**ZOOM MEETING OF THE ROYSTON COMMUNITY NETWORK**

**WEDNESDAY 17th JUNE 2020, 10.30 to 11.45.**

**PRESENT**

Robert Smith - RCA and Joint Network Co-ordinator

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

Cate Hall - Trinity Life Church and Make Lunch

Sarah Mascall - Home-Start Royston and South Cambs

Carl Filby - Creative Royston

Ray Munden - Rotary

Ivana Pakozdova - Coombes Residents Group

Jim Rawles - Royston Community Transport

Cllr Fiona Hill - Hertfordshire County Council

Cllr Tony Hunter - North Hertfordshire District Council

Joanna Aldridge – Social Navigator-Granta Medical Services

**Apologies** received from Richard Williams (Royston Health Walks), Sara Hillman (Royston Community Health), Richard Julian (Garden House Hospice) and John Davies (Royston Health Care).

1. **Carl Filby from Creative Royston** gave an update on the Royston Arts Festival. Due to the current Corona virus lockdown situation, it has been decided to cancel the main events, due to not being able to maintain social distancing. Instead, a virtual Festival will be held on line, possibly supported by some small actual events where social distancing could be maintained. There would not be a concert finale and no community events in Priory Gardens. The Glazed Creations owner, a major contributor and sponsor of the event is moving out of the area and would not have been taking part in the Festival anyway. The musical events are unlikely to take place but this is under review. The Creative Royston group has lost 2 cttte members but these have been replaced by two new members and now has 6 committee members.
2. **Ray Munden from Rotary** confirmed that the August Kite Festival has been cancelled due to the virus. A Virtual Balloon Race will be held in September to hopefully raise funds lost due to the Kite Festival cancellation. The Royston Wildlife Group has also cancelled all events. Rotary are planning to sponsor installing swift boxes in the Royston parish church tower. The Friends of Royston Heath have cancelled all live events, now meeting on Zoom. Rotary and the Friends are providing funding for new information signs on the Heath and Rotary are sponsoring prizes for a Creative Writing competition to be held shortly.
3. **Jim Rawles from Royston Community Transport** introduced himself as the new representative for RTC following the retirement of David Wherrall. All bus services were curtailed from 23rd March at which point they were running 60 trips/day. Partial service resumed recently at 5 trips/day, including a daily service for children attending Melbourn College. In order to maintain the buses, each are taken out at least once per week. A sanitiser has been purchased to thoroughly sanitise buses after each usage. Drivers and passengers now wear masks and gloves and plastic screens behind drivers are being purchased. 80% of the drivers were over the age of 80 and due to the virus, many have left. 16 new volunteers have been recruited but as some of these were people who had been furloughed, many have since returned to work, but a few have been retained. Obviously income has reduced significantly. Following the presentation made later by Joanna Aldridge, Granta Medical Social Navigator, Jim requested that Lindsay forward to Joanna his personal email address to see if RTC could offer assistance in providing a client transport service to Granta Medical or other destinations.
4. **Sarah Mascall from Home Start Royston and Cambs** reported that they were still operating but no face to face meetings, or volunteers going into family’s homes but using Zoom or telephone. This takes much longer and loses other indications such as body language. Two family Groups continue in Royston and Buntingford via Zoom, reading self written stories to avoid copyright issues and holding craft activities. Difficult to speak privately with parents as children are present. Several events have been cancelled. A Zoom gin and tonic tasting session is taking place on 26th June for fund raising.
5. **Cate Hall from Trinity Life Church and Make Lunch** reported that Make Lunch have been unable to provide the usual school holiday lunch sessions but have delivered childrens activity packs to family homes, A survey is to be sent out regarding how best to help over the Summer, with the possibility of picnics in the park or the Heath. The food bank has been operating throughout lockdown and families have been able to access food there if necessary. The Make Lunch team have also now secured the use of St Marys Church hall, for their lunch sessions when things are back to normal. Previously The Old Bull had very kindly offered them their premises for free but the venue had proved to be rather cramped and not very suitable.
6. **Joanna Aldridge from Granta Medical (Social Navigator)**  reported that all face to face meetings have been cancelled due to the virus. Very busy in triage referrals, in one week took more calls than 111 received in one month for South Cambridgeshire. Joanna is based in Sawston but currently working from home due to social distancing problems there. There has been a much increased need for help re social isolation issues which is what Joanna deals with. A new ‘My Community’ web site was launched earlier this week by 12 leading organisations including NAVCA and NCVO to help groups find the information and support they need. Details are attached to these notes. Cllr Fiona Hill wishes to tie up with Joanna as Herts Help offers a similar service.
7. **Ivana Pakozdyova from Coombes Residents Group** explained that she is a web site designer and has launched a new site, RoystonHub.co.uk, which lists organisations and Groups in Royston who offer services of interest to local residents and needs details from our Network Group of their groups and organisations for inclusion on the web site. Ivana asked members to send her their details, her email address is on the mail-out list. She has also been busy helping neighbours and told us that the Burns Road Heroes project have been working very hard, supporting people in that area of town.
8. **Cllr Fiona Hill from HCC** referred to the Herts Help service which offers similar assistance as that provided by My Community and suggested that it would be beneficial if she and Joanna could liaise.
9. **Cllr Tony Hunter from NHDC** explained that income from car parks etc has significantly declined although partially offset by a grant from central Government of £1.37 million for NHDC expenses, this was not thought to be enough. NHDC have been spending a great deal of time managing grant distribution provided by central Government. A further Government grant of £1.2 million has been received for allocation to self employed which is proving difficult to allocate without proper evidence of claim. Council reserves may have to be used to continue council costs being covered.
10. **Lindsay Davidson from RCA** explained that RCA income since 23rd March has been almost non-existent due to lockdown, apart from 2 NHS Blood Donation sessions in May and June. A part time office assistant and cleaners have been furloughed but Centre Manager has not been furloughed as we have to ensure that the Centre is kept safe, water run frequently, outstanding invoices chased, receiving enquiries from users and building/decorating completed whilst shut down. We have received a £10,000 grant from central Government via NHDC.

Date of next Meeting - **Wednesday 21st October 2020 at 10.30**

Either via Zoom or at Coombes Community Centre depending on virus situation.