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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE HARDWICKE HALL, ROYSTON TOWN HALL, MELBOURN
STREET, ROYSTON

ON WEDNESDAY, 12TH OCTOBER, 2022 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Tony Hunter (Chair), Councillor Gerald Morris (Vice-Chair), Ruth Brown, Adam Compton, Jean Green and Chris Hinchliff*

In Attendance:

Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer) and Louis Mutter (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting County Councillors Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis and approximately 4 members of the public, including registered speakers.

47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 3 minutes 3 seconds

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor Carol Stanier.

48 MINUTES - 29 JUNE 2022

Audio Recording – 3 minutes 16 seconds

Councillor Tony Hunter, as Chairman, proposed and Councillor Ruth Brown seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 29 June 2022 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

49 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

50 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 45 seconds

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation and thanked those that attended the Town Talk
- (2) 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.

51 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 4 minutes 10 seconds

N.B Councillor Ruth Brown advised that, as she was a member of the Church affiliated with Make Lunch, she would excuse herself from taking part in this item.

The Chair invited Cate Hall from Make Lunch to give a verbal presentation on their grant application.

Ms. Hall thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- Make Lunch will have been running for 8 years in February;
- Make Lunch provides meals and activities for selected families during the school holidays;
- The organisation aims to provide a meal twice per week to children who may otherwise not have a hot meal during the holidays;
- The leisure centre has kindly donated free leisure centre passes;
- This grant application is for £500 to contribute to a total project cost of £650 to purchase day cinema tickets for 45 adults and 96 children at Royston Cinema during October Half Term.
- Ms. Hall thanked County Councillors Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis for contributing the remaining funds from their Locality Budgets.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Gerald Morris
- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Tony Hunter

In response to questions, Ms. Hall advised:

- The annual budget of Make Lunch is somewhere between £8,000 and £10,000;
- That budget is made up of fundraising events, donations and support from other organisations;
- Make Lunch covers the whole of Royston and about a 3 mile radius outside of Royston including the local villages.
- Those wishing to receive support from Make Lunch are asked to register every year, so numbers change regularly but they try to keep as accurate record as possible.

52 GRANT APPLICATION - MAKE LUNCH

Audio Recording – 9 minutes 15 seconds

Councillor Jean Green proposed and Councillor Gerald Morris seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £500 be awarded to Make Lunch to assist with the costs of purchasing day cinema tickets for 45 adults and 95 children at Royston Cinema during October Half Term as outlined in the report.

53 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 10 minutes 20 seconds

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled Grants & Community Update and highlighted the following key points:

- Having just awarded £500 to Make Lunch Royston the remaining budget of the Area Committee for the civic year stands at £6,632;
- Two projects are in the pipeline and may come to a future meeting for a grant application. Those organisations being the Royston Choral Society and Royston Community First Responders;
- 8.3.1 and 8.3.4 detail two S106 funding updates for 4 sets of new goals for the Youth Football Club and resurfacing the BMX track from Royston Rockets;
- Work is ongoing with the Royston Museum, the Town Council and the Community Centre to find funding for upcoming projects;
- 8.3.19 provides an update on the pathway between Green Drift and Ivy Lane, which has had work on the horizon for a few years now.

In response to a question from Councillor Gerald Morris the Community Engagement Officer advised that, should the Committee agree to use £1500 of their budget towards the 'Free after 3pm' parking initiative, the Committee will have a budget remaining of £5130 to allocate at the last two meetings.

Councillor Tony Hunter as Chairman proposed and Councillor Ruth Brown seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston.

54 **CONSULTATION ON NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**

Audio Recording – 15 minutes 10 seconds

The Senior Transport Policy Officer presented the report entitled Consultation on North Herts District Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan and highlighted the following key points:

- These plans set out improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in Royston, Hitchin, Letchworth, Baldock & Knebworth among others;
- The consultation is running until the 7th November and is entirely online;
- Now is the time for debate; to show opposition or support to ideas, before the consultation period ends.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Gerald Morris
- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Ruth Brown

In response to questions the Senior Transport Policy Officer advised:

- The budget will be what the Council can secure out of a national budget; money is already being handed out to certain projects;
- Priority has been identified by a sense of a need for better infrastructure in a certain area. Page 108 details the top twenty highest scoring prioritised routes;
- One of the objectives of the consultation is to identify objectives, priorities and hierarches of need.

Councillor Tony Hunter as Chairman proposed and Councillor Jean Green seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

(1) Notes the report;

(2) Be encouraged to individually and through the Area Committee, respond to the North Hertfordshire District LCWIP consultation draft attached as Appendix 1, and encourage residents and local organisations to do so too.

The Senior Transport Policy Officer informed the Committee that there would be a community drop-in event the Monday following from 3.15pm until 7pm in the Committee room.

