

Public Document Pack

17 November 2017

Our Ref Royston and District
Committee/29.11.17
Your Ref.
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillor Tony Hunter (Chairman), Councillor Bill Davidson (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Sarah Dingley, Councillor Jean Green, Councillor Fiona Hill, Councillor Ben Lewis and Councillor Gerald Morris.

You are invited to attend a

MEETING OF THE ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

to be held in the

**ROOM 11, ROYSTON TOWN HALL, MELBOURN STREET,
ROYSTON**

On

WEDNESDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER, 2017 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,



David Miley
Democratic Services Manager

Agenda **Part I**

Item	Page
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. MINUTES - 13 SEPTEMBER 2017 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 September 2017.	(Pages 1 - 6)
3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chairman of other business which they wish to be discussed by the Committee at the end of the business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chairman will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS 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.	
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions and presentations from members of the public.	
6. PRESENTATION FROM ANGLIAN WATER To received a presentation from Anglian Water regarding water supply and sewerage issues in Royston.	
7. HIGHWAYS ISSUES The Chairman to lead a discussion regarding any issues raised, including current and proposed highways schemes.	
8. GREEN SPACE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - PROGRESS: INFORMATION NOTE INFORMATION NOTE OF THE PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE MANAGER To consider the Information Note on progress regarding the Green Space Management Strategy.	(Pages 7 - 20)

9. COMMUNITY UPDATE
REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES MANAGER

(Pages
21 - 28)

To receive an update on activities in Royston and surrounding Districts.

10. WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

To receive any oral reports from Members regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.

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Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE ROOM 11, ROYSTON TOWN HALL, MELBOURN STREET,
ROYSTON ON WEDNESDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2017 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors Councillor Tony Hunter (Chairman), Councillor Bill Davidson (Vice-Chairman), Sarah Dingley, Jean Green, Fiona Hill and Gerald Morris*

In Attendance:

Ashley Hawkins (Communities Officer), Louise Symes (Strategic Planning and Projects Manager), Steve Cobb (Licensing Manager), Colin Broadhurst (Licensing Officer) and Ian Gourlay (Committee and Member Services Manager)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting: Councillor Ray Shakespeare-Smith (Executive Member for Policy, Transport and Green Issues), Royston Town Councillor F.J. Smith and 2 members of the public, including one speaker.

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

22 MINUTES - 13 JULY 2017

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 July 2017 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

23 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) The Chairman drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ROYSTON SWIMMING CLUB

Mr Matthew Brundle (Royston Swimming Club) gave a verbal presentation regarding the Club's grant funding application for £1,000 to assist with equipment costs essential for the success of the organisation, including a laptop for swim bookings, a banner to promote the club at events across Hertfordshire, resistance bands and a sport equipment trolley for storing all equipment at Royston Leisure Centre.

Mr Brundle advised that the Club had approximately 201 members, from a starting age of 8 years old up to masters of 60+ years of age. The bulk of the Club's swimmers were in the 12-17 age group. The Club's catchment was mainly Royston, but also surrounding towns and villages, including Buntingford, Barkway, Sandon, Litlington and Melbourn.

Mr Brundle stated that the Club was a competitive club which had become increasingly successful over the past few years, and he gave some specific examples of the level of success. The Club has interlink status with the City of Cambridge Swimming Club (CoCSC) to help develop its elite swimmers, and Royston Swimming Club members currently made up approximately 50% of the CoCSC Arena League Squad.

Mr Brundle commented that, as a small club, their revenue was dictated by their membership fees and cost of pool hire. The Club runs close to break even, currently with an annual income of £34,000 from which it paid £20,000 for pool hire and £13,000 for coach wages.

Mr Brundle explained that the ability to develop the Club was constrained by limited pool access and lane space. The Club was therefore seeking financial support to help with some key investment, which he outlined as follows:

The Club had progressively moved away from paper based administration to online club management in line with ASA requirements. A new laptop was needed to access the Club's online SwimClub Manager software; to run specialist software relating to the annual Club Championships; and to run software to enter children in Open Meet Competitions and Hertfordshire ASA County competitions – estimated cost £350;

- As the Club had restricted pool time, it needed to be smarter to increase session utilisation. One way to do this was to have land training sets on poolside. Resistance bands would help with swimmers' strength and suppleness – estimated cost of 20 sets of bands £300;
- The Club would like to invest in a Club Banner/Flag, to be used at galas and open meets as a Team meeting point, but would also be used at recruitment events (eg. when coaches visited local schools) and also left poolside to promote the Club's presence for those swimmers at Aqua ED classes or school swimming lessons – estimated cost £150; and
- The Club would also like to invest in a new security cage for its swim aides, starter gun, PA system and land training equipment – estimated cost £370.

