

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

**MEETING HELD IN THE ROOM 11, ROYSTON TOWN HALL,  
MELBOURN STREET, ROYSTON  
ON WEDNESDAY, 13TH JUNE, 2018 AT 7.30 PM**

**MINUTES**

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

**In Attendance:** *Simon Ellis (Development and Conservation Manager), Ashley Hawkins (Communities Officer) and Amelia McInally (Committee and Member Services Officer)*

**Also Present:** *County Councillor Fiona Hill, Royston Town Councillor John Davison and two members of the public, including one registered speaker*

**4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ben Lewis.

**5 MINUTES - 14 MARCH 2018**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 14 March 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**6 MINUTES - 17 MAY 2018**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 May 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**7 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business notified.

**8 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting, those who had attended to give a presentation, the new Member of the Committee, Councillor Ruth Brown and Royston Town Councillor John Davison;
- (2) The Chairman welcomed County Councillor Fiona Hill, whom he thanked for her 16 years of service as District Councillor and her hard work on behalf of the residents of Royston;
- (3) The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;

- (4) 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.

## **9 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ROYSTON IN BLUE**

Royston In Blue did not make a presentation as they withdrew their grant funding application.

## **10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - SINGING KETTLE GROUP**

Lisa Marshal from the Singing Kettle Group, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee and gave a verbal presentation regarding the grant funding application for the Singing Kettle Group.

Lisa informed the Committee that the Singing Kettle Group was founded by Michael and Margaret McCormack, explaining that their vision had been purely to reach out to the community to connect with people of all ages, encouraging communication within that wide range with their differing demographics. Lisa further explained to the Committee that the service the Singing Kettle Group provided was free to the public, an opportunity for people to meet up and chat over coffee.

Lisa advised the Committee of the Singing Kettle Group's future wish list they would like to offer to members, those included:-

- motivational guest speakers;
- seaside days out;
- provision of an allotment and
- provide assistance to younger members of the group with personal development and life skills.

Lisa explained that the Singing Kettle Group were applying for grant funding in order to assist with all of the costs associated with promoting themselves, in order that they may continue to provide their services, expand and realise new ideas and opportunities.

Several members whole-heartedly supported the work of The Singing Kettle Group, and felt that it was a fantastic resource and were impressed with their vision to expand. They did, however agreed that management structure would need to be addressed for future operational requirements on how to promote themselves to ensure their growth.

The Chairman thanked Ms Marshal for her presentation.

## **11 SECTION 106 AND UNILATERAL UNDERTAKINGS**

The Development and Conservation Manager presented the report entitled Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings.

The Development and Conservation Manager drew the Members attention to:

- 8.1.1 of the report – stating that The Community Infrastructure Levy regulations which came into force on 28 March 2012 would remain in place.

- 8.1.2 of the report – the pooling limit which had been introduced in April 2015 would still apply and remain in place for the time being, there was no confirmation as to when pooling restrictions would be reviewed. Because of the restrictions on the pooling limit, in that, a tariff could no longer be imposed on an unknown project, this system had been heavily criticised.
- Over the next few years the emphasis of Section 106 Agreement would concentrate more on identifying the project from the beginning of a Planning Application, deciding where the money would be spent and getting documentation signed and sealed. All agreements that had been entered into from 2015, the projects had already been identified within that legal agreement, the money was committed and couldn't be changed.

NHDC Communities team, who worked within the wider community met with The Development and Conservation Manager every two to three months to discuss projects identified, that may or may not fulfil the required legislative criteria to receive Section 106 funding. The Development and Conservation Manager confirmed that there was always on-going communication between the departments.

Sustainable Transport was confirmed as the most difficult funding to allocate, due to them usually being County Council projects, and liaising with the Highway authorities was not always satisfactory. Whilst that was a tricky area it was continually being looked at in terms of way to spend available funds.

The Development and Conservation Manager confirmed that Section 106 funding came into play before Planning Applications had been granted and that funding could not be applied for from permissions that had not yet been granted.

