

MINUTES of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in Room 11, Town Hall, Royston at 8.12pm on Monday 30th October 2023.

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

In attendance: Town Clerk
3 Members of the Public

196/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Three members of the public addressed the council regarding the future of Royston Picture Palace.

197/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Adams, Birch, Compton, Inwood and Langdon.

198/24 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.

199/24 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.

200/24 THE FUTURE OF ROYSTON PICTURE PALACE:

The Chair of the cinema working party explained in detail a proposal that had been received to run Royston Picture Palace.

There was a lengthy discussion.

Members supported the proposal in principle but were concerned about losing control of the Town Hall; guaranteeing that there would be weekend cinema showings; and protection for community hirers of the Town Hall.

The Chair advised that an agreement would be drawn up which would cover these areas.

The Town Clerk advised members that legal advice should be taken to ensure that the council completes due diligence on this matter. The council had not gone through a tendering process and had not released a Prior Information Notice which was agreed at a previous meeting. The council had to prove that it had received the best terms available and needs to consider whether they need to seek to obtain proposals from other operators

The Chair clarified that Members were not making a final decision at this stage but just deciding whether or not to continue discussions on the basis proposed.

Members **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Continue engaging with the proposer subject to agreement of the terms of the lease and legal agreement.
- b) Approve up to £5000 of expenditure on legal fees associated with setting up the lease for the town hall and any other legal agreement put in place regarding the running of the Picture Palace. Legal advice will also be taken on employment issues.
- c) Approve £1500 of expenditure to engage a surveyor to determine the market rental value of the town hall.

Date of next meeting: 18th January 2024

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.14pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date _____

DRAFT