The Chairman thanked Mr Brundle for his presentation.

26 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

The Committee was advised of ongoing and forthcoming highways matters in the Royston area.

Councillor Hill advised that Hertfordshire County Council officers now believed they had a permanent solution to the drainage problems in Newmarket Road, and the intention was to implement the works in the 2018/19 Financial Year.

The Chairman reported that the Royston High Street scheme had commenced. Councillor Hill added that a crossing was soon to be installed in York Way and also a trial for Kneesworth Street to take buses away from Tannery Drift. A crossing on Baldock Street was also planned to take place in the near future.

27 ROYSTON TOWN WIDE PARKING REVIEW

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager advised that the report had resulted from various workshops held with the Town Council and Area Committee Members. A number of issues in the report were those that had been highlighted over a number of years.

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager referred to the North Hertfordshire Parking Strategy which had been adopted in 2009 and updated in 2012, which outlined the Council's approach for undertaking Town wide parking reviews. Royston was the fourth town in the cycle. She commented that when officers started undertaking these reviews they had thought they could be completed quickly, but experience had shown that they took longer than anticipated (in many cases up to 2 years from start to finish).

In respect of the Royston Review, the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager explained that the report was the start of the process. The report outlined the schemes recommended to be taken forward, which it was proposed would be carried out in two phases. Phase 1 would be looking at the on-street schemes in and around the York Way industrial area and some other parts of the town. Phase 2 would be dealing with Town Centre parking issues.

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager drew attention to the Phase 1 schemes set out in Table 1 in the report as detailed in Appendix A to the report. The main area was York Way industrial area and the Rock Road residential area; Gower Road, Queens Road and Mill Road area Controlled Parking Zone; Princes Mews; Briary lane area; Parking restrictions to be considered in Eastfield Road; and Highway Safety schemes to be considered at Icknield Walk and Layston Park.

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager advised that her Team was experiencing resource difficulties and was finding it difficult to recruit to the post of Transport Policy Officer. However, in discussion with the Executive Member responsible for Transport, it had been agreed that the Team made use of consultants to carry out this work. There was a budget for the work, but this also covered parking schemes for all the District's towns. In the event, therefore, that not all the Royston schemes could be funded, the report also suggested a priority order for the schemes, as indicated in Table 2 in the report.

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager stated that she would report back to the Committee at appropriate intervals on the progress of the Royston schemes. She added that she was working with Hertfordshire County Council with a view to them assisting in the production of Traffic Regulation Orders.

The Committee was supportive of the Town wide review, and it was noted that some of the Priority 4 and 5 schemes could perhaps be achieved through the use of funding from the Hertfordshire County Councillors' Locality Budgets. In respect of a question regarding timescales, the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager explained that consultation on each scheme would need to take place with affected residents and businesses and, dependent on the outcome, a decision would be made on whether or not to proceed with the scheme. Some of the larger schemes could take up to a year or possibly longer. If Traffic Regulation Orders could be co-ordinated so that they were advertised at the same time then this would result in a significant cost saving.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the schemes listed in Table 1 at Appendix A of the report, be agreed for progressing the Royston town wide parking review;
- (2) That the schemes prioritised in Table 2 at Paragraph 8.9 of the report be agreed;

- (3) That officers contact the relevant Hertfordshire County Council Highway Liaison Officer to discuss with the County Councillors for Royston to give consideration to joint funding of any road safety schemes from their Hertfordshire Locality Budgets that may form part of the schemes listed in Table 1 at Appendix A to the report;
- (4) That the use of the existing funding to provide the necessary expertise until appropriate staff resources are put in place be supported; and
- 5) That the Royston and District Committee receives regular updates on progress with the Royston town wide parking review from officers.

REASON FOR DECISION: To progress the Royston town wide parking review project towards implementation.

28 **CONSULTATION IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED STREET TRADING POLICY 2018-2025**

The Licensing Manager confirmed the Chairman's observations that there were no streets in Royston that were prohibited to traders applying for a Street Trading Licence, except the main arterial roads, and that each individual organisation had to apply accordingly. It was noted that the Royston BID company could pay for an annual Town Centre licence, whereby individuals could come to them for consent to trade/hold events, for which they could charge commercial operators and allow free use for not-for-profit organisations running community events.

The Chairman advised that he would bring up the issue of an annual Town Centre licence at the next Royston BID Company meeting to see if they would be interested in applying for such a licence. The Licensing Manager confirmed that Town Centre licences had been issued to the BID companies in Letchworth Garden City and Hitchin.

