

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ROYSTON AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

(Royston and Ermine Ward – Parishes of Barkway, Barley, Kelshall, Nuthampstead, Reed and Therfield)

**Meeting held at Royston Day Centre, The Old Barn, Upper King Street, Royston
on 14 March 2007 at 7.30p.m.**

MINUTES

- PRESENT:** *Councillors: Mrs F.R. Hill (Chairman), Liz Beardwell, P.C.W. Burt, A.F.Hunter, R.E.Inwood and F.J.Smith.*
- IN ATTENDANCE:** *Kim Sawyer – Corporate Legal Manager
Mary Caldwell – Planning Control and Conservation Manager
Kate Poyser – Planning Officer
Mark Simmons – Conservation Officer
Alan Fleck - Community Development Officer,
Nigel Schofield – Committee Administrator.*
- ALSO PRESENT:** *County Councillor Doug Drake, Royston Town Councillor Bill Prime and 37 members of the public (for the planning application only).*

101. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the speaker at Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

The Chairman welcomed the speakers at Agenda Item 8 – Planning Applications.

102. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Howard Marshall.

103. MINUTES – 31 January 2007

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2007 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

104. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Agenda Item 7 – Grant Application, Royston Community Association

Councillors F. Hill and L. Beardwell declared a personal interest as they were NHDC representatives to the Coombes Community Centre, Royston Management Committee and that they would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

Agenda Item 7 – Grant Application, Royston and District Sports Council

Councillor P. Burt declared a personal interest in that he was a NHDC representative to the Royston and District Sports Council and that he would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

Agenda Item 8 – Planning Application, Green Drift, Royston

Councillor L. Beardwell declared a personal interest as she was a resident in Green Drift and that she would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

Councillor R. Inwood declared a personal interest in that a member of his immediate family was resident in Green Drift and that he would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

Councillor F. Hill declared a personal interest in that she carried out work for Estate Agents currently marketing two properties in Green Drift and that she would remain in the room for this item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

105. PROPOSED BUS SERVICE: ROYSTON TO HITCHIN

Royston Town Councillor Bill Prime thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Royston Committee. Cllr. Prime requested support of the Royston Committee in his proposal to seek the introduction of a bus service between Royston and Hitchin. Central government policy was to encourage less use of personal motor cars and use public transport more. In North Herts there was a national rail link between the four towns but the problem remained that village residents did not have an easy access to stations such as Ashwell and Steeple Morden. Hitchin Station and Baldock Station were some distances and that Letchworth Garden City rail station was the only one in a town centre.

Cllr Prime was aware that North Herts District Council did not provide support for bus services in North Herts as such bus services were the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council as the primary authority. Members of the Committee considered this proposal worthy of support but agreed that the main problem lay in persuading bus companies to provide such services, to match passengers to what the bus companies were prepared to provide and the consequence was that HCC had great difficulty in deciding on the best course of bus service provision.

The Royston Committee were minded to support this proposal but considered that matching users wishes to services that HCC and the bus companies were expected to provide would be difficult .

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Royston Town Councillor Bill Prime be thanked for the presentation.
- (2) That the Royston Committee supported the proposal for a bus service between Royston and Hitchin via villages and Baldock and Letchworth Garden City;
- (3) That the NHDC Transport Policy Officer be requested to provide a contribution to the next edition of Champion News on the viability of such a bus service and the involvement of Hertfordshire County Council and bus transport companies.

106. CHAMPION NEWS

The Royston Community Development Officer (CDO) provided a comprehensive review of his activities since the last meeting of the Royston Committee held on 31 January 2007.

Of particular note was confirmation that Cabinet at its meeting held on 16 January 2007 (Minute 144 refers) had resolved to allocate £13,750 per annum for the development of a town centre partnership in Royston. The CDO advised the Committee that Cabinet in due course would receive a report on alternative funding for town centre partnerships which *inter alia* could include street trading licences.

The CDO proposed and it was agreed that he should make the necessary arrangements for a grant application to the next meeting of the Royston Committee to be held on 25 April 2007 by SCooTS (Scooter and Cycle Transport Solutions) which would concerns funds to support the project and possible purchase of additional scooters.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Royston and District Committee endorsed the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for the promotion of greater community capacity and well being;
- (2) That the Royston Community Development Officer be requested to make the necessary arrangements for the presentation of a grant application by SCooTs to a future meeting of the Royston Committee.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

To keep members of the Royston and District Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in the Royston and District Area.

107. AREA COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT BUDGET 2006-2007

The CDO referred the Committee to Appendix A which presented current and pre-allocated grants for the current civic year. The CDO advised the Committee that there was £9,000 unallocated from the discretionary budget for 2007-2007 at the date of this meeting. The CDO also referred the Committee to Appendices B and C for two grant applications.

