



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr M. S. Kennedy**
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

Tel: 01582 708540
E-mail: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

27th September 2019

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To: **All Town Councillors**

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to the Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on Monday 7th October 2019 at 7.00pm.

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED *

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

In accordance with approved Standing Orders 1(e)-1(l) Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

The total period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes and an individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

- 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**

**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.

Pages 13 - 16

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 17th and 25th June 2019.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 17th and 25th June 2019.

5. COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pages 17 – 82

To receive the minutes of the following committees and consider any recommendations contained therein:

Corporate Services Committee	10th June 2019 Members are specifically referred to the following for approval; Minute 9939 – Chairmanship Guidance Policy Minute 9940 – Complaints Policy Minute 9941– Freedom of Information & Model Scheme of Publication Minute 9943 – Volunteering Policy Minute 9944 – Councillor e-mail addresses. Please see agenda item 8 <i>Please contact the Head of Democratic Services if you would like a copy of this policy re-sent to you.</i> Members are advised that member training will be provided on the Complaints Policy and on the Volunteering Policy in accordance with the External Audit suggestion detailed in Agenda Item 10
Community Services Committee	24 th June 2019.
Environment & Leisure Committee	3 rd June and 22 nd July 2019.
Planning Committee	28th May, 18th June, 8th July, 29th July, 19th August 2019
Town Partnership Committee	30 th April 2019.

Pages 83 - 94

To receive the minutes of the following sub committees and consider any recommendations contained therein

Office Provisions Sub Committee	5 th March 2019.
Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee	28 th May and 8 th July 2019.
Personnel Sub-Committee	15 th April 2019.

Recommendation: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows;
Minute 9939 – Chairmanship Guidance Policy
Minute 9940 – Complaints Policy
Minute 9941– Freedom of Information & Model Scheme of Publication
Minute 9943 – Volunteering Policy

6 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A verbal report will be provided.

7 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED

Councillors are requested to provide verbal reports from meetings they have attended of outside organisations or from training courses they have attended on behalf of the Council.

8 COUNCILLORS EMAIL ADDRESSES

Pages 95 - 96

At the Corporate Services Committee held on the 10th June 2019 Members considered a report in support of the provision and use of Town Council email address for all Members.

Although the recommendation to recommend to Town Council that it be mandatory for all elected Town Councillors to use an official Town Council email address for all Town Council official correspondence it was felt, by some Members, that additional supplementary information in relation to access by Town Council officers was desirable.

A report is attached.

Recommendation:

1. To endorse the recommendation from Corporate Services Committee Minute 9944;
2. For all elected Town Councillors to use an official Town Council email address for all Town Council official correspondence.

9 OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT OF LAND AT HRN2

Pages 97 - 114

To enable consideration of the opportunity for HRTC to take on the management and maintenance of specified areas of public open space within HRN2.

Recommendation: To confirm to Central Bedfordshire Council that HRTC agree to take on under a lease the management and maintenance of the following areas within HRN2 subject to the associated s106 funding being provided:

1. Play areas – PA1-PA5
2. Formal Park – inc PA6 and drainage areas
3. Public sports pitches – 6.79ha Parcel Z

10 AUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2018/19

Pages 115 - 122

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is attached for consideration, Appendix A.

Members will note that the external auditor has not raised any issues under Section 3.

However, in the completion letter, Appendix B, it does suggest that the council should offer appropriate training to councillors after significant changes to procedures and policies. Members are advised that this training will be offered at Member Open Sessions as the requirement arises.

- Recommendation:**
1. **To approve and accept the Annual Return including the external auditors certificate;**
 2. **For the council to offer appropriate training to councillors after significant changes to procedures and policies at Member Open Sessions as the requirement arises.**

11 PROPOSAL FOR SPORTS FACILITY ENHANCEMENT AT TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND

Pages 123 - 126

Members are advised that the attached report, Appendix A, was presented to Environment & Leisure Committee on 17th September 2019. As this may emerge as a significant project for the Town Council it is appropriate to highlight the report to full council for information.

Recommendation: To note the report.

12 CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

Members are advised that staff have requested that the Council to consider whether the office could be closed to visitors between Christmas and New Year. It is offered that telephone services would remain, and staff have offered to be on call should an emergency situation arise. The request is made to support staff in achieving a suitable work life balance, especially given that many members of the office staff team work long hours in the lead up to Christmas and is supported by the evidence collected over the last few years on the number of visitors to the office during this period. In 2016 there were 0 visitors, in 2017 there was 1 visitor (a councillor) and in 2018 there was 1 visitor (a councillor). Members are reminded that the town council does not provide any core front line services such as social services, housing and highways. These are provided by the principal authority.

The following opening hours are suggested:

Tuesday 24th December – Open 9am to 1pm
Wednesday 25th December – Closed
Thursday 26th December – Closed
Friday 27th December – Closed
Monday 30th December – Closed
Tuesday 31st December – Closed
Wednesday 1st January – Closed
Thursday 2nd January – Normal office hours resume

Members are requested to note that the grounds staff will check the play areas and pavilions on 24th December and 30th December.

Recommendation: To approve the office opening hours between Christmas and New Year as follows:

Tuesday 24th December – Open 9am to 1pm
Wednesday 25th December – Closed
Thursday 26th December – Closed
Friday 27th December – Closed
Monday 30th December – Closed
Tuesday 31st December – Closed
Wednesday 1st January – Closed
Thursday 2nd January – Normal office hours resume

13 REMEMBRANCE DAY & ARMISTICE DAY POPPIES AND WREATHS

Pages 127 - 130

To confirm the duration that Remembrance Day & Armistice Day Poppies and Wreaths remain on display.

Recommendation: To continue to maintain poppies and wreaths around the memorial stone until end of November each year. After this period to seek to relocate them to the Memorial Hall garden and to offer to dispose of them early in the New Year if required by the Memorial Hall committee.

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Town Council
17th June 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: T McMahon
D Abbott
J Carroll
C Copleston
D Dixon-Wilkinson
Y Farrell
S Goodchild
D Jones
R Morgan
A Slough
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

Vice Chair
(Arrived at 7.09)

Officers: Clare Evans
Louise Senior

Town Clerk
Head of Democratic Services

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillors: M S Kennedy

9945 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Kennedy.

9946 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked if the website should display the party allegiance of a member of council as it currently does not state which party he belongs to.

It was advised that the instruction had been taken directly from the councillor, however, the clerk advised that she would seek further clarification.

9947 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

9948 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2019.

Minute 9888 – Council Calendar for 2019/20

Members were requested to note that the Events Working Group had requested that the start time of the group be altered to 4pm to enable nominated members to more readily attend. Members were advised that the calendar would be amended accordingly. A query was raised on the accuracy of the minutes. Members queried the recording of votes, and why details had not been shown in the minutes. Members were advised that if a recorded

vote was required for the minutes, it must be requested at the time of voting. A requested vote had not been requested for the votes that were referred to.

It was queried why there was no 'matters arising' on the agenda. Members were advised that standing orders stated that this agenda item was only to confirm the accuracy of the minutes, therefore 'matters arising' had been removed.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9949 COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the following committees and consider any recommendations contained therein:

Corporate Services Committee	4 th March 2019
Community Services Committee	11 th February 2019
Environment & Leisure Committee	25 th February and 25 th March 2019
Planning Committee	11 th March, 1 st April, 23 rd April, 29 th April, 20 th May 2019
Town Partnership Committee	29 th January 2019

To receive the minutes of the following sub committee and consider any recommendations contained therein

Office Provisions Sub Committee	None presented
New Cemetery Sub-Committee	11 th March, 23 rd April 2019

It was confirmed that only minutes of Committees and Sub Committees which had been approved were under this item.

**Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows;
To approve the Co-Option Policy, Capability Policy, Local Government Pension Scheme: Review of Statement of Local Discretions and the Health & Safety at Work Policy.**

9950 TOWN MAYOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members received a verbal report on events that had been attended by the Town Mayor.

In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor updated councillors on the Mayor's attendance at events on behalf of the Town Council.

The Mayor had attended:

4th Go Houghton Anniversary Celebration
Minds Together meeting
Brown and White Opticians 90th Celebrations
DADS AGM
Houghton Together Music Event
Central Bedfordshire Council Cheering Volunteering Awards
Mayoral Investiture Ceremony at Luton Borough Council

The Deputy Mayor updated members on the events attended:

Brown and White Opticians 90th Celebrations
Houghton Together Music Event
Harpenden Town Council Annual Towns Meeting
Arm Benevolent Fundraising Event
Dunstable and District AGM

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor were congratulated for representing the town in such a positive manner.

9951 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED

Members provided verbal reports from meetings they had attended of outside organisations or from training courses they had attended on behalf of the Council.

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she had attended the members induction training offered by BATPC which had proven very informative and worthwhile.
Members were advised that she was delighted for the opportunity to be a part of SORTED.

Cllr Copleston advised members that she had felt honoured to attend a meeting at Hospice at Home. They had spoken of upcoming fundraising events which Cllr Copleston had informed them she would support their efforts where possible.

Cllr Morgan advised members that he had attended the New Councillor Training and had found this to be worthwhile, useful and very well conducted.

Cllr Thorne requested the opportunity to attend the training session on New Councillor Induction if there was a further session held this year.

Cllr McMahon had attended Houghton Hall Park Management Committee Meeting. Members were updated on the following:

- the people counters were being looked into in order to increase accuracy.
- there was to be a review of the business plan. The 5-year business plan looks at funding risks.
- a new car park machine had been installed.
- there had been an uplift in volunteers working in the kitchen garden, which had a positive effect on reducing the lone working hours of staff.
- Police had confirmed that this was set as a priority area at the Police Priority Setting Meeting as ASB had become an issue.
- A new initiative had been introduced by the Activities Officer in the foyer encouraging local crafters to sell their wares.

