

18th January 2020

To: Town Mayor and all Members of the Partnership Committee

Town Councillors: **D Abbott, D Jones, K Wattingham, Vacancy**
CBC Councillors **Y Farrell, S Goodchild, P Hamill, A Ryan (Chair)**
Co-Opted Members **D Gibbons**
CBC Officers **Mrs Hughes, Community Engagement Manager**

(Copies to all Houghton Regis Town Councillors for information.)

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend a virtual meeting of the **Partnership Committee on 26th January 2021** commencing at **7.00pm hours**.

This meeting is being held virtually via Microsoft Teams. If members of the public would like to attend, please click on the meeting link below and follow the online instructions:

[MEETING LINK](#)¹

[MEETING GUIDANCE](#)

To assist in the smooth running of the meeting please refer and adhere to the Council's Virtual Meeting Guidance. To view the Virtual Meeting Guidance please click on the link above.



Clare Evans
Town Clerk

**THIS MEETING MAY BE
RECORDED²**

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

¹ If you require a meeting link emailed to you, please contact the Head of Democratic Services at louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk

² Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.

The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.

2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)

To receive questions and statements from members of the public in respect of any item of business included in the agenda, as provided for in Standing Order No.s 1(f) and 1(h).

3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

Members are invited to submit any requests for Dispensations for consideration.

4. MINUTES

Pages 5 - 9

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2020.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2020.

5. IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS: TIME 2 CONNECT

John Gelder, Director, Community Action Bedfordshire will attend the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

6. HOUSING PROJECTS AND RELATED ISSUES

Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing Services, Social Care, Health & Housing Directorate, will attend the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments.

7. TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION

A verbal update report will be provided on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

8. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members of the Town Partnership Committee are invited to provide a verbal report on matters of relevance to Houghton Regis arising in particular from the Committee/s on which they serve.

9. CBC UPDATE REPORT

Pages 10 - 27

The CBC update report is attached for information.

10 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Pages 28 - 29

Members are invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

11 INFORMAL INFORMATION SHARING

Members may be aware that over the last few months the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the CBC Partnership Committees have met to share good practice in relation to the operation and function of the committee.

For Houghton Regis this has resulted in a more focused spin off group emerging comprising Houghton Regis Ward Councillors, 2 CBC Executive Councillors and the Chair and the Clerk Houghton Regis Town Council. This group has met a few times over the last 6 months or so. Some useful discussions have been had and ideas have been discussed for potential strategic projects in Houghton Regis. Members of the group are very aware that this is an informal, non-decision making group with no authority or remit other than to bring ideas forward.

It is hoped that as these ideas become more tangible that they can be presented for formal consideration.

The Terms of Reference of this Committee state:

Meetings and Quorum

4. In addition to the Committee meetings, the Town Joint Committee can organise other forms of engagement to take place such as themed discussions / task and finish groups and community conferences, including joint meetings or events with other Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire.

To support the work of the group, members are requested to endorse the membership of this group and its basic remit.

Membership

Houghton Regis CBC Ward Councillors
CBC Executive Councillors (Cllr Young, Cllr Hegley)
Chair of HR Partnership Committee
Vice Chair of Partnership Committee (not currently included)
Chair of Houghton Regis Town Council
Clerk of Houghton Regis Town Council
Officer representation from CBC (not currently included)

Remit

To discuss project ideas for Houghton Regis and for these to be put forward for further consideration.

Recommendation: To support and endorse the informal information sharing group:

Membership

Houghton Regis CBC Ward Councillors

CBC Executive Councillors (Cllr Young, Cllr Hegley)

Chair of HR Partnership Committee

Vice Chair of Partnership Committee

Chair of Houghton Regis Town Council

Clerk of Houghton Regis Town Council

Officer representation from CBC

Remit

To discuss project ideas for Houghton Regis and for these to be put forward for further consideration.

12 PARTNESHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

It has been requested that potential co-option onto this committee remain on the agenda as a Standing Agenda item.

Members are invited to consider whether they would like to explore the possibility of seeking to co-opt local stakeholders onto the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee. In this regard the Terms of Reference for the Committee state:

Co-option

1. To support engagement with local stakeholders the Town Joint Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be removed from the Town Joint Committee. Decision making around removals can either be taken by the whole Town Joint committee or by joint agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair, depending on each Town Joint Committee's preference.

The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually, by the Town Joint Committee

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET
ON 10th NOVEMBER 2020**

Present: Town Cllrs: D Jones (Vice-Chair), K Wattingham, Cllr Abbott
CBC Cllrs: P Hamill, Y Farrell, S Goodchild
CBC Officers: Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager
Co-opted Member: David Gibbons
HRTC Officers: Clare Evans, Town Clerk
Louise Senior, Head of Democratic Services

Also in Attendance: Carole Hegley: CBC Councillor
Tony Keaveney: Assistant Director Housing Services, Social Care,
Health & Housing Directorate
Jill Dickinson: Assistant Director Leisure Libraries and
Countryside, CBC
Kate Moodey: School Organisation Officer, CBC
John Gelder: Community Action Bedfordshire
Gina Croxford: Community Action Bedfordshire

Apologies: Cllr A Ryan, CBC Cllr

Members of the public: 2

863 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Ryan.

