

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



01 June 2021

Our Ref    Royston and District Committee/09.06.21  
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To:   Members of the Committee: Councillor Tony Hunter, Councillor Ruth Brown, Councillor Adam Compton, Councillor Sarah Dingley, Councillor Jean Green, Councillor Gerald Morris and Councillor Carol Stanier

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A**

**MEETING OF THE ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

to be held in the

**HARDWICKE HALL, ROYSTON TOWN HALL, MELBOURN  
ROAD, ROYSTON**

On

**WEDNESDAY, 9TH JUNE, 2021 AT 7.30 PM**

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson  
Service Director – Legal and Community

**\*\*MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL  
AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION  
ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING\*\***

## **Agenda** **Part I**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>WELCOME</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2021/22</b> To elect a Chair of the Royston and District Committee for the Civic Year 2021/22.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2021/22</b> To elect a Vice-Chair for the Royston and District Committee for the Civic Year 2021/22.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>MINUTES - 17 MARCH 2021</b> To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 17 March 2021.	(Pages 5 - 14)
<b>6.</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS</b> Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II 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 Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> 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 Chair 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, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ROYSTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION</b> To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public including:  1) Royston Town Youth Football Club; 2) Royston Community Association.	

9. **GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE** (Pages  
REPORT OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER 15 - 26)

To bring to the Committee's attention some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

10. **HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

The Chair to lead a discussion regarding any issues raised, including current and proposed highways schemes.

11. **WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS**

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

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## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING  
ON WEDNESDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2021 AT 7.30 PM**

#### MINUTES

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

**In Attendance:** *County Councillor Fiona Hill, County Councillor Steve Jarvis, Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer) and Anna Gouveia (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

**Also Present:** *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 1 member of the public, who was a registered speaker.*

#### **33 WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY**

*Audio recording – 3 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.

Voting would be conducted by Members using the raised hand button for this meeting.

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

**34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 15 seconds*

There were no apologies for absence.

**35 MINUTES - 15 JANUARY 2020 TO 2 DECEMBER 2020**

*Audio Recording – 2 minutes 25 seconds*

The Chair advised that there were 4 sets of Minutes to agree:

- 15 January 2020;
- 1 July 2020;
- 7 October 2020;
- 2 December 2020.

Councillor Carol Stanier pointed out a minor amendment to the Minutes of 1 July 2020.

Councillor Tony Hunter proposed, Councillor Jean Green seconded and it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Minutes of the meetings of the Royston and District Committee held on 15 January, 1 July, 7 October and 2 December 2020 be approved as a true record of the proceedings, subject to a minor amendment to the Minutes of 1 July 2020;
- (2) That, with the authorisation of the Chair, his electronic signature and initials be attached to the Minutes approved in (1) above.

**36 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 29 seconds*

There was no other business notified.

**37 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Audio recording – 4 minutes 54 seconds*

- (1) The Chair 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 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 Councillor Bill Davidson had resigned as a Councillor and therefore as Vice-Chair of the Committee. The Chair passed on the Committee's thanks to Councillor Davidson for all his work with the Committee over the years and wished him and wife Lindsay all the best for the future in their new location.

## 38 HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

*Audio recording – 6 minutes 40 seconds*

Sergeant Jonathan Vine, Hertfordshire Constabulary, thanked the Chair for the invitation to address the Committee and provided Members with a verbal presentation including:

