

MINUTES of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSE & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE** held in Room 11 at the Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Monday 17th July 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor Harrison (Chair)
Councillors Antony, Brown, Freeman, Inwood and Rees
In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill

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.

101/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was none.

102/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Beardwell and Langdon.

103/24 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.

104/24 APPROVAL OF GENERAL PURPOSE & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the General Purpose & Highways Committee meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023 (minutes 43/24 to 48/24). The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

105/24 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

Members received the notes of the Climate and Biodiversity Working Party meeting held on 5th June 2023 into the workings of the Council.

Councillor Freeman advised that the Working Party had previously discussed having a bug hotel building session for children and she had discovered that the Community Garden would be holding such activities during the school holidays on 9th and 16th August and they would welcome councillors attending to help.

106/24 REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ROYSTON & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE:

County Councillor Hill gave a report updating the committee on road and path works in progress and scheduled for the near future, including new road markings to indicate no right turn from Market Link.

Councillor Inwood asked if the town sign located when entering Royston from the A505 could be replaced by the County Council as it was nearly illegible.

Councillor Hill agreed to pass this onto the Highways department at Hertfordshire County Council but stated that it wouldn't be a priority for them.

Councillor Brown informed the committee that she had been elected Chair of the Royston & District Area Forum which replaced the Royston & District Area Committee. The forum merged the format of the Town Talk with the committee. In the past the Area Committee would make decisions on grant applications, the members of the forum would now hear applications for grants and make recommendations on these to the Executive Member. She advised that North Herts Council was soon to establish a Community Wealth Fund which would be used to aid voluntary and non-profit organisations across the district that were eligible to apply. She mentioned that Royston Town Council had been allocated an amount from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for street furniture painting in Royston. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that this amount was £9780. Finally, she advised that the next area forum meeting would be focused on the waste contract renewal in 2025 and that there would be an officer attending from North Herts Council to speak about recycling and waste.

107/24 HERTFORDSHIRE'S RURAL ESTATE STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTATION:

Members **RESOLVED** to submit the following response:

Members broadly support the plan and found it to be clearly presented and informative.

The Council would rank the priorities as follows: 1) Strategic Development, 2) Environment, 3) Food production. The Council would urge that Hertfordshire County Council adhere to the strategic plan.

108/24 SOLAR PANELS:

Members discussed the report presented by the Deputy Town Clerk.

Councillor Brown agreed to investigate the issue of S106 monies further and report back on this at the next GP & Highways Committee meeting.

The Chair deferred the discussion of this item until the next meeting.

109/24 ACTIVE AND SAFER TRAVEL:

Members **RESOLVED** to agree to:

- a) Write to the schools asking what the barriers were to them offering the training and if any support could be offered to facilitate this.
- b) To promote the training on school visits taking place in the autumn term.

110/24 GTR PUBLIC CONSULTATION:

Members **RESOLVED** to submit the following response:

Members opposed the move away from a staffed ticket office to staff providing assistance on the concourse. Members maintained that this would lead to a poorer service especially for those that might struggle to use the ticket machines or locate the staff.

111/24 UPDATE FROM CHAIRMAN:

The Chair reported that he had been elected as the new Deputy Chairman for HAPTC. He also reported his attendance at the Hertfordshire Active Travel Forum. Finally, the Chair reported that a plaque dedicated to the late Councillor F John Smith had been fixed on the bench that the Town Council had installed on Melbourn Road near the entrance to the Twigden Estate.

112/24 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

There were none.

Date of next meeting: 16th October 2023.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.49pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____