

ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Held on Thursday 13th March 2025

PRESENT:

Mayor of Royston and Town Councillor - John Rees (Chair)
Royston Town Councillors - Elizabeth Freeman, Liz Beardwell Ruth Brown Mike Harrison Stephen Lockett Luke Haugh Mary Anthony Bindi Jani
Hertfordshire County Councillors - Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis
District Councillors – Ruth Brown Bryony May Ruth Clifton
14 electors of the town

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting and advised that Mrs Jean Green would be taking the minutes.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Royston Town Councillors - Emma Squires Smith Lynsey Langdon
North Hertfordshire Councillor - Matt Barnes

2. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 14th March 2024 were approved as a correct record.

3. Annual Report from the Town Mayor Councillor John Rees:

Councillor Rees was happy to have served the community during the past year stating that it was a real privilege. He had opened new shops and a new Bus Shelter which had been installed, attended events in the Museum. Held events for the Mayors Charity including a Quiz, Carols and a Charity Dinner. Councillor Rees thanked his fellow Councillors for their support and hard work.

4. Presentation of the Mayors Community Service Awards:

Councillor Rees remarked upon the hard work that Members of the Community and Charities carried out within the Community with awards handed out as follows:

1st Graham Pfaff upon his retirement as Town Crier, which is a voluntary position.

2nd Claire Freeman for work Curating each week and The Gallery.

3rd Paul Bowes a Bookseller who opened a new bookshop within the town and helps children with encouragement for reading. Councillor Rees said that all residents should visit to see how good the shop was.

4th Linda Bance who set up Royston Singers over Covid.

Green Awards were handed to the Environmental Group Accepted by Carol Stanier and the ~~Royston Repair Café~~

5. Report from Hertfordshire County Councillor Fiona Hill

Councillor Hill's report is attached, covering the Financial Challenges, School Visits, Public Health – New Care Home, Footpaths, Planning Consultations, Parking and Safety on A505.

12 Mar 2026



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6. Report from Hertfordshire County Councillor Steve Jarvis

Councillor Jarvis commenced by stating that his report would have been pretty much the same as Councillor Hill, He touched on the cost of health per person, how costs keep going up but improvements are slight, disability, the continuing problem of people in hospital who should not be there, money for social care, children, education, SEN, the cost of road maintenance and improvements. He also reported upon the Government's desire to change the Local Government ie District and County Councils.

7. Report from District Councillor Ruth Brown

Councillor Brown's report is attached, covering the District Councils Budget, new Parking Machines, Royston Leisure Centre a proposed new Learner Pool has been shelved but solar panels are to be installed, the new Banking Hub, Royston Forum, rate rises, waste contract. A Community Governance Review will be looking at Boundaries and the number of Councillors. The Proposed Planning Development on land in Barkway Road.

8. Open Meeting – Questions from Electors to Town, District and County Councillors

The mayor informed everyone that it was now an open meeting where electors can ask questions to the Town, District and County Councillors.

Q Question about the war memorial lights. Although refurbished at a high cost, the lights still do not work. Some old equipment remains, dismay that this is the case.

A There had been a investigation but no complete answer as extensive roadworks necessary to connect power. There is commitment to maintain the War Memorial. Grants have been received in the past from Brian Racher Trust.

Q Where have staff at the Town Hall gone

A Two members of the staff have moved away, others left trying to recruit new staff at the present time.

Q When will the Cinema reopen if at all.

A Saffron Screen served notice in 2023 but Cinema kept on for an interim period. There is a Cinema Working Party which has come up against hurdles. A third party was found but backed out. Town Council have been frustrated by lack of communication in their endeavours.

Q Why is there only one litter bin on the new estate close to McDonald's and no bins on the new estate at the end of Garden Walk.

A The Estate Management Company should be asked as the estates including roads and footpaths are not adopted by Council until all building works are signed off satisfactorily. At that time the Council can be asked.