

Royston Town Council meeting – Monday 18th March 2024

Agenda Item 9

Councillors' Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control – 5th February 2024

Present: Cllrs L Haugh, R Brown, M Antony (remote), Town Clerk - C Mills, Finance Officer – R Bartholomew

1. The following documents had been reviewed before the meeting:

- Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control - Jan 2024
- Banners Risk Assessment 2024
- Cave Risk Assessment 2024
- Council Offices Risk Assessment 2024
- Fire Risk Assessment 2024
- Market Hill Rooms Risk Assessment 2024
- Meeting the Standards
- Plantations Risk Assessment 2024
- RAGA Allotments Risk Assessment 2024
- Royston Town Council Risk Management Assessment - January 2024
- Royston Markets Risk Assessment 2024
- Royston Town Council Annual Audit Plan 2024 to 2025
- Town Hall Risk Assessment 2024
- War memorial Risk Assessment 2024

There was a discussion on the content of all the reviewed documents and a few clarifications and minor changes were added to highlight risks or services specifically.

2. Insurance policy

2.1 The current 3 year insurance contract with Zurich ends on 31 March 2025 which started 01 April 2022 and is still fit for purpose.

2.2 The level of Fidelity Guarantee insurance is currently £1 million, and this should continue for the coming year.

3. Recommendations to Royston Town Council at its meeting on 18th March 2024.

3.1 The Risk Management Assessment 2024 has been reviewed and it should be adopted into the workings of the council.

3.2 The annual review documents detailed above are adopted as a true statement of procedures undertaken by the Town Clerk and Town Council staff.

3.3 Based on a review of the above documentation and the continuing exemplary internal and external audits, the Councillors' review recommends that Royston Town Council consider that the internal audit procedures and controls at Royston Town Council are effective and meet its needs.

Cllr L Haugh

Royston Town Council

Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control

February 2024

Scope of Responsibility

The Accounts and Audit regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The authority needs to scrutinise the actions it has taken during the year, and the decisions it has made, and satisfy itself that it has acted properly within its powers and in accordance with any relevant Regulations.

Royston Town Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and includes arrangements for the management of risk. It falls on the Councillors to exercise a reasonable degree of control over financial matters. Particularly as, during the completion of the Annual Return, Councillors have agreed the following:

We acknowledge as the members of Royston Town Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements.

Internal Control Procedures

Cash Book/Bank Reconciliations

The cash book is kept electronically using SAGE software, and kept up to date from original documents – receipts, invoices, payments.

The cash book is reconciled to bank statements and a bank reconciliation is presented to monthly Finance committees for approval and signing by the Chairman.

The balances reported can be traced back to the expenditure approved in the previous meeting via the minutes.

The original bank statements are reviewed and signed by a member of the Town Council quarterly.

Standing Orders

The Town Council has adopted Standing Orders based on the NALC model. The Standing Orders are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary via approval by the Town Council. Standing Orders were updated in May 2023.

Financial Regulations

The Town Council has adopted Financial Regulations based on the NALC model. The regulations are reviewed for continued relevance and amended where necessary via approval by the Town Council. Financial Regulations were updated in May 2023.

A Responsible Financial Officer has been appointed and this was recorded in the Council minutes.

Clerk to the Council

The Council has appointed a CiLCA qualified Clerk to the Council.

The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Council also has a CiLCA qualified Deputy Town Clerk.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Order/Tender Control | Financial Regulations refer to procedures relating to tenders and orders. |
| Legal Power | A proper legal power is identified for each expenditure. The Council holds the General Power of Competence as resolved on 16 th May 2022. This was renewed and adopted after the ordinary elections in May 2022. |
| Payment Controls | <p>Delegated powers on expenditure are made to the Finance Committee at the first Full Council meeting of each year.</p> <p>All payments are reported to the Finance Committee monthly for approval via the accounts for payment included on the agenda. Two members of the council and the Town Clerk must sign every cheque or order for payment or authorise every online banking payment. Signatories are agreed annually by the Council.</p> <p>The signatories consider each cheque/payment against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil or the internet banking payment schedule.</p> <p>All authorised signatories are Members/Officers of the Council.</p> <p>An accounts for payment is attached to the minutes of the meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk/Finance Assistant maintain control of the cheque book at all times.</p> <p>The Council has a commitment to two loan repayments per year and this is included in the annual budget.</p> <p>The Clerk/Finance Assistant check adequate funds are held in the current account before payments are made on a monthly basis.</p> |
| VAT Reclaims | <p>The Clerk/Finance Assistant ensure that all invoices are addressed to the Town Council.</p> <p>The Clerk/Finance Assistant ensure that the correct amount of VAT is reclaimed/paid in the year. VAT is shown separately in the cash book and is reclaimed correctly on petty cash.</p> <p>VAT is reclaimed quarterly and the VAT return is prepared by the Finance Assistant and checked by the Town Clerk.</p> |
| Income Controls | All income is received and banked in the council's name in a timely manner and reported to the council. |
| Budgeting/Precept/Reserves | <p>The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves the level of precept for the following year at its January meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk requests the agreed precept from the precepting authority (NHC).</p> <p>The Clerk/Finance Assistant ensure that the amount of precept received is correct and received when due.</p> |

Income and expenditure reports are given to the Finance Committee monthly and significant variances are highlighted. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes of the meeting.