864 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

**865 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR
DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she was a member of the Baptist Church, however, as her role was unpaid she would still be able to speak on the agenda item.

866 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2020.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2020 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

**867 IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS:
A TIME TO CONNECT**

Councillor Abbot joined the meeting (7.14pm)

John Gelder, Director, Community Action Bedfordshire and Gina Croxford were in attendance at the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

Members were advised that Zoom had been purchased to increase opportunities of reaching a wider section of the community.

Members were advised that meetings had been held with some groups who were predominantly struggling with loneliness due to the pandemic. Members were advised that some areas within the community were not always aware of the services and groups that were available to them in Houghton Regis.

868 KINGSLAND / HR LEISURE CENTRE

Jill Dickinson, Assistant Director Leisure Libraries and Countryside was in attendance at the meeting. Members received an update on the look of the new high school, the Trust who would be managing the school and the surrounding land proposals.

It was requested that Stuart Lock, CEO of Advantage Schools meet with council and update members on the plans, values and aspirations of the school.

Members raised concerns that despite the proposed additional three new primary schools, this would remain inadequate to accommodate the growing needs of the town.

Members were advised further work would be needed to ascertain the need for a health hub in Houghton Regis.

869 HOUSING PROVISION AND ALLOCATIONS

Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing Services, Social Care, Health & Housing Directorate, was in attendance at the meeting and updated members on the All Saints View development and advised that it was hoped that Central Bedfordshire Council would be in a position to invite occupancy applications in the new year.

Members raised concerns that some residents of the elderly community believed that they had already registered for All Saints View, members were advised that extensive communications would be sent out to residents who had expressed interest.

870 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members received the Partnership Committee workplan for information.

- Community Buildings in Houghton Regis (HRN 2 Community Building)

Members were advised that an expression of interest had been received. Moving forward to the next stage, a full business case would be prepared.

Members requested that the invitation to Stuart Lock, CEO Vantage Schools be added to the workplan.

871 TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION

Members were updated on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Members were advised that a funding issue had arisen regarding the application to the Football Foundation. Members were advised that a report would be submitted to the Environment and Leisure Committee meeting on 16th November 2020.

872 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members of the Town Partnership Committee were invited to provide a verbal report on matters of relevance to Houghton Regis arising in particular from the Committee/s on which they serve.

Councillor Goodchild updated members on Corporate Parenting Panel and Social Care; A spokesperson from NHS who spoke of specialist recovery and non-emergency care, also received was an over-view of the NHS and the services available to residents.

Councillor Farrell updated members that on receipt of an Op Hana document, crime figures in Houghton Regis were decreasing.

873 CBC UPDATE REPORT

Members received the CBC Update Report for information and a brief overview of services over the last three months.

- The Chalk Pit Quarry; there had been a decline in the reports of ASB. A site visit with the landowner was being arranged.
- Library services; The select and collect service remained available
- Business investment update, over the month of July – September, 34 inquiries had been received
- Estate regeneration: Feasibility, viability and resident engagement for potential scheme(s) for Tithe Farm and Parkside was still in place.

- Community engagement: members were encouraged to nominate for cheering for volunteering. It was recognised that the voluntary community had been outstanding.
- Community Services asset grant scheme: Members were advised that the second bidding scheme had closed.
- Reminder of the garden waste collections cessation on December 7th
- BT payphone consultations report to be submitted on 8th December

874 SUPPORTING TOWN CENTRES AND THE WIDER ECONOMY

HRTC has received communication from Marcel Coiffait, looking for ideas / suggestions to support town centres and the wider economy.

The town council would like to prepare a response to this letter. A considerable amount of work had already been completed on aspirations for Houghton Regis including the town centre. Members received supporting documents to the items below:

- HRTC had responded to the CBC consultation on the Future High Streets fund
- in 2018 HRTC put together a list of services and facilities that the council would like to see in Houghton Regis
- HRTC has also developed a corporate plan for 2020/24.

Members of this Committee were asked to review the above and to discuss any other issues which they would like to see. Feedback from the Partnership Committee would be provided to Town Council in December to enable a full response to be provided to CBC.

The Town Clerk was thanked for the extensive work already completed on the aspirations of Houghton Regis.

875 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

Members were invited to consider whether they would like to explore the possibility of seeking to co-opt local stakeholders onto the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee. In this regard the Terms of Reference for the Committee state:

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1. To support engagement with local stakeholders the Town Joint Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be

removed from the Town Joint Committee. Decision making around removals can either be taken by the whole Town Joint committee or by joint agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair, depending on each Town Joint Committee's preference.

2. The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually, by the Town Joint Committee.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.24pm

Dated this 26th day of January 2021.