- Sergeant Vine had returned to Royston after 7 years away;
- The Covid-19 pandemic had significantly affected policing over the last 12 months;
- There had initially been an increase in domestic violence but this had levelled out;
- A decrease in demand for other policing services had been seen and crime levels were low in certain areas of crime;
- There had been very few Covid breaches in the Royston community;
- There had been a few issues with anti-social behaviour from youths in the town and an Operation had been set up to target and support this group specifically. Unfortunately some of the group had committed a quite serious offence, been charged and were awaiting court. Anti-social behaviour had now reduced significantly as a result;
- The Police had tried to be as visible as possible in the town during the pandemic and had maintained the same staffing levels as the last couple of years;
- There had been a significant reduction in crime in the rural area;
- There had been a few hare coursing incidents but these were few and far between and rural burglary offences had reduced considerably;
- Speeding incidents were an issue in Royston and the wider county and had been high on the public's priority list when consulted;
- The Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner had supplied the Royston force with a speed van and it was hoped that this would enable a lot more work to be done to tackle speeding in the community;
- There had been an increase in graffiti around the town recently and the Police looked forward to working closely with NHDC to tackle this and remove the graffiti quickly;
- The youth provision in the town could be improved in terms of more facilities such as youth clubs which would enable the Police to engage with young people;
- Crime figures for the past year for the area were as provided as follows (covering the area from Baldock Services to Buntingford and the Cambridgeshire border to the Essex border at Nuthampstead):
- Burglary (dwelling) in Royston was down from 21 (some of which were domestic-related) to 7, and in the rural area from 59 to 21 as a result of people working from home so homes were less likely to be targeted;
- Criminal damage was down from 127 the previous year to 112; theft from a motor vehicle was down from 79 to 71 and work was being done to target this, particularly in relation to tradespersons' vans; violence with an injury involved was down from 127 to 83; a slight increase had been seen in shoplifting; overall crime had gone down from 1089 recorded crimes to 894 (a 17.6% reduction);
- The front of the station had been restored;
- Increased visibility in the town was planned over the next 12 months;
- Royston First BID was looking to fund an additional PCSO post in the town;
- More engagement work was planned in schools;
- Preventative work with the elderly in residential homes and care homes was planned to stop the elderly becoming victims of crime, e.g. cybercrime;
- A monthly youth night at the town cinema was being considered to improve engagement with young people;
- Overall Royston was a very safe place to live.

The following Members commented and asked questions:

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

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that Trinity Life Church had recently bought The Old School House in Market Hill to develop as a community hub and would like to work with the Police on improving youth provision in Royston.

Sergeant Vine responded to questions as follows:

- There were significant delays in the court process as a result of the pandemic. In terms of what the courts were doing to catch up, Sergeant Vine advised that he could check with the Crown Prosecution Service and provide the Committee with further information;
- Youth clubs and youth facilities such as 'Viv and Andy's' had been very beneficial in the past for 13 to 17 year olds, and provided a way for the Police to engage with young people; the loss of these had led to an increase in anti-social behaviour;
- He would like to work with the community to see the re-establishment of a youth facility where the young people could go one night per week which would enable the Police to engage;
- He reminded everyone to get in contact about any problems in their area.

The Chair thanked Sergeant Vine for his presentation.

### **39 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - MR ROBERT INWOOD**

*Audio recording – 26 minutes 15 seconds*

Mr Robert Inwood thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee in relation to parking charges in Royston, including:

- Mr Inwood advised that he wished to address the Committee regarding the proposed increase in parking charges, not as the Mayor of Royston or as a Town Councillor but as a member of the Royston community;
- The Royston community had been supporting the 'Think Local, Shop Local' initiative wherever possible over the last 18 months, which had led to an increase in footfall and a more vibrant Market;
- Increasing car parking charges at this time would negatively impact the businesses in the town which had already been suffering due to the pandemic;
- Increased charges reported by the press could have a devastating impact on the High Street and also the Market;
- A two-year parking charge freeze would have been beneficial to businesses;
- Mr Inwood offered to work with NHDC Councillors and officers in developing plans which would make Royston even more vibrant;
- He offered to attend full Council to speak on this matter and hoped that Councillors would ask for a recorded vote so that the public could see who had voted for an increase in parking charges in Royston;
- Mr Inwood wished Bill and Lindsay Davidson the best of luck in the future and supported the Council in recognising them for their hard work in the Royston community.