The Council has a reserves policy which was reviewed in September 2023. Reserves are assessed and agreed annually during the budget process.

Earmarked reserves are assessed and are agreed annually by the Council.

An investment strategy was agreed by Full Council on 15th January 2024.

Employees/Salaries

All employees are issued with a written statement of employment particulars at the start of their employment.

All contract details, pay and conditions are agreed by Finance Committee, minuted, and employees are paid by those decisions.

Where TUPE is applicable, proper procedures will be followed.

Salaries are processed electronically using SAGE software and the Town Clerk/Finance Assistant ensure that all RTI returns are made to HMRC as required.

PAYE and NI are paid as required.

Staff who meet the criteria are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme.

All staff are provided with training for their roles.

Risk Management

The Risk Management Assessment is reviewed annually as part of the annual review of effectiveness of internal audit. The Policy is submitted to Full Council for approval and this is minuted.

Separate risk assessments are carried out at least annually for all areas of council business.

Insurance cover is reviewed regularly for adequacy and updated when necessary.

The level of Fidelity Guarantee insurance is reviewed annually. The level was increased to £1 million from April 2022.

Asset Control

An asset register is maintained detailing all assets valued in excess of £100. The existence and condition of assets is checked, as a minimum on an annual basis.

Audits

Members carry out an annual review of the effectiveness of internal audit procedures. Findings are reported to Full Council and this is minuted.

Independent internal audit is carried out twice a year. The auditor provides a report to the Council on records, procedures, systems, internal control, regulations and risk management and will complete page 5 of the annual return. Reports are presented to Full Council and this is minuted.

The Council submits an annual return to the external auditor within permitted timescales. External audit results are submitted to Full Council and minuted.

Other Controls

Data Protection Registration is held.
Fidelity Guarantee insurance is held.
Electronic data backup arrangements are in place with cloud storage.
Bank balances and investments are checked to ensure their safety and performance.
An investment strategy is adopted annually.
The council is a member of NALC.
Pension III Health Liability insurance is held.

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. Risks should be identified, evaluated, prioritised and managed.

The Council will regularly review its systems and controls and will review its risk management policy annually.

Recommendation

That the Town Council consider this statement of the internal control procedures implemented to ensure that they are effective. This statement was reviewed during Members review of the internal effectiveness of audit controls held on 5th February 2024. The review recommends that Royston Town Council agrees that the internal audit procedures and controls at Royston Town Council are effective and meet its needs.

This statement of the effectiveness of internal control procedures was considered by Royston Town Council at its meeting on 18th March 2024 and was approved by the Council as a true statement of procedures undertaken by the Clerk/RFO/Finance Assistant and the internal control and audit procedures are effective and adequate.

Chairman

RFO/Clerk

Approved by Royston Town Council 18th March 2024 Minute number

ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL: RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT: January 2024

| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
|--------|---|-------|---|---|
| Assets | <p>Protection of physical assets owned by the council – buildings, furniture, equipment etc. (loss or damage).</p> <p>Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability).</p> | M | <p>Buildings insured. Value increased annually by RPI.</p> <p>Full Town Hall valuation done by NHDC March 2012.</p> <p>Valuation for reinstatement and insurance purposes done in March 2023 for Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms.</p> <p>Asset register kept and, where there is a change, updated for all assets. From 2013 minimum asset value for register £100.</p> | <p>Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.</p> <p>Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.</p> <p>Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management.</p> |
| Assets | The risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the council providing services or amenities to the public (public liability). | M | <p>Annual review of risk and the adequacy of cover.</p> <p>Public liability insurance held (£10m)</p> | |
| Assets | The risk of consequential loss of income or the need to provide essential services following critical damage, loss or non-performance by a third party (consequential loss). | L | <p>Ensuring the robustness of insurance providers.</p> <p>Full valuation of 30 Kneesworth Street done May 2022. Dilapidations report done May 2022.</p> <p>Reserves held in accordance with reserves policy.</p> <p>Loss of rent/income cover included in insurance.</p> | |

