

**North Herts Council  
ROYSTON COMMUNITY FORUM**

**Meeting held at Royston Town Hall, Melbourn Street, Royston, SG8 7DA  
On Wednesday, 11 September 2024 at 7.30pm**

**NOTES**

**Present:** Councillor Ruth Brown (RB) (Chair), Councillor Bryony May (BM) (Vice-Chair), Councillor Ruth Clifton (RC), Councillor Martin Prescott (MP)

**In Attendance:** Becca Edwards (BE) (Community and Partnerships Officer), Edward Leigh (Senior Transport Policy Officer), Anna Bradley (Town Centre Project Officer)

**Also present:** At the commencement of the meeting there were 20 members of the public.

Meeting started at **7.30pm**

**1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Matt Barnes

**2. Chair's Announcements**

Cllr Brown welcomed everyone in attendance.

- Highlighted that the Forum is an informal, inclusive meeting to share ideas.
- Explained that Herts Futures and Create Community were not able to attend the meeting, even though this had been promoted.

**Community Governance Review**

The Council resolved to commence a Community Governance Review for the whole district which focuses on parish level arrangements.

The first stage of the review is to consult, and the council is inviting residents, parish councils and any interested parties to have their say on current arrangements as well as suggestions for future arrangements via a survey which is open until **7 October**.

There is a dedicated webpage on the Council's website titled 'Community Governance Review' which includes a link to the survey.

Please can I encourage you to complete the survey. If anyone has any queries regarding the Consultation, please email [CommunityGovReview@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:CommunityGovReview@north-herts.gov.uk)

### 3. Public Participation – Grant Applications

The Community Partnerships officer informed those present that there is £7,194 available in the Royston grant budget. If all grants are recommended and subsequently approved, there will be £1,060 remaining in the budget for the remainder of the financial year.

RB expressed concern about the low amount of funds that would be remaining if all grants are awarded.

Received presentations in support of grant applications by the following:

**David Bance (DB) presented the Royston and District Parkinsons group application.**

There were no questions from Members, several councillors and members of the public spoke in support of the group.

**Royston and District Parkinsons group vote**

BM proposed. MP seconded.

***Unanimous vote in favour of recommending Royston and District Parkinsons group application for £1,092 towards venue hire and card readers.***

**Bethan Desai (BD) presented the Angels Support Group Hitchin application.**

Members and members of the public enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Face to face delivery in Royston.
- Breakdown of costs.
- Ages supported

**Angels Support Group Hitchin vote**

RB proposed. MP seconded.

***Unanimous vote in favour of recommending Angels Support Group Hitchin's application for £1,063 towards online and in-person support groups.***

**Angie Marshall (AM) presented the Creative Chefs application.**

MP noted he knows the applicant as she has hosted events at his pubs. RB explained that this wouldn't be a problem, but suggested that as the Forum would be quorate without him that he could choose not to vote.

Members and members of the public enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Funding.
- Choice of locations.
- Ages supported.
- Length of sessions.

Members discussed the lack of financial contribution towards the project by the applicant.

#### **Creative Chefs vote**

BM proposed. RC seconded.

***MP refrained from voting. The remaining three Members voted in favour of recommending Creative Chefs application for £1,612 towards fun, educational cooking sessions.***

#### **Rachel Rice (RR) presented the Groundwork East application.**

Members and members of the public enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Timeframe of sessions.
- The group's structure.

Members had discussion around the lack of other funds contributed to the project.

#### **Groundwork East vote**

RB proposed a reduced amount of £1,500 be recommended on condition that the group can come up with the rest of the money (£867) to deliver the course in full. MP seconded.

***Unanimous vote in favour of recommending £1,500 towards Ground East's application for educational growing and cooking sessions.***

#### **4. Community Update**

Becca Edwards, Community and Partnerships Officer, presented the Community Update.

#### **5. [Royston Town Council \(RTC\)](#)**

Mayor John Rees introduced himself and shared information about the following:

- Banking hub opening, likely next week. Located in a room at the back of the town hall. Lloyds are closing at the end of September.

- Police providing a cyber crime talk at the Town Hall.
- 24 October Mayor's charity quiz

**6. [Hertfordshire County Council \(HCC\)](#)**

County Councillor Fiona Hill (FH) introduced herself and shared information about the following:

- The library's summer reading challenge was very successful.
- SEND crisis in education. HCC have invested a lot of money, new employees going through inductions and training for current staff.
- FH visited Outside of the Box.
- HAPpy Camps summer activity programmes have been well attended across the district.
- HCC residents survey closes 15 September.
- Public Health working with stakeholders to promote nutrition, looking to set up a Junior Park Run.
- Active travel over the A505.
- Emergency Services Day flag raising lots of people attended.
- Fire Station open Day well attended.
- Highways full list of schemes available on the website.

**7. Presentation – Sustainable Travel Town**

Edward Leigh (NHC Senior Transport Policy Officer) and Anna Bradley (NHC Town Centre Project Officer) presented.

Members and members of the public enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Engagement with disability groups.
- Frequency of buses.
- Timing of consultation.
- Buses on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

**8. Presentation – [Step2Skills](#)**

Jacquie Gascoigne and Anne Tinker presented.

- There two strands to Step2Skills. A low-cost community learning offer for 19+ looking at training people in a lot of different skills. Also have a team that support 18+ into employment.
- Work with community organisations and in schools.
- The courses that they run are done in a fun way. Might be cooking, with an element of maths.
- Want to do more in North Herts.
- Have accredited courses
- Supportive employment side of Step2Skills. 95% retention.

- Accessible employment event aimed 24 October at Stevenage FC. 9am-3pm. Quiet hour, 12-1. Would like to invite cllrs to attend.

## 9. **Open Discussion**

MOP what is the timescale on the A505 cycle bridge?

RB Likely to be delivered in 2027.

MOP tonight there has been an issue with audibility.

BE to note.

### **Plastic recycling pilot scheme**

RB residents should have had some blue bags.

BM what if bags haven't been delivered?

RB believe it should be all of Royston. Think they should be on their way.

MOP expressed concern that the leaflet isn't clear enough on what can be recycled.

MOP anything in recycle bin that gets sent to landfill?

DA No, everything gets recycled.

## 10. **Future Forum Topics**

- Sport & leisure facilities.
- Parks / green space.

**MEETING CLOSE 21:35**