The Licensing Manager explained that the Street Trading legislation had been adopted by the Council in 2005, with the intention of striking a balance between safeguarding the public and not preventing not-for-profit and community organisations from holding community events.

RESOLVED: That the report on the proposed Street Trading Policy 2018-2015 be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To provide local input into the proposed Street Trading Policy 2018-2015.

29 **GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE**

The Communities Officer presented the report of the Communities Manager entitled Grants and Community Update and drew the attention of Members to the current level of unallocated funds in the Development Budget.

The Communities Officer advised that he and Councillors Dingley and Hill had met on site at the pathway to the end of Green Drift, but unfortunately were not joined by the advisor who had promised to attend. In which case, it was now unlikely that the developers would be able to bring the pathway up to the required standard for it to be adopted as a public right of way by the end of October 2017.

On a related issue, the Committee instructed the Communities Officer to contact Redrow Homes and Moody Homes to request them to clear up litter and dog fouling on the pathway at the end of Green Drift, involving NHDC Environmental Health, if necessary.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston and District be endorsed; and
- (2) That the Communities Officer be instructed to contact Redrow Homes and Moody Homes to request them to clear up litter and dog fouling on the pathway at the end of Green Drift, involving NHDC Environmental Health, if necessary.

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

30 GRANT APPLICATION - ROYSTON SWIMMING CLUB

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,000 be awarded to Royston Swimming Club from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget to assist with equipment costs essential for the success of the organisation, including a laptop for swim bookings, a banner to promote the club at events across Hertfordshire, resistance bands and a sport equipment trolley for storing all equipment at Royston Leisure Centre.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

31 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

A number of Members updated the Committee on Ward and Outside Organisations, as follows:

- School visits – Councillors Hill and Morris undertook to liaise with appropriate Parish Councils with a view to instigating joint visits to schools in the Ermine Ward;
- Royston Volunteer Centre – Councillor Green advised that the Centre was soon to close as the Manager was moving out of the area, and due to funding issues. Outreach work would be undertaken by staff from the Broxbourne and Cambridge Volunteer Centres;
- Royston Community Transport – Town Councillor Smith reported that extra projects were planned; the organisation depended on a handful of staff + 80 volunteers, and so further staff/volunteers would be required should further expansion take place; and
- Royston Town Twinning – Councillor Green stated that the Association's representatives would be flying to Germany and then taking a coach from the airport to Grosalmerode; and the Spanish visitors from Villaneuva de la Canada would be arriving to coincide with the Royston Arts Festival and a Reception/Dinner was planned for 22 September 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.43 pm

Chairman

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ROYSTON & DISTRICT COMMITTEE 29 NOVEMBER 2017
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*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No. 8
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TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: GREEN SPACE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE HEAD OF LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This information note details the steps taken and the progress made in identifying interested groups and organisations to safely provide facilities previously provided by the Council.

2. STEPS TO DATE

2.1 CABINET

At the 24th January 2017 Cabinet meeting the following was resolved:

RESOLVED:

(1) That the results of the consultation, as identified in the body of the report, be noted, and that it be further noted that Cabinet was satisfied that demographics and size of the focus groups were appropriate for the type of consultation, and that the views of young people and children who were the main users of these facilities had been included in the consultation results;

(2) That the draft new Green Space Management Strategy (GSMS) 2017 – 2021, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be formally adopted;

(3) That it be noted that, prior to removing facilities identified in the Strategy, the Council shall allow up to 1 March 2018 for interested parties to put forward sustainable proposals that would fund both the capital and revenue requirements to safely continue to provide such facilities, and that a proactive approach be adopted in seeking community groups to take on facilities, including advertising that support would be offered to guide groups through the process, particularly through use of social media;

(4) That the work programme in the new Green Space Management Strategy be incorporated into the 2017/18 budget setting process; and

(5) That, so far as Cabinet's authority is required in respect of any variation to the contract with the Grounds Maintenance contractor, to give effect to any future revenue saving options identified within the GSMS, such authority be delegated to the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Waste, Recycling and Environment.

REASON: To best enable the retention of the green space within the budgets available to the Council.