The Committee reviewed the two grant applications and resolved to allocate funds as detailed at Minutes 108 and 109 below. Following the resolution on the two grant applications the Committee addressed the remaining funds and decided to reserve monies for hanging baskets, an increase to the grant for Coombes Community Centre a pre – allocation of £300 to cover lost car parking revenue in December 2007 and the balance to the associated costs of implementing Traffic Regulations Orders in Royston.

Through the Chairman the Committee led by Cllr. P. Burt discussed the merits of providing free car parking in NHDC car parks after 4 p.m. during the month of December 2007 and agreed that that funds should be set aside for this purpose from the 2007-2008 Discretionary Budget.

With regard to the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders the Committee agreed that King James Way should be the first road to be addressed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the current expenditure and balance of the Development Budget as set out at Appendix A be noted;
- (2) That the two grant applications as presented at Appendices B and C be noted;
- (3) That up to a maximum of £300 be pre-allocated as a payment to cover lost revenue in December 2007 following the provision of free parking in local authority car parks in Royston after 16.00 hours Monday to Saturday;
- (4) That the sum of £4,000 be pre-allocated for the provision of Hanging flower baskets in Royston Town Centre in 2007 in addition to an underpayment for Hanging flower baskets of £4,666 due for the current financial year (2006-2007);
- (5) That the remaining balance of £3,300 in the 2006-2007 Discretionary Budget be pre-allocated towards associated costs with the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders in Royston.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

To allow the Royston and District Committee continue with its support to local voluntary organisations and further the aims and strategic priorities of North Herts District Council.

108. GRANT APPLICATION – ROYSTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

RESOLVED: That a grant of £908 be awarded to the Royston Community Association as a contribution towards the costs associated with the removal of hedges to the front of the Coombes Community Centre, the supply, planting of shrubs and additional trees, and subject to the provision of an appropriate management plan.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

To allow the Royston and District Committee continue with its support to local voluntary organisations and further the aims and strategic priorities of North Herts District Council.

109. GRANT APPLICATION – ROYSTON AND DISTRICT SPORTS COUNCIL

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a grant of £450 be awarded to the Royston and District Sports Council as a contribution towards the costs associated with hall hire and promotion of a Sports Fayre to be held at Royston Leisure Centre on 15 April 2007.

- (2) That the Royston Community Development Officer be requested to enter into discussions with the NHDC Document Centre Manager to consider cost savings in the reproduction of promotional material for the Sports Fayre.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

To allow the Royston and District Committee continue with its support to local voluntary organisations and further the aims and strategic priorities of North Herts District Council.

110. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee heard two oral presentations as follows:

Application Ref. 06/02712/1 – 16 to 20 Green Drift, Royston, SG8 5DA

Caroline Coates spoke as an objector's representative.

John Crawley spoke as the applicant's representative.

RESOLVED to determine the planning application as set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building control and as indicated in the following schedule:

SCHEDULE

Reference Number	Description of Development and Location	Decision
06/02712/1	16 to 20 Green Drift, Royston, SG8 5DA Erection of 14 dwellings with associated garages, parking spaces, access road and other works (As amended by drawing Nos. 073:02B, 03B, 04C, 06C, 07A, 08A received on 12 February 2007).	Deferred (see (a)below)

- (a) With regard to planning application reference 06/02712/1 that a decision on determination be **DEFERRED** for the following reasons:

1. **Number and design of dwellings:** That the Planning Control and Conservation Manager be requested to enter into discussions with the applicant company concerning a reduction in the number of proposed dwellings on the site and invite the applicant to re-consider the design of the proposed dwellings;
2. **Traffic management:** That the Planning Control and Conservation Manager be requested to obtain from the Highways Authority a written review of traffic management issues in Green Drift including the combined effect of traffic leaving the proposed development site and traffic exiting into Green Drift from other roads in the immediate area to the site;
3. **Localised flooding and drainage:** That the Planning Control and Conservation Manager be requested to obtain a formal response on drainage and flooding issues from the Environment Agency concerning the development site owing to recent incidents of flooding in Royston.

111. PLANNING APPEALS AND ENFORCEMENT

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager confirmed that no appeals had been lodged and two appeals had been determined since the meeting of this Committee held on 31 January 2007.

