

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON & DISTRICT COMMITTEE

(Royston and Ermine Ward – Parishes of Barkway, Barley, Kelshall, Nuthampstead, Reed and Therfield)

**Meeting held at Icknield Walk First School, Poplar Drive, Royston
on 13 July 2005 at 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT: *Councillors W.M. Davidson (Chairman), Mrs F.R. Hill (Vice-Chairman), A.F. Hunter, R.E. Inwood and F.J. Smith.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Planning Control & Conservation Manager, Community Development Officer (Royston) and Committee & Member Services Officer.*

ALSO PRESENT: *County Councillor D. Drake, Vince McCabe (Chief Executive - Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust) and Mark James (Adult Care Services, Hertfordshire County Council).*

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited those present to join the Committee in a one minute silence in memory of those killed and injured in the recent bombs in London.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H.M. Marshall.

Apologies for absence were also received from Oliver Heald MP, and from Helen Whitty (Director of Corporate Development - Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust).

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 June 2005 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

15. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman informed the Committee that a question had been raised by Councillor Mrs F.R. Hill. This item would be minuted as Agenda Item 12.

The Chairman agreed consideration of an additional item in relation to the determination of a planning application for a portacabin located in the car park of the Royston Town Cabin. This item would be minuted as Agenda Item 13.

16. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor F.J. Smith declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 – Presentation by the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust – as he was an ordinary member of the League of Friends of Royston Hospital, who had made a representation. Councillor Smith reserved the right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor Mrs F.R. Hill declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 – Presentation by the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust – as she was an ordinary member of the League of Friends of Royston Hospital, who had made a representation. Councillor Hill reserved the right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor R.E. Inwood declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 – Presentation by the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust – as he was North Hertfordshire District Council's representative on the Primary Care Trust Joint

Member Panel. Councillor Inwood reserved the right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor W.M. Davidson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11 – Annual Grants and Discretionary Budget 2005/2006 – Grant Application by the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust's Community Network Team - as he was a member of the Team's Committee. Councillor Davidson remained in the chair but did not speak or vote on this matter.

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr David Reece of the Royston Fire Service had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding the proposed changes to staffing at the Royston Fire Station.

Mr Reece outlined the current practices and area of responsibility for the Fire Station, together with the current staffing levels. He then informed the Committee of the proposed changes outlined by the Chief Fire Officer. He expressed the concern of the Royston Fire Service at the proposals, which they believed would result in a drop in the standard of cover and service for the area covered by the Royston Fire Station.

Mr Reece stated that very little information was available at the time of the meeting, and expressed a desire to address a future meeting of the Committee in more depth on this matter, once more information was available.

The Committee supported the concerns expressed by the Royston Fire Service, and acknowledged the commitment of both the full-time and retained firefighters. The Committee expressed considerable alarm at the potential implications of the proposed changes, and agreed that it would be beneficial to clarify the situation in relation to the proposals.

The Chairman thanked Mr Reece for addressing the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Chief Fire Officer be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee to be held on 24 August 2005, to provide additional information in relation to the proposed staffing changes at the Royston Fire Station.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure the Committee are informed of the proposed changes and the implications of those changes to the Royston Fire Service.

The Chairman informed the Committee that there had been several registrations to speak in relation to Agenda Item 6 – Presentation by the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust. He stated that those people would be invited to address the Committee and ask any questions of the Primary Care Trust after the Trust had made their presentation.

18. ROYSTON, BUNTINGFORD & BISHOPS STORTFORD PRIMARY CARE TRUST

Mr Vince McCabe, Chief Executive of the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust (PCT) introduced himself to the Committee, and reminded them that the attendance and presentation by the PCT had arisen in response to the Committee's concerns and invitation expressed at the meeting of the Committee on 1 June 2005 (Minute 12 refers). He informed them that his presentation would cover both the plans for the Royston Hospital and general NHS care provision in the Royston area.

Mr McCabe acknowledged that there had been local concern with relation to the lack of progress in developing the Royston Hospital site, and several rumours had also been circulating that the land on which the Hospital site would instead be sold off for alternative development, removing a valuable community facility with no likelihood of replacement or utilisation of the monies raised from any such sale to improve NHS care provision in the Royston area. Mr McCabe categorically stated that the PCT had

never had any intention other than to use the land on which the current Royston Hospital is located for development of services on that site to cater for the needs of Royston.

Mr McCabe outlined the timeline of events in relation to the Royston Hospital development proposals, which included:

- November 2003 – PCT approved a strategic outline case for a 20-bed inpatient ward plus outpatient clinics and residential care provision on the site of the Royston Hospital.
- December 2003 – the strategic outline case was submitted for approval by the Strategic Health Authority (SHA). The SHA supported the proposal, with the requirement that tests in relation to the model of care, provision of beds etc be carried out to provide evidence of the financial and use implications of the proposal.
- Summer 2004 – review of those tests and implications had been taking place, but a lack of management capacity, emphasis on targets, and outside pressures – both County-wide and Nationally – had meant further delays in the process.
- January 2005 onward – management consultants had been reviewing the original strategic outline case in light of those changes.
- April 2005 – the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford PCT Board received a further report, proposing a change in the recommended model of care for the hospital, as it was felt a 20-bed inpatient ward and separate residential care facility was no longer appropriate.