2.2 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

On the 15th February 2017 Overview & Scrutiny received a call-in of the decisions made by cabinet on 24th January 2017 – review of green space management strategy and the following was resolved:

RESOLVED:

(1) That the decisions made by Cabinet on 24 January 2017 regarding the Review of the Green Space Management Strategy not be referred back to Cabinet;

(2) That the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services be requested to produce a report detailing the steps taken and the progress made in identifying interested groups and organisations to safely provide facilities and present it to this Committee at the meeting due to be held on 18 July 2017;

(3) That the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services be requested to produce a report detailing the steps taken and the progress made in identifying interested groups and organisations to safely provide facilities, together with details of play areas that have not attracted any interested groups and would likely close following the deadline of 1 March 2018 and present it to this Committee at the meeting due to be held in March 2018.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the Call - In of decisions made by Cabinet on 24 January 2017 regarding the Review of the Green Space Management Strategy.

2.3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN.

In addition to the Overview & Scrutiny call in, a formal complaint was made to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Ombudsman found no fault with the Council and endorsed our method of consultation with the use of focus groups.

2.4 ACTIONS TAKEN AND PROGRESS

A communication plan has been produced and is shown at Appendix A. It lists agreed actions between Jan 2017– April 2018.

As per the agreed actions in the Councils adopted Green Space Management Strategy 2017-2021 pavilions identified as being beyond economic repair have now been closed. (Bakers Close, Baldock, St. Johns Road, Cadwell Lane and Walsworth Common, Hitchin.) Prior to removing pavilions there is a period of time until 1st March 2018 for interested parties to put forward sustainable proposals.

Also as per the agreed actions in the Councils adopted Green Space Management Strategy 2017-2021, Local neighbourhood play areas identified as lower usage shall have until 1st March 2018 for interested parties to put forward sustainable proposals. (13 sites)

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN

2.4.1 Pavilions

Date	Action
Feb 2017	All current users of football pavilions contacted seeking expressions of interest for asset transfer. Appendix B details letter sent to existing users.
Feb 2017	Received expression of interested from interested party for use of Bakers Close pavilion as venue for beer festival. (later withdrawn)
Feb 2017	Contacted Hertfordshire Football Association for interest in asset transfer of pavilions
Feb 2017	Met with Hitchin Sunday Football League. Provided detailed information on maintenance and repairs required to pavilions.
Feb 2017	Expression of interest received from Hitchin Town Youth FC. Provided detailed information on maintenance and repairs required to pavilions.
Feb 2017	Received outline business case from community group for use of Bakers Close pavilion. Detailed business case to follow later in year.
April 2017	Followed up Sunday Football League for proposals for pavilions.
April 2017	Followed up Hitchin Town Youth for proposals for pavilions (No response)
April 2017	Complaint received from Sunday Football League re closure of pavilions.
May 2017	Received expression of interest from St. Johns FC to take on St. Johns pavilion. Provided detailed information on maintenance and repairs required to pavilion. Various meetings took place between May – August.
June 2017	Received expression of interest from Albion FC to take on Cadwell pavilion. Provided detailed information on maintenance and repairs required to pavilion. (Later withdrawn).
Aug 2017	Private company expressed interest in Bakers Close pavilion as fitness centre. Currently developing business case.
July 2017	Emailed community group for update on proposals for Bakers Close pavilion.
Sept 2017	Local Government Ombudsman response to a complaint found no fault with Council and endorsed use of focus groups.
Oct 2017	Emailed St. John's FC for update on business case.

2.4.2 Play Areas

Date	Action
Jan 2017	Article in Mercury paper requesting asset transfer of play areas.
Feb 2017	Contacted 38 residents who expressed an interest in play areas for expressions of interest for asset transfer.
Feb 2017	Contacted 46 PTA's and 85 community groups seeking expressions of interest for asset transfer.
Feb 2017	Play area information sheet on Web site (see appendix C)
Feb 2017	Contacted Royston Town Council and North Herts Homes seeking interest in asset transfer.
Feb 2017	Met with Gt. Ashby Council re options for play area. (They are undertaking residents survey results due in July)
Feb 2017	Tweeted offer of support for community groups.
Feb 2017	Provided Royston Councillors maintenance cost of play areas.
Mar 2017	Article in Comet paper requesting community groups to run play areas.
Mar 2017	Article in Royston Crow paper requesting community groups to run play areas.
Mar 2017	Article in Comet online requesting community support for Rosehill play area.
Mar 2017	Contacted Town Centre managers for funding for play areas.