Chairman

DRAFT

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

Purpose of report: For information

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1. COMMUNITY SAFETY

CCTV REPORTS

OCTOBER

Date	Time	Location	Type of Crime	Arrests
01/10/20	18:58	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
09/10/20	23:30	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
10/10/20	17:35	Bedford Square	Assault	0
16/10/20	13:16	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
16/10/20	20:17	Bedford Square	Anti-Social Behaviour	0
17/10/20	13:35	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
17/10/20	19:07	Bedford Square	Anti-Social Behaviour	0
18/10/20	17:23	Bedford Square	Drugs	0

NOVEMBER

Date	Time	Location	Type of Crime	Arrests
04/11/20	18:25	Bedford Square	Drugs	0
07/11/20	20:03	Bedford Square	OP-METEOR	0
11/11/20	10:51	Bedford Square	Theft	0
13/11/20	15:10	Cemetery Road	Theft	0
23/11/20	20:19	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0

DECEMBER

Date	Time	Location	Type of Crime	Arrests
01/12/20	14:08	Bedford Square	Intelligence	0
01/12/20	14:30	Bedford Square	intelligence	0
02/12/20	11:27	Bedford Square	Street Drinking	0
09/12/20	15:15	Bedford Square	Vehicle Theft	0
10/12/20	11:05	Bedford Square	Anti-Social Behaviour	0
11/12/20	20:32	Bedford Square	Drugs	0
12/12/20	19:54	Bedford Square	Drugs	0
12/12/20	02:01	Bedford Square	Burglary	0
22/12/20	23:59	Houghton Road	Suspicious Activity	0

COVID-19 STEWARDS

We have employed 16 COVID-19 stewards to support businesses and the public in increasing understanding of COVID-19 public health measures, such as social distancing, wearing face coverings in appropriate settings and hand washing.

The stewards will undertake patrols across Central Bedfordshire to engage, explain and encourage best practice and promote the national guidance around COVID-19.

The stewards have no enforcement powers, but they will gather intelligence and information on potential COVID-19 regulation breaches and feedback to the relevant officers in the Council to support further investigation and possible enforcement. They will also report incidents to Bedfordshire Police.

The new stewards, who will work from 9am to 9pm seven days a week, will be undertaking visits in Biggleswade, Sandy, Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Ampthill, Flitwick, Shefford and Houghton Regis. They will be wearing video cameras on their bodies and high visibility jackets to identify them as Council COVID-19 stewards.

Officers from our public protection and community safety teams will also be continuing to undertake regular patrols and visits to businesses across the whole of Central Bedfordshire, to ensure everyone is adhering to government guidelines and offering advice and support where needed.

The stewards will be provided through a contract with CYS Security Ltd and have been hired initially for 12 weeks, starting from 11 January 2021.

Anyone who has concerns about businesses not complying with the measures set out, should email trading.standards@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk with the subject 'COVID Business Compliance'. Reports will then be investigated by the appropriately delegated officers.

2. LEISURE, LIBRARIES & COUNTRYSIDE

HOUGHTON REGIS CHALK PIT UPDATE

BACKGROUND

Houghton Regis Chalk Pit is a privately owned site and with the exception of Footpath 1 there is no official public right of way.

Under the terms of a licence agreement with the site owners, the Wildlife Trust managed the site with funding provided via a S106 agreement. The conditions required the production of a management plan which was developed by the Trust and approved by Natural England as the quarry is part SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

The S106 made provision for payment of a commuted sum to the Wildlife Trust for the implementation of the plan and the cost of employing a management officer, full time, for the site, from autumn 2011 to spring 2017. The small amount left over was used by the Wildlife Trust, initially to continue the management of invasive scrub in the base of the quarry and more recently to cover the costs of litter removal. As the Trust no longer has any formal engagement with the quarry, the additional works were agreed with the owners separately.

FUTURE MANAGEMENT

The Council is now in receipt of the first tranche of new S106 funds to support the maintenance of the site. As HRN2 is developed further this will trigger additional payments until the full quarry maintenance contribution of £1,016,000 is reached.

Initial discussions with the Wildlife Trust have indicated that they would be interested in managing the site again although understandably this will be subject to agreement on terms. This includes a renewal of the licence agreement between the owners and the Trust to occupy the site plus a funding agreement between the Council and the Trust.

In the short term the Wildlife Trust and the Council will arrange for a preliminary site visit to assess the visual condition of the site and consider the work needed in order to develop a new management plan for approval by Natural England.

The Wildlife Trust will need to identify the resource needed for this work which in the current climate may be challenging but once allocated this will start the preliminary work needed in order to commence longer term management of the site.

HOUGHTON REGIS LEISURE CENTRE

In the week before Christmas, Bedfordshire was moved into tier four restrictions affecting some of the centre activities, but before this was even settled the government announced the closure of all leisure facilities from Saturday 19th December.

The building is now being managed in a way that will enable prompt and safe re-opening when allowed.

Centre Activity - 12 days of Christmas December gym challenge

The centre launched its December fitness challenge aimed at getting customers more active prior to Christmas and 40 customers had signed up to the challenge. Unfortunately, the Challenge could not be completed but did show that members still have an appetite for challenging their own fitness goals!

