

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE
**(Royston and Ermine Ward – Parishes of Barkway, Barley, Kelshall, Nuthampstead,
Reed and Therfield)**

**Meeting held at Royston Town Hall, Melbourn Street, Royston
on 18 July 2007 at 7.30p.m.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillors: Mrs F.R. Hill (Chairman), H.M. Marshall (Vice-Chairman),
Mrs Liz Beardwell, P.C.W. Burt, A.F. Hunter and F.J. Smith.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Alan Fleck - Community Development Officer,
Tom Rea – Area Planning Officer
Louise Symes – Projects Manager
Susanne Gow – Committee Administrator.*

ALSO PRESENT: *Mrs Jacqui Bunce - Assistant Director of Commissioning, West Herts
and East & North Herts PCTs
Dr John Hedges - Royston Health Centre
County Councillor Doug Drake*

21. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that two items under Notification of Other business would be taken after Agenda Item Area Committee Development Budget 2007/2008.

22. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman agreed to consider the following additional items of business:

(a) Work to be carried out on the trees at Perry Drive, Royston, which are currently under Tree Preservation Order No 151. This item to be taken as Agenda Item 12, and is urgent as the work is being currently carried out.

(b) Weight limit in Melbourn Street, Royston. This item is to be taken as Agenda Item 13, and is urgent because several Royston Town Councillors had again contacted the Royston and District Committee to ask for their help, as this matter had increased in severity for over a year without any sign of a solution.

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr R. Inwood.

24. MINUTES – 13 June 2007

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting to elect the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Royston on 17 May 2007, and those of the Royston and District Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2007, be approved as a true record of the proceedings, and be signed by the Chairman.

25. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made during the meeting.

26. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No items were presented for consideration by the Committee under Public Participation.

27. HEALTH – CURRENT PROVISION IN ROYSTON

Mrs Jacqui Bunce, Assistant Director of Commissioning at the West Herts and East & North Herts Primary Care Trusts gave an oral presentation on Health Provision at the present time in Royston, and left copies of the NHS full consultation document (12 June-1 October 2007) and some proposal/ questionnaire documents relating to the changes in hospital and local health services required to significantly improve patients' health care in Hertfordshire. These documents were distributed as part of the

consultation process, to place on record the wishes of the local communities throughout Hertfordshire.

General discussion took place, and the Committee expressed to Mrs Bunce the public's concern that Royston Hospital be part of both present and future local health care provision. The Committee stressed that it was important to the residents of Royston that a range of medical facilities were maintained in the Town. The Members were assured that there were plans in place for Royston Hospital to play a major part in the health care of the locality, which comprised north Royston and the surrounding villages, the Locality Manager of which was Josephine Schmidt.

Mrs Bunce offered to return to the Committee at any time with positive answers to questions, and the Members expressed an interest in her reporting back to them in the general situation with the primary Care Trust (PCT) on a regular basis.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Mrs Bunce be thanked for attending the Royston and District Committee Meeting and providing a presentation of the current health care provision in Royston;
- 2) That representatives of the Primary Care Trust be invited to the Royston and District Committee Meetings on a regular basis to provide updates on the situation;
- 3) That Royston and District Committee and other relevant parties meet with the Primary Care Trust to discuss in detail consultations on acute hospitals and other medical facilities within Royston and the rural areas.

28. HEALTH – PRACTICE-BASED COMMISSIONING GROUPS

Dr John Hedges from the Health Centre in Royston gave an overview of currently available practice-based commissioning groups.

He informed the Committee that practice-based commissioning was introduced in 1976, and was similar to the GP fund-holding which began in the 1990s. He stated that this was not now so readily available, and that any savings made had been used by Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to rectify their overspends.

Dr Hedges said that there were three GP practices in Royston, two in Buntingford and one in Puckeridge, and being so spread out makes it difficult for them all to work together as they appear to be going in different directions. The PCT referred minor injuries to Bishop Stortford Hospital as there was no "out of hours" service at Royston Hospital. All three Royston surgeries were keen to maintain a link with Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge, as they considered that this hospital served their patients well. The Royston surgeries joined the Cambridge Association for Commissioning and Health (CACH), as the nearest "out of hours" service was based at Hertford, which was a problem. Further, the Cambridge and Peterborough Mental Health Trust would be terminated in October 2007.

A representative from the PCT attended the last Locality Meeting and informed those present of the new services which were provided by Cambridge and Peterborough, and the Locality Group want to maintain the Cambridge and Peterborough Mental Health Trust.

