

Report for Royston Town Council

GP & Highways committee

15th July 2024

North Herts Council Royston Area Forum

New administration

On 2nd May, 51 Councillors (up from 49) were elected in 25 newly created wards for a 4-year term. Labour gained 6 seats, Liberal Democrats gained 4 seats and Conservatives lost 8 seats, resulting in 25 Labour, 19 Liberal Democrats and 7 Conservative Councillors. North Herts Council therefore remains in 'No Overall Control' and as the largest group, Labour have formed a 'Minority Administration' with the Liberal Democrats as the official opposition.

The Royston Community Forum (formerly known as the Area Forum/District committee) now has 5 Liberal Democrats, 2 Labour and 1 Conservative members. Ruth Brown continues as Chair and Bryony May has been elected Vice Chair.

Community grants

Applications are invited from Town & Parish Councils, Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise organisations to the North Herts Prosperity Fund for between £5 and £20k. The total budget available is £210K with a prescribed 60/40 split for capital/revenue funding. The closing date is 1st September 2024 and grants must be spent by March 2025.

Banking Hub

Lloyds bank have postponed the closure of the Royston branch to September 2024 and Cash Access UK are still looking for suitable premises for a Banking Hub.

Health Care services in Royston

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough ICS had a second meeting with Royston Councillors on 8th July to discuss local services and representation of Royston residents. They are currently looking for a site in Royston to build a new Community Health Hub, with a number of options being considered.

Bus workshop

A follow up meeting was held on Monday 8th July to present the findings from the stakeholder workshop in March. No decisions have been made as yet and there were further discussions on pedestrian access to bus stops and town centre amenities.

*Ruth Brown Chair, Royston
Community Forum*

Royston Town Council

General Purposes and Highways Committee 15th July 2024

County Councillor's Report

Work is now underway in Baldock Road to complete the highways works associated with the Hedera Gardens development. This includes the construction of the second junction and completion of the foot and cycle way and the installation of streetlights and traffic islands. It is to be hoped that the work will be completed as planned on this occasion.

On 16th May the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board attended the Herts County Council Health Scrutiny Committee to report on health care in Royston, on the recent consultation and their plans for further consultations later in the year. The Health Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising the delivery of health care in Hertfordshire but since health care in Royston is delivered by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ICB rather than the Herts and West Essex ICB (which covers the rest of the county) this has in practice not been happening for some time. This democratic oversight of the local NHS is an important part of ensuring that services meet local needs so getting this in operation once again is a welcome development.

The impact of the decision by the council's administration to cut Locality Budgets by 50% is starting to have an impact - reducing the amounts that can be offered to local organisations. It is up to every County Councillor how they deal with this issue and I have taken the view that organisations who provide significant benefit to disadvantaged parts of the local community should continue to benefit from the Locality Budget but this does, unfortunately, mean that there is much less available for those other groups and organisations who have benefited in the past.

Steve Jarvis

County Councillor for Royston West & Rural

July 2024

ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL GP AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE - MONDAY 15TH JULY 2024

SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

I have visited schools in my division and discussed many topics, including the letter from Barley and Barkway First School Federation (Eco Council) to the previous Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs regarding our rivers and chalk streams. I am delighted to see the item on the RTC agenda and hope it will be supported.

SEND was on the agenda for the last Impact of Scrutiny Advisory Committee and it was agreed to continue monitoring closely and bring back to a future meeting for further review. The additional funding has enabled significant recruitment and ongoing training for existing staff to take place, which should alleviate pressure on staff and result in timely communication and support for children.

Step2Skills, the Adult Learning service, continues to offer invaluable courses so that everyone has the opportunity to succeed in education.

HEALTH

Healthcare, particularly timely GP appointments and accessibility to dentists are of concern nationally. The ICBs attended the Health Scrutiny meeting in May at Hertfordshire County Council and both issues were discussed, including the ambition for an integrated healthcare facility/diagnostic centre for Royston and the villages. There will be regular feedback going forward.

Hertfordshire County Council has been rated as good by the Care Quality Commission in how well it is meeting responsibilities to ensure people have access to adult social care and support.

BANKING HUB

There is still a commitment to provide a Banking Hub in Royston. If a permanent site cannot be found there will be a temporary hub sited in the interim. Potential sites are being investigated with the aim of being in operation towards the end of the year.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

I am delighted to see that Royston Town Council will be discussing signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant at this meeting and I will support in any way I can. I have attended D-Day events and the flag raising at County Hall for Armed Forces Week. I also attended the official celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the 398th Bombardment Group. Following my visit to The Mount Prison, I have been working with veterans regarding various housing and welfare issues.

LIBRARIES

Royston Library continues to host the Police and Barclays Bank for drop-in sessions. The Lego and Code Clubs, plus the new project, Page One have proved very successful. The ever-popular Summer Reading Challenge was launched on Saturday, 6th July.

HIGHWAYS/TRANSPORT

We have managed to obtain additional stops for the HertsLynx bus in the Ivy Farm estate on Hampshire Road.

The safer crossing project for a bridge over the A505 between Royston and Cambridgeshire remains positive and the annual A10 Awareness Event took place again on 9th June.

Consultation is taking place on proposed parking restrictions in York Way – on the agenda.

The following schemes have been completed recently or are scheduled under HLB (Highways Locality Budget) and IWP (Integrated Works Programme) for 2024/2025: -

The Traffic Scheme Consultation (speed mitigation proposals on Burns Road/Shakespeare junction) is proceeding to the next stage.

Melbourn Road - surface inlay works.

The tourist sign on the A505 has been replaced and the weight limit signs at the junction of Melbourn Road and Newmarket Road will be renewed. Foliage will be cut on the signs at the junction of the A505 and Newmarket Road.

A full list of potential road and pavement schemes to be programmed is available on the HCC website.

GENERAL/COMMUNITY ISSUES

Following the Active Travel workshop held in the Town Hall on 12th March, an update meeting has taken place. I am happy to provide further details at the RTC meeting and note that there is an item for buses on the agenda.

Similarly, the next Sustainable Travel Town meeting should have taken place by the RTC meeting and again I am happy to provide detailed information on the evening.

I attended the 50-year celebration event held by Royston Town Council, the Town Mayor's Thanksgiving Service and the Parish, Town and Community Council Conference held by Herts Sports Partnership.

I have approved a number of grants from this year's Locality Budget and a full list is available on the HCC website.

Fiona Hill

County Councillor for Royston East and Ermine

8th July 2024