9952 YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Members received a report providing a brief outline of the year end accounting process.

Resolved: To note the report.

9953 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2018 / 2019 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2018/19

Members were advised that the internal auditor completed the audit on 6th June.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Members were presented with the completed Annual Internal Audit Report and supporting paperwork as part of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2019.

Resolved: To approve the following action plan in response to the internal audit report:

1. **To re-circulate to members details of the finance training being offered to encourage take-up.**
2. **For all officers to be provided with a copy of the Financial Regulations and to receive a briefing on financial requirements.**
3. **To approve the planned budget and precept setting process.**
4. **To note the reserves policy, as already implemented, as part of Financial Regulations;**
5. **To ensure that the impact of the use of reserves is factored into the budget setting process.**

9954 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2018 / 2019 SECTION 1 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Members received a draft completed version of Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2019.

Resolved: To approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2019.

**9955 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2018 / 2019
SECTION 2 – ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Section 2 – Members received Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2019.

Resolved: To approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2019 subject to external audit.

9956 CHAIRMANSHIP POLICY

Members were advised that the Corporate Services Committee considered an updated Chairmanship Policy on 10th June and had recommended to Town Council that the policy be approved.

Members were advised that there had been no amendments to the policy by the Corporate Services Committee.

It was considered desirable for this policy to be up to date at the commencement of the council year and as such it was presented for approval.

Resolved: To approve the Chairmanship Policy.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.30pm

Dated this day of 2019

Chairman

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within 4 weeks of the submission. Accordingly, HRTC have been invited to comment on the strategy in time for this deadline.

Members agreed that the point made from the member of public was valid. Members requested that this point be forwarded onto Central Bedfordshire Council and concerns reiterated about unauthorised access to open spaces.

Resolved: Strategic comments

1. **The council was concerned over the financial implications for new residents of a management company maintaining the open spaces and facilities within Linnere. In particular the following points were made:**
 - Residents would receive an annual charge in addition to their council tax;
 - There would be financial implications for social housing providers and their tenants;
 - The OSMS did not definitively impose a restriction on the charge which may be applied. It relied on safeguards of accountability. The effectiveness of these safeguards would only be known once the system was operational;
2. **Should the principle of a management company be accepted by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), HRTC support the charitable status of the management company, The Lands Trust, being put forward;**
3. **HRTC would welcome the formulation of a positive working relationship with The Lands Trust so that local services were integrated and mutually supportive. The OSMS should promote this relationship.**

Content of the OSMS

4. **Consistency of provision - The OSMS sought to ensure a consistency of provision across the development area. This was supported. However, the OSMS made limited reference to ensuring consistency between Linnere and current existing provision in Houghton Regis. The OSMS should support a consistency of provision across the areas;**
5. **Maintenance work - The OSMS referred to work being contracted out and suggested that the parish / town council would be able to tender or bid for work. This was supported.**

9982 REPORT ON FINDINGS OF THE EXTERNAL INVESTIGATION

Members received a report which advised of the findings of the external investigation, the purpose of which was to investigate the circumstances which led to the Council making an out-of-court settlement to What About Youth Limited.

Cllr Jones read a prepared statement which raised concerns that the report from the external investigator had revealed information that he had not been aware of at the time. Cllr Jones acknowledged mistakes had been made by council and staff, however, stated that a line should be drawn and the council should now move on.

Cllr Abbott read a prepared statement which referred to paragraphs: 15, 17, 18, 30 of the full report.

One member raised concerns that there were inaccuracies within the report, which had put in question the validity of the entire report.

Members discussed the officer recommendations, and an amendment was requested to recommendation 6.

The officer recommendation number 6 read:

To include a letter of counsel on the staff file signed by the Mayor and to require the staff member to complete suitable training.

An amendment to recommendation 6 was proposed to read:

- *That this council has confidence in the Town Clerk;*
- *include a letter of counsel on the staff file signed by the Mayor and to require the staff member to complete suitable training.*

Proposed by: Cllr Abbott Seconded by: Cllr Carroll

A recorded vote was requested:

Members for: Cllrs: Y Farrell, S Thorne, K Wattingham, R Morgan, D Abbott, J Carroll, M S Kennedy, D Jones, S Goodchild.

Members against: 0

Abstentions: Cllrs: T McMahon, A Slough, T Welch, D Dixon-Wilkinson.

Accordingly, the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion.

Members voted for the recommendations en bloc. A recorded vote was requested:

Proposed by: Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson Seconded by: Cllr Jones

Members for: Cllrs: M S Kennedy, T McMahon, S Goodchild, D Jones, A Slough, T Welch, D Dixon-Wilkinson, R Morgan, K Wattingham, S Thorne, Y Farrell.

Members against: Cllrs: J Carroll, D Abbott.

Abstentions: 0

- Resolved:**
1. **For the council to consider the need for legal advice as part of any project development process and for legal advice to be sought from legal service providers as put forward by the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)**
 2. **To support the model contract checklist which includes clauses dealing with:**
 - **Impartiality of the Service Provider**
 - **Non-involvement in political matters**
 - **Accountability of service provision**
 - **The services to be provided under the contract**

-
- **The performance indicators to be used to measure performance over a stated period of time**
3. **To note the investigators recommendation for a range of template contracts to be drawn up by an external solicitors' firm but not to proceed with this at this time. Should the need arise for a specific contract to be drawn up legal advice will be sought as part of the project development process.**
 4. **To seek to bank the £500 from the council's former legal advisors in relation professional negligence arising from inaccuracy of a piece of legal advice.**
 5. **For council to confirm that the public version of the report (with names and company names redacted) could be made available to any member of the public or member of the press who directly requested it with a watermark on it that it was intended for the sole use of the recipient and was not for wider circulation.**
 6. **That this council:**
 - **has confidence in the Town Clerk;**
 - **include a letter of counsel on the staff file signed by the Mayor and to require the staff member to complete suitable training.**
 7. **To conclude that:**
 - **the council had investigated and reported upon the events that lead to the Council making an out of court settlement to What About Youth Ltd;**
 - **had considered what steps could be taken to avoid a recurrence of this situation;**
 - **the council confirmed that all issues related to this matter were concluded and would not be presented to council for any further consideration.**

9983 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT OUTCOME

Members were formally advised that a Code of Conduct complaint had been made and had been duly investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The outcome had been advised to the council. It had been found that there had been no breach of the Code of Conduct.

Resolved: To note the report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.31pm

Dated this day of 2019

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Corporate Services Committee
10th June 2019 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors: D Abbott
C Copleston
M S Kennedy
R Morgan Substitute
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: D Jones

9925 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Nominee: Cllr Kennedy Nominated by: Cllr Copleston
Seconded by: Cllr Welch

No other nominations were received.

On being put to the vote, Cllr Kennedy was elected as Vice-Chair for the Corporate Services Committee for the municipal year 2019 – 2020.

9926 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones (Cllr Morgan substituted)

9927 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9928 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

9929 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2019.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Minute number 9824: The Mayoral Robes Policy was deferred to a future meeting pending confirmation of the wording within the policy being non-discriminatory. Members were advised that confirmation was still awaited.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9930 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

Personnel Sub-Committee: 21st January 2019.

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings of the 21st January 2019.

9931 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.iii. Council was required to review its delegation arrangements to committees and sub committees.

These arrangements were set out in the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference. This document set out the system of delegation to the Committees, Sub Committees and Working Groups of the Council.

Resolved: To note the information.

9932 BUDGET REVIEW & INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members received a report on the Corporate Services Committee budget for 2019/20 supported by the relevant extract from the approved budget for 2019/20 and income and expenditure report.

Members saw from the budget report there was no budget provision for any future projects. However, the following had been initiated:

- An approach had been made to Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the potential availability of s106 funding. A substantive response was awaited.
- Officers had also investigated grant sources, although projects need to meet the grant criteria and often have to be match funded. This remained a work in progress.
- The council had also sought to vary an existing s106 so that it could be utilised in a more flexible way. This remained ongoing due to delays caused by other parties to the agreement.

Members queried officer recommendation 3; specifically, the need for a replacement boiler and whether this had been budgeted for. Members were advised that this had been included the budget.

3. To approve the works to the office as recommended in the Condition Survey regarding electrical testing and repair, lighting renewals and boiler renewal.

The welfare of staff was raised and the necessity to have hot water in the council offices. Concerns were raised regarding the breach of Health & Safety if the work was not carried out as recommended by the condition survey.

It was suggested that new members were given the opportunity to read the condition survey.

Members agreed officer recommendations 1,2 and 4.

An amendment to recommendation 3 was proposed to read:

To approve the works to the office as recommended in the Condition Survey regarding electrical testing and repair and lighting renewals.

Members voted on the amended recommendation. A recorded vote was requested:

Members for: Cllr Morgan, Cllr Wattingham, Cllr Abbott.
Members against: Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Copleston, Cllr Welch.
Abstentions: Cllr Thorne.

The chair used his casting vote and voted against the amended recommendation.

Accordingly, the amendment was not carried.

Members voted on the officer recommendation. A recorded vote was requested:

Members for: Cllr Thorne, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Copleston, Cllr Welch.
Members against: Cllr Abbott, Cllr Wattingham.
Abstentions: Cllr Morgan.

Accordingly, the officer recommendation was carried.

