

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

**MEETING HELD IN THE ROOM 11, ROYSTON TOWN HALL, MELBOURN STREET,  
ROYSTON ON WEDNESDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 2019 AT 7.30 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** *Councillors Tony Hunter (Chairman), Councillor Bill Davidson (Vice-Chairman), Ruth Brown, Jean Green, Ben Lewis and Carol Stanier*

**In Attendance:** *Melanie Stimpson (Democratic Services Manager), Julie Williams (Electoral Service Manager), Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer), Amelia McNally (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

**Also Present:** *County Councillors Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis*

**22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

*Audio Recording – 50 Seconds*

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gerald Morris.

**23 MINUTES - 12 SEPTEMBER 2018**

*Audio Recording – 1 Minute 5 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 12 September 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**24 MINUTES - 28 NOVEMBER 2018**

*Audio Recording – 1 Minute 43 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 28 November 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**25 MINUTES - 13 MARCH 2019**

*Audio Recording – 1 Minute 57 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 March 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**26 MINUTES - 3 JULY 2019**

*Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 11 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 3 July 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**27 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

*Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 26 Seconds*

There was no other business notified.

## **28 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 33 Seconds*

- (1) The Chairman welcomed those present; particularly speakers at Public Participation.
- (2) The Chairman introduced and welcomed Matthew Hepburn a new Committee, Member Services & Scrutiny Officer, who will be clerking future meetings of that Committee.
- (3) In accordance with Council policy the meeting was being audio recorded. Members of the public and the press may use their devices to film/photograph, or do a sound recording of the meeting.
- (4) Members were 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 were required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda.

## **29 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ENTERPRISE EAST**

*Audio Recording – 4 Minutes 19 Seconds*

The Community Engagement Officer advised Members of the Committee that Enterprise East had withdrawn their grant application.

## **30 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - BEEE CREATIVE**

*Audio Recording – 4 Minutes 24 Seconds*

The Community Engagement Officer read out a statement to the Royston and District Committee and gave a verbal presentation on behalf Ms Carrie Washington of BEEE Creative regarding their Grant Application. The following points were highlighted:

- Supported and delivered community projects that gave people access to art opportunities;
- They wished to offer a series of 60 creative movement workshops which would be held at Royston and District Museum and Art Gallery;
- Approximately 500 people would benefit from the workshops – target groups being that of families with pre-school children and adults aged 65+; and
- Dance would be the tool to engage individuals with local cultural heritage and promote community and personal wellbeing.

The following questions asked questions:

Councillor Ruth Brown;  
Councillor Jean Green;  
Councillor Tony Hunter; and  
Councillor Carol Stanier.

In response to questions raised by Members, the Community Engagement Officer confirmed that:

- People would be charged a specific amount for attendance at workshops for that year only. In future BEEE Creative would rely on voluntary contributions;
- The Museum was a suitable place to hold the dance workshops and would provide sufficient space; and
- The grant application met the required criteria.

The Chairman thanked the Community Engagement Officer.

### 31 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

*Audio Recording – 8 Minutes 45 Seconds*

The Democratic Services Manager and The Electoral Services Manager presented the report on the Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations Consultation.

The following appendices accompanied the report:

Appendix A – Polling District Schedule - identified the polling districts, polling places and polling stations for the entire District, along with justification as to any proposed changes.

Appendix B – Consultation Responses

Appendix C – Maps (including District Boundaries)

The Democratic Services Manager explained to the Committee that it was a legal requirement for the Council to conduct a full review every 5 years of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places and that the current review must conclude by 31 January 2020. She further explained that the review was of polling districts and polling places, however, it was accepted that polling stations were linked and therefore the review had incorporated the stations.

The Democratic Services Manager stated:

- That 11 responses had been received in relation to Royston and District Committee for which a large portion of those responses had related to Royston Meridian and also to Icknield Walk First School who had requested that an alternative location be identified as the school would have to close when an election was held.

The following Member asked questions:

- Councillor Ben Lewis

In response to questions raised, the Electoral Services Manager advised that:

- For elections other than Local Elections, i.e. Parliamentary or European Elections, the Council would be able to submit a claim to Central Government to recuperate costs.

It was moved by Councillor Tony Hunter and seconded by Councillor Jean Green and:

**RESOLVED:** That Polling Places, as illustrated in the Returning Officer's Proposals set out in Appendices A and C be designated.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places. The compulsory review must commence and conclude between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020 (inclusive).

The Chairman thanked The Democratic Services Manager and The Electoral Services Manager for their presentation.

## 32 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

*Audio Recording – 17 Minutes 55 Seconds*

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

- With a carry forward of £34 unallocated funds from the 2018/19 budget, there was a total budget of £3,754 for meetings in December 2019 and March 2020 respectively;
- If the Committee were minded to grant BEEE Creative with the requested amount of £1,380, that would leave a budget of £874.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ruth Brown;
- Councillor Carol Stanier.

In response, The Community Engagement Officer provided the following information:

- To date, unaware of any grant applications that were in the pipeline, however, the deadline was soon approaching;
- Advised that BEEE Creative may be able to work with a reduced grant application figure, as they could possibly receive funding from elsewhere; and
- It had previously been agreed by the Committee that £1,500 be allocated to the “Free after 3pm Initiative” and should be ring fenced as an important scheme that had assisted many businesses in Royston.

