

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE ROOM 11, ROYSTON TOWN HALL, MELBOURN ROAD,
ROYSTON**

ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH JANUARY, 2020 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

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

In Attendance: *Reuben Ayavoo (Policy and Community Engagement Manager), Louise Symes (Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager), Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer) and Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 6 members of the public and Councillors Fiona Hill (Hertfordshire County Council) and Marguerite Phillips (Royston Town Council)*

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 14 Seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jean Green and Bill Davidson.

37 MINUTES - 9 OCTOBER 2019

Audio Recording – 22 Seconds

RESOLVED: That, subject to amendments below, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 9 October 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman:

- On page 6 – Minute 30, the following sentence be corrected from - ‘the following questions asked questions’ - to read - ‘the following Members asked questions’;
- On page 7 – Minute 31, that Councillor Ruth Brown be listed as having asked questions of the Democratic Services Manager and the Electoral Services Manager;
- On page 9 – Minute 34, the job title of ‘Transport Project Officer’ be amended to ‘Parking Officer’ and;
- On page 10 – Minute 34, the spelling error ‘iminent’ be corrected to ‘imminent’.

38 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 Minutes 41 Seconds

There was no other business notified.

39 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 48 Seconds

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting;
- (2) On behalf of Councillor Jean Green, the Chairman invited Members to Councillor Green's Civic Service which was due to take place on Sunday 19 January at 3pm at the St Thomas Of Canterbury & The English Martyrs Catholic Church in 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.

40 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 49 Minutes 35 Seconds

The Committee received a Grants and Community Update from the Community Engagement Officer and the following information was provided:

- £34 could be added to the total funds as there was an underspend on the banner purchased for Royston Councillor Surgeries, making the total funds available to the Committee £2,938;
- If Members were minded to provide funding of £1,500 requested under recommendation 2.1 for the Free after 3pm Scheme, this would leave £1,438 for the remaining meeting of the Committee in the 2019/20 financial year;
- Reed Cricket Club had applied for grant funding of £1k in order to purchase replacement netting.
- An update on Pathway at end of Green Drift as explained at Paragraph 8.2.1 on page 17 of the report;
- An update regarding issues at Coombes Community Association was provided, as further detailed at Paragraph 8.2.2 on page 17;
- The Community Engagement Officer continued to sit on the Royston Town Centre working party and the work focused on tackling waste issues within the town;
- The Community Engagement Officer was working with colleagues at Hertfordshire County Council and its contractors to install two new bus shelters in the town;
- The Community Engagement Officer was liaising with Royston Town Council Councillors in order to install additional bicycle racks into the town which would be installed in the Market Hill car park area, owned by the Royston Town Council; and
- The projects in process as detailed at Paragraph 8.2.11 on page 18 within the report.

The following Members raised questions:

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

In response to Members' questions, the Community Engagement Officer advised:

- There was currently only one grant application in the pipeline and this was Reed Cricket Club;
- There would be a carry-over of approximately £400 in the grant fund;
- The deadline for grant applications was the end of January; and
- Funding was already in place for the bus shelters, as explained in Paragraph 8.2.4 of the report. Installing green roof bus shelters would delay the process because the contractor and price had already been agreed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the release of £1,500 in support of the Free after 3pm Parking initiative scheme for the town be agreed by the Committee and;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston and District be endorsed.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Officer;
- (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; and
- (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.

41 NHDC PARKING STRATEGY DRAFT PARKING OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Audio Recording – 5 Minutes

The Strategic Infrastructure & Projects Manager presented the report entitled NHDC Parking Strategy Draft Parking Operational Guidelines and advised the following:

- The North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Strategy 2019-2031 was approved in January 2019;
- New opportunities to manage the parking stock across the District and generate additional income has been included in the draft Parking Operational Guidelines, which included;
 - Other Services in Council Car Parks;
 - Charging for On-Street Parking;
 - Employee Parking Schemes and;
 - Sale of Permits to Non-Residents in Controlled Parking Zones.
- The North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Operational Guidelines document should be read alongside the Parking Strategy;
- It was important that the Parking Operational Guidelines remained a living document in order to ensure it provided a flexible approach to emerging issues;
- The Parking Issues Reporting Pack allowed members of the public to report parking issues;

- The Reporting Pack sought to educate members of the public on parking related issues and different types of parking controls;
- Applicants must keep a log of parking issues over a four week period in order to allow for the severity to be assessed;
- 80% of residents must agree with the parking issue and;
- A similar reporting pack was in use at Hertfordshire County Council.

The following Members asked questions:

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

Points and questions raised by Members and Hertfordshire County Councillor, Fiona Hill, were as follows:

- Whether keeping the log of parking issues over a four week period could be reduce to two weeks;
- Whether an introductory note could be added to the Parking Reporting Pack in order to provide members of the public with an explanation of what they should and should not expect from the reporting pack;
- Whether a contact number could be added to the reporting pack to enable members of the public to contact the department in case there was a need for clarification or explanation;
- It was a good initiative to sell non-resident permits especially on streets such as Victoria Crescent, Baldock Street and London Road or streets that were situated near the train station;
- Existing zones could be extended to incorporate nearby roads not covered;
- The added financial cost of Parking Enforcement Officers working at weekends, evenings and Bank Holidays as a result of the proposed changes to the charging period would negate any benefit;
- Charging for parking at weekends, evenings and on Bank Holidays would have a negative effect and exasperate existing problems on residential roads;
- The possibility of implementing dedicated parking in the town centre for residents living in properties without parking;
- In relation to item 8 under Policy 2 on page 44 of the report, users of Council car parks in Royston were, at present, not required to take and display a Pay and Display ticket during the 'Free after 3pm' period;
- Each town and each individual car park was different and this should be respected when considering charges; and
- There was support for the positive environmental proposals i.e. sustainability.