The following Members commented:

- Councillor Tony Hunter



Councillor Hunter clarified that the parking charge increases had been set earlier on the year as part of the budget process and the increases had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting of 16 March 2021. The new tariffs represented a 2% increase for last year and a further 2% increase for this year in line with inflation.

The Chair thanked Mr Inwood for his presentation.

#### 40 ROYSTON PARKING CHARGES

*Audio recording – 32 minutes 26 seconds*

Members considered the matter of increased car parking tariffs as set out in a report to Cabinet on 16 March 2021 entitled Proposed Increase in Car Parking Tariffs 2021-22.

The following Members took part in debate:

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

Comments from Members included:

- An email detailing the proposed car parking tariff increases had been sent from the Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager on 3 March 2021. This had been received by the Chair but not all Committee Members had received it;
- The Chair had wanted the matter to be debated by the Committee so that its feedback could be provided, however a decision had already been made by Cabinet on 16 March 2021 to increase the charges;
- Not every car park across the district should have the same inflationary increase in a 'one size fits all' way, rather each car park should be looked at individually;
- The future was very uncertain with the pandemic and could result in less use of car parks due to commuters continuing to work from home, for example;
- An overarching review of car parks following the pandemic could usefully be conducted to look at how the system could be changed to better suit the needs of the future;
- There was a general feeling that car parking charges should not be put up this year due to the impact the pandemic was already having on businesses and the Town Centre;
- It would have been useful for the Committee to have had the Cabinet Paper circulated with the agenda for this meeting;
- It was surprising that NHDC had not received any comments from Royston First BID;
- Spaces should be set aside for residents in under-utilised areas at The Warren and residents parking season tickets should be provided at a reduced rate;
- There needed to be a balance between car parking charges, support for the Town Centre and the environment;
- The Sustainable Travel Town award required Royston not to have free parking in the Town Centre. People should be encouraged to park outside the Town Centre and stay for as long as possible within the town;
- Longer stay parking tariffs could be reduced and shorter stay tariffs increased to support the Town Centre;
- People also needed to be encouraged to use other means of transport such as cycling, which would require improvements to cycling infrastructure;
- Charging should be made simpler and more flexible, for example, paying on exit, by card, etc.;
- Research could be done on the impact of the Free After 3pm parking initiative on footfall in town, and what other measures might make a difference aside from free parking;

- Anecdotally the car parks had appeared fuller after 3pm due to the free parking;
- Parking was free in the supermarkets which encouraged people to shop there rather than the Town Centre;
- There had long been a problem in Royston with parking;
- Residents might not want to purchase a season ticket to park in The Warren as complaints had been received from people who were having to pay to park outside their houses;
- Alternatives to cars had to be found to make the Town Centre more environmentally friendly;
- The Council had a budget deficit of £2.2m and sacrifices had to be made to meet the budget;
- The car park run by the Health Centre needed to be looked at differently as people did not always know how long they would need to be at the doctors' surgery and charges should not be increased there;
- Consideration should be given to the elderly who lived further away from the Town Centre and would not be able to walk into town and back with shopping bags;
- The time allowed for consultation on this matter had been brief and unfortunately the Cabinet meeting had been scheduled to take place before the Committee had had a chance to debate the proposals and provide its feedback;
- Cheaper parking would bring more revenue into the Town Centre and therefore made commercial sense;
- It was noted that, as Cabinet had already approved the car parking tariff increases, all the Committee could do was to advise the Executive Member for Planning and Transport of the general view of the Committee and forward to him the suggestions made by Members, as discussed at the meeting.

Councillor Tony Hunter proposed, Councillor Jean Green seconded and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee did not support an inflationary increase of car parking tariffs in Royston at this point in time.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To support local residents and the vitality of Royston Town Centre, particularly in light of the Covid 19 pandemic.