- Resolved:**
1. To note the virement within cost centre 190 of £100 from 190-4017 to 190-4038
 2. To approve the virement of £660 from 190-4026 to 302-4034 (Website)
 3. To approve the works to the office as recommended in the Condition Survey regarding electrical testing and repair, lighting renewals and boiler renewal.
 4. To note at this stage the predicted deficits in 190-4001 (£5,820) and 191-4005 (£4,007).

9933 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members received the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements from February 2019 to March 2019.

- Resolved:**
1. To approve the monthly Bank and Cash Reconciliation statements from February 2019 to March 2019;
 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.

9934 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members received a list of cheque payments for the period February 2019 to April 2019.

- Resolved:** To receive and note the list of cheque payments made in the period February, March and April 2019 approved for payment by the Town Clerk and two bank signatories.

9935 INVESTMENT REPORT

In accordance with Committee Functions, Financial Regulations and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

The Corporate Services Committee were to oversee and manage the financial obligations of the Council, including:

To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where, length and amount.

Cllr Morgan highlighted the value and importance of the Finance Training provided to members and wished to thank the Town Clerk and Accounts & Cemetery Officer who led the session.

- Resolved:** To note the information.

9936 PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD REPAYMENTS ANNUAL REPORT

In accordance with the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations, Members were presented with an annual report to provide detail on the council's loans including current value, repayments and early settlement options as they stand at 1st April 2019.

- Resolved:** To note the information.

9937 REVIEW OF VISION – CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members received an extract from the Houghton Regis: Our 2020 Vision as it related to this committee which updated Members on the current status of the agreed Outcomes.

- Resolved:** To note the report.

9938 POLICY DOCUMENT REVIEW

Members received, and were requested to, consider the Policy Document Review.

Resolved: To note the report.

9939 CHAIRMANSHIP GUIDANCE POLICY

Town Council was required to review every 4 years the Chairmanship Guidance Policy.

Members received a copy of the approved Policy updated to reflect the revised Standing Order references, which were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 25th March 2019. It was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose.

Members of this Committee were asked to consider the Chairmanship Guidance Policy and make a recommendation to Town Council for its approval.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Chairmanship Policy be approved.

9940 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Town Council was required to review its Complaints Procedure annually.

Members received a copy of the approved document updated, with tracked changes, to reflect guidance from NALC, issued December 2018.

Members had requested some clarification on some of the wording within the policy.

It was suggested by members that where, within the policy, it stated 'in writing' this should include e-mails when receiving complaints, however, when providing responses or decisions, these should be sent via royal mail, first class post.

Subject to the discussed amendments, members agreed the policy.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Complaints Procedure be approved.

9941 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION & MODEL SCHEME OF PUBLICATION

The Town Council was required to review annually the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and the Model Publication Scheme. Members received a copy of the approved document. Some amendments had been made, shown as tracked changes, to reflect changes in legislation. It was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose.

Members of this Committee were asked to consider the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and Model Publication Scheme and make a recommendation to Town Council for approval.

Members discussed the need of reviewing annually. It was agreed that as this document remained live therefore, unless changes had been made, it was not necessary to review annually.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and the Model Publication Scheme be approved.

9942 HUMAN RESOURCES PROVISION

At the Personnel Sub-Committee held on the 15th April 2019. Members considered a report detailing quotations that had been sought to provide this provision and agreed to continue with HR Solutions as the Town Councils HR provider.

Resolved: To recommend that HR Solutions be employed as the Town Councils HR provider, from 22nd August 2019.

9943 VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Members received a report and draft policy in regard to the engagement of volunteers.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Volunteering Policy be approved.

9944 COUNCILLORS EMAIL ADDRESSES

Members received a report in support of the provision and use of Town Council email address for all Members.

Members queried if all councillors had their Houghton Regis Town Council e-mail addresses operating, Members were advised that two members of council, by choice, had not activated their Houghton Regis Town Council e-mail addresses.

One of the members who had chosen not to activate their Houghton Regis Town Council e-mail address, raised his concerns regarding the security of the Houghton Regis Town Council issued e-mail addresses. Concerns were expressed that the emails could be accessed, at any time, by any officer, via the server. It was requested that the wording be amended to state under what circumstances the emails would be accessed.

The recommendation was agreed subject to suitable amended wording stating under what circumstances e-mail would be accessed. It was suggested that Cllr Abbott provide suitable wording.

A recorded vote was requested on the officer recommendation.

Members in favour of the officer recommendation: Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Welch, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Thorne, Cllr Wattingham, Cllr Copleston.

Members against: Cllr Abbott

Abstentions: 0

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that it be mandatory for all elected Town Councillors to use an official Town Council email address for all Town Council official correspondence.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.17pm

Dated this 23rd day of September 2019

Chairman

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
24th June 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: K Wattingham Chairman
J Carroll
C Copleston
Y Farrell
S Goodchild
T McMahan
A Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Tara Earnshaw Community Development Officer
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

9966 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

9967 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9968 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

9969 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Members were invited to nominate and elect a Vice Chair for the Community Services Committee.

Nominee: Cllr Copleston Nominated by: Cllr Slough
Seconded by: Cllr Farrell

No other nominations were received.

On being put to the vote Cllr Copleston was duly elected as Vice-Chair for the Community Services Committee for the municipal year 2019/ 2020.

9970 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2019.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 11th February 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9971 REPORT FROM YOUTH COUNCIL

Representatives from Houghton Regis Youth Council attended the meeting to report on the events and activities they had been involved with.

Members were advised of some of the events that had been attended by Youth Council members:

- Mayor's Inauguration
- May Day
- Pride of Houghton Youth Awards
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Civic Service
- Red Nose Day
- Birds of Prey
- Cat Protection event

Members were advised that in addition to the events attended, the Youth Council had attended regular fortnightly meetings where event planning and decisions had been made. Pride of Houghton Youth Awards had involved a lot of planning which had been completed at these meetings.

Members agreed to move agenda items 7 and 8 to later in the meeting as the representative from Groundwork had not yet arrived.

9972 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Members received a report which updated members on work undertaken by the Community Development Officer.

Members were advised that the new phase of Shop Local had been launched with 42 businesses signed up. The new phase would be for twelve months rather than 6. The Birds of Prey event held in Bedford Square had drawn in large numbers of people, Red Nose Day was held inside due to poor weather on the day. Despite poor weather, the event was a success with over £400 raised for Comic Relief.

Work for the summer youth provision was underway. The family day trip to Southend was planned, with two coaches booked based on the success of the trip last year.

Funding had been received for the Graffiti Project, which had been completed at the Skate Park and Parkside Pavilion. Sessions had been attended by young people prior to completion of the artwork.

Work was ongoing with Houghton Together, which had delivered a music event in Bedford Square.

The Graffiti Project was commended and had received positive feedback.

Members queried whether the shops had provided feedback on any increase in footfall arising from events and Shop Local. Members were advised that these figures had not been collated, as not all shops had returned the evaluation form.

Members were advised that work to compile a questionnaire to roll out to youths in the area was ongoing. Results would be fed back into the Councils Vision.

Resolved: To note the report.

9973 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Events Working Group	13 th February, 6 th March, 3 rd April, 24 th April 2019
Combating Crime Working Group	19 th December 2018, 23 rd January 20 th February, 20 th March, 17 th April 2019

Resolved: To receive the following Minutes:

Events Working Group	13th February, 6th March, 3rd April, 24th April 2019
Combating Crime Working Group	19th December 2018, 23rd January 20th February, 20th March, 17th April 2019

9974 BUDGET REVIEW & INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members received a report on the Community Services Committee's budget for 2019/20 supported by the relevant extract from the and income and expenditure report.

Members were requested to note the following committed Community Services Committees projects:

- Youth Services including;
 - Easter & Summer Playscheme (delivered in-house)
 - Youth Council (delivered in-house)
 - Pop-Up Cafes (delivered by Groundwork)
- Community Services including;
 - Shop Local (delivered in-house)
 - Town centre events / attractions (delivered in-house)
 - Public toilet cleaning (delivered by contractors)
 - Christmas lights (delivered by contractors)
- Communications including
 - Town crier
 - Website
- Events
- Grants including
 - Key Partners
 - Large Capital Grants
 - Small Project Grants
 - Mayors Christmas cards and voucher
- Community Safety
 - Enviro-crime – redeployable CCTV cameras, community safety initiatives

- High visibility policing project
- Civic Services
 - Mayoral allowance
 - Civic events
 - Civic regalia

It was advised that the income from events and sponsorship had dropped significantly from the initial predicted amount resulting in the need to reduce event expenditure.

The reduction of expenditure necessary for events was queried and the suggestion of a breakdown of the costs for each event would be beneficial to members. Members were advised that these figures would be presented at the Events Working Group.

A member suggested that the Events Working Group would benefit from becoming a Sub-Committee as it was involved with a large amount of expenditure.

7.30pm David Ramsay from Groundworks arrived.

It was queried whether sponsorship opportunities had been fully explored. Members were advised that this avenue had been exhausted with all suggestions from councillors fully explored. Members were advised that in previous years sponsorship had successfully increased when councillors had time available to canvass face to face.

Members queried the number of residents who would qualify for the Mayors Christmas Appeal Fund. Members were advised that a GDPR completion form had been sent out to residents, however, around 60% of which had been returned. Concerns were raised that the number of qualifying residents was unknown, and there could be an influx of qualifying residents signing up for the fund.

Members were advised that the increase of the Mayors Christmas Appeal Fund had been set by councillors at the last budget setting meeting.

