

**MINUTES** of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

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

**In attendance:** Town Clerk  
Deputy Town Clerk  
2 Members of the Public

John Fidler from the Royston Parish 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.

**57/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

A representative from Trinity Life Church addressed Members regarding their grant application for the Make Lunch project. She reported that Make Lunch was at capacity, but they were still receiving referrals from new families wanting to join every month. She explained that they were committed to growing the club to meet the increasing demand and to do this, they would look to increase the number of weekly sessions from 2 to 3. However, they will need to buy more provisions to support the extra sessions and consequently, need more funding. She thanked Members for allowing her the opportunity to speak.

**58/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies were received from Councillors Beardwell, Birch and Haugh.

**59/24 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.

The Chair brought forward agenda item 16, Community Grants Scheme, for discussion as the next item.

**60/24 COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME:**

Cllr Brown declared an interest in this item and left the room and took no part in the debate or vote.

An amendment was proposed to increase the grant given to Trinity Life Church for the Make Lunch project from £462.00 to £500.00. The amended proposal was seconded and duly carried.

Members **RESOLVED** to award a £500.00 grant to Trinity Life Church for the Royston Make Lunch project from the Community Grants Scheme.

**61/24 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The Mayor detailed the events and activities she had attended as Mayor since the last Full Council meeting:

- Curwens Art Gallery Open Evening
- French Twinning Civic Reception
- Melbourn Springs Care Home 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Celebration
- Royston Football Club Family Fun Day
- Royston Bowls Club Open Day
- Royston Radio Interview
- King James Pub's Opening Event
- A10 Annual Cycling Awareness Ride
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bloomsday Celebration
- 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of British Raj restaurant
- Flag Raising Ceremony for Armed Forces Day at County Hall in Hertford
- Royston market and small businesses visits on numerous occasions

The Mayor then detailed upcoming events that she would be attending before the next Full Council meeting:

- Bow Books - Bookshop Opening Event
- Hertfordshire County Scouts AGM with Deputy Mayor, Councillor John Rees.
- Buntingford Town Mayor's Civic Reception
- Roman Way School's Annual Summer Fayre
- Make Lunch Family Fun Day
- Royston Rotary Kite Festival

#### **62/24 MINUTES:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (minutes 01/24 to 25/24).

The minutes were signed by the Chair.

#### **63/24 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 Finance Committee held on:

- 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (minutes 370/23 to 378/23)
- 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (minutes 395/23 to 404/23)

b) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 (minutes 379/23 to 384/23)

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

- 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (minutes 385/23 to 394/23)

#### **64/24 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 Finance Committee held on:

- 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (minutes 26/24 to 42/24)

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

- 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (minutes 43/24 to 48/24)

c) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:

- 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (minutes 49/24 to 56/24)

Councillor Antony left the meeting at 7:53pm.

**65/24 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:**

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the notes of the Communications Working Party meetings held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023 into the workings of the council.

**66/24 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT:**

Councillors Compton, Harrison and Inwood placed on record their thanks to the Town Clerk and officers of Royston Town Council for their hard work in achieving a clean audit with no matters requiring attention and no issues arising giving cause for concern.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the internal audit report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 into the workings of the council.

**67/24 ACCOUNTS 2022-2023:**

Cllr Brown asked where she could locate the capital figure from the sale of cemetery land in the general fund balance. The Town Clerk advised that the figures were marked in page 2 of the supporting statement under movements of capital reserves.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and the supporting statement.

**68/24 ANNUAL RETURN 2022-2023:**

1. Members **RESOLVED** to agree the Annual Governance Statement 2022-2023 (section 1) of the Annual Return and approve it for signing by the Chairman and Clerk.
2. Members **RESOLVED** to agree the Accounting Statements 2022-2023 (section 2) of the Annual Return and approve it for signing by the Chairman.
3. Members **NOTED** the dates for the period for the exercise of public rights as Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 to Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023.

**69/24 ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023:**

Cllr Brown asked where the Annual Report was published.

The Town Clerk reported that it would be published on the Town Council's website and that hard copies would be available at the Town Council's reception on request. Hard copies were not distributed elsewhere to save resources in accordance with the council's climate emergency declaration. Cllr Inwood suggested that a QR code could be published to access the report.