#### 41 GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

*Audio recording – 1 hour 7 minutes 18 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:

- There remained £2465 in the budget and as this was the last meeting of the financial year, it was recommended that the Committee agree to carry forward £1,500 from the current budget to the 2021/22 financial year to continue to support the Free After 3pm Parking Initiative in Royston;
- The remaining underspend of £1,145 could be carried forward to the following year for Community and Environmental Projects;
- There were potential grant applications in the pipeline from Royston Town Youth Football Club, Coombes Community Association and the Royston Choral Society;
- The Community Engagement Officer advised that he had been doing community support volunteering, delivering hand sanitiser and social distancing signage to various groups and signposting businesses to the Covid support grants available to them;

- Two of the Chair's Volunteer Achievement Awards 2021 winners had been from Royston: Friends of Therfield Heath and Royston v Coronavirus;
- Bicycle racks on Market Hill were due to be installed on 7 May 2021 with groundwork being done on 14 April;
- Ickniel Walk bus shelter was due to be in place by the summer, subject to Covid and Brexit;
- The installation of the bus shelter on Melbourn Street by the Town Hall may not take place until the end of the year;
- A consultation was due to take place concerning the potential new bandstand in Priory Memorial Gardens;
- Trinity Life Church was submitting an application to develop a community hub, including facilities for young people, to the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Grants Panel on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

The following Members made comments and asked questions:

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

The Community Engagement Officer replied to questions as follows:

- The funds carried forward would be in the base budget for 2021/22 under the theme of Community and Environmental Projects;
- There was an issue with getting lighting to the narrow section of the pathway on the public Right of Way at Green Drift.
- County Councillor Steve Jarvis confirmed that it was proposed that there would be a light at the end of the path and the County Council was looking at adopting the road to progress this project;
- Funds had been allocated to refurbish the kitchen at the Town Hall to make it more suitable for people with disabilities and this was with the architects and would then go out to tender for the works;
- Signage was being looked at for the 5km and 10km 'Walk and Talk' routes but was proving difficult due to restrictions.

Councillor Tony Hunter proposed, Councillor Carol Stanier seconded and it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston;
- (2) That the Committee agrees to the carry forward of £1,500 from the current budget to the 2021/22 financial year to continue to support the Free After 3pm Parking Initiative in Royston;
- (3) That the Committee agrees that any unspent funds from the 2020/21 financial year be allocated to Community & Environmental Projects for 2021/22.

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

## 42 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

*Audio recording – 1 hour 21 minutes 50 seconds*

The Chair led a discussion regarding Highways Issues.

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

- There had been a lot of drainage works carried out, particularly in the villages;
- Drainage works in Picknag Road and London Road in Barley were almost complete;
- Works near Hobbs Hayes in Reed were complete and further works were planned for early next financial year elsewhere in Reed;
- Works were scheduled for the next financial year at Mill Road and Melbourn Road on the corner, at Stamford Avenue, Old North Road and Green Street/ Morton Street;
- Long overdue resurfacing works were taking place in Old North Road and Kneesworth Street near the station by the Queens Road Junction;
- Pram crossings were scheduled for York Way and Orchard Road next financial year;
- The speed indicator device was now in Reed on the A10 and the device in Newmarket Road had been turned;
- Speed and volume surveys were currently taking place in Newmarket Road and Melbourn Road;
- Police would be carrying out speed checks as resources allowed as a number had been requested in Royston and the villages;
- The feasibility study in Burns Road had been completed and recommendations were awaited;
- Funding was being sought for the safer crossing over the A505 and it had been agreed by the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership in the Melbourn Greenway. Crossings in other areas were being looked at to make this safer for cyclists and pedestrians;
- £7m had been allocated in the County Council budget for the next three years for 20mph zones and £10m had been allocated for drainage and sustainability schemes.

