

MINUTES of the meeting of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in Room 11 at the Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Monday 31st July 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor Haugh (Chair)
Councillors Adams, Antony, Brown, Harrison, and Lockett

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill
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.

The Chair moved the Public Participation session to item 3 on the agenda.

113/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors Compton, Jani, Inwood and Squire-Smith.

114/24 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.

115/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A member of the Royston Allotments and Gardens Association spoke about agenda item 7, Allotments on the Proposed New Development at Land Off Barkway Road and North of Flint Hall, Royston. She discussed the revisions that the Town Council had requested from the developer in relation to the proposed allotment site and made some suggestions to amend these in the interest of creating a better site.

The Chair moved agenda item 7 forward for discussion next.

116/24 ALLOTMENTS ON THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT AT LAND OFF BARKWAY ROAD AND NORTH OF FLINT HALL, ROYSTON:

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that since the last Full Council meeting, the developer had agreed to most of the Council's requests, except for the small tool shed per plot. They had also offered to enlarge the site to 0.8 hectares.

Councillor Brown proposed an amendment to also request from the developer; 4 Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBC) for next to the site tool shed; an agreement to protect the allotment site from contamination by building materials and waste during site construction; a 2-metre-high deer-proof fence surrounding the allotment site and 10 parking spaces. The request for extra topsoil could be removed.

The amendment was seconded and duly carried.

Members **RESOLVED** to agree that the Town Council would manage the proposed allotments on the site, on the terms of the amendment, should planning permission be granted.

117/24 APPROVAL OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Monday 26th June 2023 (minutes 79/24 to 93/24). The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

118/24 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

- a) Members received the notes of the Senior Committee Working Party meetings held on 14th June and 12th July 2023 into the workings of the council.
- b) Members received the notes of the Markets Advisory Sub-Committee meeting held on 22nd June 2023 into the working of the council.
- c) Members received the notes of the Cinema Working Party meetings held on 4th and 11th July 2023 into the workings of the council.
- d) Members received the notes of the Events Working Party meeting held on 3rd July 2023 into the workings of the council.

119/24 BANK RECONCILIATION AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:

- i) Members received and noted the Bank Reconciliation for June 2023. Councillor Brown enquired as to why the expenditure on the Market Hill Rooms boiler wasn't included in the Market Hill Rooms expenditure figure. The Deputy Town Clerk thought that these expenses were taken from a maintenance reserve but would check and confirm by email.
- ii) Members received and noted the June 2023 Income and Expenditure report compared against budgets for 2023-2024.

120/24 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the July 2023 accounts for payment and the transfers between the Town Council accounts.

121/24 SENIOR COMMITTEE WORKING PARTY:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Jani be appointed to the Senior Committee Working Party.

122/24 CAR PARKING CHARGES IN ROYSTON:

Councillor Brown declared an interest in this item.

Councillor Brown then exercised her councillor's right to speak and informed members of the reasoning behind North Herts Council's decision to increase the parking charges in Royston.

Councillor Brown then left the room for the duration of the debate and vote.

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

Members opposed the increase to parking charges as there are concerns about the effect they will have on local businesses in the town centre, and owners/workers that have no choice but to travel by car, especially those that live in the surrounding villages, in light of the cost-of-living crisis.

Councillor Brown then returned to the room for the remainder of the meeting.

123/24 SILVER SUNDAY 2023:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £450 for the Silver Sunday event to be held on 1st October 2023.

124/24 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Councillor Brown reported that the Conservators of Therfield Heath and Greens had held a public consultation meeting on the Heath Management Plan to improve and maintain the Site of Special Scientific Interest on the Heath.

She reported that they need to find £40,000 annually to fund the management plan and one of the options proposed for this has been the Rural Payments Agency. She informed members that there was a stakeholder meeting taking place on Thursday 21st September 2023 in the Town Hall and encouraged town councillors to attend.

Councillor Harrison reported that he had visited the Royston Army Cadets and had watched them undertake activities such as team building exercises.

As a member of the Cinema Working Party, Councillor Lockett reminded members to use the Royston Picture Palace if they wanted it to stay open as there were many blockbuster films being shown this month.

Date of next meeting: 25th September 2023.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.37pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____

DRAFT