

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

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

**Meeting held at Royston Town Hall, Melbourn Street, Royston
on 10 December 2014 at 7.30p.m.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillors: Mrs F.R. Hill (Chairman), W. Davidson, P.C.W. Burt,
J. Green, Tony Hunter, Ben Lewis and G. E. Morris.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Cllr David Levett – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enterprise
(Economic Development)
John Robinson – Strategic Director of Customer Services and Project
Directive
Mary Caldwell – Development and Conservation Manager
David Charlton – Senior Estates Surveyor
Ashley Hawkins – Communities Officer
Susanne Gow - Committee and Member Services Officer*

ALSO PRESENT: *Cllr F J Smith – Leader of Royston Town Council
Royston Town Cllrs Lindsay Davidson, John Davison, Les Baker and
Rod Kennedy
10 members of the public, including 3 Speakers for Public
Participation.*

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were tendered for this Meeting.

35. MINUTES – 17 SEPTEMBER 2014

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 September 2014 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

36. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No additional business was notified to the Chairman for discussion at this meeting.

37. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) The Chairman welcomed all Members of the Committee and officers to the meeting. She also welcomed Cllr David Levett, who had come to present the Local Plan – Preferred Options, The Strategic Director of Customer Services, the Development and Conservation Manager, the Senior Estates Surveyor and the Leader of Royston Town Council and several Town Councillors. Also welcomed to the Meeting were three Speakers for Public Participation, and all members of the public present;

(2) The Chairman read out the following statement: "Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest which requires they leave the room under Paragraph 7.4 of the Code of Conduct, can speak on the item, but must leave the room before the debate and vote."

38. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(1) Mrs Margaret Allen, representing the Community Interest Company (CIC) introduced herself as one of the three directors and gave the background to the organisation. She explained that they would like to work with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and the National Health Service (NHS) to establish a community facility for integrated care for Royston and the surrounding area. They already had

a good relationship with the NHS and had networked with a variety of organisations, having recruited several experts in the process. The experts would need to be paid, and she explained that the organisation was looking for financial support to secure start-up funding in the future from the Royston and District Committee, amongst others, with the Council providing letters of support and start-up funding for the CIC. Money given by the Council was an incentive for match funding if the Council endorsed the organisation of the project.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Allen for her presentation, and proposed that a letter of support from the Royston and District Committee would be provided, together with a start-up grant of £150, on production of their funding documentation. This was supported by all Members of the Committee. On being questioned, Mrs Allen confirmed that the Business Plan was not yet ready, although the scheme was financially viable. She stated that the novel approach of this scheme which includes community involvement, solved local problems, and that the model could be used more widely.

- (2) Mr Paul Rydon, Chairman of the Royston and District Town Twinning Association (R&DTTA) addressed the Committee. He explained that he had brought along Mr Ryder, a member of the R&DTTA who would be able to assist him in answering questions put to them by the Committee. Mr Rydon explained the background of the Association, starting with twinning with Grossalmerode 40 years ago, La Loupe in the Loire 27 years ago and more recently, Villanueva la Cañada outside Madrid, Spain. The town had been obliterated during the Spanish Civil War, but had now been rebuilt. The Association exchanged trips with all three of the European twin towns, played boules and exchanged books etc, as did the football teams and town bands.

Mr Rydon outlined the R&DTTA's finances and revealed that the income was very small, therefore any grants awarded by NHDC, Royston Town Council and Johnson Matthey were very much appreciated. The current balance in the R&DTTA's bank account was £10,101.16 as at 12 November 2014. They needed this amount as a float to cover the cost of trips etc. The Committee were given details of forthcoming activities the Association hoped to organise, as well as visits to and from the twin towns. The Association needed to attract fresh members; produce publicity to increase awareness of Royston; recruit a Social Secretary and maintain a viable working committee. The Chairman thanked Mr Rydon for his presentation, and opened this item to Committee questions and debate. On being asked how twin towns were chosen, Mr Rydon explained the procedure, and thanked the Royston and District Committee for their help over the years.