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

- Resurfacing works to the path outside what had been Morrisons had been completed following repeated delays;
- Re-consultation on Layston Park had taken place - some residents had wanted more yellow lines, some had wanted fewer. Revised proposals had now been put forward;
- Work was being arranged to deal with congestion caused by parking on the heath on the Therfield Road;
- Work was planned on the Litlington junction of the A505 to prevent traffic turning right out of the junction. Preliminary investigations would take place soon with the majority of the work planned for September;
- Resurfacing on footways in Green Drift was due to be completed.

The Chair thanked County Councillors Hill and Jarvis for their updates.

## 43 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

*Audio recording – 1 hour 27 minutes 45 seconds*

The Chair led a discussion on ward matters and outside organisations. The following issues were discussed:

### Citizens Advice North Herts

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that:

- They were experiencing increased demand for their services and expected this to continue to increase;
- They were only doing face-to-face work in Letchworth at the moment and were operating a mixed model of delivery;
- There was no news on when face-to-face services would re-open in Royston or Hitchin at the present time, but this was under consideration;
- NHDC had agreed an additional £50,000 funding for this year because of the demand they were experiencing for their services.

### Royston First BID

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that:

- The 'Shop Safe, Shop Local' campaign jointly run by North Herts and East Herts continued to receive funding from the EU with hand sanitiser being provided;
- An Easter Bunny trail would be organised to encourage footfall into the Town;
- The Christmas lights which had been organised with the Town Council had been a great success with no negative comments;
- BID levies had been received from many businesses and the remainder had been topped up by a grant from NHDC so funding was secure;
- The AGM was on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 5.30pm on Zoom and they were looking for more members for their Advisory Council and one member to represent local businesses for their Board.

### Town Twinning

Councillor Ruth Brown advised that:

- A bilingual quiz had been held with French twin town La Loupe on 6 March on Zoom which had gone really well.

### Melbourn Area Youth Development

Councillor Carol Stanier advised that:

- Councillor Stanier had recently become the representative for this organisation;
- They had not been able to run scheduled workshops due to lockdown;
- They were hoping to hold the workshops at Easter but were aware that if these did not take place they would need to return their grant to NHDC;
- They had sufficient funds secured to run two years' worth of clubs;
- They were very concerned about the impact of lockdown on young people not having social interactions and had been sending packs out to homes and refurbishing laptops to ensure young people could take part in digital activities;
- The youth work contractor Groundwork had had some staff changes and were struggling to recruit staff so different options were being considered such as holiday-only clubs;

- They were looking for a bigger venue which could be in Royston if there was anywhere suitable;
- There was a further meeting the following week.

Coombes Community Centre

Councillor Carol Stanier advised that:

- The Centre had a new trustee with all the necessary skills and were always looking for other people;
- Bookings were coming in from interested groups so finances were adequate;
- A new nursery was starting in what had been the Rainbow playgroup meeting room;
- There was an ongoing problem with the drains which would be looked at by NHDC.

North Herts CVS

Councillor Tony Hunter advised that:

- North Herts CVS had some new trustees;
- They ended the year with a grant from Lloyds Bank Foundation which was close to £30,000;
- They have been working really hard during the pandemic across the district and the Chair passed on his thanks to all staff.

The meeting closed at 9.07 pm

Chair

**ROYSTON COMMITTEE  
9 JUNE 2021**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT:** GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

**REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**COUNCIL OBJECTIVES:** BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

**1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets.
- 1.2** To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement officer has been involved in.
- 1.3** 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 be recommended to consider allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the projects below.
- 2.2** **£794** to Royston Town Youth Football Club to assist with costs for the purchase of replacement pitch divider nets for the artificial pitch facility at King James Academy. as outlined in 8.1.1.
- 2.3** **£1500** to Royston Community Association to assist with costs for the purchase of 30 new padded and stackable chairs for the Coombes Community Centre as outlined in 8.1.2.
- 2.4** That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1** To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement 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 January 2020.

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 Council 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 regarding funding proposals for Committee Funds.

