**FIRST MEETING OF THE ROYSTON COMMUNITY NETWORK**

**WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2018**

**AT THE**

**COOMBES COMMUNITY CENTRE, ROYSTON**

**PRESENT**

Robert Smith -RCA and Royston & District Community Health CIC Joint Network Co-ordinator

Lindsay Davidson- RCA and Make Lunch . Joint Network Co-ordinator

Gillian Morland –RCA and Manager Coombes Community Centre

Liz Harris-Priory Quilters

Barbara Blower-Priory Quilters

Peter Morgan –Royston Arts Society

Kay Makowiecki – W.I. A.M

John Davies – Friends of Royston Healthcare

Sarah Hillman- Community Breakfast and RCH CIC

Ray Munden - Rotary Club and Community Breakfast

Ivana Pakidzyova – Coombes Residents Group

Amanda Jeavons – Coombes Residents Group

Sylvia Beamon – Coombes Residents Group

David Wherrell – Royston and District Community Transport

Barbara Van Der Merve- W I P.M

Janet Simister- Mencap

Michael Young - CADS

Gillian Boyd – Royston speak out Club

Brian Norwood – Royston Methodist Church

Carl Filby – Creative Royston

Diana Barker – Melbourn Community Allotments

Jackie Cotton- Home-Start-Royston and S. Cambs

Trudie Harrington – Age UK –Hertfordshire

Kevin Clark – Royston Chess Club

Cllr Fiona Hill- Herts County Council

Cllr Tony Hunter- North Herts District Council

Corrections were made at the start of the meeting to some erroneous information that had been supplied in a previous email to Community Breakfast members:

Royston Volunteer Centre had closed due to personnel problems and some funding difficulties. The Royston Children’s Centre isstill functioning, and Herts C. C. and NHDC support the RCA with Locality Budgets and Discretionary Area Committee Funds

**PURPOSE OF MEETING AND INDENTIFICATION OF GROUP NEEDS. WHAT WOULD WE LIKE THE GROUP TO DO?**

DIANA BARKER – Melbourn Community Allotments. Run by volunteers and meet weekly between 10-12pm on Friday mornings. Looking for more volunteers to work on a pre-prepared plot, especially interested in working with people with mental health issues and those who are socially isolated. They are also looking for help and advice with funding etc, which they are hoping this meeting might provide.

RAY MUNDEN – Rotary Club and Community Breakfast. Talked about the Community Breakfast which is held once a month on a Friday morning at the Bull . Hoped that this meeting would be a useful compliment to their meetings and that we could all help each other. He also liked the idea of speaking with a single voice through the Network on future local issues and funding.

DAVID WHERRELL. – Royston Community Transport. Explained the work of Community Transport and how they are available to help with local transport needs for groups and charities etc as well as individuals. They need more volunteer drivers as RCT is pretty full to capacity, work wise now. They currently have 85 drivers and covered 200,000 miles last year, the community’s transport needs are growing all the time. RCT pay 50p per mile to use your own car and no extra insurance is needed.

BOB SMITH- RCA and Royston and District Community Health CIC. Gave an update on the current situation with the Royston hospital and then a report on Social Prescribing,(please see attached info sheet). He wondered if there was any way the Network could help with this issue. It was pointed out that members are already providing a service for the lonely and isolated by giving them clubs and groups of whatever kind to join, but that we all might need to be more aware of this growing issue. Cllr Fiona Hill further explained about what Herts C.C. is doing. Social Prescribing had been up and running for some time with a Navigator based in Stevenage and covering Royston who was working closely with local GP surgeries, Social workers and groups like AGE UK. What had previously been missing were GP referrals, but this had now been rectified.