- Resolved:**
1. **To request that Events Working Group give consideration to ways to reduce expenditure on council events by £6500 to offset the predicted reduction in event income and sponsorship pending the outcome of recent efforts to secure additional sponsorship;**
 2. **To enhance the Mayors Christmas Appeal Fund initiative by increasing the value of the voucher to £3.50.**

9975 REPORT FROM GROUNDWORK

A representative from Groundwork attended the meeting to report on the youth work Groundwork had recently completed in Houghton Regis on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that session attendance numbers had been at 20 / 25 although numbers had dropped during the school holidays. Members were advised that the programme of events and activities were varied with quizzes, fun activities and visitors to offer advice and support.

A session for older youths had been introduced, however the number of attendees had fallen quickly, figures would be assessed until summer, a decision would then be made whether it was worthwhile to continue these sessions.

Members were advised that Groundwork had secured a five-year tender for Central Bedfordshire Council Youth provision in Houghton Regis.

9976 HRTC YOUTH SERVICES

A representative from Groundwork attended the meeting to report on the youth work Groundwork had recently completed on behalf of HRTC in delivering the pop-up youth cafes.

Members were advised that the numbers of young people attending the Pop-up-Cafe averaged at 10 – 15. Young people were enjoying the preparation of simple foods; donuts, toasties, smoothies and had considered planning a roast dinner. There were some enhanced sessions planned with details to be confirmed.

Members were advised that a ban had been imposed on a young person due to unacceptable behaviour.

Members queried a Food Hygiene course for the young people, members were advised that investigation into this was ongoing and a suitable training programme was being sought.

9977 VISION UPDATE

Members received a review of the initiatives under this committee.

Members queried whether completed projects should be removed from the document, members were reminded that members had agreed for the items to remain on the document, but colour coded accordingly. Members were advised that the vision setting process for the next 4 years was imminent and would likely be completed over three sessions, with scope to extend to four sessions if necessary.

Resolved: To note the report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Dated this 2nd day of September 2019.

Chairman

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Environment & Leisure Committee
3rd June 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman
D Abbott
Y Farrell
S Goodchild
R Morgan
A Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 3

Also present: Councillors: J Carroll
D Jones

Absent: Councillor: D Dixon-Wilkinson

9912 APOLOGIES

None.

9913 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

An update was requested on football development in the area. It was felt that who were able to travel were using superior facilities in the surrounding areas making it difficult to run a club in Houghton Regis.

Consideration for play equipment for older children was requested in the Sandringham Drive area. The destruction of a tree by local children had been witnessed and on questioning the children, they had told the member of the public that there was nothing for them to do. As such, she had felt duty bound to inform the council of the lack of play equipment for older children to enjoy.

A member of the public advised members of his concerns regarding the upkeep of the SSSI in the Chalk Pit. He advised members that Central Bedfordshire Council were responsible for SSSI's (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), it was requested that Houghton Regis Town Council bring this to the attention of Central Bedfordshire Council through the Partnership Committee. It was also suggested that the committee include this item on future Houghton Regis Town Council agendas.

9914 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9915 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Members were invited to nominate and elect a Vice Chair for the Environment & Leisure Committee for 2019/20.

Nominee: A Slough
Nominated by: S Goodchild
Seconded by: Y Farrell

No other nominations were received.

On being put to the vote Cllr Slough was elected as Vice-Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee.

9916 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 25th February and 25th March 2019.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 25th February and 25th March 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9917 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received an extract from the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference relating to this committee.

Resolved: To note the report.

9918 BUDGET REVIEW & INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members received a report on the Environment & Leisure Committees budget for 2019/20 supported by the relevant extract from the approved budget for 2019/20 and income and expenditure report.

Members were requested to note the following outstanding Environment & Leisure Committees projects:

- Community defibrillators at each recreation ground
- Energy efficiency measures for the council's premises
- Illumination of flag poles on the Village Green
- Village Green Pavilion re-design

As members saw from the budget report, no budget provision had been made for these projects. However, the following had been initiated:

- An approach had been made to Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the potential availability of s106 funding. A substantive response was awaited.
- Officers had also investigated grant sources, although projects needed to meet the grant criteria and often had to be match funded. This remained a work in progress.
- The council had also sought to vary an existing s106 so that it could be utilised in a more flexible way. This remained ongoing due to delays caused by other parties to the agreement.

Members were requested to note that there may be budget available within the Community Services Committee budget for the illumination of the flag poles. This would be discussed by the Community Services Committee in due course.

Clarification was requested on the under achievement of the predicted income and if the planned improvements to the pavilion were with a view to increase use and income. Members were advised that this was the case, however, any increased use of Moore Crescent Pavilion was restricted to September to March due to the Bowls Club usage during the spring and summer months.

- Resolved:**
1. **To scale back the Village Green Pavilion deep clean to focus on the community room, kitchen and toilets in order restrict expenditure in 202-4036 to the budget available;**
 2. **To seek to reduce expenditure within cost centres 242 and 243 to take account of the predicted under achievement of income;**
 3. **To note the proposed virements as follows:**
 - **From 291-4020 (£200) to 291-4038**
 - **From 291-4017 (£300), 4039 (£400), 4036 (£200) to 291-4059**

9919 VISION UPDATE

Members received a review of the initiatives under this committee.

Clarification was requested as to whether all items on the Vision had been achieved, in particular 4a. Members were advised that the items listed were a wish list, however, the aspirations of the objectives had been met.

It was requested that this item remain on future agendas.

Resolved: To note the report.

9920 REQUEST FOR THE USE OF THE VILLAGE GREEN

Full House Theatre requested the use of the Village Green as follows:

Hullabaloo Family Film
Friday 20th September 2019
On site: 4pm-8pm
Showing: 6pm-7.30pm approx.
To provide an open-air film (U classification)
Expected attendance 100 people (up to 200 people)

Members were advised that Full House Theatre had submitted the following documents:

- Public liability insurance certificate
- Event management plan
- Event risk assessment

Resolved: To grant approval for the use of the Village Green by Full House Theatre as detailed above.

9921 VILLAGE GREEN PAVILION ALTERATIONS

Members received a project update to invite general discussion on aspirations for the internal design and feel of the pavilion.

Members were advised that the council authorised a consultant to work to the following brief:

‘..... the project scope will involve largely internal alterations to increase the toilet facilities to service public attendance at outdoor events (such as the Carnival and the May Fair) held on the Village Green. Also, if possible to increase the size of the Function Room and a establish a more functional kitchen.’

The consultant was to provide a costed feasibility design solution.

The first step was to undertake a limited measured survey at the Pavilion to verify dimensions and the basic conditions of the property and its suitability for the alterations. This was currently in progress. Then, to offer a feasibility design for consideration, supported by professionally produced budgeted costings.

Members comments were invited.

A member suggested that, as a user of the pavilion, the kitchen facilities were in need of expansion and updating and were not always fit for purpose in their current state.

It was suggested that the Social Prescriber, from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, would like to come and address Houghton Regis Town Council to outline his work within the community. It was requested that councillors were given the opportunity to look around the pavilion.

Members requested that they were given a copy of the measured survey. Members were advised that they would be sent the feasibility report in due course.

Especially in relation to future design options, the following points were made:

1. The kitchen would be larger
2. The council should consult with current users
3. Ideally changing facilities should remain to enable sport to be reintroduced on the Green in the future.
4. Public toilets would be desirable.

9922 FIELDS IN TRUST - ACTIVE SPACES PROGRAMME

Members were advised of the grant secured from Fields in Trust, Active Spaces Programme, and were requested to authorise the installation of three items of fitness equipment on Orchard Close Recreation Ground.

- Resolved:**
1. **To authorise the completion of the Grant Agreement to secure funding of up to £5000 from Fields in Trust, Active Spaces Programme for the installation of an outside gym area on Orchard Close Recreation Ground;**
 2. **To authorise the installation of the outdoor exercise equipment.**

9923 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Replacement door

Resolved: In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

9924 REPLACEMENT DOOR

Members were requested to consider the replacement of a garage style door at a council property.

The officer recommendation was:

To replace the door with a metal roller shutter using EMR 322 Pavilion Renovation.

An amendment was proposed to read:

To assess the suitability of a potential repair, failing which, replacement with a metal roller shutter using EMR 322 Pavilion Renovation.

Proposed by: Cllr Abbott Seconded by: Cllr Farrell

In favour: 6 against: 0 abstentions: 0

Resolved: To assess the suitability of a potential repair, failing which, replacement with a metal roller shutter using EMR 322 Pavilion Renovation.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.57pm

Dated this 17th day of September 2019

Chairman

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Environment & Leisure Committee
22nd July 2019 at 5.00pm

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman
D Abbott
Y Farrell
S Goodchild
A Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Absent: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson
R Morgan

9993 APOLOGIES

None.

9994 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9995 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9996 NEW AREA OF EXISTING CEMETERY – TENDER CONSIDERATION

Members received a report which enabled members to consider;

1. The tender submissions relating to the landscaping and layout works associated with the development of the new area within the existing cemetery;
2. The desirability of appointing a CDMC to support the project;
3. To confirm a budget for the central design feature;
4. To provide guidance for the drafting of regulations and pricing structure for the new area;
5. To confirm a budget for initial memorialisation features.

Members agreed to consider recommendations 1 – 3 en-bloc
Proposed by: Cllr Abbott; seconded by: Cllr Goodchild
All in favour

Members were requested to appoint a councillor to attend a meeting with the contractor. It was requested for Cllr Slough to attend in her role as Vice-Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee.

Members voted on recommendation 4.

Proposed by: Cllr Goodchild; seconded by: Cllr Farrell.
All in favour.

Members compared designs and agreed to delegate the choice of memorialisation to the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Town Clerk. Members noted that having a piece of commemorative artwork in the cemetery supports the 20:20 vision of displaying art work within the town.