Cllr Brown proposed several amendments to the Annual Report:

- a) To remove one instance of Cllr Beardwell's name as it had been duplicated in the councillors list.
- b) To add a sentence under the Allotment heading that states that the Town Council are "actively looking for a new allotment site".
- c) To add a sentence under the Picture Palace heading to say that both interim solutions and sustainable solutions for the cinema's future were being investigated.

- d) To add a sentence under the Mayor's Community Trust Fund heading to say that a donation was made towards the restoration of the Victoria Memorial on Therfield Heath.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Report for publication with the proposed amendments.

**70/24 PRAYERS AT FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the rota for prayers at Full Council meetings for the Civic year. The agreed rota was Royston Parish Church, Royston Evangelical Church and Trinity Life Church. In future years, it was agreed to ask all faith groups in Royston if they would like to lead the prayers at Full Council meetings.

**71/24 ROYSTON MUSEUM TRUST'S REPORT:**

The Museum Manager gave a report on activities at the museum since the Trust took over twelve months ago. On behalf of the Trust, he thanked the council for all their support. Councillors Inwood and Squire-Smith placed on record their thanks to the Museum Manager for all of his hard work in keeping a high standard at the Museum.

**72/24 MINUTES OF ROYSTON & DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION:**

Members received the minutes of the Royston & District Twinning Association meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 into the workings of the Council.

**73/24 ALLOTMENTS ON THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT AT LAND OFF BARKWAY ROAD AND NORTH OF FLINT HALL, ROYSTON:**

There was a lengthy discussion.

An amendment was proposed to request allocated car parking spaces for the allotment site and for guttering to be included on the sheds to help with rainwater harvesting.

The amendment was seconded and duly carried.

Members **RESOLVED** that the Town Council should agree to manage the proposed allotment site on the proposed new development at Land off Barkway Road and North of Flint Hall, Royston should planning permission be granted.

Members **RESOLVED** to request the following specific requirements to be provided by the developer for the site –

1. Secure perimeter fence with a lockable gate and access wide enough to allow deliveries of skips and other items.
2. A hedge planted around the fence for weather protection and to promote wildlife and biodiversity.
3. Small tool shed per plot including guttering for rainwater collection.
4. Water butt for each plot.
5. Topsoil for all plots.
6. Site shed large enough for shared tools e.g. mower and strimmer.
7. Composting toilet.
8. Two accessible plots with raised beds near to the entrance.
9. Allocated car parking spaces for the allotment site.

**74/24 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:**

Councillor Brown reported on the Conservators of Therfield Heath. Members were updated on the negotiations with the Rotary Club to keep the Kite Festival on the Heath and were also advised that the Conservators were investigating the purchase of larger dog fouling bins.

Councillor Inwood gave a report on the Royston Day Centre. He passed on their thanks for the subsidy that the council give them annually. He informed the council that they were always looking for volunteers to help with their activities. He also informed that they were happy to display any posters or leaflets for events that the Town Council were holding for senior residents.

**75/24 CLERK'S REPORT:**

The Town Clerk gave a report on electoral ward boundaries. She detailed that despite the Town Council objecting to a proposal that would create six Town Council wards in Royston, three of which would be single councillor wards, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had advised that they planned to proceed with their model and it was being presented to Parliament for approval. However, after contacting Sir Oliver Heald and North Herts Council for advice, she had been informed that before the next Town Council elections in 2026, North Herts Council will undertake a Community Governance Review to consult on the proposed changes. If support was forthcoming, the Town Council's proposal of fewer wards that aligned with the District Council's wards could be implemented.

The Town Clerk also reported that a new hearing loop funded by Section 106 money had been installed in the Heritage Hall and that the surrender of the lease at the Museum had been completed subject to registration at the Land Registry.

**76/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:**

Members **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, in the public interest, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting under the provision of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

**77/24 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:**

Members **RESOLVED** to award the contract to supply festive lights and decorations for 2023 to 2025 to Lite Ltd.

**78/24 ROYSTON PICTURE PALACE:**

Members **RESOLVED** to waive hall hire charges for cinema performances up until 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Date of next meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman

