

MINUTES of the meeting of **ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Heritage Hall at the Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 20th May 2024.

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

In attendance: Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk
County Councillor Hill
District Councillor May
18 members of the public

Rev. John Fidler from St John's Parish Church led the meeting in prayer.

The Mayor welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed those present that the meeting was being recorded and live streamed.

The Mayor stated that as a woman raised in Royston, it had been an honour to hold her position for the last year and expressed gratitude towards everyone that had supported her during this time. She reported that she had raised £1092.24 which will be split between the Mayor's Community Trust Fund and her nominated charity, Pathways to Learning.

01/25 TO ELECT A TOWN MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Rees be appointed Town Mayor for the year 2024/2025. Councillor Rees put on the Chain of Office.

02/25 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:

The Town Mayor read out and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took over the Chairmanship of the meeting.

Councillor Rees accepted the role of Town Mayor and promised to fulfil the role to the best of his judgement and ability. He said that he felt honoured and privileged to be elected and thanked his predecessor, Councillor Adams, for all her hard work during her time as the Town Mayor. The Mayor announced that his consort would be his wife, Mrs Sheila Rees and that his nominated charity would be Homestart. He looked forward to working on behalf of the residents and stated that he would do the utmost to be involved with the community and businesses of Royston in his term of office.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council places on record their sincere appreciation of the service rendered to the Town by Councillor Lisa Adams as Mayor of Royston for 2023-2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council is very mindful that Councillor Lisa Adams has during the period fulfilled the duties of Town Mayor and has worked to further the interests of the inhabitants of the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to the above Resolution and that it be signed by the new Town Mayor and the Town Clerk, and then presented to Councillor Lisa Adams.

Councillor Harrison placed on record his congratulations to both the Mayor and the councillor that would be elected as Deputy Mayor and wished them both luck for the ensuing year.

03/25 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Luke Haugh be appointed Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year. The Deputy Town Mayor then read out and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of office.

04/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillor Birch (work commitments) and Councillor Compton (transport problems).

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the apologies from Councillors Birch and Compton on the grounds stated.

05/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS:

No declarations or requests for dispensations were received.

06/25 MINUTES OF LAST COUNCIL MEETING:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18th March 2024 (minutes 319/24 to 339/24).

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

07/25 STANDING ORDERS:

It was **RESOLVED** that the Standing Orders be approved and adopted into the workings of the Council.

08/25 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR:

It was **RESOLVED** that Haines Watts Chartered Accountants are re-appointed as the Internal Auditors for 2024-2025.

09/25 DELEGATION OF POWERS AND DUTIES:

It was **RESOLVED**:

- a) That the powers and duties of the Council in regard to: - properties, insurance, civic functions, finance, accounts, Royston Market, Royston Cave, the cinema, events, staffing, entertainment, subscriptions and co-operation with voluntary bodies and charities, (with the exception of the power to levy a precept or to approve capital expenditure or to authorise the raising of a loan) be delegated to the Finance Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.
- b) That the powers and duties of the Council in regard to: - matters under the Town and Country Planning Acts be delegated to the Planning Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate. That the Chair and Vice Chair and the Clerk be delegated to give a response to planning applications if there is a time constraint on the response required.
- c) That the considerations, powers and duties in regard to:- footpaths, street lighting, infrastructure, sustainable travel, open spaces and climate, biodiversity and environmental matters, together with the considerations in regard to Highways & Transport matters; and the delegation to make representation to the North Hertfordshire Council and Hertfordshire County Council, and such other bodies as they consider necessary, be delegated to the General Purposes & Highways

Committee; and that the Committee shall appoint Sub-Committees and Working Parties as appropriate.

10/25 TO APPOINT STANDING COMMITTEES AND CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

- a) The Mayor proposed that the following Councillors be appointed to the Finance Committee: -
Councillor Haugh (Chair)
Councillor Antony (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Adams
Councillor Freeman
Councillor Harrison
Councillor Inwood
Councillor Jani
Councillor Lockett
Councillor Rees
Councillor Squire-Smith

An amendment was proposed to remove Councillor Inwood from the Finance Committee and replace him with Councillor Brown. The amendment was seconded but the motion was lost.

An amendment was proposed to appoint Councillor Squire-Smith as the Vice-Chair for the ensuing year. The amendment was seconded but the motion was lost.

An amendment was proposed to remove Councillor Freeman from the Finance Committee and replace her with Councillor Brown. The amendment was seconded and duly carried.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Councillors be appointed to the Finance Committee:-

Councillor Haugh (Chair)
Councillor Antony (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Adams
Councillor Brown
Councillor Harrison
Councillor Inwood
Councillor Jani
Councillor Lockett
Councillor Rees
Councillor Squire-Smith

- b) The Mayor proposed that the following Councillors be appointed to the Planning Committee: -
Councillor Beardwell (Chair)

Councillor Langdon (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Adams
Councillor Birch
Councillor Compton
Councillor Freeman

Councillor Haugh
Councillor Jani
Councillor Lockett
Councillor Squire-Smith

An amendment was proposed to appoint Councillor Lockett as the Vice-Chair for the ensuing year. The amendment was seconded and duly carried.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Councillors be appointed to the Finance Committee:-

