going through a process of retendering.
Members received a report from District Councillor Hunter:
- The local plan is still going through a period of consultation and won't be finished until August 2023 at the earliest.
- A new contract for John O'Connor is being negotiated regarding the grass verges on highways. There will be an interactive piece of play equipment going into the Serby Avenue play area later this year.
- Tree branches are restricting the footway of The Warren and this is being looked at by North Herts Council.
- The Electoral Commission have decided to restructure Royston to have 7 district councillors over 4 wards at the next district council elections.
- Johnson Matthey have pledged funds to resurface the BMX track.

107/23 CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY ACTION WORKING PARTY:

Members **RESOLVED** that Councillors Adams, Brown, Rees and Stanier be appointed to the Climate & Biodiversity Action Working Party. Members **RESOLVED** to agree the terms of reference for the working party.

108/23 PRIORY MEMORIAL GARDENS:

Members **NOTED** North Herts Council's plans to install new signs and information boards in Priory Memorial Gardens.

Members **RESOLVED** to agree to ask for the Community Toilet Scheme to be included on the town map.

109/23 LITTER IN ROYSTON:

Members discussed the problem of litter picking near Ivy Lane at some length. It was noted that McDonald's litter pick this area when staff are available and a member agreed to contact them to remind them to do this.

A member would also contact Redrow about the issue.

Litter pickers are available from the Town Council Offices and the public can 'Adopt an Area' through a scheme run by North Herts Council. Members would discuss re-instating the councillors' litter pick at a later meeting.

Members **RESOLVED** to write to the members of the public, thanking them for their efforts and informing them of their actions.

110/23 STREET CLEANLINESS/PIGEONS:

Members supported the action being taken by North Herts Council to encourage businesses and landlords to install more pigeon deterrents on their properties. A member suggested that uncovered bins belonging to restaurants around Jepp's Lane and John Street could be adding to the problems.

Members **RESOLVED** to endorse the actions of North Herts Council, offer their support and suggest the bin issue be brought to their attention.

111/23 PEOPLE AND PLACES SURVEY:

Members **NOTED** the results from the survey.

112/23 RIGHTS OF WAY APPLICATION TO DIVERT ROYSTON FOOTPATH 17 (NH/308/DIV RAIL):

Members **RESOLVED** to support the application with the comment that they would like the work to take place as soon as possible.

113/23 UPDATE FROM CHAIRMAN:

The Chair reported that a resident had asked him for more seating on the main roads of Old North Road and Melbourn Road. Members discussed the issue and it was agreed to put a proposal forward at a later meeting to investigate the feasibility of the project. The Chair reported that he had attended a Zoom meeting for the Cambridgeshire County Council Greenways scheme with Councillor Rees. He also attended the HAPTC AGM which he will report on at the next Full Council meeting. The Chair had received a letter from a resident concerning overgrown footpaths next to Green Walk plantation which he passed to the Assistant Town Clerk for action.

114/23 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Councillor Rees gave a brief report on the Royston Museum. Councillors Rees, Beardwell and Jani had attended a meeting of the board of trustees. He reported that the museum had big plans for the future and was in the process of re-inventing itself.

Date of next meeting: 17th October 2022.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.58pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____