HOUGHTON REGIS LIBRARY

LIBRARY OPENING

We had a higher use of the service until Lockdown was announced. Houghton Regis Library is now open 09:30-18:00 Tuesday to Friday and 09:00-16:00 operating the Select and Collect service throughout the December Lockdown as well as through the changes in tiers and into our current Lockdown and have had some very encouraging comments from service users.

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

The Reading Agency will release their theme title for this years summer reading challenge around Easter along with the official title. We have begun planning activities that can be delivered both in Houghton Regis Library and online through our social media, how we deliver these will be decided as we approach the last school term of the academic year.

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

COMMUNITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME – Currently suspended due to National lockdown

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES REFERRAL PROGRAMME

Referral programme continued though the lockdown. Service was adapted and support was given to those who were currently on the programme. For more information please email activityforhealth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

HEALTH & WELLBEING KIOSKS – Out of use due to National lockdown

ONLINE ACTIVITY PROGRAMME- We are working on different platforms to offer online resources to those who are not on social media.

We are also in the early stages of developing our you tube channel. This will have pre-recorded classes available. Click to subscribe [Central Bedfordshire Active Lifestyles You Tube Channel](#)



HOUGHTON HALL PARK

LOOKING BACK

We achieved:

- A hugely popular festive wreath making event with click and collect wreath packs and an online video to demonstrate how to create the wreaths.
- A festive display in the front of the kitchen garden with charismatic stick men which were created by park volunteers. The stick men were later sold to the public and very well-liked by local families.

Key highlights:

- Eleanor Evans has settled into the team fantastically in the role of Community Park Ranger.
- Despite the café and visitor centre being closed, a mobile coffee van has proven very popular with park users with highly positive feedback.

Key issues:

- One large event 'The Spirit of Christmas' was cancelled two days prior to the sold out activity due to being moved into Tier 3.

LOOKING FORWARD

We are planning:

- A range of new volunteering opportunities in the park led by the Community Park Ranger to increase scope for involvement by the community.
- Events programme to continue with Covid secure activities such as self-guided trails.
- A produce stall in the kitchen garden to facilitate the sale of plants, vegetables and flowers grown on site.

3. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

WORKS COMPLETED

From 1st Oct – 21st December

276 visits were made to Houghton Regis and 28 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued.

4. BUSINESS, INVESTMENT & SKILLS

The team continue to engage with Central Bedfordshire's key employers through our business engagement programme to gather intelligence on the impact of the current situation, in addition we have been identifying businesses that are making redundancies and offering our help through the National Careers Service by offering support with CV writing, Online Job Searching, Application Forms and Interview Techniques.

We have also been responding to the recent business grant enquiries and have been signposting them to government business support packages and working with our Revenue and Benefits team to support businesses to help claim the different grants available to them.

BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANTS UPDATE

New business grant - the government has given us details of a new one-off grant for retail and hospitality businesses of up to £9,000 called the Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment (CBLP).

The good news is that businesses will not have to make a fresh application to us. However, some businesses will be required to certify they were trading on Monday, 4 January 2021. We will be emailing asking them to confirm this so please monitor your email. We will not ask for bank details as we already hold this information.

Businesses eligible for CBLP will also be supported by a further payment of up to £4,500 under the Local Restrictions Support Grant, depending on rateable value. This is intended to cover the period up to and including Friday, 12 February 2021.

Businesses closed under Tier 4 - we are also contacting businesses that were required to close from Saturday, 19 December by email so we can make payments under the Tier 4 grant scheme. We will then make a payment to these businesses to cover the period up to and including Friday, 12 February 2021.

No fresh application will be required while these businesses are obliged to remain closed.

Businesses required to close under Tier 4 will automatically receive their one-off CBLP payment of up to £9,000 provided they have responded to our email confirming that they were trading when those restrictions came into force.

Commercial property enquiries – Houghton Regis/Dunstable (October – December 2020)

There were a total of 27 new property enquiries across Central Bedfordshire, 12 of which were interested in Houghton Regis/Dunstable – please see table below. The conversion of enquiry to commitment can take up to a year to come to fruition. But the team will look to add information to future reports.

Date taken	Requirement Max Size	Requirement Unit Type	Reason	Status	Original Location
06/10/20	3 Acres	Land	Business Expansion	Live - Active	London
19/10/20	2000 Sq Ft	Restaurant	Business start up	Live - Active	Luton
19/10/20	5000 Sq Ft	Industrial	My business is relocating	Live - Active	London
21/10/20	2000 Sq Ft	Industrial	Business Expansion	Live - Active	Houghton Regis
02/11/20	1000 Sq Ft	Industrial	Business Expansion	Live - Active	Dunstable
06/11/20	2000 Sq Ft	Office	My business is relocating	Live - Active	Northampton
09/11/20	100000 Sq Ft	Land	FDI	Live - Active	Overseas
13/11/20	40000 Sq Ft	Industrial	Business Expansion	Live - Active	Unknown
16/11/20	100000 Sq Ft	Industrial	My business is relocating	Closed	London
03/11/20	3000 Sq Ft	Retail	Business start up	Live - Active	Toddington
07/12/20	3000 Sq Ft	Office	FDI	Live - Active	Overseas
10/12/20	20000 Sq Ft	Industrial	Business Expansion	Live - Active	Unknown

BEDFORDSHIRE EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS SERVICE (BESS)

As with other Further Education providers, the Council's Employment and Skills Service (BESS) continues to deliver educational courses via its in-house delivery teams and a range of external training providers working as part of the BESS partnership.