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Assets | Security of buildings, equipment etc. | M | Caretaker or responsible person checks security of Town Hall when hirers leave. CCTV installed at all entrances to the Town Hall. CCTV installed at Market Hill Rooms. CCTV notices displayed and policy held. | Compliance contract in place for Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms. |
| Assets | Maintenance of buildings etc. | L | Buildings currently maintained on a Maintenance Plan. Health & safety checks on equipment and buildings done monthly by contractor, any defaults are rectified. | |

| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
|-----------|--|-------|--|--|
| Liability | <p>Risk to third party, property or individuals.</p> <p>Ad hoc provision of amenities/facilities for events to local community groups</p> <p>Markets management</p> <p>Car Parks – Market Place & Angel Pavement management</p> <p>Professional services</p> | M | <p>Insurance in place. Cover £10m.</p> <p>Risk assessments on all properties carried out at a minimum yearly and updated as required/when necessary. Risk assessments of individual events such as Christmas lights and May Fayre carried out as necessary.</p> <p>Risk assessments reviewed annually.</p> <p>Car park surfaces checked twice weekly for defects & records kept.</p> <p>Contractors employed to put up Christmas lights and test fixings when installing them.</p> <p>Internal audit carried out by independent chartered accountants.</p> | <p>The Internal Control Review Team reviews all Risk Assessment documents and insurance schedules (on renewal) as part of their check on effectiveness.</p> <p>A report on the Effectiveness of the Internal Controls is then submitted to Full Council for adoption.</p> <p>Checked by internal auditor and confirmed as part of the annual return.</p> |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | Risk to staff, volunteers, hirers and members of the public – Pandemic (COVID-19) | | <p>COVID risk assessments carried out on all properties and continuously reviewed in line with current Government guidelines.</p> <p>Thorough cleaning schedule carried out by Caretaker/Cleaner and outside cleaning agency. Clear guidance given to hirers. Signage and social distance markers displayed.</p> <p>All properties closed when required by law.</p> <p>Work places assessed and certified as COVID safe.</p> | |
| Liability | Plantations management | | <p>Contractors maintain Stile and Green Walk plantations. Appropriate liability insurances held.</p> <p>Regular inspections undertaken and damage reported and safety work carried out as required.</p> <p>Tree maintenance policy in place.</p> | |
| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
| Employer Liability | Comply with Employment Law and regulations. | M | <p>Clerk is a member of SLCC.</p> <p>Employer Liability insurance in place (£10m).</p> <p>Pension Ill health liability insurance in place.</p> <p>Council is a member of NALC.</p> <p>Professional HR advice sought where necessary.</p> | |
| Employer Liability | Comply with Inland Revenue requirements | M | <p>Advice from IR and Sage when required.</p> <p>Internal auditor checks books 6 monthly and external auditors carry out annual audit.</p> <p>VAT advice received from an independent advisor.</p> | Internal auditor checks compliance. |

| Employer Liability | Safety of Staff and Visitors | M | <p>General risk assessment checks of all properties and office working conditions as required.</p> <p>COVID-19 risk assessments carried out and reviewed on a continuous basis, in line with recommendations.</p> <p>Health and Safety Policy in place – updated as required.</p> <p>Health and Safety posters displayed in all properties</p> <p>Signing in/out book in operation.</p> <p>Equipment provided as required for all staff.</p> <p>Employee Assistance Programme available to employees enrolled in the pension fund.</p> <p>Regular fire alarm testing and drills. All employees attend fire marshal and first aid training.</p> <p>All appliances PAT tested.</p> <p>Adoption of codes of conduct for members (2021) and an employee handbook.</p> <p>CCTV installed at all entrances to the Town Hall and the main entrance at Market Hill Rooms.</p> <p>CCTV notices displayed. CCTV policy adopted.</p> <p>Cover for key tasks will be provided by other staff members where possible.</p> | |
|--------------------|---|-------|--|---|
| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
| Legal Liability | Proper and timely reporting via the Minutes | M | <p>Council receives and approves Minutes of meetings held.</p> <p>Minutes made available to press and public at the Town Hall and on the council website. Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public.</p> | Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are available, and the basis of the powers recorded and correctly applied. |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--|--------------|--|---------------------------------|
| | | | <p>Accessible website in place, with clear accessibility statement.</p> <p>Responding to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection.</p> <p>Minutes properly numbered and paginated. From April 2010 copy of all minutes kept electronically.</p> | |
| Legal Liability | Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to local councils. | M | <p>Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitations.</p> <p>Ensure Council has the power to act. General Power of Competence adopted on 16th May 2022 following ordinary elections.</p> <p>Independent legal advice taken where necessary.</p> | |
| Legal Liability | Proper document control | M | <p>Original leases and Deeds stored in fireproof safe in main office.</p> <p>Documented procedures for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing.</p> <p>Disposal of confidential documents – shredded. Shredding facility available to Councillors for confidential information.</p> <p>Document Retention Policy in place (updated 2021).</p> | |
| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
| Data Protection | Computer | M | Backups done daily, cloud storage in operation. | |
| Data Protection | <p>Loss or theft of personal data</p> <p>GDPR</p> | M | <p>The Town Council is registered with the Information Commissioner.</p> <p>A data protection audit has been carried out and all findings were addressed.</p> | |