Members voted on recommendation 5.

Proposed by: Cllr Goodchild; seconded by: Cllr Abbott
All in favour.

Members raised concerns over the practicability of a cost neutral cemetery and suggested costings would normally include the cost of the land. However, the existing cemetery land was transferred to Houghton Regis Town Council at no cost. Members were advised that various entombment options were available at varying costs. It was explained to members that the cost of grant of exclusive entombment would be for a fixed period, at the end of which families would have the option to extend.

Members requested that a subsidy level comparison be prepared by the Town Clerk showing figures for 25%, 50% and 75% in order to help members determine a reasonable cost for the new area.

An amendment to recommendation 6 was proposed.

The officer recommendation 6 read:

To request that regulations and associated pricing structure be developed for subsequent approval which aims to establish a cost neutral situation for the new area within the existing cemetery;

The amendment to recommendation 6 was proposed to read:

To request that regulations and associated pricing structure be developed for subsequent approval which aims to establish a reasonable cost for the new area within the existing cemetery;

Proposed by: Cllr Abbott seconded by: Cllr Goodchild

Accordingly, the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion.
All in favour

Members discussed memorialisation costs, maintenance fees, interment fees and possible term length.

Concerns were raised regarding updated contact details for renewal. Members were advised that the onus would be on the guardian of the casket to ensure their contact details were up to date. The terms and conditions would reflect this.

Members voted on recommendation 7.

Proposed by: Cllr Abbott; seconded by: Cllr Goodchild
All in favour.

- Resolved:**
1. To approve Contractor C as the preferred contractor to deliver the landscaping and layout works associated with the development of the new area within the existing cemetery, subject to formal interview;
 2. To accept Option 2 as the preferred paving surface due to reduced maintenance liabilities and higher durability;
 3. To appoint a Construction Design and Management Consultant for the project
 4. To appoint a member to attend the formal interview with the contractor;
 5. To confirm a budget of up to £10,000 for the central design feature and for delegated authority to be given to the Chair, Vice Chair and Town Clerk to agree the feature so that it can be delivered as part of the installation;
 6. To request that regulations and associated pricing structure be developed for subsequent approval which aims to establish a reasonable cost for the new area within the existing cemetery;
 7. To confirm a budget of up to £10,000 for memorialisation options to be installed.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 5.57pm

Dated this 17th day of September 2019

Chairman

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Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
28th May 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
D Jones
M S Kennedy
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 1

Also present: Councillors: Y Farrell

9907 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

9908 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9909 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9910 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23rd April 2019 for consideration.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9911 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/00789/FULL Tree house to rear
116 Douglas Crescent, LU5 5AT
For: Mr & Mrs Cox

Members of the Planning Committee considered this application at the meeting held on the 23rd April 2019. The following comments were made:

The Town Council requested more information before comments could be submitted, for example: the above ground height had not been detailed.

Members were advised that further information had been provided.

Comments: The Town Council objects to this application on the following grounds:

Inappropriate development

Detrimental impact to neighbouring residents

Scale of the building is overbearing and out of character

CB/19/00883/RM Reserved matters of appearance, scale and landscaping for residential development of 255 dwellings following outline CB/15/0297/OUT
Parcels 4a and 4b, Bidwell West, LU5 6JQ

Comments: Members received a report from the Town Councils planning consultant:

Application CB/19/00883/RM (follows CB/15/00297/OUT)
– Parcels 4a & 4b for 255 homes on land west of Bidwell, HRN2, Houghton Regis

Observations by Houghton Regis Town Council: May 2019

NB The Council has previously commented on Reserved Matters for parcels 6a and 6b for 625 homes – these details were submitted to Central Beds under the same application numbers as shown above.

The Application

The outline applicant approved in November in 2015 was for up to 1,850 homes, roads, landscaping recreation and open space, two schools, employment and a local centre. The whole site extends westwards from Bedford Road, from the new A5 dual carriageway southwards to the edge of the former Chalk Quarry Nature Reserve.

The current details show 255 homes in two parcels either side of the new ‘spine’ road located west of Bidwell. The proposals (covered by the outline consent) for schools, employment, and local centre are not included in these reserved matters.

In addition to house details the Reserved Matters also cover boundary treatment, materials, parking, open space and drainage arrangements.

NB the outline approval was granted 2 years after the Framework for the whole HRN proposal was agreed by Central Beds.

Preliminary views from the Town Council:

- raised no objection to this application however,
- Members raised safety concerns regarding the water feature shown on the plans and requested more information,
- Members requested that the developer incorporate some disabled friendly equipment play equipment in the play areas, and
- raised concerns in whether current local school capacity could cope with the additional intake.

Previously, in response to the outline scheme the Town Council had concerns over highways issues and connections onto Bedford Road, allotment provision, open space / recreation provision, cemetery / burial provision, the layout of the community / changing facilities in relation to the school, and the Town Council's position of having open space transferred to it in future. A Groundwater Audit report was also sent to CBC as part of the exploration for future cemetery provision.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Town Council welcomes the details in the Reserved Matters and raises no overall objections.

The Town Council may wish to comment:

- the application needs to demonstrate that the 'affordable' housing is within the financial reach of those in need of homes locally, and how this could be supported to assist key workers, teachers, health workers and others important to support the community in this part of Houghton Regis,
- the lack of details on dwellings which are suitable for people with access and mobility issues,

- a feature of the scheme is to position local access roads along the boundaries of the parcels – the plans should show how these edges are to be fenced / hedged in order to maintain a pleasant / soft boundary landscaping and which is safe, preventing children from straying onto the spine / distributor roads,
- the way the plans show footpaths (cycleways??) alongside the spine / distributor roads but needs regard to the point above re. planting and safety,
- similarly, the fencing / hedging around the water feature / SUDS facility needs to be both effective in preventing access and attractive around this landscape feature,
- the details of access routes for pedestrians and cyclists, children, parents with pushchairs, etc to nearby facilities – schools, local centre, recreation areas etc. need to be clearer,
- the locations and ranges of local play areas and equipment within the site needs to be clearer, especially provision for older children / young teenagers.

The Reserved Matters application covers Parcels 4A and 4B here. The application relates to 255 dwellings, a mix of dwellings in varying sizes and flats, in 14 types.

Development Parcels were defined by the plans approved under the outline permission, including Parcels 4a and 4b. Condition 1 of the outline permission required the approval of the following details for each Development Parcel – scale and appearance of the development, plus landscaping of the site (details of access arrangements were determined at the outline stage) to accord with the Bidwell West Design Code (approved June 2015).

Brief Description

The application site itself is currently an 8ha arable field which has been recently separated into two parcels by the newly constructed main spine road/primary vehicular route through the Bidwell West site.

Parcel 4a to the north of the spine road (2ha) and Parcel 4b to the south of the spine road together adjoin a large block

of woodland (Bluewaters Woodland) to the south. Existing arable land to the west of the site on the other side of the main spine road is proposed to form a large amenity area, including sports pitch provision. The Ouzel Brook watercourse runs broadly east-west immediately to the north of the application site.

As part of the proposed residential development of 255 residential dwellings, 77 units will be affordable housing; equating to 30% and complying with the S106 agreement in this respect. There will be a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties, including 1 and 2 bed apartments and 2 bedroom coach houses, which will help contribute to a mix of housing within the local area in order to meet housing requirements.

Development Parcels 4a and 4b form the “Park View Crescent” Character Area within the Bidwell West development. The houses are laid out in blocks with near continuous frontages onto the main roads, parcel 4a has a large formal landscaped open space on the western side, 4b has a similar feature in the centre around which the blocks of new houses are arranged. The proposals achieve an onto the open space, along with strategically located keynote buildings. The average density is 32 per ha (the Design Code specifies between 30 and 35). The plans show a range of buildings, detached, semi-detached and terraced, 3 houses of 2 and 2.5 storey, 1.5 storey

flats over garages (FOGs) and 3 storey focal point apartment blocks in line with the Design Code.

The palette of materials and the design details comply with the Design Code including some local detailing from the local vernacular.

Annex A: Initial Comments by Houghton Regis Town Council

Framework: The proposals need to be set out more clearly to show how they reflect the Framework scheme for the area, especially with regard to landscaping and non-vehicular access arrangements. Each Reserved Matters application

needs to show how each 'parcel' relates to the broader landscaping proposals for HRN - the pieces within a jigsaw - to achieve an integrated whole.

Landscaping - tree- planting around the edges of the site appears to be very low density. With the layout and densities shown it will take many years for the landscaping to mature. It would be preferable to use a combination of retained existing trees* and hedgerows where possible, introduction of a variety of tree sizes as part of the new landscaping, and denser planting patterns with provisions for later thinning. The tree species mix should be native species appropriate to the area and soil type.

As well as the proposed grassed areas, native woodland flower species should be introduced so that when established, the landscaping reflects the habitat and ecosystems of the former copses and field edges.

Planting adjoining the rear of properties which back onto the landscaped areas / public paths should have spiky species (rose, briars, fruiting brambles, etc) to deter intruders.

*The degree of tree and hedgerow removal which has taken place along the roadside is alarming - mature trees and hedgerows especially should be retained - using TPO provisions, where they could add to the appearance of the new area and preserve wildlife habitats and ecosystems until the new landscaping has had time to become established.