Mr James further informed the Committee that a clear need for increased provision of nursing and social care beds over the next 10 years had been identified for the Royston area, and stressed that the optimum way to do this was in association with the PCT.

Mr McCabe further stated that no change to the Royston Hospital was not an option as there was a need for the assessment, diagnostic and treatment provision that would result in the redevelopment. He supported Mr James' statement that there was a need for developing nursing home provision in the Royston area, and stated that it was hoped that extra provision could be included in the new development.

Doctor Peter Goff addressed the Committee and stressed what an important community facility the Royston Community Hospital was. However, he also stated that changes needed to be made to treatment provision on the Royston Hospital site, in order that it could meet the intermediate care provision requirements of the area. He stressed that, whilst the last 12 months had seen the biggest changes in primary care provision since 1948, it was now important to seize the opportunities now available and move forward with the changes for the benefit of the people of the Royston area, as looking back was not constructive.

Town Councillor Mrs L. Berry spoke on behalf of the Royston Town Council, and expressed the concern of the Town Council that there had been no consultation or information provision about the ongoing, changing situation in relation to the Royston Hospital. Mr McCabe acknowledged the Town Council's concerns, and stated that there had been an unfortunate lack of consultation and updating with other parties in relation to the situation of the Royston Hospital. Mr McCabe expressed the PCT's commitment to improving that process in future to ensure all parties were kept informed of any progress and developments.

Doctor Hedges of the Royston Health Centre addressed the Committee, and supported the concerns of the Town Council in relation to the lack of communication by the PCT with other parties. He also expressed concern that the current out of hours service provider had been given notice by the PCT, that they would no longer be using their services from 20 July 2005. However, Doctor Hedges stated that no official notification of that change, or provision of information as to the replacement

service provider, had been given to doctors in the Royston area. Mr McCabe acknowledged Doctor Hedges' concerns, and informed the Committee that the change in out of hours service provider had arisen as a result of the escalating costs of the current service provision. Mr McCabe agreed that the service provided was excellent, but stated that the PCT had a duty to ensure the provision of care services at the best-cost value. He stated that the PCT were confident that the new provider would provide excellent service and will ensure that out of hours GP provision for the Royston area was improved and maintained.

Mrs Joan Yates of the Priory Dental Service addressed the Committee and supported the work that the PCT did to promote excellent NHS treatment provision in the Royston area. She informed the Committee that their Practice had the capacity to almost double their current service provision, but that this was not yet possible as the Practice's existing accommodation was not adequate for this purpose.

Mr Ketteringham of the League of Friends of Royston Hospital addressed the Committee and expressed the Friends' concern at the lack of progress in the redevelopment of the site, and the lack of communication by the PCT. He stated that the PCT were not trusted very much by local residents, especially as they were seen to be sneaking around making plans behind people's backs. Mr Ketteringham informed the Committee that the Friends had raised and spent over £1/4 million on provision of equipment for the hospital, so they felt they should be treated as a stakeholder in the hospital and be kept informed of progress and developments, as well as being consulted on the redevelopment plans. He further stated that the Friends believed the new proposals were inferior to the original plan, which was unanimously voted to go forward, and questioned who had made the decisions to totally change this.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr McCabe confirmed that the current Royston Hospital building would be replaced by a new building and not retained, and that service provision on the site would include additional GP, dentist and outpatient treatment for the residents of the Royston area. He explained that there had been a delay in the provision of increased dental provision in Royston as the new dental care provision contracts were taking longer than anticipated to be completed, but stated that the PCT were committed to addressing the current lack of NHS dental care provision in the town. He stressed however that, whilst the care requirements of Royston might have changed, the PCT's commitment to providing the best standards of health care possible to the people of Royston remained unchanged.

The Committee supported the concerns expressed by the people of Royston, and stated that they did not feel that much clarification had been provided by the PCT at the meeting. They supported the assertion that the Royston Hospital was an important community asset, and that it provided the opportunity to administer intermediate care to the people of Royston without the need to travel the long distances to Lister or Addenbrookes hospitals. The Committee further emphasised the need for everyone to be kept informed of any progress or developments (or lack of them), and expressed disappointment in the lack of communication provided by the PCT.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust be noted;
- (2) That the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust be invited to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 24 August 2005 to provide an update on the situation in relation to improving dental care provision in Royston;
- (3) That the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust be invited to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 1 February 2006 to provide information in relation to the revised strategic outline case.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure the Committee are kept apprised of the situation in relation to the provision of NHS healthcare services in the Royston area.

19. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee heard oral representations regarding the following:

Application reference 04/01425/1 – 25 Priory Close, Royston

- a) Mr Bayliss (objector)
- b) Mr Clark (objector)
- c) Mr Ovens (applicant)

Application reference 05/00493/1 – The Maltings, Green Drift, Royston

- a) Mr Airey (objector)
- b) Mr Chapman of Sun Hill Day Nurseries (Europe) Ltd (applicant)

RESOLVED: To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Planning Control and Conservation Manager as submitted to the Committee in the following schedule:

SCHEDULE

Reference Number	Description of Development and location	Decision
05/00661/1	Land at Council Depot, Queens Road, Royston Three storey building comprising 15 one bedroom flats, single storey bin store, provision of 18 car parking spaces, construction of vehicular access from Victoria Crescent, landscaping and ancillary works, following demolition of existing buildings on site. (As amended by drawing no. 1357-P01A and P07A received on 29 June 2005).	GRANTED (as per report)
04/01425/1	25 Priory Close, Royston SG8 7DU Outline application: Erection of three 5-bedroom dwelling houses with associated garaging and parking, access road and ancillary works. Replacement double garage to serve existing dwelling (landscaping reserved). (As amended by drawing no. 101 Rev D received 8 June 2005).	REFUSED (see (a) below)
05/00493/1	The Maltings, Green Drift, Royston Change of use of Units 1 and 2 from B1 to Use Class D1 (day nursery with the use of six on site parking spaces) for a temporary period of three years	REFUSED (see (b) below)

(a)

(b)

20. PLANNING APPEALS

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager informed the Committee that no planning appeals had been lodged or determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2005.

21. REFRESHMENTS KIOSK SERVING USERS OF PRIORY MEMORIAL GARDENS

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager presented the report of the Strategic Director of Financial and Regulatory Services to the Committee. She stated that this report had come at the request of the Committee when they granted planning permission for the kiosk at their meeting of 1 June 2005 (Minute 7 refers).

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Strategic Director of Financial and Regulatory Services be noted;
- (2) That the support of the Committee for this proposal, subject to regular inspection of the site and the proper control of litter, be noted.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To permit the development of a service that will be of direct benefit to the users of Priory Memorial Gardens and provide advice to the Council's Property Services Officer.

22. CHAMPION NEWS

The Community Development Officer for Royston presented a report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services to the Committee, which advised them of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for Royston since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2005, and brought to their attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for Royston to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston communities be endorsed.

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in Royston.

23. ANNUAL GRANTS AND DEVELOPMENT DISCRETIONARY BUDGET 2004/05

The Community Development Officer for Royston presented a report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services to the Committee, which set out the budgetary situation for the Committee, together with 2 additional grant applications that had been received and one item of expenditure by the Community Development Officer for Royston to be ratified.

RESOLVED: That the current expenditure and balance of the Development Budget be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) The report was intended to apprise Members of the financial resources available to this Committee. It drew attention to the current budgetary situation, assisted in the effective financial management of the Committee's budget and ensured actions were performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance contained in the Grants procedure;
- (2) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

24. RATIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE – REPAIRS TO FENCE AT BLAKES CLOSE, ROYSTON

RESOLVED: That the expenditure by the Community Development Officer for Royston in the sum of £126 be ratified.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

25. GRANT APPLICATION – ROYSTON, BUNTINGFORD & BISHOPS STORTFORD PRIMARY CARE TRUST

RESOLVED: That the sum of £750 be awarded to the Royston, Buntingford & Bishops Stortford Primary Care Trust as a financial contribution toward a pilot Youth Obesity Management Project.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

26. GRANT APPLICATION – ROTARY CLUB OF ROYSTON

RESOLVED: That the sum of £750 be awarded to the Rotary Club of Royston as a financial contribution toward the Royston Kite Festival.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

27. ADDITIONAL ITEM: PRIORY MEMORIAL GARDENS

Councillor Mrs F.R. Hill informed the Committee that she was concerned at the problems with anti-social behaviour in the Priory Memorial Gardens, and the cost of rectifying the recent thefts and vandalism of property in the Gardens. Councillor Hill stated that in the local newspapers it had been reported that these costs had been in the region of £10,000, and asked if this was correct.

Councillor W.M. Davidson, as Portfolio Holder for Waste and the Environment informed the Committee that the costs had actually been in the region of £14,000.

The Committee noted this information.

28. ADDITIONAL ITEM: DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE SITING OF A PORTACABIN IN THE TOWN HALL CAR PARK

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager informed the Committee that an application for permission to locate a portacabin in the Royston Town Hall car park for the temporary period of the 3 months until September 2005. This was for the purpose of advertising and promoting the new Royston Leisure Centre, which was due to open in September 2005.

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager informed the Committee that the portacabin had actually already been placed in that location, but stressed that she was not asking for discussion of the merits of the application lodged. Instead, the purpose of raising this item was to request the Committee's permission for the Planning Control and Conservation Manager to determine this application under delegated powers, in order that it could be determined quickly, without having to wait for the next meeting of the Committee, to be held on 24 August 2005.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Control and Conservation Manager be permitted to determine the planning application for location of a portacabin in the Royston Town Hall car park under delegated authority from the Committee.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure a timely determination of the planning application.

The meeting closed at 23.24 p.m.

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Chairman