

MINUTES of the **ANNUAL MEETING of ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 15th May 2023.

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

In attendance: Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill
18 Members of the Public

Cate Hall from Trinity Life Church led the meeting in prayer.

The Town Mayor welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed those present that the meeting was being recorded and live streamed.

The Mayor thanked the people of Royston South Ward for electing her to her position and her fellow councillors for their support. She expressed her gratitude to the local community and businesses for their generosity in their donations to her chosen charities. Since her election as Mayor, she reported that she attended 85 official visits and raised £1562.50 which will be split between the Mayor's Community Trust Fund and Royston Make Lunch. The Mayor thanked the Town Clerk and her staff for all of their help during her tenure, in particular the Mayor's Secretary who she said had supported her greatly. She reported that she had enjoyed supporting local businesses and being able to encourage residents to shop locally. Finally, she thanked her consort, Dr Robin Antony as well as her family and friends for their unconditional support.

Councillor Harrison put on record his thanks to the Mayor and congratulated her on the good work she had undertaken during her time in office.

01/24 TO ELECT A TOWN MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Adams be appointed Town Mayor for the year 2023/2024. Councillor Adams put on the Chain of Office.

02/24 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:

Councillor Adams accepted the role of Town Mayor and promised to fulfil the role to the best of her judgement and ability. She said that it was a great honour to be given the opportunity to be Mayor this year as she had lived and worked in Royston all of her life. She looked forward to attending events and meeting with residents to discuss their concerns and listen to their issues regarding the town. The Mayor announced that her nominated charities would be Pathways to Learning and The Mayor's Community Trust Fund.

The Town Mayor then read out and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of office and took over the Chairmanship of the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council places on record their sincere appreciation of the service rendered to the Town by Councillor Mary Antony as Mayor of Royston for 2022-2023.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council is very mindful that Councillor Mary Antony has during the period fulfilled the duties of Town Mayor and has worked to further the interests of the inhabitants of the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to the above Resolution and that it be signed by the new Town Mayor and the Town Clerk, and then presented to Councillor Mary Antony.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Council places on record their sincere appreciation for the service rendered to the Town by Dr Robin Antony, her Consort, in support of the Town Mayor from 2022 to 2023.

03/24 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor John Rees be appointed Deputy Mayor for the ensuing year. The Deputy Town Mayor then read out and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of office.

04/24 BY-ELECTION 4th MAY 2023:

The Town Clerk announced the results of the South Ward by-election held on 4th May 2023. Elizabeth Freeman was duly elected and has completed her declaration of acceptance of office to become a councillor.

05/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillor Birch.

06/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS:

No declarations or requests for dispensations were received.

07/24 MINUTES OF LAST COUNCIL MEETING:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20th March 2023 (minutes 353/23 to 369/23).

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

08/24 STANDING ORDERS:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Standing Orders be approved and adopted into the workings of the Council.

09/24 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR:

It was **RESOLVED** that Haines Watts Chartered Accountants are re-appointed as the Internal Auditors for 2023-2024.

10/24 DELEGATION OF POWERS AND DUTIES:

It was **RESOLVED**:

- a) That the powers and duties of the Council in regard to: -
properties, insurance, civic functions, finance, accounts, Royston Market, Royston Cave, the cinema, 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 Chairman and Vice Chairman 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, sustainable travel, open spaces and climate 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 Purpose & Highways Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.

11/24 TO APPOINT STANDING COMMITTEES AND CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

- a) The Mayor proposed that the following Councillors be appointed to the Finance Committee: -
Councillor Compton (Chairman)
Councillor Haugh (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Adams
Councillor Antony
Councillor Brown
Councillor Harrison
Councillor Inwood
Councillor Jani
Councillor Rees
Councillor Squire-Smith
An amendment was proposed to appoint Councillor Squire-Smith as the Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.
The amendment was seconded but the motion was lost.
An amendment was proposed to remove Councillor Rees from the Finance Committee and replace him with Councillor Lockett. The amendment was seconded and duly carried.
It was **RESOLVED** that the following Councillors be appointed to the Finance Committee: -
Councillor Compton (Chairman)
Councillor Haugh (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Adams
Councillor Antony
Councillor Brown
Councillor Harrison
Councillor Inwood
Councillor Jani
Councillor Lockett
Councillor Squire-Smith
- b) It was **RESOLVED** that the following Councillors be appointed to the Planning Committee: -
Councillor Beardwell (Chairman)
Councillor Rees (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Adams

Councillor Birch
Councillor Freeman
Councillor Haugh
Councillor Jani
Councillor Langdon
Councillor Lockett
Councillor Squire-Smith

- c) It was **RESOLVED** that the following Councillors be appointed to the General Purpose and Highways Committee: -
Councillor Harrison (Chairman)
Councillor Langdon (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Antony
Councillor Beardwell
Councillor Birch
Councillor Brown
Councillor Compton
Councillor Freeman
Councillor Inwood
Councillor Rees

12/24 TO APPROVE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the Finance Committee (copy attached to minutes).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the Planning Committee (copy attached to minutes).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the General Purpose & Highways Committee (copy attached to minutes).

13/24 COMMUNICATIONS WORKING PARTY:

- 1) It was proposed that the following Members be appointed to serve on the Communications Working Party - Councillors Adams, Freeman, Haugh and Rees. Councillor Freeman was unwilling to be nominated and asked to be removed from the proposal.
It was proposed to nominate Councillor Inwood to the Communications Working party in Councillor Freeman's place.
The proposal was seconded and duly carried.
It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed to serve on the Communications Working Party: - Councillors Adams, Haugh, Inwood and Rees.
- 2) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference of the working party as –
 - a) The working party shall consist of four members of Royston Town Council.
 - b) The aim of the working party is to:
 - Consult a broad cross section of the public on the ways they would wish to receive information from the Town Council, making recommendations to the Council for further actions based on these, and carrying out any actions approved by Council in this regard.