Mar 2017	New sponsorship page on web site (see appendix D) Emailed link to Town Centre Managers & NHDC Business development officer to include in business newsletter.
Mar 2017	Met with planning to discuss future options for new play areas.
Apr 2017	Community management signs erected in 13 play area (see appendix E)
Apr 2017	Royston Town Council resolved not to fund play areas.
May 2017	Met with Community group who expressed interest in taking on Jackmans Recreation Ground play area.
May 2017	Petition received to save Rosehill play area.
June 2017	Community Development working on a business plan with Community group who expressed interest in taking on Jackmans Recreation Ground play area.
Sept 2017	Gt. Ashby Community Council expressed interest in taking on 3 play areas and funding new equipment for those listed as minimal investment.
Oct 2017	Contacted Hitchin Members with proposal for Rosehill play area.
Oct 2017	Mr Hall confirmed he was in the process of setting up community group to take on responsibility for Jackmans play area.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3.1 SUMMARY OF PROGRESS MADE

Colour	Status
	No interest from third parties
	Expressions of interest received
	Interested group secured

3.1.1 Pavilions

Site	Progress
Bakers Close Pavilion, Baldock	Outline business case received from community group to develop as social club with retained changing rooms and additional community use. Awaiting final business case.
St. Johns changing rooms, Hitchin	Expression of interest received from St. Johns FC to take on building. Provided detailed maintenance cost and condition survey. Community Development working with St. Johns FC on business case.
Cadwell Lane changing rooms, Hitchin	Expression of interest received from Albion FC to take on building. Later withdrawn.
Walsworth changing rooms, Hitchin	No expressions of interest received for existing building. Aiming to secure section 106 money for new build in 2020/21.

3.1.2 Play Areas

Site	Progress
Generic	Seeking sponsorship of some of our larger play area sites, which may generate additional income to offset the cost to help retain some of the smaller sites. We are also seeking opportunities for alternative play provision in the locality of our existing play areas through negotiations with landowners and stakeholders.
Betjeman Road, Royston	No interest from Royston Town Council. Royston District Councillors seeking options for alternative funding.
Farrier Court, Royston	No interest from Royston Town Council.
Ivel Road, Baldock	No expressions of interest received.
Dacre Road, Hitchin	No expressions of interest received.
Rosehill, Hitchin	Lots of community support to retain play area. Officers have potentially found a long term sustainable solution to retain a children's play area for the residents of Rosehill. Officers will be recommending to Cabinet in March 2018 that the existing play facility remains until such a time as a new play area is provided in the locality by an independent provider which it is expected would be at nil cost to the Council.
Symonds Rd, Hitchin	No expressions of interest received.
Jackmans Recreation Ground, Letchworth	Expression of interest received from community group to fund play area. Community Development working with group to formalise status.
Linnet Close, Letchworth	Some community support to retain play area. No offers of funding.
Oaktree Close, Letchworth	No expressions of interest received.
Chilterns, Gt. Ashby	Gt. Ashby Community Council have agreed to take on responsibility of play area.
Cleveland Way, Gt. Ashby	Gt. Ashby Community Council have agreed to take on responsibility of play area.
Fairfield Crescent, Gt. Ashby	Play area reclassified as not having formal play equipment.
Merrick Close, Gt. Ashby	Gt. Ashby Community Council have agreed to take on responsibility of play area..

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 In March 2018 provide a progress report to Overview & Scrutiny and report to Cabinet on any completed or proposed asset transfers.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Communication Plan
Appendix B: Letter sent to existing pavilion users
Appendix C: Play Area information sheet
Appendix D: Parks Sponsorship page

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

Steve Geach
Parks & Countryside Development Manager
Ext 4553
Email: steve.geach@north-herts.gov.uk

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Green Space Management Strategy 2017-2021

Appendix A: Communication Plan

OUTLINE TIMELINE FOR COMMUNICATIONS – GSMS

Timing	Action	Who is responsible?	Complete
Jan 2017	Article in local press seeking interested parties for asset transfer	Comms	Yes
Feb	Contact residents who expressed an interest in play areas	SG	Yes
Feb	Contact local football clubs advising of closure of pavilions and seeking interest in asset transfer	SG	Yes
Feb	Contact Herts FA seeking interest in asset transfer	SG	Yes
Monthly	Inform Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	SG	ongoing
Feb	Meet with Gt. Ashby Community Council re asset transfer of play areas	SG	Yes
Feb	Meet with Sunday Football League seeking interest in asset transfer	SG	Yes
Feb	Contact PTA's of all Schools in District seeking interest in asset transfer	SG	Yes
Feb	Produce information pack/toolkit for asset transfer of play areas	SG	Yes
Feb	Publish information pack/toolkit on a web page on NHDC website	SG	Yes
Feb	Contact community groups who may have an interest in asset transfer	SG	Yes