55 INFLATIONARY INCREASE IN CAR PARKING CHARGES

Audio Recording – 28 minutes 55 seconds

The Chairman prefaced this item by informing the Committee that this was put on the agenda because the Committee did not have an opportunity to discuss the increase in parking charges before it was ratified at Cabinet and Council.

Councillor Ruth Brown commented that she was disappointed that the item was labelled 'Inflationary' as the parking charge increases are not in line with the current rate of inflation.

Councillor Tony Hunter responded that this item was named by officers and not by him.

The Chair invited Members to partake in a discussion.

The following Members took part in the discussion:

- Councillor Tony Hunter
- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Councillor Jean Green
- Hertfordshire County Councillor Fiona Hill
- Hertfordshire County Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Gerald Morris

Points raised in the discussion included:

- The % increase across the board is 1.9%. The Medium Term Financial Strategy says the Council should aim for a 2% increase;
- The only charge increasing is the 1 hour charge but does not include Princes Mews;
- Wanted to increase the likelihood that parkers stay longer as there is a direct link between longer car park stays and spending in the town;
- The 'Free after 3pm' parking policy has been in place for 10-15 years, no one knows how much it costs and whether it makes a difference. The Area Committee commits £1500 as does County Councillors;
- Some of the car parks affected by the price increases are used by people wishing to visit the GP surgeries and are in effect being penalised for doing so;
- Anecdotal evidence shows that car parks are empty up until 3pm and then suddenly they are full;
- The Town Council do not contribute towards the Free after 3pm policy even though they receive revenue from 2 car parks;
- Planters were put along the high street during COVID, taking away the 20 minute parking; received lots of complaints about this;

- Hertfordshire County Council officers and the BID have spoken to business owners and the majority are in favour of the planters and disabled spaces;
- Might be a good idea to write to the Town Council to ask them to put up some funding for Free after 3pm and explain the value and how its broken down at the moment.
- Initially the policy was free after 3:30 and was split between County Council and District Council, eventually the BID wanted it to be changed to 3pm.

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

RESOLVED: That the Committee encourages the Community Engagement Officer to write to Royston Town Council about the payment breakdown of the 'Free after 3pm' parking policy and discuss cost sharing.

56 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Audio recording – 47 minutes 30 seconds

Councillor Tony Hunter invited Hertfordshire County Councillor Fiona Hill to provide an update to the Committee, including:

- Works due on Mill Road, Serby Avenue, Parthia Close and King James Way footpaths as well as some patching on the road on Serby Avenue next year.
- New signs in Barkway High Street and Cambridge Road will be due next year.
- Barley - works on London Road to be completed.
- Works on Masefield Way and Newmarket Road are due to be scheduled.
- Looking at footpath works in Shaftesbury Way, Melbourn Street and the High Street in 2023-24.
- Investigating a school sign on the A10 (Barley and Barkway Federated First Schools).
- Following a feasibility study carried out on Burns Road regarding speeding - the main issues are around Shakespeare and Hardy Drive where there have been a higher number of accidents - there will be a consultation on the mitigation measures suggested by HCC Highways.
- A Public Meeting took place regarding proposed cuts to the 915 bus service; need representations to the Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Stagecoach, MPs and County Councils/Councillors.

The Chairman thanked Hertfordshire County Council Fiona Hill for her update and invited County Councillor Steve Jarvis to provide his update:

- Most work for this year has been completed;
- There was a plan for an enforceable 20 Mph speed limit around Tannery Drift School but that cannot be installed without speed humps. Those advocating for the speed limit did not want humps so instead there will be an advisory limit;
- Some resurfacing scheduled on Lancaster Road;
- There is a discussion ongoing about the pathway lighting on Green Drift but Hertfordshire County Council will not do any work on it until Anglian Water have accepted the sewage pumping station from the developers.

The Chairman thanked Hertfordshire County Councillor Steve Jarvis for his update.

57 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 55 minutes 50 seconds

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

Royston Town Twinning Association

Councillor Ruth Brown advised:

- Had first visit in three years from the Mayor of Grossalmerode; the mayor and his wife stayed in Royston and they went treeplanting along with the Mayor of Royston thanks to North Herts officers;
- The mayor also visited Royston Fire Station, attended Silver Sunday and the Sustainability Event in Priory Gardens.

Royston First

Councillor Ruth Brown advised:

- The BID are now plastic free champions;
- The Audi and M&S car parks have had their lines redrawn;
- Have taken over some of the ad boards in the town centre and would be advertising businesses in the town;
- Collaborating with the Town Council on the Christmas Lights Event, going to be a 'Christmas Switch-on' on Friday 25th November; BID have also got more than 30 businesses signed up for the Christmas Windows event.

Visit to school

Councillor Hunter advised:

- He had visited a school alongside Town Councillor Michael Harrison, County Councillor Fiona Hill and District Councillor Carol Stanier.

The meeting closed at 8:33 pm

Chair