#### **6. FORWARD PLAN**

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

#### **7. BACKGROUND**

7.1 With reference to the Council's Constitution, Section 9.3 Area Committees will include budgets for the purpose of providing grants and discretionary budgets that may be used within the area of the Committee for economic, social and environmental well-being. Under the current grant criteria there is no upper limit outlined for grant funding to be allocated which can be decided at the Committee's discretion.

7.2 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 2021/22. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year, including balances and past expenditure.



7.3 Funding available for the Committee to allocate during 2021/22 is summarised below:

	2020/21 Carry Forward	2020/21 Base Budget	Total Budget Remaining
<b>Royston</b>	£1145*	£6,000	£7,145

\*Carry forward was £2645 from 2020/21 before the £1,500 was released for the Free After 3pm Parking Initiative.

## 8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

### 8.1 Grant Applications

#### 8.1.1

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>Royston Town Youth Football Club</b> Funding support to assist with costs for the purchase of replacement pitch divider nets for the artificial pitch facility at King James Academy.
<b>Sum requested</b>	£794
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1,694
<b>Match funding</b>	£900 split evenly between Cllr Fiona Hill and Cllr Steve Jarvis's Herts County Council Locality Budgets.
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes, £385 in 2017 to assist with costs for setting up Futsal Royston and £1250 in 2010 to assist with costs for setting up several new girls' football teams. Total award £1,635.
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council objective:</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities

Royston Town Youth FC are seeking funding support from the Royston & District Committee to assist with costs for the purchase of replacement pitch divider nets for the artificial pitch facility at King James Academy.

Royston Town Youth FC is a not for profit organisation that has been in operation since 1872. The club provides football for children of both genders from 3 to 18 years. The group is made up of 13 Volunteer Committee Members and around 100 volunteers. The replacement pitch divider nets are required as the original nets are full of holes creating a trip hazard. Whilst the artificial pitch is used by students at King James Academy, the divider nets are only used by Royston Town Youth FC and other football clubs that use the facility including Royston Town FC, Bassingbourn FC and Royston Hockey Club. The divider nets are required to allow for multiple sessions to be run at the same time. The divider nets are used 6 days a week. Royston Town Youth FC are unable to put any match funding into the project as all fundraising efforts and any surplus funding remaining from the season is pumped into a sink fund which is raising funds for a new replacement surface for the artificial pitch which is likely to cost in the region of £250k. Members are asked to note that the match funding from Cllr Steve Jarvis and Cllr Fiona Hill is on the condition that Royston Town Youth FC are successful in securing the £794 from the Royston & District Committee. The application is criteria compliant and the officer recommendation is the award of £794.

### 8.1.2

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Royston Community Association</b>
<b>Project</b>	Funding support to assist with costs for the purchase of 30 new padded and stackable chairs for the Coombes Community Centre
<b>Sum requested</b>	£1,500
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1800
<b>Match funding</b>	£300 from the Royston Town Council's Mayors Fund
<b>Previous support</b>	No support from Area Committee in last 5 years.
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council objective:</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities

The Royston Community Association is seeking funding support from the Royston & District Committee to assist with costs for the purchase of 30 new padded and stackable chairs.

The Coombes Community Centre has been a hub for community groups since 1976. The centre is well used by young and old and caters for a wide variety of clubs including sports, education, leisure, music, mental health and wellbeing. In addition, the centre also caters for nursery provision, church services and is also used regularly for blood donor sessions and as an election polling station when required. The purchase of new chairs was identified as an essential requirement following a recent Health and Safety Audit where the current chairs were deemed not to meet fire safety regulations. The application is criteria compliant and the group has secured some match funding via the Royston Town Council Mayors Fund.

## 8.2 Future Grants

The Royston Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has been working with several groups / organisations who are seeking funding support from the Royston & District Committee. The application below was not in a position to be tabled at the June meeting so has been deferred until the October meeting. Details of the application are included in the table below:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding Requested</b>
Royston Choral Society	Funding support to assist with publicity, equipment and venue hire costs for concert to be held during 2021.	Not known at this stage.