The Committee asked Dr Hedges how they could help the Royston General Practitioners (GPs), and were told that this could be done by ensuring that the GPs were able to confirm with the Members that they were in step with the local people. However, it was vital to ensure that what the Group attempted was achievable, and that standards of medical care should rise to the level of the larger communities surrounding Royston. Dr Hedges stated that the GPs believed that the people of Royston deserved to have the same standard of service as those living nearer the hospitals.

On being asked how the PCT feels about buying services from outside North

Hertfordshire, Dr Hedges stated that as Addenbrookes Hospital was a Foundation Trust and not constrained, costs were higher. Patients were seen rapidly, but at a high cost. All these hospitals were now "payment by results".

On being asked by a Member whether an "out of hours" service could be set up at Royston Hospital, Dr Hedges admitted that it would be the obvious place to go, and that CAMDOC could be looking for a southern base for the rural areas, which would make it eligible.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Dr Hedges be thanked for attending this Royston and District Committee Meeting and providing an extremely informative presentation;
- 2) That Dr Hedges and his colleagues be thanked for all their hard work in providing the best medical facilities in Royston and the surrounding area;
- 3) That the Royston and District Committee would work with Dr Hedges to help in any way possible to maintain and improve medical facilities for Royston and the surrounding area.

29. HIGHWAYS ISSUES

The Community Development Officer (CDO) reported back to the Committee on the problem spots found during a walking inspection of Royston's highways, by the CDO, the Royston Town Centre Manager and the Royston and District Committee Chairman. The problems could be put into three categories:

- **Street Furniture** – this had not been painted for some time, and could be painted if funds became available. Volunteers and the Town Centre Forum could help with the painting;
- **Highway Repairs** – investigation showed that materials had not been used appropriately, with many loose paviers, some of which could be kept in place with simple "grouting";
- **Repair Strategies** – inappropriate materials had been used, e.g. where cast iron bollards had been used as a parking deterrent and had been damaged, they had been replaced with unsightly concrete or tarmac instead of replacement bollards.

The CDO was asked to find out whether Hertfordshire Highways has a budget which can be used for rectifying these problems and then report back to the Royston and District Committee at the next meeting to be held on 26 September 2007.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the items listed in "Highways Issues and Repair Strategies", distributed to Members and Officers at the Committee Meeting on 18 July, be passed to Hertfordshire Highways for comment and their views on how the standard of repairs might be improved, and be reported back to the next meeting to be held on 26 September;
- 2) To establish if any funding has been allocated from Hertfordshire Highways or North Herts District Council, and if there are any plans in place to carry out the work detailed above, and then to report back to the Committee at the next meeting to be held on 26 September 2007.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

That Hertfordshire Highways (HH) have the opportunity to give their views on how the standard of repairs to Royston highways might be improved, and for the CDO to discover the extent of HH's plans to carry out the work and of any funding they, or North Herts District Council, have allocated to these repairs.

30. GARDEN WALK AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

The Community Development Officer gave a verbal update on the traffic problems in Garden Walk, and general traffic issues in Royston, together with suggested measures to solve the problems.

The response he received was that making Garden Walk a one-way street would be

very difficult and costly, but that the No Right Turn option would be investigated and costs would be explored.

RESOLVED:

That the Community Development Officer be requested to enter into discussions with the Highways Authority and report back to the Royston and District Committee with the results of their investigations, and with a quotation for a No Right Turn solution.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To confirm the support of the Royston and District Committee for an appropriate traffic management control to be placed at the junction of Garden Walk and the A10 for the benefit of local residents and in the interests of traffic flow and highway safety.

31. CHAMPION NEWS

The Royston Community Development Officer (CDO) provided a review of his activities since the last meeting of the Royston and District Committee, held on 13 June 2007.

One item of concern was that part of a wall in the car park of Somerfield supermarket had collapsed, and was now a Health and Safety issue. Building Control had taken this over due to inadequate insurance, and there were issues pertaining to ownership of the wall. A Committee Member had reported this over a year ago, but the only action taken was the removal of some bricks and the placing of an ineffective plastic barrier. Cars were still parked there, and judging by the state of the barrier which was now on the car park surface, had been parked on top of it. The suggestion was to go back to Building Control and ask who is responsible for repairing the wall. This matter was discussed by the Committee, resulting in the suggestion that a strong temporary barrier be erected without delay, as it is now a Health and Safety issue, with the possibility of a member of the public being injured in the near future if nothing is done quickly.

Town Centre Parking Issues

Louise Symes, Planning Projects Manager, gave an overview regarding appointment of Consultants to undertake a car parking and assessment study of Royston Town Centre as part of the background preparation for the Town Centre Strategy agreed by Cabinet, Item 6e (140) of the Minutes of the Meeting on 16 January 2007 refers.

