**Royston Town Council Full Committee Meeting**

**Chief Officers Report**

**Submitted by:** Paul Arnill MBE – Chief Officer
**Meeting Date:** 22nd September 2025



**Royston Town Council**
**Title:** Chief Officers Report
**Submitted by:** Paul Arnill – Chief Officer
**Date:** 17th September 2025

**Chief Officer’s Report**

**Introduction**
This report provides members with an update on the Town Council’s financial account balances, staffing, administration, projects, training, and other key activities since the last meeting. The Council’s focus continues to be on strengthening internal systems, supporting staff, and delivering projects that enhance both the efficient operation of the Council and the wider community.

Councillors are respectfully reminded that, should they be unable to attend a committee meeting, the Chief Officer should be notified at the earliest opportunity.

**Account Balances**

RTC Current Account £349,489.45

Mayor’s Charity Trust £16,073.02

Business Account £23,121.06

The Leete (Deposit A/C) £10,046.98

War Memorial Fund £5,949.83

Treasury Account £648,329.85

Royston Cave Trust Fund £31,336.04

**Staffing**
Staffing remains a key priority, with a focus on recruitment and smooth transitions to maintain continuity of service.

* The Temporary Finance Officer has completed her handover to the new Finance Officer, who is already making excellent progress in bringing the Council’s finances and accounts back into order.
* A new Administrative Officer has been appointed and is settling in well to the role.
* CHRGS have been tasked with the recruitment of both the Deputy Chief Officer and the Caretaker positions. It is expected that both posts will be filled within the next 6–8 weeks following interviews to be held on the 8th, 9th and 10th of October.
* Following interviews, a new Town Crier has been appointed and is currently working alongside the outgoing Town Crier to ensure a smooth handover. I am also exploring the possibility of holding a civic event to mark this occasion.

**Administration Update**
Improving systems and processes continues to strengthen efficiency across the Council and support both officers and councillors in their roles.

* The introduction of the Microsoft shared calendar has synchronised committee meetings across the Council and will assist councillors in planning their individual diaries.
* Microsoft SharePoint has been successfully introduced, improving communication across the management team.
* A card reader has been installed at the Cave to automate payments. This has proved very popular and has contributed to an increase in takings.

**Projects and Initiatives**
Work is progressing on several operational and strategic projects that will improve service delivery, sustainability, and security.

* Discussions are ongoing with the Crown Commercial Service regarding the lease of a commercial EV.
* A key tracker system is being explored to improve the security and management of Council keys.
* The Council’s booking system is being reviewed, with plans to replace the current Avelon system with a more modern alternative.
* The SCG phone system is being replaced with a BT system and WiFi, delivering an annual saving of £296.64. Mobile phones have also been provided to key staff to enhance communication.
* Future ICT projects include the introduction of a firewall, the appointment of a Data Protection Officer from existing staff, and the implementation of two-factor authentication and enhanced password protection.

**Training**
Ensuring staff are fully trained and compliant with best practice remains a priority.

* Staff training is ongoing, with courses in First Aid, Manual Handling, and COSHH to be scheduled.

**Other Updates**
A number of wider projects and seasonal activities are also progressing well.

* A quotation for the trimming of the Plantation Trees will be presented to the Finance Committee.
* Preparations for the Christmas Lights are progressing well, with the switch-on event scheduled for 28th November.
* An update on the Cinema Feasibility Study is expected by the end of the month.

**In conclusion**

The Town Council continues to make steady progress across its financial management, staffing, and project delivery. Strengthening governance, supporting our teams, and ensuring services are delivered efficiently remain key priorities.

I would like to thank councillors and staff for their ongoing commitment and support, which enables the Council to meet its responsibilities effectively and continue serving the community of Royston.