Feb	Press release	Comms	Yes
Feb	Social media	Comms	Yes
March/April	Erect notices in play areas seeking interest in asset transfer	SG	Yes
April	Contact local companies for sponsorship of play areas	SG	Yes
June	Article in Summer Outlook seeking interest in asset transfer	Comms	Yes
June/July	Social media	Comms	Yes
July	Progress report to Overview & Scrutiny	SG	Yes
Oct/Nov	Press release – last chance	Comms	Yes
Oct/Nov	Social media – last chance	Comms	Yes
Oct/Nov	Briefing note for Area Committees	SG	Yes
March 2018	Progress report to Overview & Scrutiny	SG	
March	Report to Cabinet on any completed or proposed asset transfers	SG	
April	Erect removal of equipment notices at play areas not transferred explaining what will happen to the site	SG	
April/May	Remove equipment and landscape sites not transferred	SG	
March/April	Article in Spring Outlook promoting importance of green space	Comms	

Appendix B. Letter sent to existing pavilion users

Dear

On the 24th January 2017 the Council's Cabinet discussed the future of green space and adopted a four year Green Space Management Strategy to ensure its protection in North Herts. The following link provides details of the Cabinet report listed at item 9. Appendix A. details the adopted 2017-2021 Green Space Strategy.

<http://web.north-herts.gov.uk/aksnherts/users/public/admin/kab14.pl?operation=SUBMIT&meet=102&cmte=CA&grpId=public&arc=71>

You will see that the stated aim of the strategy is 'to provide a sustainable, strategic approach for the future management of green space'. The key driver of the strategy is to retain and maintain the green space in our urban environments for current and future generations to enjoy.

In relation to Football Pavilions:

The Council recognises that many of its pavilions are beyond economic repair and costly to maintain. It has been agreed that at the end of the current football season, the following pavilions shall be closed: St. Johns Road, Cadwell Lane and Walsworth Common, Hitchin.

The Council will allow up to 1 March 2018 for interested parties to put forward viable proposals for the transfer of these facilities to a third party.

If you feel you may have a viable proposal please contact North Hertfordshire District Council on 01462474553 or email steve.geach@north-herts.gov.uk.

Managing a play area

In order to ensure continued investment in its major play areas, the Council is looking for interested parties to put forward viable proposals that would fund both the maintenance and as required the replacement of the equipment for some small play areas.

These play areas include:

Dacre Road, Rosehill and Symons Rd play areas in Hitchin;

Jackmans Recreation Ground, Linnet Close and Oaktree Close play areas in Letchworth;

Ivel Road play area in Baldock;

Betjeman Road & Farriar Court play areas in Royston; and

Chilterns, Cleveland Way, Fairfield Crescent and Merrick Close play areas in Gt. Ashby

Firstly, if not already established you will need to form a legally recognised body such as a registered Friends of Group or Residents Association. Our Community Development team will be happy to assist you in this. Please contact our Community Manager, Stuart Izzard on 01462 474854 or email stuart.izzard@north-herts.gov.uk.

What we will do

The Council will transfer the play area to the group in the form of a 25 year lease. The lease will be legally binding and it is recommended that you obtain your own legal advice to ensure you are happy with it. The lease will stipulate what the Council expects from you and what you can expect from the Council.

The Council will continue to maintain the grass and any trees or shrubs that may be present along with litter picking the area and emptying the bins.

What you will do

In summary you will become responsible for the regular inspection and maintenance of the play area including the equipment, safety surfacing, litter bins, seat, fencing etc. You will also be responsible for the replacement of equipment as and when required.

You will need to take out your own public liability insurance. This [charity insurance page](#) provides useful information on insurance and other information of interest to community groups.

Inspections and risk assessments

The play area must remain open for general public use and the Council expects you to maintain it in a safe and clean condition for use.

Currently the Council inspects its play areas on a daily basis and you may wish to contact our grounds maintenance contractor for a quote to do this on your behalf. Our contractor can be contacted via andrew.mills@north-herts.gov.uk. We have found that these recorded daily inspections pay dividends in defending insurance claims. If you wish to do the inspections yourself The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) can arrange suitable training. RoSPA can be contacted at enquiries@rospa.com.

Each year you will be required to undertake an independent risk assessment of the play area and send a copy to the Council. The Council will expect you to undertake any remedial work

highlighted in the report. If any highlighted work identified as a risk to users is not undertaken, the Council may have no option but to remove the item of equipment; if there are regular failures, the Council will need to consider whether to terminate the lease.

The Council has negotiated a reduced rate with a specialist playground inspection company for these annual inspections and you may wish to take advantage of this service. The current charge is £50.00. If you prefer to make your own arrangements RoSAP will be able to provide a suitable list of companies.