Appellant; Mr and Mrs P. Merritt
Address: 21 Baldock Street, Royston, Herts, SG8 5AY
Description: Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear projection (as amended by plan received on 10 March 2006)
Ref. 06/00092/1HH and 06/00093/1LB
Decision: Appeals DISMISSED on 31 January 2007.
Committee/ Delegated.
Delegated:

Appellant; Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Ltd
Address: The Maltings, Green Drift, Royston, Herts SG8 9BT
Description: Change of use from B1 to D1 for day nursery usage (3 year period only).
Ref. 06/00095/1
Decision: Appeal DISMISSED on 1 March 2007.
Committee/ Committee.
Delegated:

112. ROYSTON CONSERVATION AREA REVIEW

The Conservation Officer (CO) reminded the Committee that a six-week public consultation had commenced on 20 January 2007 and that the first of three Royston Town Centre Strategy workshops related to the review. The Committee noted that over 150 'consultation packs' were taken by members of the public and that there had been 31 responses by questionnaire. The CO advised that generally the responses were very positive and more than 90 per cent of respondents were fairly or very satisfied with the text and perhaps some significance could be attached to the fact that no one under the age of 35 responded to the process and 74 per cent were aged 50 or older.

The CO referred the Committee to Section 5 which detailed the proposed changes following public consultation and Appendices A, B, C and D containing supporting documentation. The Committee noted and agreed the changes to the Royston Conservation Area documents and Register of Buildings of Local Interest as at Section 5 and accepted the reasons for non acceptance of matters raised during public consultation as detailed at Section 6. Members noted the non-inclusion of the O2 mast and the CO provided additional details on the reasons for the exclusion of the Telephone Exchange site. The CO also provided details relating to the inclusion of The Mill, Kneesworth Street, and the exclusion of properties 2 – 22 (evens) from the Register of Buildings of Local Interest. The Co gave reasons why the Conservation Area should not be extended further to include properties in Old North Road and referred the Committee to Appendix G. And finally, The CO advised the Committee that the annotation on the consultation documents referring to the former Priory Cinema Site as a 'site beyond the conservation area where re-development would improve its setting' should remain on the basis that the site was considered to have no special architectural or historical interest to merit inclusion within the Conservation Area.

The Committee reviewed a coloured extract from the draft conservation map as presented at Appendix B showing the changes listed at Paragraphs 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10, and the CO agreed that the red representation of Old Barn, Upper King Street should extend to the rear of the building.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the contents of the report and Appendices A to G be noted;

- (2) That changes to the final text, layout, maps and images of the Royston Conservation Area document and Register of Buildings of Local Interest as indicated in the report (including alterations made at this Committee) be agreed;
- (3) That the Conservation Officers be thanked for their very professional approach to the production of the Royston Conservation Area document.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that the Councils statutory duties are carried out and that targets set to meet BV 219 are completed;
- (2) To allow the Council adopt a Register of Buildings of Local Interest and an up to date review of the Royston Conservation Area with appropriate documents that would inform future planning decisions.

113. ROYSTON COMMUNITY SURGERY

The Community Development Officer reminded the Committee that in December 2004 a trial period of community surgeries had been agreed and the surgeries were held on a Saturday on a monthly basis until August 2006. Subsequently the surgeries were reduced to meeting bi-monthly, an analysis of attendees was made and shown graphically at Paragraph 4.1 to the report and attendances shown at Paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3. The Committee noted the trend of attendees falling away from December to June and then increasing towards December each year and the issues raised by attendees as listed at Appendix A.

The Committee entered into a short debate on surgeries and agreed that the surgeries should continue on a bi-monthly basis commencing on 14 April with the location remaining at Royston Town Hall. The Committee requested that the CDO should publicise the surgeries as widely as possible in Royston and using Members Information Service and the NHDC web site.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the information on Royston Community Surgeries be noted;
- (2) That the proposal to hold Royston Community surgeries on a Saturday between the hours of 10.30 a.m. and 12 noon on a bi-monthly programme be agreed as follows:
 - 14 April 2007 = Cllrs. F.J. Smith and H. Marshall
 - 2 June 2007 = Cllrs. R. Inwood and P. Burt
 - 4 August 2007* = All Royston Councillors are invited.
 - 6 October 2007 = Cllrs. F. Hill and H. Marshall
 - 1 December 2007 = Cllrs. F. J. Smith and R. Inwood
 - 2 February 2008 = Cllrs P. Burt and A. Hunter
 - 5 April 2008 = Cllrs. L. Beardwell and F. Hill
- (3) *That the Royston Community Development Officer be requested to make the necessary arrangements to hold the surgery timetabled for Saturday 4 August 2007 in a location adjacent to Royston Market;
- (4) That the Royston Community Development Officer and the Committee and Member Services Officer be thanked for their efforts in the organisation and follow up to Community Surgeries.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

To ensure the most efficient use of resources in communications with members of the public.

The meeting closed at 9.56 p.m.

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Chairman

