

MINUTES of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 18th March 2024.

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

In attendance: Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill
2 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.

319/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A member of the public spoke in support of the Community Grant Scheme application from Royston Swimming Club. They explained that if granted, the funding would go towards the future entry fees for swimming galas. They thanked members for the opportunity to speak.

320/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillors Inwood and Squire-Smith.

321/24 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 item 8, Community Grant Scheme Applications for discussion as the next item.

322/24 COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME APPLICATIONS:

An amendment was proposed to increase the grant given to Royston Swimming Club from £100.00 to £190.00.

The amended proposal was seconded and duly carried.

Members **RESOLVED** to award a £190.00 grant to Royston Swimming Club from the Community Grants Scheme.

323/24 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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

- Visit to Collingwood Court
- Ceremony for Holocaust Memorial Day in Priory Memorial Gardens
- Visit to King James Academy
- Age UK Volunteers Day
- 10-year birthday celebrations for Royston Repair Café
- Neighbourhood Improvement Garden Opening

- Chair of North Herts Council's Civic Reception
- Royston Girl Guiding Spring Fayre
- New Chatty Café at Kooky Nohmad

The Mayor then informed members of her planned engagements until the end of her tenure and reported that she had attended 96 official engagements in her time of office so far.

324/24 MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 15th January 2024 (minutes 261/24 to 284/24).

325/24 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 meetings of the Planning Committee held on:
 - 8th January 2024 (minutes 255/24 to 260/24)
 - 5th February 2024 (minutes 285/24 to 291/24)

326/24 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:

- a) The meeting of the General Purpose and Highways Committee held on:
 - 19th February 2024 (minutes 292/24 to 300/24)
- b) The meeting of the Finance Committee held on:
 - 26th February 2024 (minutes 301/24 to 311/24)
- c) The meeting of the Planning Committee held on:
 - 4th March 2024 (minutes 312/24 to 318/24)

327/24 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

- a) Members received the notes of the Communications Working Party meeting held on 20th February 2024 into the workings of the council.
- b) Members received the notes of the Youth Council Working Party meeting held on 5th March 2024 into the workings of the council.

328/24 MEMBERS REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT CONTROLS:

- a) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Councillors' Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the system of Internal Control report.
- b) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Royston Town Council Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control report.
- c) Members **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the working party to agree the level of Fidelity Guarantee insurance of £1 million for the year 24-25.
- d) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Risk Management Assessment 2024 document.

329/24 CCTV POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the CCTV Policy into the workings of the Council.

330/24 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Environmental Policy into the workings of the Council.

331/24 MINUTES OF ROYSTON & DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION:

Members received the minutes of the Royston & District Twinning Association meetings held on 10th January and 7th February 2024 into the workings of the Council.

332/24 ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL 50th ANNIVERSARY EVENT:

- a) Members **RESOLVED** to agree to hold an event to celebrate the Town Council's 50th Anniversary in the Heritage Hall at Royston Town Hall on Saturday 8th June 2024.
- b) Members **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £200.00 for the event.

333/24 ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the official photograph and framing for the sum of £265.00.

334/24 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TRAFFIC SENSITIVE STREETS REVIEW:

Members **RESOLVED** to agree the Traffic Sensitive Streets Review proposal as it stood and not submit any comments or objections.

335/24 RESIDENTS' SURVEY – RELEASE OF RESULTS:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the publication of the results of the Residents' Survey via an additional page in the June edition of the Town Crier at a cost of £375.00.

336/24 ROYSTON MUSEUM TRUST'S REPORT:

Councillor Beardwell read out a report on behalf of the Museum Manager who gave her apologies for being unable to attend the meeting. The report detailed various updates including the renovations completed to the museum's upstairs community room, a grant awarded to the Museum from North Herts Council's Community Investment Fund and upcoming activities for the community.

337/24 COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME:

Councillor Brown proposed that an additional £5,000 was allocated to the Community Grants Scheme for the civic year 2024/25.

Cllr Harrison asked the Town Clerk how much had been spent out of the £5,000 allocated for the current civic year.

The Town Clerk confirmed that it was approximately £2,300 including tonight's expenditure.

Cllr Harrison suggested that the balance could be carried forward to the next civic year rather than adding £5,000 from reserves.

Cllr Rees could not see the justification for adding a further £5,000 when less than half of the current fund had been used.

Councillors Beardwell and Adams agreed that the balance from the current civic year could be carried forward and an additional amount of approximately £2,500 could be allocated to the Community Grants Scheme for the civic year 2024/25 to take the funding up to £10,000.

The original motion of an additional £5,000 was seconded but was defeated.

338/24 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

Councillor Harrison gave a report from the meeting between Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils and Hertfordshire County Council. His report to Members included updates on HCC who needed to find £500,000 in savings as increased funding had been allocated to highways for potholes and road surfaces, their aim to be net zero by 2050 and the need for councils to educate residents on the differences between levels of local government.

Councillor Brown reported that the Conservators of Therfield Heath were recruiting as both the former Clerk and Ranger had resigned. Their financial position for the financial year improved because of this and the increased funding from their application to the Countryside Stewardship Grant. This would go towards general maintenance on Therfield Heath but they were looking at car park improvements, waste bins and the renovation of the Heath Sports Club roof.

339/24 CLERK'S REPORT:

The Town Clerk reported that the gates at Market Hill Rooms had been replaced after a car crash had left them irreparable. She also informed members that the remainder of street furniture painting funded by the NHDC Shared Prosperity Fund would be taking place this week. Finally, she reminded all councillors that PERP, the pre-election period would begin on Friday 22nd March.

Date of next meeting: 20th May 2024

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.32pm.

Signed: _____

Chairman

Date _____