| | | | <p>Policies for data protection, document retention, freedom of information and a privacy notice have been adopted and published.</p> <p>Annual subscription to Council Hive Pro for advice and latest information on GDPR regulations. Officers have undertaken GDPR on-line training.</p> | |
|---------|---|-------------------|---|--|
| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
| Finance | <p>Responsible Finance Officer</p> <p>Banking</p> <p>Payroll</p> <p>Ensuring all requirements are met under HM Revenue and Customs Notices and regulations (Income Tax and National Insurance).</p> | <p>L</p> <p>M</p> | <p>RFO appointed and recorded in minutes.</p> <p>Investments with Barclays Bank and the Public Sector Deposit Fund. Bank transfers authorised by Town Clerk between RTC accounts only.</p> <p>Investment policy adopted and published.</p> <p>Online banking controlled with different inputter and authoriser and a third party check being carried out.</p> <p>Salaries calculated by Finance Assistant and checked/signed by Town Clerk. BACS payment monthly limit set with bank. Verification received from bank within 2 days and checked by Town Clerk. RTI for salaries in place from Nov 2012.</p> <p>Regular returns to HM Revenue & Customs; contracts of employment for all staff, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation.</p> | <p>Banking reviewed annually by Councillors.</p> <p>Bank signatories appointed annually.</p> <p>Salaries approved annually by council.</p> |
| Finance | Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty (fidelity guarantee) | L | All cash monies received are receipted and invoices marked paid. Petty cash balanced monthly. Market takings banked weekly, or when amount held is above £1,000. | Review and testing of arrangements by auditor to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. |

| | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | Insurance cover review ensures adequacy of Fidelity Guarantee insurance. Cover £1,000,000. | Checked by internal auditor and reviewed by Councillors annually at the Annual Audit Review. |
| Finance | Catastrophic Bank failure | L | Banking arrangements reviewed. Reserves invested between two banks. Investment policy adopted and published. | |
| Finance | Financial controls and records | L | <p>Monthly reconciliation prepared by Finance Assistant and checked by TC and reported to Finance Committee/Full Council.</p> <p>Invoices initialled when cheques are signed by Councillors or online banking payments are authorised.</p> <p>Three signatories on cheques required and three signatories to input and authorise online banking transactions. Authorised signatories confirmed annually and recorded in minutes.</p> <p>Internal Auditor visits and checks 6 monthly.</p> <p>External Audit year-end accounts.</p> <p>Standing orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts for services or the purchase of capital equipment. Reviewed annually.</p> <p>Annual review of contracts.</p> <p>Reporting on performance by suppliers/providers/contractors as required.</p> <p>Monthly scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for approval of expenditure.</p> <p>Adoption of and adherence to codes of practice for procurement and investment.</p> | <p>Review of internal controls in place and their documentation. Review undertaken by councillors and reported to Full Council.</p> <p>Internal Auditor - Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to Full Council.</p> <p>Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions.</p> <p>Payroll checked.</p> <p>Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers.</p> <p>Debtor and creditor turn checked.</p> |

| | | | | |
|---------|---|-------------------|---|--|
| | | | <p>Clear statements of management responsibility for each service. Developing systems of performance measurement to scrutinise performance against targets.</p> <p>Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption.</p> <p>Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements.</p> | Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. |
| Finance | | | <p>Ensuring the proper use of funds granted to local community bodies under specific powers or under The General Power of Competence as adopted by Council on 16th May 2022, minute number 18/23.</p> <p>Instant Accounts & Payroll – password protected.</p> <p>Daily and weekly backups taken.</p> <p>Cloud storage being used.</p> | |
| Finance | <p>Comply with Customs and Excise</p> <p>Regulations</p> | L | <p>Use help line when necessary. VAT payments and claims calculated by Finance Assistant and checked by Town Clerk. Submitted via accounts package through Government Gateway in accordance with Making Tax Digital requirements. Processed quarterly.</p> <p>Training for the Responsible Financial Officer and Finance Assistant in matters of VAT and other taxation issues as necessary. VAT advice sought from an independent advisor.</p> | |
| Finance | <p>Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept</p> <p>Adequacy of Reserves – General & Earmarked</p> | <p>M</p> <p>L</p> | <p>Income and Expenditure against budget reported to Finance Committee monthly.</p> <p>Considered at review of final accounts and budget setting.</p> <p>Budget Working Party review draft Budget for following year.</p> | Budget reviewed by internal auditor. |