Currently in this 2020/21 academic year, we have engaged with 46 Houghton Regis residents, despite the Covid-19 restrictions. The most popular courses have been Getting Started with English and Maths, Early Years and Supporting Teaching and Learning. The figures also include five individuals undertaking apprenticeships.

Enrolments will continue throughout the academic year, at the moment the majority will be online. A number of the programmes we offer are accredited, so residents can work towards qualifications which will help them gain employment, support a career change or help residents progress in their specific sectors. Other courses are non-accredited which means that whilst successful learners won't get a recognized qualification, their appetite for learning may have been inspired or they have learned how to progress on a particular career path and are better informed as to the direction they wish to go in.

The BESS curriculum includes courses for the following:

- English

- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
- Maths
- IT and digital skills
- Support with wellbeing and mental health
- Preparing for employment
- Working with and supporting children and young people
- Apprenticeships

A list of workshops and courses with information and how to enrol can be seen by looking at our [upcoming course list](#) , with an overview of the workshops and courses available on the [curriculum map](#).

If residents would like someone to help them get started on the right course they should [contact us](#) with their details or use the comments box in the online form to let the BESS team know what learning they are interested in. An adviser or the relevant training provider will then get in touch to help them get started.

TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES IN CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE, AUG 2019 - NOV 2020

Town	Aug-19	Nov-19	Feb-20	Nov-20
Ampthill	5.5	3.3	4.4	3.3
Arlesey	12.5	18.8	18.8	18.8
Biggleswade	8.4	8.9	8.2	7.6
Dunstable	10.8	9.6	9.2	12.9
Flitwick	4.4	2.1	6.4	4.3
Houghton Regis	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Leighton Buzzard	4.0	2.7	2.7	4.8
Potton	4.0	0.0	4.0	4.0
Sandy	7.9	7.8	7.7	9.2
Shefford	7.3	4.8	4.8	2.4
Stotfold	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Average Rate	7.0%	6.0%	6.2%	7.3%

In November 2020 the vacancy rate for all units within towns surveyed was 7.3%. This is an increase from the 7% reported for August 2019. Notable increases in vacant units have been seen in Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable and Sandy. On average, towns in Central Bedfordshire have a vacancy rate of 6.1%.

5. YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

1) UPDATE ON NEEDS WITHIN THE WIDER CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE AREA

The figures presented below are those reported to NCCIS / DfE at the end of November 2020.

HEADLINE FIGURES FOR THE WHOLE CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE AREA (30 NOVEMBER 2020)			
Cohort	Total number of young people	Positive destinations (EET)	NEET destinations
16 year olds/ Year 12	3025	2935 (97.0%)	60 (2.0%)
17 year olds/ Year 13	3008	2782 (92.5%)	143 (4.8%)
Combined cohort	6033	5717 (94.8%)	203 (3.4%)

2) OVERVIEW OF THE HOUGHTON REGIS AREA COMPARED TO OTHER LOCAL AREAS

The figures presented below are based on the data stored within the Youth Support Service's CCIS database for young people as of 18th December 2020.

	Dunstable		Houghton Regis		Leighton Buzzard	
Total YPs in area	843		488		911	
EET	797	94.5%	459	94.1%	868	95.3%
NEET	41	4.9%	27	5.5%	38	4.2%
Unknown/Refused	5	0.6%	2	0.4%	5	0.5%

3) CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEET GROUP IN THE HOUGHTON REGIS AREA

a. Summary of the individual Houghton Regis Wards

Ward	Total number of YPs in the Year 12-13 cohort	Total number of YPs recorded as NEET	% of NEET within Ward
Tithe Farm	137	11	8.0%
Houghton Hall	208	10	4.8%
Parkside	143	6	4.2%
Total	488	27	5.5%

b. Summary of the Houghton Regis NEET cohort by age, time and gender

Actual Age (Year 12 & 13)		Length of time NEET		Gender	
16 years old	7	Less than 3 months	13	Male	18
17 years old	13	3-6 months	10	Female	9
18 years old	7	6+ months	4	Other/Refused	0

c. Summary status of the Houghton Regis NEET cohort

Status		
Seeking Employment or Training	25	92.6%
Unable to work due to 'Personal Circumstances'	2	7.4%

6. SCHOOLS

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

The closing date Starting school and transfer to Middle school applications is 15th January 2021.

For Transfer to Secondary and Upper school 2021 the closing date has passed. Parents can still apply, however all applications received after the 31st October 2020 will be processed as a late application.

Parents are encouraged to apply for a place online via our school admission web pages [here](#) which contains a wealth of information including the deadline dates for applications, school catchment areas, deferred entries, making an application on religious/faith grounds and how places are allocated.

