

**REPORT FROM FIONA HILL, COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR ROYSTON EAST AND ERMINE  
HIGHWAYS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – MONDAY, 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

**LIBRARIES**

The Summer Reading Challenge was a tremendous success with over 520 starters and 25 volunteers in Royston Library. All those who completed were awarded. Grateful thanks to everyone involved.

Royston Library continues to host the Police and Barclays Bank for drop-in sessions, together with a Lego Club, Robot Workshop, Code Club and Story Sessions, in addition to the regular activities that exist throughout the year.

**SCHOOLS/EDUCATION**

In September 2022, the Government passed a new policy that requires LA schools to help keep costs down by taking steps to remove unnecessary branded items and allow more high street options, such as supermarket own label uniforms. Schools have been reminded of this guidance.

Additional funding has been put into SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) to support EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans) and there is considerable work going into recruiting and training new staff.

The programme of combined school visits by Town, District and County Councillors has started again and we have visited King James Academy and Icknield Walk First School so far. Roman Way will receive a visit this week. County Councillors also visited Tannery Drift First School to discuss a specific project, with another democracy visit by councillors due soon. Other schools are also due to be visited in the programme.

I attended the Step2Skills Adult Learners' Awards Evening which highlighted the invaluable work conducted. To hear the stories of how the organisation has helped with confidence and self-esteem is humbling and shows that everyone has a chance in education and it is never too late.

**ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

As Chairman of the AFC, I attended the official opening of the Hitchin Army Reserve Centre on Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September and we held our Board meeting on Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> September.

It would be good to have more Town and Parish Councils signing up to the Covenant and we are encouraging this support.

The Christmas Card competition is taking place again this year and schools are being encouraged to participate.

## **HIGHWAYS/TRANSPORT**

The A505 safer crossing (bridge) proposal, which we have been working on for many years, was discussed at the GCP meeting at the end of September. The project remains live and hopeful of a positive outcome, with the next steps being the public consultation and planning processes.

The very unpopular proposal for a Cambridge Congestion Charge, which I have been objecting strongly to and lobbying against, was scrapped by the GCP and I hope will not appear back on the agenda. The impacts on so many individuals and businesses would have been huge if the scheme had proceeded.

There are changes proposed to the 26 bus route. I have sent a copy of the details to the Chairman, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

The next meeting of the Sustainable Travel Town meeting is on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> October.

The following schemes have been completed or are scheduled under HLB (Highways Locality Budget) and IWP (Integrated Work Programme) for 2023/2024:-

Serby Avenue and Studlands Rise VXO – resurfacing works – completed.

Serby Avenue – Footpath works – completed.

Speed Indicator Devices - Warranties extended.

Barkway Road – Siding out completed and Speed/Volume survey planned.

Burns Road – Near Coombes Community Centre/Hardy Drive – traffic scheme consultation.

All areas – road markings.

Resurfacing works due in Eliot Road, Grays Close, Masefield Way, Melbourn Road, Mill Road (completed) and Wordsworth Close.

Drainage works currently taking place in Kneesworth Street/Old North Road (9<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> October 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.) and due to be scheduled in Melbourn Road.

Lower King Street/Kneesworth Street – works being scheduled to repair the damage caused during the accident.

## **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

I have responded to several surveys/consultations including NHS Let's Talk, Family Centres, Services for Young People and the Planning Application for Felling of Trees on Baldock Road (Ivy Farm Development).

## **GENERAL**

The Annual Meeting of Town, Parish and Community Councils did not go ahead but there are plans to arrange another date.