## 8.3 Community Engagement Updates

### 8.3.1 Support for Businesses during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Royston CEO continues to signpost local businesses and community groups to business support grants that are available to them during the Pandemic. This has included funding support available from the NHDC Additional Restrictions' Grant. At the time of writing this report I can confirm that the Coombes Community Centre has received this funding.

#### 8.3.2 Bus Shelters

The bus shelter for Icknield Walk is due to be installed between Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The installation works were due to be carried out on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May but were delayed whilst the Royston CEO investigated who owned the land where the shelter was to be installed. On investigation it was discovered that the preferred site for the shelter was owned by the Settle Group, so the shelter location was relocated to land owned by the County Council.

In terms of the bus shelter planned for Melbourn Street, a scan was carried out in January 2021 to ensure that the proposed site was not going to disrupt any Utilities. The scan was successful, and the positioning of the shelter has been agreed by the contractors and Hertfordshire County Council. Royston Town Council have raised the Purchase Order for the works but due to the current Pandemic it is unlikely that the works will be carried out before November 2021. The Royston CEO will continue to liaise with the Contractors and Highways and will update Members on progress with the scheduling accordingly.

The Royston CEO has no further update on the proposed bus shelter for Melbourn Road. Members will recall that this shelter was originally scheduled in as part of the Royston Town Council works using S106 Sustainable Transport funding but is now being picked up by a local Developer.

Once installed all bus shelters will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council.

#### 8.3.3 Bicycle Racks

The bike shelter project on Market Square Car Park was completed during May 2021. As part of the works all the white and yellow lining within the car park was painted. The Royston CEO assisted the Town Council with the planning for this project and also suspended the car park to ensure the area was kept traffic free to allow for the painting of the lines. This project was paid for using S106 Sustainable Transport funds.

The Royston CEO is currently in communication with Royston Conservators to ascertain if there is a need for a bike shelter on the Heath. Funding is available from S106 Sustainable Transport.

#### 8.3.4 Potential new band stand for Priory Memorial Gardens

The Royston CEO is working with Royston Town Council on a project to install a new band stand on Priory Memorial Gardens. This project is still in the early stages but discussions have taken place between Royston Town Council and North Herts District Council's Ground Maintenance team.

Royston Town Council will undertake a public consultation regarding the proposed band stand as the idea has not received wide support.

Funding under S106 Community Facilities has been provisionally allocated to a band stand but can be re-allocated to a different project if the public consultation opposes the initiative.

**8.3.5 Trinity Life Church Community Facility Project**

Trinity Life Church was successful in its application for funding from the Community Facilities Capital Projects funding Stream, securing £50k to assist with the refurbishment and alterations of The Old School House Building. The project will include replacing the kitchen and toilets, improving disabled access and improving the rear office space.

The Royston CEO will oversee the project and will release the funds on completion of the various stages of the works.

**8.3.6 Street Food Heroes at Priory Memorial Gardens**

The Royston CEO continues to liaise with the organiser of Street Food Heroes with plans for their 3 events which will be held on Priory Memorial Gardens on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July and Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August. The Royston CEO has assisted the organiser with the paperwork required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group and has also arranged for the Public Toilets to have extended opening on each event day. The Royston CEO will also provide the organisers with social distancing signage to increase the safety of all attendees.

**8.3.7 Walkandtalk Initiative**

The Royston CEO is working with the organisers of the walkandtalk initiative to create both a 5km and 10km signed route. The Walkandtalk project was set up during the current Pandemic to help people to cope with their mental health and wellbeing. The Royston CEO had hoped that signs for the routes could be displayed on Highways Street furniture, but this was not possible as it was not within the signage guidelines. The Royston CEO has liaised with colleagues in Waste and Grounds Maintenance and the plan is now to have stickers on bins around the town showing the routes. This is subject to the sticker design being approved by all parties.