| | | | | |
|----------------|--|---------------------|---|--|
| | | | Reserves policy held – revised September 2023 Finance Committee receive detailed draft budget in the late autumn. To discuss and amend. Annual Precept derived directly from this. Presented to Full Council Dec/Jan for approval. | |
| Finance | Complying with borrowing restrictions | L | Public Works Loan Board facility agreed for the purchase of the Market Place - £300,000. Repayments included in annual budget. | Loan taken out on the 24.7.14 for a period of 25 years. |
| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
| Continuity | Staff- Loss of key personnel (Clerk) Other employed staff Town Councillors | L L L | Hours, health, stress, training, long term sick, early departure – risk monitored and managed as appropriate. Pension Ill Health Liability Insurance in place. Deputy Town Clerk now CiLCA qualified. Training and supervision monitored. 1 new councillor elected in by-election 4 th May 2023 All new councillors offered training, on a regular basis. | Councillor training has been arranged for new councillors. |
| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
| External Areas | Monitoring of performance against agreed standards under partnership agreements | L | Annex (Complex) contract with NHC. | Changes reported to Finance Committee. |

| Area | Risk | Level | Internal Controls (<i>bold indicates areas where work is needed</i>) | Internal Audit Assurance |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Councillors propriety | Registers of Interests and gifts and hospitality in place | H | <p>All elected Councillors signed up to the Code of Conduct. Subsequent co-opted or elected councillors will also sign the code of conduct. Code of conduct updated June 2021.</p> <p>Register of interests complete, accurate and up to-date.</p> <p>Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' interests and Gifts and Hospitality received.</p> | Interests displayed on the NHC website and links provided on the RTC website. |
| | | Next Review date: January 2025 | | |
| | | <p>Reviewed by Internal Audit team: 5th February 2024</p> <p>Adopted by Full Council Date: 18th March 2024 (minute no /)</p> <p>Chairman: Cllr L Adams Signed:</p> | | |

Agenda Item 10



Royston Town Council

CCTV Policy

Adopted by Full Council 3rd September 2018 **Minute number 151/19**
Reviewed and adopted by Council 26th April 2021 **Minute number 218/21**
Reviewed and adopted by Council 18th March 2024 **Minute number XX/24**
Review date March 2027

1. Introduction

This policy is to control the management, operation, use and confidentiality of the CCTV systems located at Royston Town Hall, Council offices and Market Hill Rooms. The sites are owned or managed by Royston Town Council.

This policy was prepared after taking due account of the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. This policy will be subject to periodic review by the Council to ensure that it continues to reflect the public interest and that it and the system meets all legislative requirements.

2. Statement of Purpose

To provide a safe and secure environment for the benefit of those who might visit, work or live in the area. The system will not be used to invade the privacy of any individual, except when carried out in accordance with the law. The scheme will be used for the following purposes:

- to reduce the fear of crime by persons using facilities at Royston Town Hall, Market Hill Rooms and Council offices, so they can enter and leave the buildings and facilities without fear of intimidation by individuals or groups;
- to reduce the vandalism of property and to prevent, deter and detect crime, disorder or fraudulent practices;
- to assist the police, the Council and other Law Enforcement Agencies with identification, detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders by examining and using retrievable evidence relating to crime, public order or contravention of bye-laws;
- to deter potential offenders by publicly displaying the existence of CCTV, having cameras clearly sited that are not hidden and signs on display in areas being monitored;
- to assist all “emergency services” to carry out their lawful duties.

3. Changes to the Purpose or Policy

The CCTV Policy will be discussed at Full Council meetings and any major change that would have a significant impact on either the purpose of this policy or operation of the CCTV scheme will take place only after discussion and resolution at a Full Council meeting.

4. Responsibilities of the Owner of the Scheme

Royston Town Council retains overall responsibility for the scheme.

CCTV Code of Practice

1. Management of the System

Day to day operational responsibility rests with the Town Clerk for the Town Hall, Council offices and Market Hill Rooms.

Breaches of this policy will be investigated by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk and reported to the Council.

A CCTV system prevents crime largely by increasing the risk of detection and prosecution of an offender. Any relevant tape or digital evidence must be in an acceptable format for use at Court hearings. This policy must be read and understood by all persons involved in this scheme and individual copies of this policy will therefore be issued for retention. A copy will also be available for reference in the secure recording areas.