Parking provisions - appears to be inadequate, requires confirmation that the number of spaces meets Central Beds parking standards for residents and visitors

Layout - generally no objections. The plans for the parcels need to highlight how the layout relates to the network of foot and cycle paths to facilitate non-car access to shops, schools, recreation etc. Existing rights of way in the area should be highlighted and the connections from the new development made clear

Appearance: The buildings and cottages in Bidwell and Thorn exhibit a generally plain design for rural brick-built dwellings, with however interest and detailing is created in the brick detailing around the windows, eaves, chimneys, lintels etc. The proposed house-types could be easily adapted to reflect this level of detailing so that the scheme is

more reflective of the area. There are no details within the plans of features such as solar panels, electric car charging points, etc.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.40pm

Dated this 18th day of June 2019

Chairman

1870

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**Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
18th June 2019 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
D Jones
S Thorne
K Wattingham

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: M S Kennedy
T Welch

Also present: Councillor: T McMahon

9957 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Kennedy and Cllr Welch.

9958 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9959 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9960 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20th May 2019 and 28th May 2019 for consideration.

Matters arising from the minutes.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2019 and 28th May 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9961 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/01112/FULL Extension of the existing car showroom and workshop areas
Grovebury Cars, Mayer Way, LU5 5BF
For: Mr M Camplin

Comments: No objections

CB/19/01577/FULL Relaying of the churchyard path
 All Saints Church, Bedford Road, LU5 5DJ
 For: Fr D Galanzino

Comments: No objections***For noting***

CB/19/01470/LDCP Single Storey Rear Extension
 1 Fareham Way, LU5 5RE

For information - This was not an application for planning permission in the normal sense but sought confirmation from the Planning Authority that the installation was Permitted Development. If the Planning Authority agreed with this view, a Lawful Development Certificate would be issued, meaning that the development could take place without the need for a further planning application. This falls to be determined solely on the basis of legal considerations, i.e. is it permitted development or not? As such this was purely a matter for professional/legal consideration and legislation does not require any consultation to be carried out.

(b) The following decision notices were noted:***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

CB/19/00133/FULL	Change of use from C3 residential dwelling house to C2 residential institution (residential family centre) and extension to rear ground floor bedroom The Limes, Cumberland Street, LU5 5BW
CB/19/00134/FULL	First floor rear extension 3 Holyrood Drive, LU5 5FW
CB/18/01902/FULL	Dropped kerb and vehicular crossover over green amenity land to provide off-street vehicular parking 149 Sundon Road, LU5 5NN
CB/18/04686/VOC	Variation of Condition No.11 on planning application CB/17/02942/REG3 dated 9/11/17. The variation is required to redesign the roof scape so the area of flat roof is omitted (new plan submitted - Sherwood Architects Ltd Drawing 3128-02 Plans and Elevations). Varied Condition to read: "The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on submitted plans, numbers PH500/2.1/001 rev C,

PH5000/2.1/100, PH5000/1.1/100, PH5000/1.1/002,
PH5000/1.1/001, and Sherwood Architects Ltd Drawing
3128-02 Plans and Elevations"
Puddlehill (Former All Saints Vicarage) Bedford Road; LU5
5DJ

- CB/19/00544/NMA Non-Material Amendment - Amendment to
CB/18/00811/RM dated 07/09/2018 - Proposed
Amendments: Shared double garage removed from Plots 3-4
and 95-95. No changes made to the approved car port and the
required 2 x car parking spaces for each 3-bedroom unit
remains Temporary Sales Centre now on Plot 97 Triple
garage reduced to shared double garage on Plots 91 and 92.
Required 3 x car parking spaces for each 4-bedroom unit
remains Single garages removed from plots 33 and 73
providing additional garden area and the required 2 x car
parking spaces for each 3-bedroom unit Plot 8 reduced from
2.5 storey (5-bedroom unit) to 2 storey (4 bedroom) version
of the same house type Additional rear doors added to
apartment block (22-28) to provide private access to ground
floor flats at the request of the RP
Parcel 1, Bidwell West, LU5 6JQ
- CB/19/00507/FULL Single storey rear extension.
18 St Michaels Avenue, LU5 5DN
- CB/19/00455/FULL 3 bedroom detached new dwelling
1 Townsend Terrace, LU5 5BB

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

- CB/19/00685/LDCP Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Change of use to
a 14 bed "care home"
Hillside, Chalk Hill, Houghton Regis

9962 LOCAL PLAN

Members were advised that Written Statements for all remaining hearing sessions were now available and could be accessed through the links within the Written Statements section, via Central Bedfordshire Councils website.

The statements included the Council's response to Matter 10 on Housing Land Supply. Responses to the Council's latest position on this Matter were to be received by 5pm on Tuesday 25 June.

Resolved: To note the report.

9963 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were advised that the Town Council was in the process of inviting consultants to provide quotation costs to undertake the public consultation/examination of the Town Councils draft Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering group would consider all quotations and make a recommendation to the Planning Committee for appointment.

Resolved: **To note the information.**

9964 LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL - CONSULTATION

Members were informed that Luton Borough Council had produced a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which aimed to provide advice to developers, including housing associations and other registered providers, including private developers on the council's approach to affordable housing provision.

The SPD aimed to provide additional guidance on key development plan policies. It did not introduce new policy but supplemented existing policies in the council's Local Plan.

Resolved: **To note the information**

9965 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN- UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – For information this major road project opened on the 11th May 2017. Central Bedfordshire Council had again been contacted for an update in regard to the Safety Audit, proposed for this road. A response was awaited.

HR Central – No substantive update to report. Members requested that this be changed to All Saints View.

Linnere – The following update was provided to members of the planning committee via email dated 25th April 2019. Copy of email for information for new members.

We wanted to take this opportunity to provide an update on our progress with the development of the HRN1 site to the North of Houghton Regis. As you may already have seen construction has started onsite to deliver the initial part of the spine road which will serve the first part of the development to the North of Thornhill Primary School.

Now that the development is moving into the construction phase, we are renaming the site, with a title that represents the sustainable extension to Houghton Regis that it will create. We are delighted to announce that we will be calling the site "Linnere." We believe this name will help to celebrate the landscape-led design and quality of the new development, whilst simultaneously demonstrating the strong links with the local community and Houghton Regis.

The name Linnere means field of lime trees – a native British species which occur naturally in Houghton Regis. Linnear also appears on a 1762 map of the site and is also the name of a pedestrian route in the town. The ethos of the Linnere masterplan is to create a place where wellbeing is prioritised, and outdoor living is a way of life. The plans will deliver around 78 hectares (equivalent to 62 cricket pitches) of open green space that will be accessible to all residents in Houghton Regis, not just those living at Linnere.

We would also like to thank all those local residents, stakeholders and Councillors who have given their time to attend and participate in all of the consultation exhibitions, workshops and other events that we have held in recent years, your feedback has been invaluable to us. We look forward to continuing to work with the whole Houghton Regis community as we move into the next phase for Linnere.

HRN2 – As development was well underway on this site, Members were invited to consider whether it was now appropriate to remove this heading. Members requested that this heading be left on future agendas with the new name of Bidwell West.

Kingsland – No substantive update to report.

Windsor Drive – No substantive update to report.

Section 106 Monies – Members requested an update on s106 money and confirmation of outstanding funds. Members were advised that details of s106 money were included in the Community Services meeting. Members suggested that this be looked at along with the new Vision.

Resolved: **To note the information**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.38pm

Dated this 8th day of July 2019

Chairman

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Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
8th July 2019 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
Y Farrell Substitution
M S Kennedy
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillor: D Jones

9984 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones (Cllr Farrell substituted)

9985 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9986 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9987 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 18th June 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th June 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

9988 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/01629/FULL Single storey rear extension & part garage conversion
14 Lake View, LU5 5GJ
For: Mr & Mrs Mayling

Comments: No objections

CB/19/01134/FULL Two storey rear extension and single storey front extension.
22 Drury Lane, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5ED
For: Mr M Kapelski

Comments: No objections

CB/19/00547/FULL Proposed Garden Fence. Retrospective.
46 Bidwell Hill, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5EP
For: Miss P Isherwood

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objects to this planning application for the following reasons:

- **Not in keeping with the local area**
- **Negative visual impact on the character of the neighbourhood**
- **Overbearing and dominating**
- **Too high**

CB/19/01657/FULL Part single part two storey rear extension and extension to garage
42 Douglas Crescent, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5AT
For: Mr J Saulle

Comments: No objections

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

CB/19/01631/LDCP Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Construction of a 2 bedroom mobile home for ancillary use to the existing dwelling.
6 Meads Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LY
For: Mr I Mackay

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

9989 LOCAL PLAN

No substantive update to report.

Resolved: To note the information.

9990 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group met to appoint four members of the group, whose role would be to consider completed tenders and to discuss their findings with the rest of the group at a meeting scheduled to be held on the 17th July 2019. It was proposed that a recommendation on the approved contractor would be presented to the Planning Committee at its meeting to be held on the 29th July 2019.

Resolved: To note the information.

9991 BURY SPINNEY, THORN ROAD, LU5 6JQ

Members were informed that the appeal decision had been published, by the Planning Inspectorate, for Bury Spinney, Thorn Road.

Resolved: To note the information

**9992 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN-
UPDATE/PROGRESS**

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – No substantive update to report.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Bidwell West – For information Members were advised that amendments had been made to CB/19/01218/RM Parcels 6A & 6B Land West of Bidwell. Erection of 625 dwellings. The changes principally related to detailed design changes in response to the initial consultation (from the Town Council response dated 29th April 2019).

The following changes particularly related to the Town Council comments:

- Increased design in the proposed dwellings. For example, inclusion of chimneys, and extra detailing in the elevations. Blue doors had been included around focal points (such as around the play areas) for increased interest.
- To reflect parking guidance and to make parking spaces more usable
- Improved landscaping
- Increasing pedestrian connections to the wider environment

Kingsland – No substantive update to report.