- (3) Ms Cate Hall of the Trinity Life Church addressed the Committee, informing them of Make Lunch, which is a scheme by churches to fill the gap left by free school meals during the school holidays. She explained that this scheme has been so successful that it is now a national charity, growing from three locations to 50! However, there was nothing local to Royston. 280 children in Royston received free school meals during the term but no hot midday meal during the school holidays. Trinity Life Church, in partnership with Royston Churches Together, would like to set up a method of serving a hot meal to each child, along with activities to keep them occupied throughout the school holidays. Each child would receive a timetable of when the lunches were available. The cost of venue hire, food, an administration fee and training would come to £3,000 in the first year alone. They would also apply to other organisations for financial assistance. To avoid there being a stigma around the children who would benefit from this scheme, it would be advertised as a fun lunch club.

The Chairman thanked Cate Hall for her address, and asked the Royston and District Committee whether it was happy to support Make Lunch in principle.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Margaret Allen be thanked for her informative presentation;
- (2) That the Royston and District Committee assures her of their goodwill and that on production of the funding documentation for the Community Interest

Company, the Committee would provide a grant of £150, together with a letter of support, to enable funds to be generated for starting up the Community Interest Company;

- (3) That Paul Rydon be thanked for his presentation on the Royston and District Town Twinning Association;
- (4) That the Royston and District Committee thank Cate Hall for her address on Make Lunch in conjunction with Trinity Life Church and Royston Churches Together the Committee was happy to offer their support to such a worthwhile endeavour.

39. INFORMATION NOTE: NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE MUSEUM AND COMMUNITY FACILITY AT HITCHIN TOWN HALL

The Strategic Director of Customer Services (SDCS) referred the Committee to the Information Note, which updated them on progress to date with the North Herts Museum and Community Facility. He advised them that a huge body of work had been done and the site had been transformed. As previously reported in September 2014, additional unforeseeable costs during the construction phase had already resulted in an increase in the project contingency budget being earmarked. Since that time, as a result of the delay in securing Listed Building Consent because of the need to report back to the Planning Control Committee on conditions, it is anticipated that additional costs will be incurred and project completion will be approximately seven to 12 weeks behind schedule. The Council's Quantity Surveyor is currently in negotiation with our construction contractor and any additional costs will be reported in due course.

The SDCS advised that several statements had been made by Hitchin Town Hall Limited that the Council had breached the Development Agreement. Any detailed rebuttal of these statements at this time would put the Council in a difficult position. As a result, the Council's response had been limited to a broad statement by the Leader of the Council in response to a media enquiry generated by Hitchin Town Hall Limited. An additional meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Meeting would be held on 18 December 2014, consisting of both Part 1 and Part 2 sections to review matters concerning the extant Development Agreement. All Members were requested to refrain from commenting on these issues in public, and would be invited to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting.

The Committee held a short discussion and stated that they appreciated the limitations. They asked if a further visit to look around the Facility could be arranged for them to view the work that had been completed to date. The SDCS agreed to see what could be arranged and informed them that through the Council's Flicker feed and video they could have a "walkthrough". On being asked whether a tour of the site was possible in the day or during the evening, the SDCS confirmed that this would be subject to the construction being carried out at the time and safety concerns for the Members.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Director of Customer Services for his informative clarification of the Information Note.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the contents of the Information Note on the North Hertfordshire Museum and Community Facility at Hitchin Town Hall be noted;
- (2) That the holding of an additional meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2014 to review the current status of the Development Agreement between North Herts District Council and Hitchin Town Hall Limited regarding the North Hertfordshire Museum and Community Facility at Hitchin Town Hall, be noted;
- (3) That the Strategic Director of Customer Service investigates the possibility of the Members of the Royston and District Committee being given a tour of the site to view the work completed to date, subject to the construction work being carried out at the time of the tour and any safety constraints required;

- (4) That the Strategic Director of Customer Service be thanked for his comprehensive presentation of the Information Note.

40.

SECTION 106 AND UNILATERAL UNDERTAKINGS

The Development and Conservation Manager (DCM) presented the report of the Head of Development and Building Control.

The DCM advised that this was the annual update and she highlighted the changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as set out in paras 8.5 and 8.6 of the report. The Committee was informed that the ability to use S106 agreements would be curtailed with the introduction of the CIL regulations and from 6 April 2015, a pooling limit would be applied to any obligation completed after this date. In addition, from that date, if more than five obligations had been allocated to a specific project, the Local Planning Authority would be unable to seek any more contributions. However, any funds still existing, together with those due for collection from existing permissions, would not be affected.