If parents have difficulty completing their application, they must contact Admissions before the relevant deadline, as submission after the deadline will mean your application will be processed in the late round.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their application for a school place for September 2021 on the following days:

Round	National Offer Day
Transfer to Secondary	1 st March 2021
Transfer to Upper	1 st March 2021
Starting School	16 th April 2021
Transfer to Middle	16 th April 2021

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

Up to 43,000 new homes are expected in Central Bedfordshire by 2035. The Council's Schools for the Future Programme has been established to ensure that we plan for the new school places that will be needed in the longer term and ensure that we have them in the right places delivering the best education.

In response to both the forecast demographic growth and the forecast deficit in secondary school places in Houghton Regis, the Council approved the proposal to build a new secondary school on the Kingsland Campus in Houghton Regis (subject to planning), through the 'Free Schools Presumption Process'.

The Head Teacher Board, of the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner, approved the Council's preferred sponsor – Advantage Schools - for the new school at their meeting on 30 September. Officers are now working with the approved multi academy trust in order to deliver the new school for September 2022, following the closure of Houghton Regis Academy in August 2022. The initial designs for the new school can be viewed on our website [here](#). Officers attended the Houghton Regis Town Partnership Committee meeting in November to present the plans for the school, which are due to be discussed at the CBC Development Management Committee on 13 January 2021. Representatives from the Advantage Schools Trust are due to attend the Houghton Regis Town Partnership Committee meeting in April 2021.

Construction has started in order to expand Thornhill Primary School, Grove Road, Houghton Regis by 60 places in each year group for September 2021, which is also in response to the current and future significant housing development on land north of Houghton Regis, known as HRN1.

7. PUBLIC HEALTH

STOP SMOKING

The delivery of Stop Smoking Services through GP Surgeries continues to be severely impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic and the latest data, from Q2 20/21 shows that, consistent across the Chiltern Vale sub Cluster B "Titan" locality, both Houghton Regis practices are performing under target.

Overall, performance by the Titan Primary Care Network of Practices in Chiltern Vale was at 40% against target for the period up to Q2 20/21 (19 actual quits compared to a target of 48).

COVID 19 has had an impact on the resources available to deliver stop smoking support in Primary Care and the data reflects the reduced levels of activity:

LOCATION	2020/21 SMOKING QUITTERS @ Q2
Houghton Regis Medical Centre	7 (target 21): 33% of target for period
Wheatfield Surgery	12 (target 20): 60% of target for period

The Stop Smoking Service delivers flexible support options, including telephone support, plus a new app, which continues to support local residents throughout the pandemic.

Extended treatment programmes are available to some residents who would benefit most from them, for example those with a Mental Health diagnosis or COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder). The Smokefree Baby and Me programme is also available for pregnant smokers.

Call one of our advisors free on: 0800 013 0553

Email: stop.smoking@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.smokefreebedfordshire.org/>

NHS HEALTH CHECKS

The NHS Health Check is a national risk assessment and management programme for those aged 40 to 74 living in England, who do not have an existing vascular disease, and who are not currently being treated for certain risk factors.

It is aimed at preventing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease and raising awareness of dementia for those aged 65-74 and includes an alcohol risk assessment. Everyone receiving an NHS Health

Check will have a risk assessment which will look at individual risk factors as well as their risk of having, or developing, vascular disease in the next ten years. An NHS Health Check should be offered every five years.

GP practices continue to be the sole provider of the NHS Health Check programme; however, performance varies. As patients are entitled to one Health Check every five years, Practices have a target to invite 20% of their eligible population each year.

The latest data, collected in December 2020, shows that in all Primary Care settings, including Chiltern Vale, the Coronavirus Pandemic continues to have significant impact on delivery of NHS Health Checks, due to them needing to be delivered face-to-face, with no option for virtual delivery. Only 180 Health Checks were delivered against a target of 1,098 for the period (16.4% of annual target to date). They have invited 560 patients for a Health Check (target 2,956) so are performing at 18.9% for that indicator.

The local Practices are performing as follows:

Houghton Regis Medical Centre is performing at 41.4% for Health Checks delivered (63 against a target of 152) and 22.7% offered (93 out of 410 target).

Wheatfield Road has still yet to offer or deliver any Health Checks during 2020-21.

Data quality Houghton Regis Medical Centre continues to be excellent, above all other CV Practices, at 100%.

COVID continues to present significant disruption to the delivery of Public Health services in Primary Care and will continue to do so as Primary Care Networks are increasingly involved in the organisation and delivery of COVID vaccination programmes. We will continue to work with Practices to identify how we can support them looking to deliver Stop Smoking and Health Check services to their patients.

TIME2CONNECT

Time2connect, continues to engage with local residents and stakeholders.

Time2Connect is being run by Community Action Bedfordshire. It aims to develop the social infrastructure of the area by bringing communities from new developments together with the existing population, encouraging residents to becoming more involved in their communities. In turn, this will tackle issues like isolation, and improve mental health, wellbeing and self-esteem amongst residents. Community Action Bedfordshire will look at existing community groups and networks within Houghton Regis and build on those to connect residents with resources in the area.