Considerations when taking on a play area

The check list below is not exhaustive but identifies some of things that you will need to consider prior to taking on a play area:

Becoming qualified to undertake play area inspections.	Retaining records of safety inspections.
Routine maintenance of the equipment such as replacement swing seats and chains.	Arranging public liability insurance.
How to respond to public / media enquiries	Training for routine maintenance for example how to safely replace a swing seat.
Who will paint the equipment	Arranging annual risk assessment
What to do if you find hazardous waste such as needles from drug users.	What contact number to have displayed at the play area in case of emergencies or complaints.
How to quickly make safe a dangerous item of play equipment.	How to clean noxious substances from play equipment e.g. dog mess, sick etc.

Further help and information

This may all sound rather daunting but it is important to realise upfront what is involved in managing a play area. This information may help prevent future unexpected surprises.

If you google ‘Community Playgrounds’ you will see that a number of Councils have adopted a similar approach. You will also be able to contact a number of community groups that already manage play areas.

There are also a number of playground companies that will be able to offer help and guidance especial on funding opportunities for community playgrounds. Below is a brochure from Wicksteed Playgrounds that you may find of use.

If you wish to proceed with taking on the responsibility of your local play area, please contact Steve Geach, Parks & Countryside Development Manager, steve.geach@north-herts.gov.uk, or call 01462 474553.

Attachment

Size

[Wicksteed Playgrounds Funding Brochure](#)

1.02 MB

Appendix D: Parks Sponsorship page

Park Sponsorship Scheme

The Parks service of North Hertfordshire District Council runs a sponsorship scheme, designed to offer local businesses the opportunity to advertise in popular destinations around the district.

Roadside bedding displays, play areas, water splash parks and skate/BMX parks in North Hertfordshire are available to sponsor with all proceeds being used to improve the surrounding park areas. You can see an example of a sign [below](#).

Some of the sites on offer include main town gateway locations such as those entering Letchworth Garden City and large floral beds in the Green Flag award winning Priory Memorial Gardens in Royston. Also available to sponsor are the extremely popular and recently improved and well used larger play areas in our towns. Four popular interactive water splash parks including the large water pool at Howard Park in Letchworth are also available to sponsor along with our newly constructed skate park at Norton Common in Letchworth.

For more information please contact the Parks Department on 01462 474000 or by email via services@north.herts.gov.uk to learn more about the scheme and discuss how it could help your business.

Sites available for sponsorship

Site	Size (M2)	Description
Letchworth Garden City		The World's first Garden City
Pixmore Way roundabout flower beds	177m ²	Flora display at main gateway into town centre
Howard Park play area	1950m ²	Play area located adjacent large interactive water splash park attracting many thousands of visitors each year.
Norton Common, skate park	1205m ²	New district wide skate boarding facility.
Baldock		Historic market town
Avenue Park water splash park	390m ²	Interactive water splash park, open May–September each year.
Royston		Historic market town
Priory Memorial gardens, flora displays.	617m ²	Town centre gardens. Displays include herbaceous borders and annual bedding.

Priory Memorial gardens, water splash park	300m ²	Interactive water splash park, open May –September each year.
Hitchin		Historic market town
Bancroft Recreation Ground, water splash park	300m ²	Interactive water splash park, open May –September each year.
Ransoms Recreation Ground, play area	798m ²	Recently refurbished play area including equipment for all ages and multi use games area
Walsworth Common, Play Area	1914m ²	Recently refurbished play area including equipment for all ages and ball games area

Attachment

Size

[Sponsorship sign example](#)

244.21 KB

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ROYSTON & DISTRICT COMMITTEE 29 NOVEMBER 2017
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*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No. 9
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TITLE OF REPORT: COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES MANAGER
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS
PRIORITY: ATTRACTIVE AND THRIVING / PROSPER AND PROTECT / RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Grant Funding, made by community groups and local organisations, which conform to the Authority's Grants Policy approved by Cabinet on June 14th 2016.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Officer has been involved.
- 1.4 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston.
- 2.2 The Committee agrees the release of £1,500 in support of the Free After 3pm Parking initiative scheme for the town. This funding is required annually and is combined with funding from Hertfordshire County Councillors' Locality Budgets and Royston First.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Officer.
- 3.2 This report is intended to inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in June 2016.

3.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Corporate Plan.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report. However in the course of debate at committee, Members may wish to comment and offer additional views on any of the items included within this report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

5.1 Consultation with Members has occurred in connection with the allocation of funds for Community Projects.

5.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external bodies/groups has taken place with regard to funding proposals for Area Committee Funds.

6. FORWARD PLAN

6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 Royston Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2017/18.

