

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING
ON WEDNESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER, 2020 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Tony Hunter (Chair), Bill Davidson (Vice-Chair), Ruth Brown, Jean Green, Gerald Morris and Carol Stanier*

In Attendance: *Marie Pritchett (Parking Projects Officer), Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer), Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Anna Gouveia (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 2 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

20 WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY

Audio recording 4 seconds

The Chair welcomed everyone to this Royston and District Area Committee meeting that was being conducted with Members and Officers at various locations, communicating via audio/video and online. There was also the opportunity for the public and press to listen to and view proceedings.

The Chair invited the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer to explain how proceedings would work and to confirm that Members and Officers were in attendance.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer undertook a roll call to ensure that all Members, Officers and registered speakers could hear and be heard and gave advice regarding the following:

The meeting was being streamed live onto YouTube and recorded via Zoom.

Extracts from the Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol were included with the agenda and the full version was available on the Council's website which included information regarding:

- Live Streaming;
- Noise Interference;
- Rules of Debate;
- Voting; and
- Part 2 Items

Members were requested to ensure that they were familiar with the Protocol.

The Chair of the Royston and District Area Committee, Councillor Tony Hunter started the meeting proper.

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 41 seconds

There were no apologies for absence.

22 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 46 seconds

There was no other business notified.

23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 52 seconds

- (1) The Chair thanked those who had attended the Town Talk and welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded as well as filmed. The audio recording would be available to view on Mod.Gov and the film recording via the NHDC YouTube channel;
- (3) The Chair 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;
- (4) The Chair advised that he would be taking Item 7, Highways Matters, first on the agenda.

24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - 1ST ROYSTON SCOUTS

Audio recording – 17 minutes 13 seconds

Mr Patrick Leighton, 1st Royston Scouts, thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of the grant application as follows:

- They were seeking funding of £796 for 8 replacement tents that would be used by approximately 85-90 children;
- This was the first time since 2005 that the group had approached the Committee for funding;
- The groups had been meeting on Zoom but had not been charging subs, however they still had to pay an annual fee to keep the organisation going;
- The tents would be used after lockdown for pitching and camping.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ruth Brown

Mr Leighton advised that tent pitching could continue during the pandemic in the group "bubbles", but tents would not generally be lent out to individuals to ensure they were kept in good condition. Tents had a shelf-life of approximately 4 years and were used regularly for camps in all weathers.

The Chair thanked Mr Patrick Leighton for his presentation.

25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - 7TH ROYSTON (BARKWAY) SCOUTS

Audio recording 38 minutes 37 seconds

NB Mr Stuart Farrow, 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts, had been unable to attend the meeting due to an urgent work commitment and have given his apologies during the meeting.

The Committee agreed that, due to the length of time until the next Committee meeting in March, the funding request from 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts would be considered at this meeting.

The Community Engagement Officer presented the application from the 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts including:

- The 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts were seeking funding of £795 for equipment, tents, and some cooking equipment;
- They were seeking funding for bush saws not buzz saws as stated in the report;
- This was the first time they had sought funding from the Committee;
- The equipment could be used for training activities as well as camping.

The Chair thanked the Community Engagement Officer for presenting the funding request on behalf of 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts.

26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - MELBOURN AREA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Audio recording 25 minutes 4 seconds

Mr John Travis, Melbourn Area Youth Development, thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application as follows:

- Melbourn Area Youth Development (MAYD) was a jointly funded youth club based in Melbourn, located close to Melbourn Village College;
- Funding was shared between four Cambridgeshire villages based on attendance and was reviewed annually;
- A specialist youth work contractor, Groundwork East, was employed by the youth club;
- Changes were made to the catchment area of Melbourn Village College which now included almost 80 students from Royston who also used the youth club;
- Royston Town Council had been approached for funding but were unable to help;
- The funding request of £902 was proportional to the anticipated participation of youth from Royston for the year commencing January 2021;
- MAYD would welcome representation from Royston on the Joint Committee which managed the youth club.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Gerald Morris;
- Councillor Carol Stanier;
- Councillor Ruth Brown;
- Councillor Tony Hunter.

