

MINUTES of the meeting of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in Room 11 at the Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Monday 30th September 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor Antony (Chair)
Councillors Adams, Brown, Harrison, Inwood, Jani, Lockett, Rees and Squire-Smith

In attendance: Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk
Town Councillors Beardwell and Freeman
District Councillor May
10 members of the public
1 member of the press

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 on behalf of the Council.

145/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A representative from CADS spoke about item 10, Royston Picture Palace Equipment. They detailed how the acquisition of the equipment would be of integral importance to make the Town Hall a multi-functional space not just for the cinema, but for other dance, music and theatre groups in and around Royston to use as a rehearsal and performance space too. They thanked members for the opportunity to speak.

A member of the public spoke about agenda items 9-12 regarding Royston Picture Palace. They explained how valuable and important the cinema was to the community of Royston both socially and economically and that if it was left disused, there would be a great impact on the town. They thanked members for their time.

146/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Councillor Haugh.

147/25 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.

148/25 APPROVAL OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Monday 29th July 2024 (minutes 108/25 to 117/25). The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

149/25 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTY MEETINGS:

- a) Members received the notes of the Markets Advisory Sub-committee meeting held on 18th July 2024 into the workings of the council.
- b) Members received the notes of the Cinema Working Party meeting held on 24th July 2024 into the workings of the council.
- c) Members received the notes of the Events Advisory Sub-committee meeting held on 13th August 2024 into the workings of the council.

- d) Members received the notes of the Cave Advisory Sub-committee held on 28th August 2024 into the workings of the council.
- e) Members received the notes of the Allotments Advisory Sub-committee meeting held on 10th September 2024 into the workings of the council.

150/25 BANK RECONCILIATION AND INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:

- 1) Members received and noted the Bank Reconciliations for July 2024 and August 2024.
- 2) Members received and noted the July 2024 and August 2024 Income and Expenditure reports compared against budgets for 2024-2025.

151/25 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the August and September 2024 accounts for payment and the transfers between the Town Council accounts.

152/25 BUDGET WORKING PARTY:

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillors Antony, Harrison, Haugh and Rees were appointed to the Budget Working Party.

153/25 GREEN STREET ALLOTMENTS:

- a) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Policy for Sharing and Succession of Allotments and the co-worker agreement.
- b) Members **RESOLVED** to approve the amended Tenancy Agreement.
- c) Members **RESOLVED** to approve an amnesty from 1st October 2024 to 31st December 2024 for current tenants to add a joint tenant to their agreement subject to the required proof of address and identity being submitted.

154/25 ROYSTON PICTURE PALACE WEBSITE:

There was a lengthy debate.

- a) Members **RESOLVED** to request the transfer of the Royston Picture Palace website domain name, Facebook account and Instagram account login details from Saffron Screen for a cost of £50.
- b) Members **RESOLVED** to retain the Royston Picture Palace website domain name at a cost of £9.49 per year.
- c) It was proposed to secure the services of the website creator to upgrade and manage the website for an annual cost of £200.

The proposal was seconded but the motion was lost.

155/25 ROYSTON PICTURE PALACE EQUIPMENT:

Councillor Rees declared an interest in this item and left the room and took no part in the debate or vote.

There was a lengthy discussion.

Members **RESOLVED** to instruct officers to investigate the possibility of securing the cinema equipment whether by outright purchase or a leasing arrangement, taking into account the current value, future costs and remedial works required.

A recorded vote was requested. Councillors Adams, Antony, Harrison, Inwood and Jani voted in favour of the proposal and Councillors Brown, Lockett and Squire-Smith abstained.

Councillor Rees returned to the room for the remainder of the meeting.

156/25 ROYSTON PICTURE PALACE MANAGER:

There was a lengthy debate.

Members **RESOLVED** to instruct officers to investigate the feasibility and costs to appoint a Cinema Manager.

A recorded vote was requested. Councillors Adams, Antony, Harrison, Inwood, Jani and Rees voted in favour of the proposal and Councillors Brown, Lockett and Squire-Smith abstained.

157/25 ROYSTON PICTURE PALACE LEGAL ADVICE:

It was proposed to:

- a) Grant permission for a summary of the legal advice to be released to non-Councillor members of the Cinema Working Party.
- b) Approve expenditure of up to £750 to pay for a summary of the legal advice to be provided.

The proposal was seconded but the motion was lost.

A recorded vote was requested. Councillors Brown, Lockett and Squire-Smith voted in favour of the proposal and Councillors Adams, Antony, Harrison, Inwood, Jani and Rees voted against the proposal.

158/25 STAFF MATTERS:

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the appointment of a part-time caretaker at a rate of £11.50 per hour for weekdays and £13.50 per hour for weekends.

159/25 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND AS REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS:

There were none.

Date of next meeting: 28th October 2024

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.24pm.

Signed: _____

Date _____