Windsor Drive – No substantive update to report.

Section 106 Monies – No substantive update to report, an update was requested for presentation at the next Planning meeting.

Resolved: To note the information

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.27pm

Dated this 27th day of July 2019

Chairman

**Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
29th July 2019 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
D Jones
M S Kennedy
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 3

9997 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

9998 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked why Cllr Carroll's information had been removed from the Houghton Regis Town Council website and stated his disappointment that Central Bedfordshire Council had not yet processed the declarations of interest for Houghton Regis Town Council Councillors.

The member of public was advised that an updated version would be supplied to the Town Clerk in due course.

9999 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

10000 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8th July 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10001 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/01602/FULL New substation and hardstanding
Land to West of Houghton Regis, Watling Street
For: Bidwell West (Works) Ltd

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objects to this application and supports and reiterates the objections put forward from Highways as detailed below:

The proposal is to establish a substation just behind the new highway boundary of the new link road for the Bidwell West urban expansion. This proposed location is close to the future bus stops and due to the alignment of the Link Road there is a probability that any vehicles parking on the carriageway to visit this building will cause a hazard to traffic on the highway.

CB/19/01771/FULL Rear single storey extension, replacement porch and internal alterations
39 Manor Park, LU5 5BU
For: Mr Everitt

Comments: No objections

CB/19/01834/FULL Two storey side extension
116 Plaiters Way, LU5 6JE
For: Mr Mick

Comments: No objections

CB/19/01919/FULL Erection of 20 no. B2 industrial units with associated parking, access and landscaping and upgrading of public right of way
For: Option Two Development Ltd

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

- **Overdevelopment of the area**
- **The site is a County wildlife site**
- **Insufficient space for the quantity of garages**
- **Lack of parking provision**
- **This application is contrary to the saved policies of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan**
- **Inadequate space availability for the manoeuvring of HGV vehicles**
- **Out of keeping with the surroundings of Dog Kennel Down**

CB/19/01480/FULL Conversion of existing garage into additional living space
57 Yew Street, LU5 5PA

Comments: No objections***For noting***

CB/TRE/19/00264 Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: Horse Chestnut reduce to approximately 1 metre above crown break (8 metres) to significantly reduce weight.
Land North of Tennyson Avenue, between 97 & 119, Tennyson Avenue

(b) The following decision notices were noted:***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

CB/19/00835/LB Complete refurbishment work to the interior and exterior fabric of the building including doors and windows and demolition of the existing single storey rear porch
1 The Red House. The Green

CB/19/01068/FULL Proposed change of use from dwelling to 14 bed care home – semi independent support & accommodation for 16-21 year olds, looked after or children in care
Hillside, Chalk Hill

CB/19/00994/VOC Variation of Condition on Application CB/18/00811/RM dated 04/09/18. Vary Condition No. 1 To substitute previously listed plans (layouts, house types and garage arrangements on plots 32, 34, 49-51, 56-57, 59-60, 62-63, 72-73, 68, 70, 74, 76-80, 83-86, 88 and 91)
Parcel 1, Bidwell West, Thorn Road

CB/19/01577/LB Re-laying of churchyard path
All Saints Parish Church, Bedford Road

Refusals:

CB/19/00431/FULL New dwelling house
1 Keaton Close, LU5 5SW

Withdrawals:

CB/19/00789/FULL Tree house to rear
116 Douglas Crescent, LU5 5AT

CB/19/00849/LB Re-laying of churchyard path
All Saints Parish Church, Bedford Road

The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan was submitted to government on 30 April 2018. The examination included a series of hearings on what the Inspector deemed to be critical issues affecting the Plan. These hearings were still ongoing.

Resolved: To note the information.

10003 STREET NAMING

Members were requested to consider ideas for road naming. Members were asked to provide 2 or 3 themes with some street name examples for each.

Members discussed theme options and agreed to suggest:

Viking Gods
Old English flower names
Butterflies
Chalkdown flowers
Entertainers from the 1930's to 1960's

Members were invited to provide more detailed specifics via e-mail to the Corporate Services Manager on the suggested themes.

Resolved: To provide Viking Gods, Old English flower names, Butterflies Chalkdown flowers and entertainers from the 1930's to 1960's as theme names for the Linnere Development.

10004 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were advised that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at its meeting held on the 17th July 2019, considered the public consultation quotations received and reported that they were unable to approve any of them at present. The Steering Group had since been made aware that there could be possible support for the regulation 14 consultation, from an alternative source. It was anticipated that the consultation period would now commence following the start of the new academic year.

Resolved: To agree to further investigations being undertaken in seeking alternative sources of support for the Regulation 14 consultation and to receive a recommendation from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at the next planning meeting.

10005 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN- UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – Members were advised that although the main ownership of this land was with Highways England, some land in this area was owned by Central Bedfordshire Council Highways.

Central Bedfordshire Council Highways have agreed to the transfer of ownership of all the land to themselves, however, in order for this to happen documentation needs to be in place. Members were informed that Central Bedfordshire Council Highways are mindful of the improvements that could be made to lining on this road.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Linnere – Members were informed that vegetation removal on Linnere had been carried out fully in accordance with their ecology method statements and had been personally overseen on site by their ecology consultants. An exclusion zone had been implemented in areas where active bird nests were identified.

Bidwell West – Members were advised that two planning applications would be presented to them at the meeting to be held on the 19th August 2019, one for land East of Bidwell Road. As members were aware, this additional site has not been included in the strategic growth planned for this area and therefore members requested that the Town Council Planning Consultant look at this application along with one for an area of land East of Houghton Park Road and provide a report for members to consider at the next meeting.

Kingsland – No substantive update to report.

Windsor Drive – No substantive update to report.

Section 106 Monies – At the previous planning meeting held on the 8th July 2019, Members requested that information in regard to the two oldest s106 contributions be presented at the next planning meeting.

Members saw that SB/08/00388/FULL Land at Sandringham Drive – There was £29,716.19 remaining for the provision and maintenance of works to the Amenity Land and SB/07/01448/OUT Land at Houghton Quarry - £10,246.42 + £12,408.22 for transportation measures, public transport service and infrastructure provision works to and in connection with the existing public highway network and sustainable modes of transport together with monitoring and feasibility studies.

Members were further advised that the Town Council had applied for s106 monies to support the installation of floodlights to illuminate the flagpoles, additional defibrillators and for energy efficiency measures.

Resolved: To note the information

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.42pm

Dated this 19th day of August 2019.

Chairman

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**Houghton Regis Town Council
Planning Committee
19th August 2019 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson Chairman
J Carroll
D Jones
M S Kennedy
S Thorne
K Wattingham
T Welch

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 44

Also present: Councillors: T McMahon
S Goodchild
A Ryan Central Bedfordshire Council

10006 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

10007 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public raised several concerns regarding the planning application CB/19/02056/FULL

- The access track was owned by existing residents not Central Bedfordshire Council
- Property was out of keeping with the area
- Access to the proposed building would be only available through conservation land containing trees with TPO's (Tree Preservation Orders)
- The property would be sited on conservation land
- Loss of heritage site due to the possible destruction of tunnels situated on the land
- Parking issues as the application does not meet Central Bedfordshire Council parking requirements
- Over development of the land
- Loss of privacy to existing properties and lack of privacy of the new build
- Damage to the environment
- Building site would be too close to existing properties
- Plans would involve the removal of tree tops
- Turning circle would be too tight for vehicles which would go across resident's land
- Access road too tight for emergency vehicles
- Protected land should not be given over to developers
- Houghton Regis valuable heritage was disappearing with new developments
- Track road was also used for pedestrian access

- Health and care services were already overstretched, this property would stretch capacity further
- There was access to the rear of number 134, however this was for number 134 only
- The residents were not correctly notified of the application for the proposed property

Residents were assured that their comments and concerns would be passed on to Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members of the public raised several concerns regarding the planning application CB/19/02053/OUT

- The land for the proposed access would be over conservation land, which was the habitat for many species
- The natural spring would not be maintained with the loss of protected species and their habitats i.e. badgers, water voles etc.
- The information presented was not current information
- The plans did not show new road infrastructure
- Previous applications had been rejected in 1981 and 1984 by the Secretary of State
- The Brook had not been tended since the new road was opened

Residents were advised of the report from the Houghton Regis Town Council planning consultant. Members suggested that the Central Bedfordshire Council Councillor for that ward represent residents at the Development Management Committee meeting. Residents were assured by Councillor Ryan that she would call this application in.

10008 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

10009 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 29th July 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10010 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/02130/FULL Demolition of existing residential dwelling and erection of 121 dwellings including the creation of a new vehicular access, recreational open space, parking infrastructure and associated landscaping and ancillary works.

The Gates Land East of Bedford Road Bidwell

For: Jarvis Homes Ltd

Members received a report from the Town Councils planning consultant in relation to this application.

Members were advised that this planning application would not be officer delegated but would be presented to Development Management Committee.

Comments: The Town Council raises objections to the scheme as proposed, for the following reasons:

- The layout of the buildings adjoining the Bedford Road frontage should be changed so that these homes face the road reflecting the layout of the original hamlet and with respect to the setting of the adjoining listed building,
- The dwellings facing Bedford Road should be designed to reflect the materials and scale of the hamlet,
- The children's play area should be relocated elsewhere in the site to avoid placing close to a road and not adjoining a pond for reasons of safety,
- The spine road through the estate should be re-designed to reduce traffic speeds, reduce the lengths of straight carriageway and use the resulting design to introduce more landscaping into the street scene and reduce the appearance of a dense urban setting

The Town Council would review its objections if an amended scheme which incorporates all these changes were submitted, but in view of the scheme being in advance of any nearby service, shopping or community facilities, would seek a s.106 contribution being negotiated towards these being provided, plus a play facility aimed at young teenagers, and a bus service to connect the site with the facilities in the town centre.

