

MINUTES of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 20th March 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor Antony (Mayor) in the Chair
Councillors Adams, Brown, Compton, Harrison, Haugh, Inwood, Langdon, Lockett, Rees and Squire-Smith

In attendance: Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill
District Councillors Green and Hunter

Jonathan Scott from the Royston Evangelical Church led the meeting in prayer. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed those present that the meeting was being recorded. The Chair reminded Members to be mindful of the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency declared by Royston Town Council when making decisions on behalf of the Council.

353/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was none.

354/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Beardwell and Jani.

355/23 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.

356/23 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The mayor detailed her activities since the last Full Council meeting:

- Met the fire cadets at Royston fire station.
- Attended the Menopause Café at the Old Bull Inn.
- Was present at the Holocaust Remembrance Day service in Priory Memorial Gardens.
- Journeyed to London for an event held by YMCA.
- Invited to the 1st anniversary of Pamper Mimi.
- Attended St John the Baptist's re-dedication service.
- Judged the stalls at the Royston Girl Guide's Spring Fair.
- Attended the art exhibition at Curwen's Solicitors and the craft fair at Fish Hill.

357/23 COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION:

Members noted the resignation of Councillor Stanier which leaves a Town Council vacancy in Royston South Ward. A by-election has been requested and will take place on 4th May 2023.

Several Members expressed thanks to Councillor Stanier for her work on the council and wished her all the best in the future.

358/23 MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 16th January 2023 (minutes 278/23 to 294/23).

359/23 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following minutes, which have already been adopted as a correct record, are adopted into the workings of the Council:

a) The meetings of the Planning Committee held on:

- 9th January 2023 (minutes 272/23 to 277/23)
- 6th February 2023 (minutes 307/23 to 313/23)

b) The meeting of the Finance Committee held on:

- 30th January 2023 (minutes 295/23 to 306/23)

360/23 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following minutes, which have not already been adopted as a correct record, are adopted into the workings of the Council:

a) The meeting of the General Purpose & Highways Committee held on:

- 20th February 2023 (minutes 314/23 to 329/23)

b) The meeting of the Finance Committee held on:

- 27th February 2023 (minutes 330/23 to 343/23)

c) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:

- 6th March 2023 (minutes 344/23 to 352/23)

361/23 COMMUNICATIONS WORKING PARTY:

Councillors Antony and Lockett were both nominated for the vacancy and both proposals were seconded. A vote was then taken.

Members **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Antony to the Communications Working Party.

362/23 DIVERSITY FORUM:

An amendment was proposed to add a diversity item onto every Full Council meeting agenda to give councillors and members of the public the opportunity to speak about diversity issues. The amendment was seconded and carried.

Members **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Compton to the Diversity Forum and to add a diversity item onto every Full Council meeting agenda to give councillors and members of the public the opportunity to speak about diversity issues.

363/23 LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the live streaming of council meetings via YouTube.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a Toucan Video Conference System

364/23 NALC LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME:

In response to Members questions, the Deputy Town Clerk stated that much of the work had already been done for the Foundation Level Award, but more evidence of community engagement would be needed such as a survey or online poll to obtain the Quality Award. The Deputy Town Clerk further explained that if the Council achieved the Foundation Level Award it could apply for the Quality Award later and there was no time limit on upgrading, it would depend on how long it would take to compile the evidence of community

engagement. The Town Clerk added that there were only 4 panel dates per year so the application for the Quality Award could only be submitted every 3 months. The community engagement requirements would fit well within the remit of the Communications Working Party.

Members **RESOLVED** to work towards gaining the Quality Award for Local Councils and apply at a later date.

365/23 PROTOCOL FOR FILMING AND RECORDING:

An amendment was proposed to change section 1 to “The council requests that anyone wishing to record should let the Chair/Clerk of the meeting know prior to, or at the start of, the meeting and the recording should be overt (i.e. clearly visible to anyone at the meeting), but non-disruptive.”

The amendment was seconded and carried.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amended Protocol for Filming and Recording for adoption into the workings of the council.

366/23 GRANTS POLICY:

There was a lengthy discussion.

An amendment was proposed to change section 3.1 to “The scheme is only open to: community organisations, local charities, clubs and voluntary groups based in Royston or for activities which take place in Royston or on Therfield Heath”. This was seconded but not carried.

An amendment was proposed to change section 3.1 to “The scheme is only open to: community organisations, local charities, clubs and voluntary groups based in Royston or for activities which take place in Royston.” This was seconded and carried.

An amendment was proposed to delete section 4.3 from the policy. This was seconded but not carried.

An amendment was proposed to change section 4.3 to “For grants exceeding £250, for the purchase of goods, the applicant should demonstrate that best value has been sought by submitting at least two quotations.” This was seconded and carried.

An amendment was proposed to delete section 6.1 from the policy. This was seconded but not carried.

An amendment was proposed to change section 3.6 to “The Town Council will not fund core expenditure, ongoing revenue costs, religious activities or projects with party political links”. This was seconded but not carried.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amended Community Grants policy for adoption into the workings of the Council.

367/23 MINUTES OF ROYSTON & DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION:

Members received the minutes of the Royston & District Twinning Association meetings held on 18th January 2023 and 1st March 2023 into the workings of the Council.

368/23 COUNCILLORS’ REPORT ON ACTIVITIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Councillor Brown reported on matters discussed at the Conservators of Therfield Heath and Greens’ most recent public meeting which included waste bins and litter on the

Heath. There is a new Chair and there have been staff changes. There are opportunities to volunteer with the ranger to work on scrub clearance as well as a monthly litter pick. She also disclosed that the finances of the Conservators were looking better this year and more money has been put into reserves, aided by S106 monies contributed by developers of the Ivy Farm estate opposite Therfield Heath.

Councillor Harrison reported that he had attended the HAPTC Executive Committee meeting on Zoom. He informed the council that NALC were looking to relocate to a smaller premises. He further informed that the partnership between HCC and

HAPTC was working well but they may sustain a small loss this financial year. He also notified that Christmas lights were discussed and HCC were asking for more rigorous checks to be carried out on the lights themselves.

Councillor Langdon left the meeting at 9:15pm.

369/23 CLERK'S REPORT:

The Town Clerk reported that the new license for the Town Hall has been agreed. This includes an alcohol license for the cinema and more days and extended times for when cinema screenings can take place. She also reported that the new noticeboards have been installed across the town with a copy of the noticeboards policy on each one of them to let the public know what they can and can't post. She encouraged councillors to let the Deputy Town Clerk know if they could volunteer to help with the May Fayre on Monday 1st May.

Date of next meeting: 15th May 2023.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.17pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____

Chairman