For more information, visit the [time2connect](https://www.time2connect.org.uk/) website, or contact Martin Westerby, Head of Public Health Programmes at Central Bedfordshire Council.

8. PUBLIC PROTECTION

- 5 visits about Covid control measures
- Instigation of potential prosecution of a barber for failing to comply with health and safety improvement notice.
- 2 improvement notices for barber and hairdresser – both Covid related
- Closure of a car wash – Covid related
- 13 Covid pub checks carried out with 2 fixed penalty notices issued
- 5 firework related inspections.

COMPLAINTS

- 28 noise complaints
- 5 odour complaints
- 1 bonfire complaint

We continue to receive sporadic noise complaints from the Houghton Regis North (HRN) development. These are investigated straight away and we have direct contacts for the site managers across the varying contractors, this enables swift action and resolution.

An off road motorcycle track was operating adjacent to the new homes at HRN, causing a disturbance to residents, however this has now ceased and planning permission obtained for the land to be redeveloped.

COMMERCIAL TEAM UPDATE

The Commercial Team continue to respond to a variety of complaints regarding non-compliance with Covid regulations and restrictions, and requests to advice and guidance from various businesses around the area, not least due to the rapid escalation in our Tier status over the past few weeks and the changes to the rules and guidance.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

LOOKING BACK

As reported in the previous report, Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing services will continue throughout lockdown and beyond. It was necessary to prioritise some service areas due to resource availability during the initial stages of the pandemic, however where service provision was suspended or reduced every effort was made to re-instate these at the earliest opportunity.

Grass cutting and shrub bed maintenance continued throughout the lockdown with limited impact on the service provision or standards.

There have been various ad-hoc cleansing and clearing operations. Services have been under greater pressures during the lockdown and continue as residents continue to work from home (where possible) and change social habits/exercise regimes to include use of public spaces more frequently. Cleansing services have adapted to these changed and increased demands and will continue to be reviewed as demand develops.

With the third lockdown service provision will be continually reviewed with our Contractor and should staffing levels begin to be affected by the new variant strain of Covid 19, services may have to be prioritised to reflect this.

NEW FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS

Following the Council's 2018 waste consultation which revealed that residents were overwhelmingly supportive of recycling and wanted the option to recycle more of their waste Weekly food waste recycling collections in the south of Central Bedfordshire were introduced in November 2020.

All residents (except those living in flats) received a small 23-litre outdoor food waste bin, smaller indoor kitchen caddy and a roll of food waste caddy liners to all houses together with an A5 4-page leaflet explaining how to use the bins and which food items can and can't be included in the collection. If a resident has not received their food waste kit, they can contact the council.

Further communication was provided to residents, Town and Parish Councils, Customer Services and other relevant stakeholders for the duration of the delivery period through a variety of different channels, including a press release, social media and via the council website.

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTIONS

All kerbside garden waste collections are suspended between Monday, 7 December 2020 and Friday, 26 February 2021 inclusive. Collections will resume again on Monday, 1 March 2021.

During the break in service, garden waste can still be recycled at our Household Waste Recycling Centres which are open seven days a week from 9am-5pm, including bank holidays. Certain restrictions due to Covid-19 may be in operation at all four sites.

HWRCs

Household Waste Recycling Centres remain on a booking system which is a simple process of residents booking a slot here:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/2/waste_and_recycling/612/household_waste_recycling_centres_tidy_tips

and taking along proof of booking and CBC residency. This is to ensure safe throughput of visitors on site and to control queuing.

10. SUSTAINABILITY

In September the Council adopted its Sustainability Plan. This sets out the initial course of action and priorities that the Council will aim to follow to support Central Bedfordshire to become net zero carbon as well as realising the wider co-benefits from considering sustainability in all that the council does. A key part of this will involve engagement and working with key stakeholders, such as town and parish councils, businesses and communities. This will be developed over the coming year. The council's Sustainability Plan can be found on line at: [Climate change - tackling it and our strategy | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

A key first step was taken in December when the Council launched its new Central Bedfordshire Tree Planting Fund, aimed at delivering tree and hedge planting schemes across Central Bedfordshire. Town and Parish Council's, local voluntary and community organisations, schools and other groups can apply for funding (or match funding). Projects can vary in size, from a minimum of five trees upwards, to larger areas of new woodland. Planting more trees and hedgerows represents one of the key ways in which the climate challenge can be met. It will help increase biodiversity and mitigate other environmental issues such as flooding and air pollution. In addition to this, it will help create a nicer environment that benefits communities in many ways. More details can be found at: [Central Bedfordshire Council news and press releases | Central Bedfordshire Council](#).

11. TRANSFORMATION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY AND VILLAGE HALLS SURVEY

In collaboration with Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) we are surveying Community and Village Halls in Central Bedfordshire to ensure we have an up to date understanding of their status and any planned improvements. This will help to inform requests for S106 funding, which must be project based, and the Village Halls Advisor at BRCC can support halls in need of help around governance and management of their facilities.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

We have engaged with over 200 residents who signed up to be a Community Champion to assist with the amplification of public health messages to help keep residents safe during the pandemic. We estimate that the Champions help us to reach a further 26,000 residents when they share social media posts and email alerts with their friends, families and social networks. We hold regular drop in sessions to keep in touch with the Champions and listen to their feedback.