County Councillor Fiona Hill informed the Committee that meetings had already taken place with all interested parties on future & existing developments stating that she would forward communications to the Development and Conservation Manager.

Royston Town Councillor, John Davison reported that Section 106 money was currently under negotiation and agreed in principal on the land North of Baldock Road reporting that this was £100,000 for new facilities on the Heath and £1,000 per house for the upkeep of the Heath. He further stated that it was hoped, when the Lawyers, on completion of paperwork would give scope to spend the money in other areas that is separate from the money that was already available and unallocated in the Section 106 lists, particularly for leisure and sport.

The Development and Conservation Officer drew the Committees attention to the table in section 8.4.1 of the report, showing the financial position for the section 106 monies that the District Council had been receiving from 2001 to date. He highlighted their well audited system, supported by the figures. He advised the Committee that of the 5.6 million pounds collected by the Council over the last 18 years, only £7,000 had ever been refunded, proving to be an impressive track record.

The Development and Conservation Manager drew the Committee's attention to 2.3 of the Recommendations stating that it had been adjusted a few years ago to enable allocation of money from one village to another.

Members agreed that they continue to funnel ideas for allocation of Section 106 funding to the Community Officers and their team. The Development and Conservation Manager reminded the Committee the difference between an idea and a project, stating that allocation of money would only occur when proved that the project could happen, and it could be funded. He further reminded that the project must deliver infrastructure that was permanent and benefitted the service. A project had to be deliverable, Section 106 could not fund an entire project and developers could only fund demands on services it generated.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the contents of the report titled Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings be noted;
- (2) That a report shall continue to be presented to this Committee on an annual basis;
- (3) 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.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To ensure that there is a robust system for negotiating and managing Section 106 and Unilateral Undertakings, and to ensure that this is kept under constant review in order that this activity is managed in an appropriate manner.

**12 HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

County Councillor Fiona Hill gave a brief update regarding highways issues in the Royston and District area including:

- Grass Cutting at the major junction on A505, stating that the safety issues had been dealt with, she explained that these issues had been held up due to Cambridge County Council placing a Traffic Regulation Order through their own authority to carry out works on the A10 which would have affected the necessitated use of the A505 during that time.
- Highways Locality Budget Schemes had in the past been postponed due to Utility Companies works having to be carried out. She further explained that Royston and District Committee and County Councillors were lobbying to have the law changed to enable them more control of utilities. County Councillor Hill informed the Committee that the Highways Locality Budget was near to completion and would continue to update Royston and District Committee on progress made.

**13 GRANTS & 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 following:-

- Section 106 Funding, to the value of an estimated £15k had been secured by Royston BMX to assist with their plans for a new practice strip.
- Barkway Parish Council had received Section 106 funding for the provision of a new Bus Shelter, a zip wire and associated land works at the recreation ground.
- Coombes Community Association and Royston Town Centre Working Group applied for Capital Funding and were successful in securing, subject to a few caveats, £15k for the installation of a platform lift, refurbishment of the toilet facilities and the refurbishment of the kitchen.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development and be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston and District be endorsed;

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

**14 GRANT APPLICATION - ROYSTON IN BLUE**

Prior to the meeting Royston In Blue withdrew their application for grant funding.

**15 GRANT APPLICATION - SINGING KETTLE GROUP**

**RESOLVED:** That grant funding of £400 be awarded to the Singing Kettle Group from the 2018/19 Discretionary Budget as funding towards publicity and equipment costs associated with promoting their new group in the Royston and District area.

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

**16 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS**

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

- The Police and Crime Panel was approaching – Councillor Tony Hunter undertook to try and acquire a copies of the David Lloyds Annual Report and distribute to all members of the Committee;
- Town Twinning AGM – Councillor Ruth Brown advised that the meeting was to be held at 8pm on Wednesday 27 June 2018;
- Motivate Group – Councillor Dingley reported that the family coaching programme had commenced on Tuesday 12 June 2018, and been really well supported.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Chairman