Mr Travis advised that the two six-week workshop sessions to be delivered were planned to take place at the pavilion on Melbourn Recreation Ground not online via Zoom.

Mr Travis advised that Groundwork East delivered a programme including drama, art and music and also worked with the youth club members on issues such as anxiety and sexual

health. Membership was from a mixed demographic, including those from difficult backgrounds.

The Community Engagement Officer confirmed that the funding request met the Committee's grant funding criteria as children from Royston would benefit from attending the youth club.

The Chair thanked Mr John Travis for his application.

27 GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio recording 41 minutes 14 seconds

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled Grants and Community Update together with the following appendix:

- Appendix 1 – 2020/21 Financial Year Budget Sheet.

He advised Members that:

- The Committee had £5,138 remaining in its budget to allocate for the year which included a refund of £438 in respect of the "Free After Three" parking initiative;
- If the Committee was minded to allocate funding in accordance with the applications received for this meeting, and taking into account the funding of the "Free After Three" parking initiative for the next financial year, a budget of £1,145 would remain for the Committee to allocate at its March meeting;
- The bus shelter on Icknield Walk was due to be installed by the end of the year, the exact location would be confirmed.

It was proposed by Councillor Tony Hunter, seconded by Councillor Carol Stanier and:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the refund of £438 into the Royston Base Budget 2020/21 against the payment made in April for the Free After 3pm parking Initiative in Royston, be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston be endorsed;
- (3) That Councillor Carol Stanier be nominated as a member of the Melbourn Area Youth Development Committee.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Team.

28 GRANT APPLICATION - 1ST ROYSTON SCOUTS

Audio recording 45 minutes 21 seconds

Prior to consideration of the item Councillor Carol Stanier declared a declarable interest in that her husband was District Secretary for the Scouts and her son was a member of 1st Royston Cubs. She advised that she would leave the meeting during both the debate and the vote on this item.

The Chair advised that 1st Royston Scouts was requesting £796 in grant funding.

It was proposed by Councillor Tony Hunter, seconded by Councillor Ruth Brown and:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £796 be awarded to 1st Royston Scouts to assist with the costs of purchasing new tents and equipment that could be used for training and learning experiences during the pandemic and then for camps throughout 2021.

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

29 GRANT APPLICATION - 7TH ROYSTON (BARKWAY) SCOUTS

Audio recording 46 minutes 19 seconds

Prior to consideration of the item Councillor Carol Stanier declared a declarable interest in that her husband was District Secretary for the Scouts. She advised that she would leave the meeting during both the debate and the vote on this item.

The Chair advised that the 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts were requesting £795 in grant funding.

It was proposed by Councillor Gerald Morris, seconded by Councillor Ruth Brown and:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £795 be awarded to 7th Royston (Barkway) Scouts to assist with the costs of purchasing new tents and equipment that could be used for training and learning experiences during the pandemic and then for camps throughout 2021.

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

30 GRANT APPLICATION - MELBOURN AREA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Audio recording 47 minutes 56 seconds

NB Councillor Stanier re-joined the meeting at 8.18pm

The Chair advised that Melbourn Youth Development was requesting £902 in grant funding.

It was proposed by Councillor Ruth Brown, seconded by Councillor Gerald Morris by show of hand and:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £902 be awarded to Melbourn Area Youth Development to assist with the costs of running the youth provision via Groundwork East and venue hire costs at Melbourn Recreation Ground Pavilion.

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

31 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Audio recording – 3 minutes 44 seconds

County Councillor Fiona Hill gave the Committee a verbal update on highways issues including:

- Speed and volume surveys were due to be carried out in various areas of the town;
- The speed indicator device in Newmarket Road had now been turned around;

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- There were issues with regard to speeding around schools and various areas of the town, particularly around Tannery Drift School where speeding mitigation measures and 20mph zones had been requested;
- Dropped kerbs and crossings would be installed in Orchard Road and in York Way;
- There have been some resurfacing works in Barkway.