The DCM informed the Royston and District Committee that there had been an update to the report since it had been written, as the Government had updated and modified the Planning Practice Guidance as of 28 November 2014. This stated that no contributions should be sought from developments of 10 or less units. In rural areas, the Council could apply a lower threshold of five units or less, where no affordable housing of tariffs should be sought. For six to 10 units, the contributions were to be sought in the form of commuted cash payments. The unallocated funds for Royston comprised community centres, informal open spaces, play spaces, sustainable transport (non-residential), sustainable transport (residential) plus leisure and amounted to a total of £351,744.86.

Following a query, the Chairman clarified that some Section 106 money had been allocated towards road crossings and road improvements. The DCM confirmed that in some cases the NHDC S106 and the Herts County Council S106 monies were put together and treated as one contribution towards a scheme.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the contents of the report updating the Royston and District Committee on Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings be noted;
- (2) That the Development and Conservation Manager be thanked for her presentation of the Information Note and that, in the event that there are any further legislative updates concerning the implementation of any changes to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations from 6 April 2015, she be requested to provide an Information Note to Members;
- (3) That the Development and Conservation Manager be requested to present an annual updating report on the annual Section 106 allocations and any contributions under the new CIL regulations;
- (4) That, other than where a contribution has been negotiated for a specific purpose or project, Ward Members of the area where Section 106 or Unilateral Undertaking funding is generated, be consulted prior to allocation of funds to any project;
- (5) That, other than where a contribution has been negotiated for a specific purpose or project, Ward Members of the area where Section 106 or Unilateral Undertaking funding is generated and the Area Committee, be consulted prior to funding being allocated away from that area or from a village location to a town.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure there is a robust system for negotiating and managing Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings;
- (2) To ensure that Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings funding is kept under constant review and that the risk associated with this activity is managed in an

appropriate manner.

41. NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – PREFERRED OPTIONS

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enterprise, Councillor David Levett, introduced the Local Plan using a Powerpoint presentation. He explained that he had given an updated version of the presentation first to both Cabinet on 16 December 2014 and to full Council on 27 November 2014, which meant that all the District Councillors on the Royston and District Committee were familiar with it, and with the two Appendices that had been issued with the Local Plan in November, and were therefore not required at this meeting.

He explained that it was vital that planning policies were in place and that everybody in North Hertfordshire had been consulted in one way or another, and were happy that they had stated their preferred options. The North Hertfordshire Local Plan was positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Councillor Levett explained that this established 42 policies under 10 headings, which will shape how the NHDC achieved and promoted sustainable growth until 2031 and would be a material consideration when deciding planning applications.

He took the Committee through the presentation, answering questions as he went, as follows.

Why Preferred Options? He explained that nothing is set in stone at this stage, but it had been 22 years since the Council had adopted a plan which identified these development sites. He stated that Preferred Options gave a base to work from and allowed Members to “test the waters” as to what the residents of North Hertfordshire thought was the best way forward. The Committee was informed that the results of the consultation would be used to determine what went into the version of the Draft Local Plan that would go forward for submission.

Where does the figure for dwellings come from? National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to identify their objectively assessed need for housing. Objective assessments of needs was carried out through a Strategic Housing Market Assessment and this will be updated for the submission version of the Draft Local Plan.

How were the sites chosen? The Committee were advised that there was a call for sites to hold approximately 18,000 to 20,000 dwellings. All were assessed for suitability, availability and achievability and matched to the needs of the District. North Hertfordshire had 12,160 sites, 80% of which were in North Hertfordshire’s Green Belt. This was to be reviewed to cover: the Greater Luton Greenbelt and the Greater London Greenbelt, to prevent towns joining together. Planning application for dwellings in the greenbelt was to be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and the greenbelt could be reviewed.

How will this change North Hertfordshire? By an increase in the greenbelt.as follows:

- In 2013 developed land would amount to 10.5%, up from 8.5% in 2011
- In 2031 undeveloped land would amount to 42%, down from 50% in 2011.

