

MINUTES of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 18th September 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor Rees (Deputy Mayor) in the Chair
Councillors Antony, Freeman, Harrison, Haugh, Jani, Langdon and Lockett

In attendance: Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill
5 Members of the Public

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.

138/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A representative from the Royston branch of the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) addressed the council via Zoom about their application for a community grant. She explained that NCT attended the May Fayre to promote awareness of the organisation and to provide a changing facility at the event in the absence of changing facilities in the centre of Royston. She reported that they had helped over 50 families at the May Fayre but their feeding and changing facilities for attending events were very limited and a community grant would allow them to purchase better equipment and reach out to vulnerable families in Royston. She thanked Members for allowing her the opportunity to speak.

A representative from the Royston Indian Society addressed the council on their application for a community grant. He spoke about their purpose and aims as a group to improve social integration for the Indian population in Royston as well as promoting charitable causes. He also mentioned the future events that the Indian Society had planned to showcase their culture to the community of Royston and how the community grant would help to fund these. He thanked Members for the chance to speak.

139/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillor Adams, Beardwell, Birch, Brown, Compton, Inwood and Squire-Smith.

140/24 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.

141/24 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There were none as the Mayor was not in attendance at the meeting.

142/24 MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19th June 2023 (minutes 57/24 to 78/24).

The minutes were signed by the Chair.

143/24 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:

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

- a) The meeting of the Finance Committee held on:
 - 26th June 2023 (minutes 79/24 to 93/24)
- b) The meetings of the Planning Committee held on:

- 3rd July 2023 (minutes 94/24 to 100/24)
- 7th August 2023 (minutes 125/24 to 130/34)

144/24 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:

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

- The meeting of the General Purpose & Highways Committee held on:
 - 17th July 2023 (minutes 101/24 to 112/24)
- The meeting of the Finance Committee held on:
 - 31st July 2023 (minutes 113/24 to 124/24)
- The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:
 - 4th September 2023 (minutes 131/24 to 137/24)

145/24 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

- Members received the notes of the Communications Working Party meetings held on 7th June, 21st July and 15th August 2023 into the workings of the council.
- Members received the notes of the Youth Council Working Party meetings held on 12th June, 17th July and 4th September 2023 into the workings of the council.

146/24 COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME APPLICATIONS:

- Members **RESOLVED** to award a £395.00 grant to the Royston and Villages branch of the National Childbirth Trust from the Community Grants Scheme.

Councillors Antony and Jani declared an interest in the next item, left the room and took no part in the debate or vote.

- Members **RESOLVED** to award a £450.00 grant to the Royston Indian Society from the Community Grants Scheme.

Councillors Antony and Jani returned to the room.

147/24 ROYSTON MUSEUM TRUST'S REPORT:

The Museum Manager gave a report on activities at the museum since the last Full Council meeting on 19th June 2023. He also mentioned future activities that the Museum Trust had planned, including a series of events at the upcoming Royston Arts Festival. He further reported that the Museum will be closed in October to renovate and restructure its facilities.

Additionally, he gave a report on the Cave and described that its annual visitor number records had been broken this year and that the outlook for the Cave continued to be very positive. On behalf of the Trust, he thanked the council for all their support.

Councillors Freeman and Langdon placed on record their thanks to the Museum Manager and congratulated him on the extensive progress made at both the Museum and the Cave.

148/24 EVENTS WORKING PARTY:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Freeman would be appointed to the Events Working Party.

149/24 COMMUNICATIONS POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Communications Policy into the workings of the council.

150/24 POLICY ON RESERVES AND BALANCES:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Policy on Reserves and Balances into the workings of the Council.

151/24 NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 2022-2023:

Councillor Harrison placed on record his thanks to the Town Clerk and her staff for their hard work to achieve an excellent audit result again this year.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept the audited annual return for 2022-2023 and the External Auditors' Report and Certificate into the workings of the Council.

There are no matters to report requiring any attention and no issues arising giving cause for concern. The annual return and notice of conclusion of audit have been published on the Town Council's notice board and the website as legally required.

152/24 COUNCILLORS' REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Councillor Harrison gave a report on a recent HAPTC meeting that he had attended. He reported that the discussions at the meeting were centred on HAPTC's finances, subscription and internal auditing services, the future for local council support services, staffing issues and recruitment, and the possibility of a merger with other county associations.

The Chair thanked Councillor Harrison for his comprehensive report.

153/24 CLERK'S REPORT:

The Town Clerk reported that the refurbishment of the kitchen at Market Hill Rooms had been finished and there was now a fully equipped kitchen complete with an oven for hirers to use.

She detailed that there would be two events for Remembrance this year, one on Saturday 11th November 2023 for wreath laying at the War Memorial and in Priory Memorial Gardens, and the other on Sunday 12th November 2023 with a parade. She reminded councillors that they were all invited to attend, and that more information would be sent out on both events in due course.

Date of next meeting: 15th January 2024.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date _____