7.2 There was no carry forward from the 2016/17 financial year.

7.3 So far the Royston & District Area Committee has awarded £6,700 of its £10,700 allocation for the 2017/18 financial year.

7.4 Members should note that each year the Committee is asked to allocate £1,500 in support of the Free After 3pm Parking initiative scheme for the town. If members agree to support the initiative, the remaining budget to be allocated at the March 2018 meeting will be £2,500.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Update on Community Engagement

8.1.1 Creative Royston

The Royston Festival was held between Friday 22nd and Sunday 24th September. As with previous years the festival was extremely popular with the Carnival event at Priory Memorial Gardens on Saturday 23rd September attracting large numbers of visitors.

The Royston Communities Officer (CO) provided marshal support on the day.

8.1.2 Pathway at end of Green Drift

The Royston CO continues to liaise with Moody Homes, Redrow Homes and Herts Right of Way Team on the pathway at the end of Green Drift.

Redrow Homes are currently liaising with their Solicitors to progress the legal transfer.

The Herts Right of Way Team is now co-ordinating the project and will be finalising details of the land adoption with Moody Homes and Redrow Homes.

In order for the pathway to be adopted as a Public Right Of Way, the gates will need to be removed from both ends of the path, the path will need to be enhanced to the required specification and signage erected.

8.1.3 Royston Means Business Christmas Event

The Royston Means Business Christmas Event will be held for the 5th time on Royston High Street on Saturday 2nd December. The Royston CO is providing support to the organiser.

Support has included assistance with licensing issues, parking, traffic management and support with drafting the event management plans as required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group.

The Royston CO will also be providing marshal support on the day and will be assisting with the event set up and take down.

8.1.4 S106 Matters

The Royston CO and CM continue to work with local groups to secure funding for projects. This includes the Therfield Pavilion Project, a number of initiatives at Royston Heath with the Conservators, a disabled access lift for Coombes Community Centre and funding for kitchen refurbishment works at Barkway Village Hall.

8.2 **Highways Matters**

This section is included within the community update report for each committee cycle to facilitate debate and enable appropriate feedback on any of the proposed or listed Highways related schemes.

Any new proposals or revised schemes will be forwarded to the respective Herts County Councillor for consideration who will in turn report back and advise the Committee accordingly.

9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Section 9.8.2 (g) of Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference provides that they may: "establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations operating specifically with the area including, where appropriate, the provision of discretionary grant aid/financial support etc. but excluding grants for district-wide activities". The Area Committees also have delegated power under section 9.8.1 (a) & (b) to allocate discretionary budgets and devolved budgets within the terms determined by the Council and outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in June 2016.

9.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything:-

- An individual may generally do
- Anywhere in the UK or elsewhere
- For a commercial purpose or otherwise, for a charge or without a charge
- Without the need to demonstrate that it will benefit the authority, its area or person's resident or present in its area.

9.3 Section 137 Local Government Act 1972 provides specific authority for the Council to incur expenditure on anything which is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to its area. This includes a charity or other body operating for public service.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 All Area Committees saw a 55% decrease in funding in the 2016/17 financial year. There are 4 meetings in the 2017/18 Committee cycle and members must ensure that sufficient funding is available for all meetings. The Royston Committee had an original budget of £10,700 for the 2017/18 financial year. £1,000 was allocated at the September meeting leaving £4,000 for the committee to allocate.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Performance, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12.2 All projects that are assigned area committee funding are assessed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on any part of the local community. The only deviation to this is where a minority or marginalised group may specifically receive funding or allocation of resources to address a particular area of need or 'gap' in provision.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

15. APPENDICES

15.1 Appendix 1 - 2017/18 financial year budget sheet.
ROYSTON (29.11.17))

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

17.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.

17.2 Review of Grant Policy Cabinet June 2016.

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ROYSTON AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2017/18

SUMMARY/ TOTALS	Funding	Allocated	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Budget					
DEVELOPMENT BUDGET 2017/18	£10,700	£6,700	£6,700	£0	£4,000					
Total	£10,700	£6,700	£6,700	£0	£4,000					

DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS										
	Funding			Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Amount	Comments
Base Budget 2017/18	£10,700			Creative Royston	£1,500	14/07/17	£1,500			
				Corvus Cornix Basketball	£200	14/07/17	£200			
				Rotary Club of Royston	£1,000	14/07/17	£1,000			
				Royston Community Transport	£3,000	14/07/17	£3,000			
				Royston Swimming Club	£1,000	29/09/17	£1,000			
Total	£10,700		11930006980		£6,700		£6,700	£0	£4,000	

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