- 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 and an RTC officer 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. In the event that the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from the councillors within their numbers.
 - g) Meetings will be called as necessary in order 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 and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
 - i) No budget has been allocated to the working party.

14/24 YOUTH COUNCIL WORKING PARTY:

- 1) It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed to the Youth Council Working Party: - Councillors Adams, Antony and Inwood.
- 2) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference of the working party as –
 - a) The working party shall consist of a minimum of 3 members of Royston Town Council.
 - b) The aim of the working party is to act as a steering group to set up and facilitate a Royston Youth Council. It must:
 - Actively recruit enthusiastic young people to work with while the initial work to set up the Youth Council is done.
 - Define the role of the Youth Council, set up a framework within which the Youth Council can operate, giving a clear idea of what they can and can’t do.
 - Ensure that correct procedures are implemented and seek external advice from appropriate organisations where necessary.
 - Ensure that all legal requirements are adhered to.
 - Decide the structure and recruitment procedures and draft a constitution for the Youth Council.
 - Elect a nominated adult champion to help lead and support the Youth Council.
 - Decide a mechanism to measure the success of young people’s involvement.
 - Put forward projects to help raise the profile and influence of the Youth Council.

- Ensure the group will be selected with sensitivity toward gender, race, and geographic area represented.
- c) The working party shall report to the Full Council.
- d) A minimum of three Members and an RTC officer will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- e) Non-members will 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. In the event that the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from the councillors within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary in order 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 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/Finance Committee and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.

15/24 DIVERSITY FORUM WORKING PARTY:

- 1) It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed to serve on the Diversity Forum Working Party: - Councillors Birch, Compton, Langdon and Lockett.
- 2) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference of the working party as –
 - a) The working party will contain four Members of Royston Town Council.
 - b) The aim of the working party is to allow better representation of the views of a more diverse section of the population of Royston and to feed back ideas to the Council. The membership of the forum should consist mostly of non-councillor representatives of black, Asian and minority ethnic origins, LGBTQ+ orientations, minority faith groups, young people and elderly people's groups, and groups for those with disabilities who live within Royston. Members of the working group can be invited to speak at Full Council meetings on topics being debated that are of interest to them.
 - c) The working party will report to Full Council.
 - d) A minimum of three people will constitute a quorum for meetings. This will include a minimum of two councillors.
 - e) Non-councillors can be invited to join the working party.
 - f) At the first meeting of the working party, members of the working party shall select 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 in order 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,

and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.

- i) Specifically, this committee has the delegated authority to:
To consider and investigate all matters relevant to Royston Town Council
and to provide feedback to the Town Council for consideration.

16/24 CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

The Town Clerk reported that there were currently two contracts with other local authorities:

- An agency agreement with North Herts Council for the Complex. Royston Town Council occupy and manage the property on behalf of NHC who own the building.
- A building compliance contract for the Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council continues with its current contracts with other Local Authorities of maintenance, utilities, and all other business areas as listed until such time the Council or Town Clerk wishes to change them.

17/24 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FOLLOWING BODIES FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed as representatives to outside bodies for the ensuing year:

- a) Friends of Royston & District Museum – Councillor Beardwell
- b) Royston Community Transport – Councillor Harrison
- c) Royston Coombes Community Association – Councillor Adams
- d) Royston Day Centre – Councillor Inwood
- e) Royston Army Cadet Force – Councillor Harrison
- f) Royston & District Scouts Council – Councillor Squire-Smith
- g) Royston & District Twinning Association – Councillor Adams
- h) Conservators of Therfield Heath – Councillor Brown
- i) Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire Homestart – Councillor Adams
- j) Royston Museum Trust CIO – Councillors Beardwell, Haugh and Rees
- k) Creative Royston – Councillor Antony
- l) Sustainable Travel Town Joint Member Group – Councillors Harrison and Rees
- m) Plastic Free Royston – Councillor Langdon
- n) Royston Girl Guiding – Councillor Squire-Smith
- o) Royston First BID – Councillor Antony

Members are to report back to the Council under the agenda item – Councillors as Representatives on External Organisations.

18/24 ASSET REGISTER:

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the Town Council's asset register.

19/24 SCHEDULE OF DEEDS AND TRUST:

Members **NOTED** the Schedule of Deeds and Trust Instruments held by Royston Town Council which are as follows:

- 1) Town Hall
- 2) 30 Kneesworth Street
- 3) Market Hill Rooms

- 4) Green Street Allotments
 - 5) Green Walk Plantation
 - 6) Stile Plantation
 - 7) War Memorial, Melbourn Street
 - 8) Royston Cave
 - 9) Market Place
- Counterpart Lease: 30 Kneesworth Street

20/24 COUNCIL'S COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Council's complaints procedure into the workings of the Town Council.

21/24 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY AND PUBLICATION SCHEME:

Members **RESOLVED** that the Freedom of Information Policy and Publication scheme are adopted into the workings of the Town Council.

22/24 DATA PROTECTION POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Data Protection Policy into the workings of the Town Council.

23/24 MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Council's Media Relations Policy into the workings of the Town Council.

24/24 INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2023-2024:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Council's Investment Strategy into the workings of the Town Council.

25/24 SCHEDULE OF FULL COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEES UP TO THE NEXT ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Schedule of Meetings for 2023-2024 into the workings of the Town Council.

The Town Mayor then announced that the next meeting of the Town Council would be held on Monday 19th June 2023 and closed the meeting at 8.25pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____