The Community Engagement Officer informed the Committee that Section 106 money had been allocated to fund two new bus shelters and new bicycle racks in the town.

The Community Engagement Officer directed Members to paragraph 8.2.2 within the report in relation to the possibility of starting “Royston Town Talk”. The Community Engagement Officer further added that Royston was the only Area Committee not to have held a Town Talk that took place prior to their Committee Meeting.

Members entered into a lengthy debate and the following issues were raised during their discussion:

- The need to increase engagement with the public;
- Whether a Town Talk was the most appropriate forum for public engagement;
- Public attendance and engagement at other area committee Town Talks;
- If an alternative venue was required – cost, location and adequate public parking; and
- Publicity.

It was proposed by Councillor Ruth Brown and seconded by Councillor Tony Hunter that Royston and District Committee trial a Town Talk prior to the next Committee Meeting. Upon being put to the vote, there was no majority. The Chairman had the casting voting and voted in favour of the proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That Royston and District Committee trial a Town Talk prior to the next Committee Meeting due to be held on Wednesday 4 December 2019; and
- (2) That the Committee endorsed the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:**

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Officer;
- (2) 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.

**33 GRANT APPLICATION - BEEE CREATIVE**

*Audio Recording – 8 Minutes 30 Seconds*

**RESOLVED:**

That grant funding of £850 be awarded to BEEE Creative towards the running costs for 60 Creative Movement Workshops at Royston & District Museum and Art Gallery.

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

**34 HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

*Audio Recording – 49 Minutes 20 Seconds*

The Chairman informed the Committee Members that NHDC were currently in the process of employing a Transport Project Officer, who would, as a matter of priority be given Royston and District Committee's Parking Review. The Chairman would liaise with the Strategic Infrastructure & Projects Manager to organise a meeting with the new Transport Officer, all Members of the Committee and County Councillors and would inform of date so that all full discussion could take place.

The Chairman led a discussion regarding Highways Issues and invited Hertfordshire County Councillors Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis to update the Committee, they did so as follows:

- The bus service to Marks & Spencer and Aldi was due to commence operation on 11 November 2019;
- There was a drainage issue on The Barkway Road and Priory Lane which had negatively impacted upon the scheduled road resurfacing. Overnight resurfacing would now take place on 14 October until 19 October;

- Various traffic regulation orders and painting of yellow lines were taking place in various locations, in particular on the Grange Estate;
- Speed Indicator Devices had not yet been moved on Barkway Road, but informed this would be imminent;
- Safety Issues in Garden Walk, where cones had been placed;
- Speed and volume surveys had taken place in Nuthampstead;
- Resurfacing and footpath work had taken place and was ongoing;
- Speed and volume surveys were due to take place in Reed and Warren;
- A Speed Indicator Device was due to be fitted on London Road;
- The footpath outside Morrison's fell within Councillor Steve Jarvis' Highways Locality Budget he informed that this would be resurfaced. However, part of the land was owned by Morrison's which had added to the delays;
- On-going investigation into lowering the speed limit by the Ashwell turning onto the A505. It had been reported that at least one motorist a day drove down the wrong side of the carriageway; an investigation to find out the reason for this was in process; and
- Suggested Traffic Island in Baldock Road – cost research had already commenced.

The Chairman thanked both County Councillors Fiona Hill and Steve Jarvis for their attendance at the meeting and the updates.

### **35 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS**

*Audio recording – 58 Minutes 43 Seconds*

Councillor Ruth Brown updated the Committee on the following outside organisations:

- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) were required to make a mandatory pay award of 2% to all of their staff. The funding was not index linked with North Herts District Council, however, the renewal for funding was due in March 2020 and the new administration would be looking at indexing at that time;
- CAB had been experiencing more complex issues with clients than in the past;
- There was a dedicated person from settle based at CAB;
- Royston BID had been renewed. However, due to the fact that Aldi and Marks & Spencer's had not yet been assigned a rateable value, their income had been much lower than expected. Long Term projects, including a high street deep clean, were on hold due to lack of income, resulting in inability to fund.
- Royston BID would no longer be running the cinema, this would be taken on by Saffron Screen.
- Royston Town Twinning – a quiz would be held on 19 October 2019 at Market Hill Rooms. There was also a trip planned to visit Germany at the end of October.

Councillor Tony Hunter added that:

- He had attended the North Herts Centre for Voluntary Service Annual General Meeting; with respect to the Year of Culture an interesting presentation had been provided. North Hertfordshire Museum, who also had representation that evening, had produced a comprehensive Fact Sheet for which the Chairman informed that he would pass on to the Committee Clerk to attach to the next meeting Agenda for Members information; and
- Whilst attending the Royston Working Party Meeting, pleasingly, it had been reported that whilst overdue, the electrical pit for Royston Christmas Tree had now been successfully moved back from the kerb line.

**Wednesday, 9th October, 2019**

The meeting closed at 8.36 pm

Chairman