2. Control and Operation of the Cameras, Monitors and Systems

The following points must be understood and strictly observed by operators:

a) Trained operators must act with integrity and not abuse the equipment or change the pre-set criteria to compromise the privacy of an individual.

b) No public access will be allowed to the monitors except for lawful, proper and sufficient reason, with prior approval by the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk. The Police are permitted access to tapes and prints if they have reason to believe that such access is necessary to investigate, detect or prevent crime. The Police are permitted to visit Royston Town Council to review and confirm the Council's operation of CCTV by arrangement. Any visit or other request by the Police to view images will be logged by the operator.

c) Operators should regularly check the accuracy of the date/time displayed.

d) Storage and Retention of Images

Digital records should be securely stored to comply with data protection and should only be handled by the essential minimum number of persons. Digital images will be erased after a period of 3 calendar months unless subject to an ongoing request for information, in which case any images the Council hold will be erased once any such request has been satisfied.

e) Images will not normally be supplied to the media, except on the advice of the police if it is deemed to be in the public interest. The Town Clerk would inform the Chairman of the Council of any such emergency.

f) As records may be required as evidence at Court, each person handling a digital record may be required to make a statement to a police officer and sign an exhibit label. Any images that are handed to a police officer should be signed for by the police officer and information logged to identify the recording, and showing the officer's name and police station. The log should also show when such information is returned to the Council by the police and the outcome of its use.

g) Any event that requires checking of recorded data should be clearly detailed in the log of incidents (Appendix A), including Crime Numbers if appropriate.

h) Any damage to equipment or malfunction discovered by an operator should be reported immediately to the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk and recorded in the log. When a repair has been made, this should also be logged showing the date and time of completion.

i) Subject Access Requests

Any request by an individual member of the public for access to their own recorded image must be made on an Access Request Form (appendix B) and may be subject to a fee. Forms are available by contacting the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk and will be submitted to the next meeting of the Council for consideration and reply, normally within three calendar months in line with the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018.

3. Accountability

Copies of the CCTV Policy are available in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, as will any reports that are submitted to the Council providing it does not breach security needs.

The Police have been informed of the installation and will be provided with a copy of this CCTV Policy upon request.

Any written concerns or complaints regarding the use of the system will be considered by the Council, in line with the existing complaints procedure.

4. Status

Royston Town Council has considered the need for using CCTV and has resolved that it is required for the prevention and detection of crime and for protecting the safety of members of the public. It will not be used for other purposes.

This policy was adopted by Royston Town Council at the Full Council meeting on 18th March 2024.

Review date: March 2027

THIS POLICY MUST BE COMPLIED WITH AT ALL TIMES.

Log of CCTV incidents

| Details of Offence | Date & Time Committed | Location | Name/Address of any Witnesses | Action taken (including Crime Ref. No.) | Reported by | Date/Time | CCTV Checked by/Result/Action |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|---|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

ACCESS REQUEST FORM – CCTV IMAGES

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Date of Recording: | | Place of Recording: | | Time of Recording: | |
| Applicants Name and Address | | Description of Applicant and any distinguishing features (e.g. clothing) | | | |
| Post Code: | | A recent photograph may be necessary to aid identification | | | |
| Tel.No: | | | | | |
| Signature of Applicant | | | | | |
| (or parent/guardian if under 18) | | | | | |
| Reason for request - to be submitted to the Town Council | | | | | |
| Continue overleaf if necessary | | | | | |
| Received by: | | Clerk's Signature: | | Date Received: | |
| | | | | | |
| Time Received: | | Request Approved: | | Date Applicant Informed | |
| | | YES/NO | | | |
| Fee Charged / N.A. | | Fee Paid: | | | |
| | | | | | |

Agenda item 11

Royston Town Council

Environmental Policy

Adopted by Full Council 18th March 2024 - Minute number:

Review date: March 2026 or earlier if legislation dictates

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the impact that Royston Town Council (RTC) has on our environment and to ensure that the council acts as an example of good practice within our local community and in accordance with its declaration of a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency at the Full Council meeting on 20th June 2022.

For anyone requiring further detail, examples are in the appendices to this policy.

Objectives:

- To protect, enhance and make a positive contribution to, the local and global environment.
- To build environmental considerations and sustainability into RTC policies.
- To minimise environmental pollution and waste in RTC activities and encourage the conservation, re-use and recycling of resources.
- To carry out an annual audit to measure progress against the objectives in this policy and report this to the Annual Town Meeting and in the Annual Report.
- Bring this Environmental Policy Statement to the attention of all stakeholders.
- Communicate goals and inform residents of ways they can reduce their carbon emissions via the Town Council website.

Climate Change Action

To make all reasonable efforts to reduce carbon emissions from the council, with the working party to investigate the feasibility of the Council being net zero by 2030.

To educate and lobby for a net zero town by 2040, in line with aims set out by North Herts Council in 2019, and to work with other councils and local businesses to achieve this.

- RTC is committed to responsible energy management (see Appendix 1 for examples).
- RTC will promote the awareness of Climate Change issues within the community.
- RTC will encourage and, where possible, support allotment holders in reducing water use.
- Water use reduction and recycling methods will be considered in all other areas.
- Environmental impact will always be considered in the use of cleaning materials and paints (Appendix 2).
- When considering office related expenditure, impact on the environment will be the primary driver in decision making (Appendix 3).
- RTC will endeavour to buy locally, where requirements for value and quality are met, to support the local economy and reduce environmental impact.
- For the proven capture of CO₂, RTC should at every opportunity promote the planting of trees and plant trees itself where appropriate.
- Continue to work to become a Sustainable Travel Town (Appendix 4).
- Reduce the use of single-use plastic (Appendix 5).