When will this happen? NHDC was not building any houses, but was indicating where the houses would be situated. This depended on a developer first coming forward with proposals, which would then require planning permission. A Master plan would be required for major developments.

What was to happen next? The consultation period was from 18 December 2014 until 6 February 2015. Responses would be analysed and fed into the next version of the Local Plan, along with any changes in legislation, results of further studies and other emerging policies.

Submission of Draft Local Plan September 2015 for consultation. As many comments as possible were wanted, with positive alternatives, ways to improve and reasons to remove or amend options.

Ways to respond to consultation?

Using the NHDC website (everything required is on there), advertisements in newspapers, etc.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Levett for his comprehensive presentation and opened the item to questions from the Committee. She reminded Members that a number of the sites are currently "live" planning applications. She stated that every single site should have a full infrastructure plan, not just those sites over 1,000 dwellings. She stated that there has been piecemeal development in Royston and other areas over the last few years, which has resulted in one case of over 1,000 dwellings with only one access road (contrary to HCC guidelines). Councillor Levett agreed that this was a Hertfordshire County Council guideline, which should be written into the policies. She also asked Councillor Levett to expand on his points regarding sites which had been put forward, and others that were looked at and requested confirmation that all sites which are considered to be sustainable or made sustainable, have to be included in the Preferred Options document.

Committee questions included: are the houses on the sites for North Hertfordshire residents? (Yes – around 8,700 residents including children and babies, that is 2.3% occupancy. North Hertfordshire District is an ageing population, as due to jobs, the housing market etc, the younger generation is migrating, primarily to Central Bedfordshire and Luton); out of 365 Councils in the United Kingdom, how many have a Local Plan and what are the consequences if they do not have one? (About 60 have adopted a Local Plan. Policies are not adopted, so hostile applications can take control. This is why it is so important to adopt a suitable Local Plan).

The Chairman then used her discretion to allow members of Royston Town Council and the public to ask questions, and Heather Bryant and Joanna Rae queried how the villages would fare, as calling the process a consultation raised expectations. Councillor Levett explained that this subject was up for discussion, but only required "fine tweaks". Changes could be made by making it a policy. Housing on sites was making the best of a bad job and could have the type of homes contained by Letchworth Garden City. No numbers had been quoted for Luton's and Stevenage's requirements. A Local Plan was in place that quotes numbers and stops growth into the NHDC area. Healthy communities and the kind of expansion Royston has, like a village development, kept it at a community level. In response to a question on why a new Garden City was not included, the Portfolio Holder stated that the main reason why this option was not included, (although it was discussed during the preparation of the Local Plan) is that North Herts does not have a suitable site available within its boundary that has been identified.

The best location that has been suggested by a number of people is alongside the A505 between Odsey and Royston but that land is actually in South Cambridgeshire and would require their co-operation to develop. They have been approached (along with some other neighbouring authorities), but at present they are not interested. The other issue is that under the present system, any development of that site would count towards South Cambridgeshire's numbers, not North Hertfordshire District Council's, as these needs can be met within NHDC's own boundaries. The idea of a new settlement has not been completely discounted for the future, but will not happen within the current Plan period.

The Chairman allowed Royston Town Councillor Rod Kennedy to speak, and he requested that the consultation period on the Local Plan be extended to the end of February 2015, as seven weeks, including the Christmas period, was not long enough. Councillor Levett responded that analysis had shown that more responses were made at weekends, late at night and over holiday periods. In fact, the background documents had been out for consultation for a long time.

Councillor Kennedy then asked why new green belt land between towns could not be used for housing development and infrastructure, and was informed that it is Government policy that building on greenbelt land between towns is not allowed in case it joins towns together.

With the Chairman's permission, Royston Town Councillor John Davison stated that Royston had developed piecemeal, but that for other developments a tougher line has to be taken. He declared that it was vital that future developments were carried out in a better way than in the past, and quoted two instances in the report, asking why they had not been included in the Local Plan. Councillor Levett offered to investigate them.

Royston Town Councillor Les Baker, with the Chairman's permission, remarked that people had not been mentioned. He requested that a condition be added to ensure that the housing was affordable, and Councillor Levett agreed to this.