Its easy to sign up on our [website](#)

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Subject to budget approval in February we plan to run the Ward Councillor and Community Asset Grant schemes in 2021/22.

CHEERING VOLUNTEERING 2020

Our 7th Cheering Volunteering event has moved on line and we will be launching the 'movie' on You Tube in early February.



CONSULTATIONS

BUDGET 2021 CONSULTATION

The consultation on the draft budget proposals has started. This process will run until 5pm on 27 January 2021 and has been widely promoted through our digital and conventional communication channels.

The headlines are as follows:

- Next year we anticipate spending some £402million on a full range of services.
- We're also continuing to focus on efficiency with £10.7million of efficiency proposals for next year.
- But we continue to face big increases in demands, particularly in Adult Social Care. We also recognise the pressures we face in key areas such as public health, social care and children's services (including services for children with special educational needs/disabilities). We will also need to focus on economic recovery and supporting job creation.
- To bridge the gap between what we need and what we anticipate in terms of income, we propose to:
 - apply the Adult Social Care Precept of a 3% increase on council tax to contribute towards funding care services, and
 - increase council tax by 1.95% for fund other services.
- Additionally, the consultation will highlight proposals for almost £128million of capital investments, including schools, roads, health and leisure and other infrastructure projects.

The consultation is available online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/budget2021.

We would normally make paper copies available in our offices, libraries and leisure centres however, this year, due to the pandemic this is not possible. Residents can request a paper copy by calling us on 0300 300 8000.

You can download and print copies of the [consultation summary, questionnaire and poster](#) to print and display using the link, however, if you would like us to send you printed copies please let us know via the following email address: communications@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Feedback from the consultation will be collated and presented to the February Executive, in advance of decision making on the finalised budget which will be recommended to Full Council.

CURRENT AND UPCOMING CONSULTATIONS

Details of current and upcoming consultation activity undertaken by the Council are provided by the Community Intelligence Team. For more information about this update please contact Clare Harding, tel: 0300 300 6109 (ext. 76109).

Current consultations

Subject	Description	Start	End	Lead officer
Budget 2021/22	Consultation on the draft budget for 2021/22	4 Jan 2021	27 Jan 2021	Charles Warboys 0300 300 6147
Abbotsbury Older Person's Home	Consultation on the options for and reprovision of Abbotsbury OPH	23 Oct 2020	29 Jan 2021	Tobin Stephenson 0300 300 4098

Upcoming consultations

Subject	Description	Start	End	Lead officer
Schools for the Future – SEND	Consultation on the proposals for the SEND cluster	Dates tbc	Dates tbc	Jody Nason 0300 300 4512
Home to School transport	Consultation on the proposed policies for 5-16 year olds and those attending post 16 education	Dates tbc	Dates tbc	Jody Nason 0300 300 4512

12. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Date	Meeting	Time
Tues 2 February	Executive (Budget)	9:30am
Wed 10 February	DMC	10:00am
Mon 15 February	CPP	10:00am
Wed 3 March	Traffic Management	10:00am
Thur 4 March	Audit	10:00am
Thur 4 March	Council (Police precept)	5:00pm
Tues 9 March	CS OSC	10:00am
Wed 10 March	DMC	10:00am
Thur 11 March	SC OSC	10:00am
Mon 15 March	SCHH OSC	10:00am
Wed 17 March	Licensing	10:00am
Thur 18 March	CR OSC	10:00am
Thur 25 March	General Purposes	10:00am

Key:

CPP – Corporate Parenting Panel

CR OSC – Corporate Resources OSC

CS OSC – Children’s Services OSC

DMC - Development Management Committee

HWB – Health & Wellbeing Board

SCHH OSC – Social Care, Health & Housing OSC

SC OSC – Sustainable Communities OSC



**HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE –
WORK PLAN 2020-2021**

WORK PLAN 2020-2021 - Draft

Meeting Date	Regular Updates	Work Plan 2020-2021	Reports already received / completed
July 2020	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group	<p>The following suggestions are put forward, the timings of these reports / presentations will be confirmed once the content of the work plan has been agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Buildings in Houghton Regis (inc. HRN 2 Community Building, Bedford Square Community Centre) • Estate Regeneration • Chalk pit • Kingsland / HR Leisure Centre • Housing Provision and Allocations • Tithe Farm sports provision • Improving Health & Wellbeing In Houghton Regis • New school Trust to attend April 2021 	Community Buildings in Houghton Regis 21 st July 2020 10 th November 2020
October 2020	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group		Estate Regeneration
January 2021	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group		Chalk pit 21 st July 2020
April 2021	CBC Update report Work Plan Town Centre Benchmarking Task & Finish Group		Kingsland / HR Leisure Centre 10 th November 2020 Housing Provision and Allocations 10 th November 2020



			<p>Tithe Farm sports provision 21st July 2020</p>
			<p>Improving Health & Wellbeing In Houghton Regis: Time to Talk 21st July 2020</p>