TRUDIE HARRINGTON – AGE UK- Herts. Has been working for some time on the Social Prescribing issue together with Herts C.C. but had previously found it difficult to get Royston GP’s to refer patients to them. Now that the system is up and running here, she is hoping that this issue will improve. She also pointed out that the Herts Help web site has a list off all local groups. Discussion took place about the use of local café’s and shops to have tables set aside for use by those who are feeling isolated and want to meet others. A Pilot project in Letchworth is doing this, calling these premises Community Connectors and the Costa Café in Tescos has a Chatter and Natter table for this prupose. DAVID WHERRALL wanted to point out that Community Transport don’t just help the old and disabled, but also those who are isolated and without transport where they live.

JOHN DAVIES – Friends of Royston Healthcare reported that they helped a wide range of people and local groups such as Home-Start and also had more funds available for people who needed assistance, ideally with healthcare referral or support. He hoped the Network would be able to spread the word about the work of his group so that more people could be helped in the future. They were also writing to Schools to ask if anyone needed support.

KEVIN CLARK Royston Chess Club. Run a very successful group for adults but want to start a junior section and is finding it very difficult to access children through the local schools with advertising about it, wanted help (and helpers) and advice about how to achieve this. CLLR FIONA HILL told Kevin that she could possibly help with this as she visits schools through her role as a County Cllr. Discussion took place about the difficulties encountered by all groups in reaching the younger demographic both to join things and to volunteer. PETER MORGAN of the Royston Art Society talked about the problems they had had with engaging young people to take part in Art competitions etc.

CARL FILBY –Creative Royston , said that they worked hard to reach out to all generations through the Arts Festival and found that often it was word of mouth that seemed to get the best results. He wanted the Network to share information, and helpto publicise events andalso identify the people whocould benefit from going to them or joining in with local activities.

JANET SIMISTER –Mencap. Her group had huge difficulties in getting people to come to their meetings and their numbers had dwindled down considerably. Hoped the Network might be able to help by mentioning their work in Royston to their respective members. AMANDA JEAVONS –Coombes Residents Group reported after the meeting had closed that there were also other mental health groups and projects in Royston such as the Tesco’s Community Garden, MIND, which met on Wednesday mornings at the Centre and a group called TIME TO CHANGE which met on alternate Thursday evenings from 7pm to 8.30pm at the Centre here.

BRIAN NORWOOD- Royston Methodist Church. They put on many events throughout the year and had a big hall and rooms for hire at the back of the church but again found it difficult to get people to come to things or use their premises, especially younger people. He realised that parking for their church was a big issue as the location of the church in Queens Rd made parking very difficult.

IVANA PAKOZDYOVA- Coombes Residents Group. They are brand new little group trying to set up a social network for their neighbourhood but are finding it quite hard going and need help and advice. They want to hold a Neighbourhood party in their local park area next year as well as other social events to bring people together.

CLLR TONY HUNTER-told the meeting that he was the Cabinet member for Community Engagement at NHDC . The Community Development Fund had some funding available to help local groups and charities and members should contact him (see address on Contacts sheet attached) if they required help.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED NOTES ON WHAT THE RCA CAN DO FOR YOU AND FULL MEMBERS CONTACT LIST WITH RELEVANT INFO.

**WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

DIANA BARKER suggested that the Network should try doing what she has done very successfully, that is having stalls at Farmers markets and also Open Days where people could come and see what they do.

SYLVIA BEAMON- Coombes Residents Group, asked if we could try having stalls for our members outside Tesco’s and in the markets in Royston to promote events and encourage membership/volunteers.

Discussion took place about how to publicise events by multi-media including local press, social media, posters and word of mouth- and ensure people have many different opportunities to “see” the publicity. It was also suggested that a Volunteers Fair could be held.

It was also generally agreed that the Network should be about communicating with and helping each other, looking at possible future funding issues together and speaking with one voice where ever possible. Members could also always contact each other out-with meetings and also send round to us all, news about their work and upcoming events etc.

Members wanted to meet 3 times a year. It was suggested that one of the meetings should be held in the evening to accommodate those who through work commitments were unable to make a day time one.

**The next meeting is now set for WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 13TH 2019 10.30 am at the Coombes Community Centre**