The Chairman then invited Royston Town Councillor F J Smith, Leader of Royston Town Council, to speak, and he commented that the whole presentation had been brilliant. However, what had not been mentioned was the land east of Luton, where housing development sites were required for Luton housing. Could the same be done for this area? Councillor Levett responded that this has yet to be seen.

Councillor Hunter raised a number of issues that are outside the Council's control when developing the Local Plan

With the Chairman's permission, Albert Silwood, a resident of Baldock enquired what the "something interesting" to which Councillor Levett had referred? He was told that this could not be revealed as yet.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Levett for his precise clarification of the Local Plan, and for responding to all the questions put to him. The Chairman requested on behalf of the Royston and District Committee that the comments from this meeting be taken into account as part of the consultation process. The Portfolio Holder agreed.

**42. 0.33 HECTARE SITE, MEADOW WAY, THERFIELD
Councillors Hunter and Burt stated a Declarable Interest, as they are both Members of Cabinet. They stated that they would not leave the Committee Room and would not speak or vote on this proposed land disposal.**

The Senior Estates Surveyor presented the Report of the Head of Finance, Performance and Asset Management.

He explained that the Royston and District Committee had been asked to give comments on the proposal to dispose of this land before the Cabinet Meeting on 16 December 2014. Howard Cottage Housing Association proposed to use the land marked on the location plan as surplus to requirements, to build affordable housing.

The Committee agreed that this had been raised because of local need, and those Members who were able to vote, unanimously agreed to the land disposal as set out in the Report.

RESOLVED:

(1) That disposal of the land marked on the location plan at Meadow Way, Therfield being declared surplus to the requirements of North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC), be supported;

(2) That this land be developed for affordable housing by Howard Cottage Housing Association.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

(1) That the proposal to declare the land at Meadow Way, Therfield surplus to requirements by North Hertfordshire District Council be agreed;

(2) That the Howard Cottage Housing Association using the aforementioned land for the development of affordable housing, be agreed.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To enable Royston and District Committee to comment on the proposed provision of

new social housing through the use of Council-owned land that might otherwise remain of limited benefit to the community.

43. **HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

The Chairman introduced this item.

Issues discussed were as follows:

- The Chairman was not satisfied with the recent work on the High Street in Royston. The Chairman had met with other Councillors and a Highways officer to view the unsatisfactory situation. The Highways officer has agreed that further work be carried out in the new Financial Year. Options are being investigated but there are issues as the High Street is in the Conservation Area;
- Big Town Tidy Up – deep cleaning and painting the street furniture, is to be carried out. The doorways of businesses are private land. The Communities Officer confirmed that there is funding for maintenance of the street furniture and this will be carried out in the Spring/Summer of 2015. The Committee agreed that a sum be allocated for this;
- Cllr Morris asked whether a resurfacing programme would still be carried out on Barkway High Street.

RESOLVED: That a sum be allocated from Town Centre Management funds to fund a deep clean of Royston High Street, pavements and street furniture during the Big Town Tidy Up.

44. **OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS – MEMBERS' REPORTS**

The Chairman introduced this item.

Coombes Community Centre was still negotiating their lease.

Members would be given an update on the **Royston Day Centre** after the next meeting.

Royston Town Twinning Association

Brief reports under this heading had already been covered by Mr Paul Rydon under Public Participation.

45. **COMMUNITY UPDATE AND GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Communities Officer (CO) updated the Committee on, and gave a brief summary of, the activities with which he had been involved since the last meeting on 17 September 2014. Members were asked to consider:

- providing funds to support Royston Town Council with a Community Art Project at Coombes Hole;
- providing funds and advice to support Royston Means Business for the event currently being planned for Summer 2015. A grant application for £1,000 would be put before the Royston and District Committee in March 2015 to contribute towards the cost of £2,300, including road closure costs, publicity costs, insurance and entertainment costs;
- funding support to Friends of Roysia School, to help with the purchase of external play equipment;
- funding support to the Free After 3pm Parking Initiative Scheme in Royston.

Grant Funding

A spreadsheet at appendix A showed the detailed spend to date of the Area Committee budgets. Members were asked to note that this that indicated the Royston and District Committee's unallocated funds totalled £17,457.