County Councillor Steve Jarvis gave the Committee a verbal update on highways issues including:

- An investigation had been requested into the introduction of a 20mph limit and traffic calming measures to be put in place around Tannery Drift School;
- Highway works around the town had been subject to some disruption, for example, resurfacing work to the pavement that used to lead to Morrisons;
- There was some footway work to be done in Green Drift;
- The installation of double yellow lines in Layston Park was underway;
- Patching work was planned to roads around Therfield;
- Confirmation was awaited regarding Royston's application for sustainable travel town status.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Tony Hunter

County Councillor Jarvis confirmed that there would be a statutory period for people to submit objections to the Layston Park scheme once the Traffic Regulation Orders had been published. The target completion date was March 2021 before budget year end.

The Parking Projects Officer gave an update on the Royston Parking Review including:

- The pre-consultation for Schemes 1 and 2 had been postponed due to lockdown restrictions but were due to start the following week and run for an extended period of 6 weeks up until the 17th January 2020 to account for the Christmas and New Year holidays;
- The objectives of both schemes were to make the affected roads both safer and also to propose implementing an extension of the controlled parking zone or introduce a new one. In Scheme 1 a commercial parking scheme in the York Way Industrial Estate was being proposed and the views of the business community would be sought on this;
- Scheme 3 (Princes Mews/Briary Lane area) and Scheme 4 (parking restrictions in Eastfield Road off Newmarket Road) pre-consultations would be delayed until January;
- The Parking Projects Officer advised that she would be able to provide a fuller update on the pre-consultation exercise at the next meeting of the Committee.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Carol Stanier

The Parking Projects Officer advised that additional areas might be able to be considered as part of the review should the original areas under consideration no longer be relevant for review.

32 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 51 minutes 03 seconds

The Chair led a discussion regarding Ward Matters and Outside Organisations. The following issues were discussed:

Doorstep Carols Event

Councillor Carol Stanier advised that:

- the Doorstep Carols Event was taking place on 16th December;
- various local radio stations would be playing carols with the idea that people could sing along;
- everyone was encouraged to take part on their doorsteps.

Royston First

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that Royston First had been doing a lot of work around the run up to Christmas including:

- Encouraging people to shop local and support local businesses;
- East Herts and North Herts were taking part in the “Shop Safe – Shop Local” initiative and there would be a photoshoot around Royston to encourage this;
- EU funding for an additional five hand sanitisers had been received;
- Planters had been installed in the town;
- Working in conjunction with the Town Council to get the Christmas lights up;
- Shop windows had been painted;
- A reindeer trail in the shop windows was being organised for children;
- The vast majority of the bid levy had been received despite the pandemic;

Citizen’s Advice

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that Citizen’s Advice:

- have had to change the way they deliver their service due to the pandemic, moving to phone, email and webchat;
- had seen an increase in people needing support which was no surprise;
- were introducing a video service soon and were offering a limited face-to-face service in Letchworth;
- were re-designing the way they delivered their services, considering e.g. free phones in public places and a bus or van to reach rural areas;
- were delivering exceptional value for money - every £1 invested would return nearly £5 in financial savings and much more in wider economic and social benefits;
- were preparing for an expected continued increase in demand in the next six months with the end of the furlough scheme, unemployment rising, etc.
- were a very much needed service which should be commended to the community.

Royston and District Community Transport

Councillor Tony Hunter advised that:

- They continued to maintain the best service they could within Covid restrictions.

Grants for Businesses

Councillor Tony Hunter advised that:

- government grants were available to businesses and an application form could be found on the NHDC website;
- the cut-off date for applications was 15th December 2020 and Members were encouraged to promote this to businesses.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Chair