**8.3.8 Developer Contributions / s106 & other Capital Funding projects**

The Royston CEO has worked with external groups and colleagues in the Planning Department in the potential utilisation developer contributions and other sources of capital funding available. Under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, contributions/obligations can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, the need for which has arisen as a result of a new development taking place. This funding is commonly known as 'Section 106'.

**Projects Completed:**

- Fencing project at side of Coombes Community Centre to address anti-social behaviour
- Fencing project at Royston BMX to address anti-social behaviour
- Bike Shelter at Market Square Car park
- Bus Shelter at Icknield Walk

**Projects in process:**

- Enhancement of sporting facilities at Royston Heath with the Conservators.
- The possibility of seeking a new venue for Royston Scouts currently based at Roysia School.
- Enhanced provision of Bus Shelters at potential sites within the town
- Provision of cycle racks around Royston Town Centre.
- Youth / Spectator Shelter to address anti-social behaviour around Coombes Area
- Resurfacing and lighting project on Public Right of Way Land linking Ivy Farm with Green Drift. (this project was on the work programme for 2020/21 but has been delayed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic)
- A505 Cycle Path project
- Access and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) improvements to Royston Town Hall
- All weather Hockey pitch for Royston
- Barkway PC re the installation & disabled access to the Recreation Ground & Pavilion
- Kitchen and toilet improvements in the main hall of Royston Town Hall.

If members have any projects in mind which may potentially benefit from utilising capital funds derived via the Planning process, please contact the Community Engagement Officer to investigate further possibilities.

The Community Engagement Team is also collating a database of future requirements in terms of community need across the District in preparation & response to potential developments arising from the Local Plan.

Such perceived need will be communicated to planning officers to assist when negotiating any new planning obligation with prospective developers. Similarly, if Members have any suggestions of suitable projects or possible future requirements within their wards please inform the Community Engagement Officer.

**8.4 Highways Matters**

- 8.4.1 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.
- 8.4.2 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 Sections 9.8.1 (a) and 9.8.1 (b) of the Council's Constitution in respect of the Area Committees' Terms of Reference, notes the following:- To allocate discretionary budgets within the terms determined by the Council and to allocate devolved budgets and activities within the terms determined by the Council. This is outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in January 2020. Section 9.8.2 (h) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference notes 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.
- 9.2 Chapter 1, s1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything if it is not specifically prohibited in legislation.
- 9.3 Section 137 of the 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 As outlined in Appendix 1 Committee budget 2021/22.
- 10.2 The agreed base budget for this financial year is £6,000. The Committee has £1,145 carry forward from the 2020/21 financial year giving a total budget of £7,145 to allocate across the 4 meetings in 2021/22.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, 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. Area committee funding is awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

### **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

### **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

### **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **16. APPENDICES**

16.1 Appendix 1 - 2021/22 Financial Year Budget Sheet.

### **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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### **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

18.2 Review of Grant Policy Cabinet January 2020.

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ROYSTON AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2021/22

SUMMARY/TOTALS	Funding	Allocated	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Budget					
CARRY FORWARD BUDGET 2020/21	£2,645	£1,500	£1,500	£0	£1,145					
BASE BUDGET 2021/22	£6,000	£0	£0	£0	£6,000					
Total	£8,645	£1,500	£1,500	£0	£7,145					

2020/21	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Amount	Comments
CARRY FORWARD BUDGET 2020/21	£2,645						£0		
			Free After 3pm Parking Initiative	£1,500	19/05/2021	£1,500	£0		
							£0		
							£0		
							£0		
Total	£2,645			£1,500		£1,500	£0	£1,145	

2021/22	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Amount	Comments
BASE BUDGET 2021/22	£6,000								
							£0		
							£0		
							£0		
							£0		
							£0		
Total	£6,000			£0		£0	£0	£6,000	

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