Councillor Beardwell (Chair)
Councillor Lockett (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Adams
Councillor Birch
Councillor Compton
Councillor Freeman
Councillor Haugh
Councillor Jani
Councillor Langdon
Councillor Squire-Smith

c) It was **RESOLVED** that the following Councillors be appointed to the General Purposes and Highways Committee: -

Councillor Harrison (Chair)
Councillor Rees (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Antony
Councillor Beardwell
Councillor Birch
Councillor Brown
Councillor Compton
Councillor Freeman
Councillor Inwood
Councillor Langdon

11/25 TO APPROVE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the Finance Committee (copy attached to minutes).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the Planning Committee (copy attached to minutes).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference for the General Purposes & Highways Committee (copy attached to minutes).

12/25 COMMUNICATIONS WORKING PARTY:

- 1) It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed to serve on the Communications Working Party: - Councillors Adams, Haugh, Inwood and Rees.
- 2) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the terms of reference of the working party as –
 - a) The working party shall consist of four members of Royston Town Council.
 - b) The aim of the working party is to:

- Draw up a communications strategy for the next 4 years to incorporate existing and new methods of communication for the Town Council with the public, for approval by the Council.
 - Within the context of the strategy, review the format and delivery mechanism of the “Town Crier” to recommend any possible changes to the Council.
 - Deal with all other relevant communications issues.
- c) The working party will report back to Full Council.
- d) A minimum of three Members will constitute a quorum for meetings.
- e) External individuals or groups who have expertise in communications methods and channels can be invited to join the working party.
- f) At the first meeting of the working party, members of the working party shall elect a Chair for the term. The Chair must be a member of Royston Town Council. In the event that the Chair retires mid-term they shall again elect a Chair from the councillors within their numbers.
- g) Meetings will be called as necessary in order to conduct current business as determined in the Terms of Reference and as instructed by the Council. As a ‘Working Party’, public notice of meetings or public admission to meetings is not required. Also full minutes of meetings are not required; however notes from meetings will be submitted to Full Council to be accepted into the workings of the Council.
- h) The Working Party may only use the resources as delegated by Full Council or the Finance Committee and has no mandate to make decisions on behalf of the Council.
- i) No budget has been allocated to the working party.

13/25 CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

The Town Clerk reported that there were currently two contracts with other local authorities:

- An agency agreement with North Herts Council for the Complex. Royston Town Council occupy and manage the property on behalf of NHC who own the building.
- A building compliance contract via North Herts Council for the Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council continues with its current contracts with other Local Authorities of maintenance, utilities, and all other business areas as listed until such time the Council or Town Clerk wishes to change them.

14/25 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FOLLOWING BODIES FOR THE ENSUING YEAR:

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed as representatives to outside bodies for the ensuing year:

- a) Royston Community Transport – Councillor Adams
- b) Royston Day Centre – Councillor Harrison
- c) Royston Army Cadet Force – Councillor Inwood
- d) Royston & District Scouts Council – Councillor Squire-Smith
- e) Royston & District Town Twinning Association – Councillor Rees
- f) Conservators of Therfield Heath – Councillor Brown

- g) Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire Homestart – Councillor Adams
- h) Royston Museum Trust CIO – Councillors Adams, Beardwell and Lockett
- i) Creative Royston – Councillor Antony
- j) Sustainable Travel Town Joint Member Group – Councillors Harrison and Rees
- k) Plastic Free Royston – Councillor Langdon
- l) Royston Girl Guiding – Councillor Squire-Smith
- m) Royston First BID – Councillor Rees

Members are to report back to the Council under the agenda item – Councillors as Representatives on External Organisations.

15/25 ASSET REGISTER:

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the Town Council’s asset register.

16/25 SCHEDULE OF DEEDS AND TRUST:

Members **NOTED** the Schedule of Deeds and Trust Instruments held by Royston Town Council which are as follows:

1. Town Hall
 2. 30 Kneesworth Street
 3. Market Hill Rooms
 4. Green Street Allotments
 5. Green Walk Plantation
 6. Stile Plantation
 7. War Memorial, Melbourn Street
 8. Royston Cave
 9. Market Place
- Counterpart Lease – 30 Kneesworth Street

17/25 COUNCIL’S COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Council’s complaints procedure into the workings of the Town Council.

18/25 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY AND PUBLICATION SCHEME:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Freedom of Information Policy and Publication scheme into the workings of the Town Council.

19/25 DATA PROTECTION POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Data Protection Policy into the workings of the Town Council.

20/25 MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Media Relations Policy into the workings of the Town Council.

21/25 SCHEDULE OF FULL COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEES UP TO THE NEXT ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING:

Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Schedule of Meetings for 2024-2025 into the workings of the Town Council.

22/25 HAPTC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the nomination of Councillor Harrison for election to the HAPTC Executive Committee.

The Town Mayor then announced that the next meeting of the Town Council would be held on Monday 17th June 2024 and closed the meeting at 8.08pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____