The **Royston BMX** track was working with the CO to secure funding for a new pavilion at the BMX track. The pavilion would be used as an office as well as for storage purposes. Royston First had also agreed to contribute funds to Royston BMX Club for this purpose.

The **Fitness Trail** that had been installed during October 2014 was being well used by local children. They had requested goal posts as well, but the CO recommended their installation in an alternative location to avoid over-congestion of equipment at York Way.

Dog mess had been a problem at the York Way recreation ground and the Council Enforcement Officers had recommended that a **dog bins** were to be installed on the path close to the Fitness Trail as well as in Eliot Road/Burns Road. This would have to be agreed by the Grounds team, who were responsible for emptying and maintenance of the bins. Normally this would be £180 per annum for each bin, but in the first year only it would cost £400 to install, maintain and empty each unit.

Royston Town Council had submitted the formal application for naming the road linking Market Hill and Fish Hill Market Link. Signage was to be installed once agreement on **naming the road** had been received from Hertfordshire Highways.

The CO had acquired two **salt bins**, to be located at Hunters Way and a potential location along Shaftesbury Way, off the Barkway Road.

In response to an enquiry from Royston Town Council, it had been determined that North Hertfordshire District Council was responsible for the maintenance of the brown directional 'finger posts' indicating places of interest. The CO had identified appropriate funding within the NHDC Town Centre Maintenance budget for the rectification works. These works would be carried out during the early months of 2015.

The CO then ran through the matters raised by the general public at the last Community Surgery on 6 September at Angel Pavement.

One comment referred to a poorly-maintained footpath linking Green Drift and Ivy Farm which was also poorly lit. Local residents were proved right in their belief that this path had not as yet been adopted, and the CO had investigated and was trying to formulate possible options. He reminded the Committee that a proposal to seek adoption of a road can take some considerable time, and relied on various factors.

The Committee then considered the grant application submitted. Their determination is recorded in Minute 46 below.

The Chairman thanked the Communities Officer for presenting the report and for his continued hard work for the people of Royston and the surrounding areas.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the activities and schemes with which the Communities Officer (CO) has been involved, be noted;
- (2) That the Royston and District Committee endorses the actions he has taken to promote greater community capacity and well-being and thank him for his work on behalf of the people of Royston and the surrounding area;
- (3) That the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry-forwards from the Development Budgets be noted;
- (4) That the Committee considers awarding a sum of £500 to the Royston and District Museum and Art Gallery to assist with the cost of running fortnightly mothers and toddlers dance classes as detailed in Minute 46 below;
- (5) That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes, as proposed and discussed under paragraph 9.7 of the report.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure that the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Communities Officer;

- (2) To inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. The report draws attention to the current budgetary situation, assists in the effective financial management of the Royston and District Committee's budget and ensures actions are performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance in the Grants procedure;
- (3) 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;
- (4) The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by members of the community;
- (5) Production of this report is a requirement of the 'Priorities for the District', in which the Communities Officer is required to produce a formal report to the Royston and District Committee on four occasions per annum, in line with the Civic calendar.

46. GRANT APPLICATION – ROYSTON AND DISTRICT MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY
The Chairman stated a Declarable Interest as she has been in discussions with the Museum regarding a donation from her Hertfordshire County Council Locality Budget. Councillors Burt and Lewis also stated a Declarable Interest as they are Royston Town Councillors and Cllr Burt is a Member of the Royston Museum Advisory Committee. These three Members of the Royston and District Committee stated that they would neither leave the room nor take part in the vote.

As stated previously, the sum requested was to cover the cost of hiring a professional dance teacher to run free mother and toddler dance classes every fortnight and to cover publicity costs.

RESOLVED: That the sum of £500 be granted to Royston and District Museum and Art Gallery to fund free mother and toddler dance workshops.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- 1) 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;
- 2) The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by members of the community.

NEXT MEETING OF THE ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

The next meeting of the Royston and District Committee will be held on **4 March 2014**.

The date of the next Royston Surgery is **31 January 2015** and it will be held at Angel Pavement, Royston from 10.00am to 11.30am. All Herts County Councillors, District Councillors and Royston Town Councillors are invited to attend, as are members of the Hertfordshire Constabulary.

The meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.

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Chairman