Appendices

The following appendices contain examples for guidance and should not be considered exhaustive.

Appendix 1 – Energy efficiency

- Continue to use 100% renewable energy suppliers.
- Recommend energy conservation technology where applicable, including low energy light bulbs, low water use toilets.
- Staff, visitors and hirers to be made aware of relevant parts of the RTC environmental policy at time of booking.
- Where opportunity arises in the future, the viability of installing renewable energy generation/storage on council-owned and occupied properties should be considered.

Appendix 2 – Cleaning materials and paints

- Cleaning fluids, polishes and glues etc. should be as environmentally least damaging as possible.
- A review of the cleaning materials used should be carried out on a regular basis.
- Paints will be water-based where possible.
- Options to be considered include recyclable or refillable containers.

Appendix 3 – Office equipment

- RTC will consider the environmental impact of disposing of end-of-life office and other equipment.
- Paper use will be minimised in the office and for council meetings. Recycled paper to be considered when purchasing.
- In future, all meetings including council meetings will seek to reduce paperwork, by providing downloadable and/or visually presented alternatives where possible.
- Minimise material consumption (and consider the lifecycle impact of any purchase)

Appendix 4 – Transport

- Promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking through becoming a Sustainable Travel Town
- Consider Electric Vehicle charging provision in planning applications.

Appendix 5 – Single-use plastic

- RTC has purchased reusable cups for use at its events and for loaning to other community organisations to use at their events.
- Reduce the use of single-use plastic in properties by supplying a good range of reusable crockery and cutlery.
- If single-use items are purchased, they should be fully recyclable.

Other relevant policy: Biodiversity policy.

Agenda Item 13 - Proposal for 50-Year RTC Anniversary Event

The Events Working Party have been discussing how to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Royston Town Council. After much discussion and considering a range of options, the Working Party have drawn up the following proposals.

- A special event to be held at the Town Hall on Saturday 8 June 2024 with a display around the hall of old photographs, mostly from 1974. There would also be music from 1974 playing in the background, supplied by members of the Events Working Party.
- The event would be open to the public from 10am to 1pm. Tea, Coffee and biscuits would be served
- On the same day, from 2pm to 4pm there would be a similar event for former Mayors, Councillors and Staff dating back to 1974.
- Again, similar refreshments would be made available, plus a celebratory cake
- Volunteers would be sought to assist with various tasks on the day
- Royston Museum have expressed an interest in attending with artifacts from the period

Estimated costs of the event:

Tea/Coffee £15.00

Milk £10.00

Biscuits and small cakes £25.00

Celebratory Cake (16") plus 4" gluten free option £85.00

Stationery items for displaying old pictures £40.00

The Council are asked to agree:

1 – To hold an event to celebrate the Town Council's 50th Anniversary in the Heritage Hall at Royston Town Hall on Saturday 8 June 2024

2 – To set a budget of £200 for the cost of the event

Cllr John Rees on behalf of the Events Working Party

Agenda Item 14 - Proposal for Official Council Photograph

Whilst discussing plans for recognising the Town Council's 50th Anniversary it was decided that an official photograph of all current Council Members and Staff be arranged for display at an appropriate place in the Council buildings.

The Photograph would be taken on Monday 20 May, following the Full Council Meeting on that day. All Staff members would be invited to be included but have the option to decline.

The following quote has been obtained from Gareth Jones Photography, a local Royston business.

| Product / Package | Description | Unit Price | Quantity | Tax |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Group Photography & Frame | Photography session - group set up Choice of the final image Professional post-production as required One framed print is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10x8 inch print• Lustre paper professional paper• Single mount• Charcoal wooden frame• Digital file supplied via download for web use <p><i>Frame options and sizing can be changed - this may alter the final price</i></p> | £265.00 | 1 | No Tax |

The Council is asked to approve the photograph and framing for the sum of £265.00

Cllr John Rees on behalf of the Events Working Party

Agenda Item 15

Traffic Sensitive Street Review 2024

Traffic Sensitive Street Review 2024
Hertfordshire County Council
CHN115
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford, Herts SG13 8DF
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

Good Morning,

I am writing to consult you on Hertfordshire County Councils proposed Traffic Sensitive Street review.

By way of background the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 allows a highway authority to designate certain streets (roads) as traffic sensitive, provided they meet certain criteria. The designation means that these roads are subject to a greater level of control when works or activities on these roads are proposed. For example, a works promoter is required to provide greater advanced warning of proposed works on a traffic sensitive street.