The appointed Consultants, MVA Transport Consultancy, carried out their surveys during July 2007, this will also include meeting key stakeholders for a consultation exercise in late summer to discuss the key issues emerging from their study before presenting their preliminary findings to the Royston and District Committee at their meeting to be held on 26 September 2007. Their concluding report will be presented to the Royston Committee on 7 November 2007 for final agreement.

The Committee Members were unhappy with some of the on street parking issues relating to Newmarket Road, King James Way, Rock Road and the loading bays in High Street being incorporated in the overall Town Centre Parking Strategy. Discussion followed, with input from all Members present, leading to several resolutions.

It was confirmed that the questions raised by a member of the Royston Town Council would be answered following the production of the Town Centre Parking Strategy, which will contain a series of recommendations

It was agreed that the parking ticket issuing machines would be adjusted to enable use of tickets discounted by local traders.

The Committee decided that arrangements are again to be made in respect of the special Christmas parking charges, and these are proceeding with no problems.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a temporary barrier is to be provided without delay, and permanent work carried out immediately on the Somerfield car park wall which had collapsed and had become a serious Health and Safety issue.
- 2) That the loading and unloading bays in the High Street are to be moved forward

and financial and staffing resources should be found to ensure that this work proceeds imminently, as previously agreed.

- 3) Regarding parking restrictions in Newmarket Road, King James Way and Rock Road, a final decision was to be made on this at the Committee Meeting to be held on 26 September 2007, bearing in mind that finances were already available and the principle agreed previously by the Royston and District Committee.
- 4) Members made the point that at the meeting on 26 September 2007, decisions were to be made in principle on the MVA preliminary findings regarding parking issues within Royston Town Centre. Any improvements could be made following the Building Design Partnerships (BDP) report on parking issues.
- 5) That the Committee endorsed the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To keep Members of the Royston and District Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in the Royston and District area.

32. AREA COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS 2007/2008

The Community Development Officer (CDO) took the Committee through the Royston and District Budget Statement for 2007/2008, and advised the Committee that there was just one grant application for determination.

Members were requested to note the information in Appendix A, which related to Area Committee Budget balances for the Financial Year 2007/08, the pre-allocations and the balances allocated to Visioning Budgets available to respective wards within the Royston and District area.

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

REASON FOR DECISION:

To allow the Royston and District Committee to continue with its support to local voluntary and community organisations and to further the aims and strategic priorities of North Herts District Council.

33. GRANT APPLICATION – YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Royston and District Committee fully supported this application, and suggested that everything possible was done to support the youth of Royston by way of this contribution to the Young People of the Year Award.

RESOLVED:

That the Young People of the Year organisation be awarded £1,000 as a contribution to the administration costs of the competitive event with associated high-profile award ceremony aimed at young people in the Royston area who give to others, promote a positive role model and improve the image of young people in the community.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To allow the Royston and District Committee to continue with its support to local voluntary and community organisations and further the aims and strategic priorities of North Herts District Council.

34. TREES AT 11 PERRY DRIVE, ROYSTON

The Area Planning Officer spoke briefly on the work to be carried out imminently on the cypress trees at 11 Perry Drive, Royston, which were preserved under Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No 151. Pruning of the trees was necessary, and the crown was to be raised. Beechdale Homes who own the property were to get the trees trimmed to 2 metres on one side, and in Mortimer Road they would be cut back. Previous attempts for this work to be done had failed, as the contractors were unable to gain access due to parked cars. It was stated that the contractors appeared unsure of their exact task in relation to these cypress trees, and Members were pleased to be

told that as a result the contractors would be supervised by a Council official during their work, to ensure they did not contravene the Tree Preservation Order.

35. WEIGHT LIMIT ON MELBOURN STREET, ROYSTON

The Committee discussed imposing a weight limit on Melbourn Street, and agreed to support Royston Town Council in this matter. Councillor F.J. Smith commented that heavy vehicles regularly park on the road surface above Royston Cave, which is likely to cause severe damage.

The Community Development Officer will check and report back to the Committee by the next meeting on Wednesday 26 September 2007.

36. COMMUNITY SURGERY

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the next Royston and District Community Surgery will be held on Saturday 4 August from 10am to 11.30am at Angel Pavement, Market Hill, Royston, and that all Councillors are invited to attend.

Councillors E. Beardwell and F.J. Smith both offered their apologies, as they will be away at that time.

The meeting closed at 9.32p.m.

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Chairman