In response to questions and points raised by Members, the Strategic Infrastructure & Projects Manager provided the following:

- Residents could work together to gather evidence of the parking issue;
- The Parking Reporting Pack would provide the department with data and evidence in order that the team could decipher what was a genuine parking issue, affecting more than one resident;
- The Parking Reporting Pack would be trialled to see its advantages and disadvantages;
- The aim of consulting Area Committees was to obtain comments from Members in order that any necessary changes could be made before submitting it the draft to Cabinet;
- The document was due to go to Cabinet in March 2020;

- The document suggested District-wide proposals;
- Anything that was or had been proposed would require consultation;
- At present, during the 'Free after 3pm' period, there was no data on car park usage as users did not need to take and display ticket;
- The consultation period would end in the middle of February 2020 to allow for the team to collate comments. Further comments could be submitted by email; the deadline of which was 15 February 2020; and
- Hertfordshire County Council and town/parish councils and Members would be included in the consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Draft North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Operational Guidelines at Appendix A of the report be noted;
- (2) That the Draft North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Issues Reporting Pack 1 and Part 2 at Appendix B and C of the report be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the Draft North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Operational Guidelines at Appendix A be considered and adopted;
- (2) That the Draft North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Issues Reporting Pack 1 and Part 2 at Appendix B and C be considered and adopted;
- (3) That delegated authority be given to Service Director - Regulatory to approve minor amendments and format changes to the draft Parking Operational Guidelines as required in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy for Planning and Transport;
- (4) That officers proceed with the work associated with the key projects listed in the Parking Strategy Strategic Action Plan using the Parking Operational Guidelines to implement the policy framework.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: The draft Parking Operational Guidelines will provide the necessary guidance and assessment criteria for the Parking Strategy policy framework for managing parking across the District in a most cost efficient way that accords with the Council's Corporate Objectives and its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

42 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

Audio Recording – 38 Minutes 59 Seconds

The Policy and Community Engagement Manager presented the report entitled Community Grants Policy Review and advised the following:

- The report outlined the proposed changes to the grants policy;
- The process had been simplified;
- The policy was last reviewed in 2016;
- Changes to the eligibility criteria were on page 90 of the report at paragraph 8.2.1;

- Organisations with charitable status, voluntary sector groups, community groups, Community Interest Companies, Community Interest Organisations, Schools, Academies, Business Improvement District Groups, Parish and Town Councils were now able to apply for grants;
- The 2016 Policy stated that applicants were ineligible for funding if they had other funding from NHDC within 2 years. This would no longer apply under the new policy;
- These changes would encourage a variety of organisations to apply;
- The new criteria was similar to that of other local authorities and;
- Cabinet had approved two proposals relating to community grants which included the creation of a one-off District-wide pot of £10,000 in 2020/21.

The following Members asked questions:

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

The Policy and Community Engagement Manager provided the following responses to questions raised by Members:

- The District-wide pot of £10,000 would be administered by the Community Engagement Team, in the same way as the Capital Grants Fund is;
- Officers would promote the grant scheme to encourage applications from organisations who had not applied in the past; and
- Funding a statutory service such as waste collection at an event would need to be further looked at.

Councillor Ruth Brown, as Deputy Executive Member for Community Engagement, provided the following responses to points and questions raised by Members:

- Waste Collection at charity events should be eligible for funding;
- It was the intention to widen the scope and increase the number of applications;
- As a result of the policy change, the Committee may receive more applications than money to grant. In which case, the Committee would have to make decisions around who to grant money to; and
- If the same organisation repeatedly applied for funding, that would influence the decision as to whether to grant funding or not.

RESOLVED: That the proposed review of the Community Grants Policy and criteria be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the criteria and outline consultation process be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of grant funding awards to organisations, charities and voluntary groups, and the use of grant budgets devolved to Area Committees allows the Authority to further its aims and overarching Priorities of the Council and District.

43 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Audio recording – 59 Minutes

The Committee was informed of the following on-going and forthcoming highways matters in Royston by Hertfordshire County Councillor Fiona Hill:

- Royston was investigating the possibility of becoming a Sustainable Travel Town and a group had been formed of Town, District and County Councillors, together with relevant officers;
- Councillor Hill had been appointed as the Hertfordshire County Council representative on the Steering Group, which would be looking at the A505 between Granta Park and Royston;
- The programme of school visits would be taking place again that year;
- The bus to Royston Gateway was in operation and working well;
- The North Hertfordshire Bus Users' Group meeting was taking place that week and Councillor Hill would be in attendance;
- Several Speed Indicator Devices were being moved;
- Speed and Volume surveys in a number of roads had been commissioned including Burns Road and The Warren;
- The TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) process was continuing on the proposals for the Grange Estate, Ridings Estate and Green Street;
- There were also safety issues in Layston Park, which would be addressed next financial year; and
- Widespread resurfacing work had been carried out in town, including Melbourn Road and Stamford Avenue.

Councillor Fiona Hill responded accordingly to a series of questions raised by Members.

44 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 1 Hour 10 Minutes 30 Seconds

The Chairman advised that there were two consultations open, both of which would close on 30 March 2020:

- Hertfordshire County Council Rail Strategy Consultation; and
- The North Central Growth and Transport Plan.

The Chairman suggested and the Committee agreed that they would work with the Town Council and Hertfordshire County Council in order to put together a working party to gather comments for the consultations and feed these back to Members.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Chair