The designation highlights that works or activities on these roads are likely to be particularly disruptive to other highway users, but it does not mean that works or activities cannot take place during the traffic sensitive times. Once a designation is made it applies to all works and activities taking place in the street.

In 2022 the DfT amended the criteria for Traffic Sensitive Street with these changes coming into force on 3 April 2023. The amendments removed three criteria ('is designated by the authority as part of its winter maintenance programme'; 'is on a tourist route or within an area where major events take place'; and 'is covered by a congestion charge').

The updated requirements are that one or more of the following criteria should apply before an authority may designate a street as traffic sensitive.

- a) the street is one on which at any time the authority estimates traffic flow to be greater than 500 vehicles per hour per lane of carriageway, disregarding bus or cycle lanes.
- b) the street is a single carriageway two-way road, the carriageway of which is less than 6.5 metres wide, having a total traffic flow in both directions of not less than 600 vehicles per hour.
- c) the street is one on which more than 25% of the traffic flow in both directions consists of heavy commercial vehicles.
- d) the street is one on which the traffic flow in both directions includes more than eight buses per hour.

e) the street is within 100 metres of a critical signalised junction or a critical gyratory or roundabout system.

f) the street has a pedestrian flow of at least 1,300 people per hour, per metre width of footway.

We have now completed a comprehensive review of our Traffic Sensitive Network taking account of the amended criteria and I would like to give notice, in accordance with the “Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) Code of Practice for the co-ordination of street works and works for road purposes and related matters”, of our proposal to the designation of streets as traffic sensitive.

The proposed traffic sensitive streets meet criteria a, b (above) or both as detailed on the attached excel spreadsheet and follow the link for the maps.

Traffic Sensitive Streets Viewer (arcgis.com)

For anyone not receiving an electronic version go to the maps at

<https://hertscs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/media/index.html?appid=6cde7a9dec9f4ce39eb4e79c74e9f8d7>

and to load information into spreadsheet download from this link.

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshires

Based on these revised criteria, our traffic sensitive network will reduce by approximately 40%.

We have not changed the three traffic sensitive time periods as below, which are shown on the map and spreadsheet.

Period 1 Monday to Sunday 05:00 22:00 Red

Period 2 Monday to Sunday 06:00 20:00 Blue

Period 3 Monday to Friday 07:00 09:30 and 16:00 18:30 Green

In order to carry out its duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004 it is important to this authority to be aware of and where necessary, control activity on its proposed traffic sensitive network, to reduce disruption and congestion for the benefit of local residents, businesses and wider highway users. It is essential to note that it is not necessarily intended to prevent occupation during traffic sensitive times, but it implies that there is a high degree of importance to these particular streets and emphasise the need for all works promoters to discuss their proposals for works on these streets in particular. HCC would encourage early communication for all proposed work on the revised traffic sensitive network.

I would be grateful if you could review our proposals and raise any objections in writing by Wednesday 27th March 2024, please submit any objection that you may have on a route-by-route basis, including the specific reasons for your objection to:

Jon Coomber

Agenda Item 16 - Royston Town Survey: Release of Results

Because of the local elections being held on 2nd May 2024 and intervening Pre-election Period it is not possible to publish the results of the recent Residents' Survey until after that date.

Basic information on the survey such as the number of forms issued and the number of paper and digital responses will be given to the Annual Town Meeting as part of an overall report on the conduct of the survey.

It is being proposed that a comprehensive report on the Survey results be published in the June edition of the Town Crier. To enable this, it would require a full page – additional to the usual two pages – in the Listing magazine at a discounted cost of £375

Councillors are therefore asked to approve this additional amount of £375.

Cllr John Rees

Chair, Communications Working party

Agenda Item 18

In November 2022 Royston Town Council resolved to allocate £5000 to a Grants Fund for the civic year 2023/24. The Grants Policy was adopted in March 2023 and the first grants were awarded in June 2023. For the civic year 2024/25, the allocation to the Grants Fund remains at £5000.

Since the approval of the budget in January 2024, Hertfordshire County Council has voted to cut the County Councillor Locality budgets by 50% for the coming civic year. Royston has two County Councillors with a current allocation of £10,000 each, which will be cut to £5000 each in 2024/25, resulting in a loss of £10,000 per year for community organisations.

As a result of the County Council decision, North Herts Council has approved an additional £5000 in grant funding for each Area Forum in 2024/25, to support the community at this difficult time. For Royston this means that there will be a net loss of £5000 local community grant funding. This could be mitigated by allocating an additional £5000 to the Town Council Grants Fund from reserves.

I therefore propose that Royston Town Council allocates an additional £5000 to the Grants Fund in the civic year 2024/25, to be taken from General Reserves.

Proposer: Cllr Ruth Brown

Seconder: Cllr Emma Squire-Smith