1. Description

1.1 Bidwell is a small group of mostly homes and farm buildings either side of the Bedford Road, currently separate from Houghton Regis, located at the foot of the hill north of the town centre. The site is situated on the eastern side of Bedford Road, with a frontage onto the road and includes the paddocks at the rear which extend to the southern edge of the Rugby Club. A footpath / right of way (Chiltern Way) runs north-south along the eastern boundary. There is a small row of terraced houses fronting Bedford Road north of the site and the Red Cow Farm, a grade II listed building to the south.

1.2 The site is not included in the Masterplan Area for Houghton Regis North development and under the current Local Plan (2004) is within a green belt designation. The proposed Local Plan (the Examination period has recently concluded and the Inspectors' conclusions are awaited) contains one allocation for development at Bidwell – HAS28 in the Small / Medium Allocations, for 40 homes on the Bidwell Gospel hall site.

1.3 The Design & Access Statement supporting the application illustrates that the HRN Masterplan proposals will see Bidwell including the application site, enveloped by new development; immediately to the east of the site will be a landscape belt carrying the current right of way with housing beyond.

1.4 The site is just over 4ha in size, a gentle slope to the north, currently with a house and various out-buildings. There are trees and hedges on the site mostly along its boundaries and between the house and Bedford Road, otherwise the site comprises rough-grazing / pasture.

1.5 The proposal is wholly residential, demolition of the existing buildings and 121 new homes made up of a mix of houses and flats:

Private Dwellings (Total 85); 7 x 4 Bed Houses; 46 x 3 Bed Houses; 23 x 2 Bed Houses;
9 x 2 Bed Flats.

Affordable Dwellings (Total 36); 1 x 4 Bed House; 6 x 3 Bed Houses; 10 x 2 Bed Houses;
13 x 2 Bed Flats; 6 x 1 Bed Flats.

1.6 The balance between private and affordable dwellings accords with the Central Beds requirements. The affordable dwellings are in two groups: one near the boundary with the rugby club and the other on the southern edge.

1.7 The site would be served by a single road access point from the Bedford Road frontage with pavements either side, leading to a spine road connecting to a number of cul-de-sacs. The scheme includes two areas of open space, one with a play area adjoining an attenuation pond on the Bedford Road frontage next to the access road, the second a ribbon of grass and planting along the eastern boundary retaining the hedgerow and trees plus an access pathway.

1.8 There are 236 car parking spaces shown, a mix of allocated / on-plot spaces and unallocated / visitor parking. A Travel Plan report accompanies the application which highlights the walking / footpath opportunities, cycling and bus stops / routes close to the site.

The location of the development means that access to local school(s), community facilities, shops and Houghton Regis centre would be the most important to facilitate to avoid unnecessary car-based journeys. The Design & Access Statement describes the facilities available in Houghton Regis, those which will be provided within the HRN development, and the excellent (car-based) connections northwards to the A5 dual carriageway and southwards to Houghton Regis and Dunstable.

2. Planning Policy

2.1 The Planning Statement supporting the application balances three policy matters: the requirement to determine applications in accordance with the adopted local plan (2004), the anticipated matters which the draft Central Beds Local Plan will need to embrace before that can be adopted, and thirdly the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) support for sustainable development.

2.2 The recent Local Plan Hearings have given rise to a considerable number of issues which, it is likely, the Inspectors will require further work by Central Bedfordshire to produce evidence or justification, and which may itself involve a period of further consultation.

2.3 This is unlikely to affect the progress of the Houghton Regis North 1 and 2 developments, where sites are already commenced with levelling and infrastructure being installed.

2.4 The Statement with this application also refers to the HRN Framework (2012) which guides the HRN development, however as stated above Bidwell is not included in the Framework area.

3. Issues

3.1 Policy: Ordinarily the current green belt designation in the adopted local plan would require a high bar of justification to be demonstrated to enable development, then usually only a limited range of types – infill, required in connection with agriculture etc.

However the approval of the HRN development in 2012 and the subsequent reserved matters approvals for its implementation, around Bidwell, which will in the near future leave it as an 'island' between HRN and Houghton Regis means that the purposes identified for green belt in the National Planning Policy Framework – to prevent settlements merging, to protect open countryside, have very limited application.

3.2 It should be noted that other applications for development between Houghton Regis and Bidwell have been approved –

CB/17/02512/OUT

Outline Application: Residential development of up to 1.03ha of the site with formation of two accesses, sustainable urban drainage and associated landscaping
Land South of the bungalow, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JS

CB/19/00668/OUT

Outline application for the erection of 7 detached dwellings with associated access, turning and parking.
Land East of Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Beds LU5 5ES

CB/18/00067/OUT

Outline Application: Formation of a new access to serve existing residential development and a residential development of up to 24 dwellings together with an enhanced footpath link and associated landscaping
Highfield Barns, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JP

3.3 On balance, the current green belt designation has little relevance or justification. However the development will have little in the way of local community facilities, schools or retail opportunities until the development on HRN progresses, and a S.106 agreement is recommended to contribute towards these and to support public transport into Houghton Regis.

3.4 Scale and Density: The design and layout achieves 121 dwellings on a little over 4ha, a density of approximately 30 to the hectare which is in the medium / high range, more akin to an urban setting rather than a village or hamlet. There is no specific policy in the Local Plan in relation to Bidwell and its future development except the site at Gospel Hall, but NPPF paragraph 122. States

Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) local market conditions and viability;
- c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

3.5 Reference to an area's prevailing character and setting is a consideration but with the exception of the listed building adjoining to the south there is little to justify major changes to the scale or density. However some issues regarding design and layout may affect the overall number of houses on the site.

3.6 Layout & Design: The main concerns are with the southern part of the site fronting Bedford Road. This part of Bidwell still retains characteristics of a small hamlet and the site frontage should reflect this. The dwellings nearest the Bedford Road frontage present the side elevation / gable end to the road and should be re-designed so the front elevations are fore-most, and would be more in keeping with older houses nearby. This front elevation should have design features which reflect the simplicity of the local vernacular.

3.7 A major part of the scheme's appearance from Bedford Road is the pond and open space with houses placed around it on two sides and the estate spine road on the third. However placing the children's play area next to the pond and the spine road raises concerns over safety and the play area should be relocated elsewhere in the site. The pond and open space is the main landscape feature and the rest of the site lacks planting with the houses presenting an 'urban' appearance which would be relieved with more landscaping.

3.8 The purpose of the two footpath connections shown leaving the site on the eastern boundary should be clear, e.g. links to proposed facilities in new development.

3.9 the scheme as it stands makes no mention of traffic calming / speed restrictions on the spine road, and this should be incorporated to help reduce traffic speeds as a safety feature for pedestrians, cyclists and children. The scope for road bends and narrows would also allow more new planting.

3.10 In order to justify being considered 'sustainable' the scheme should show electric charging points for dwellings and parking spaces, with solar panels and water heating panels incorporated in the house designs.

CB/19/02056/FULL

New dwelling.
Greenside, 134 High Street, LU5 5DT
For: Nextgen Properties Ltd

Members received a copy of a letter of objection in relation to this application.

Comments: The Town Council strongly objects to the scheme as proposed, for the following reasons:

- Inappropriate development in the setting of the Conservation Area;
- Overdevelopment, the proposed development appears cramped for the site;
- Concerns over the loss of trees that are protected;
- Lack of parking provision;
- Lack of an adequate Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Lack of suitable Archaeological Assessment, desktop study not sufficient;
- Lack of Conservation Area application;
- Due to the proposed location of refuse collection, this would cause the refuse lorry to stop on a pedestrian crossing which could lead to harm of pedestrians and other road users.

Whilst not a planning matter, the access road is not in the ownership of the occupiers of the proposed dwelling, therefore access cannot be gained.

CB/19/02053/OUT

Outline Application - for the provision of up to 350 residential dwellings and associated works
Land to the east of Houghton Park Road Houghton Regis
For: Bellcross Homes

Members received a report from the Town Councils planning consultant in relation to this application.

Members received a copy of a letter of objection in relation to this application.

Members were advised that this planning application would not be officer delegated but would be presented to Development Management Committee.

Comments: The Town Council raises major objections to the outline application as proposed for the following reasons:

- the proposal avoids any of the education, community or other facilities required for a new community of this size and / or those anticipated for this part of the HRN development shown in the Framework Plan,
- the proposal fails to integrate with the broader transport scheme for HRN by not showing the central north-south road / bus route through the site, and would therefore not enable this essential part of the transport infrastructure to be implemented,
- the proposed scheme would rely on all road traffic to and from the site passing along Conquest Road before joining Parkside Drive. This would be a major detriment to the residents on Conquest Road by virtue of noise, disturbance and possibly safety and pollution problems.

b) The current application should be refused or withdrawn in favour of a scheme which shows an integrated approach to the development of this area, showing the proper provision of community facilities and transport provisions.

1. Description

1.1 The outline application seeks permission for up to 350 houses and the access arrangements, all other issues, design, materials etc being reserved for later approval. The site is given as 14.72 hectares and the outline application is supported by an Illustrative Masterplan, and plans with broad proposals for Land Use, Density and Building Heights, Green and Blue Infrastructure, and Movement and Access. If approved there would be further submissions showing more details of layout, design, arrangement of open space, surface water drainage, etc, however at this outline stage only the broad proposals for land use – residential, and access are being put forward.

1.2 Beyond the current extent of the Parkside estate, the land to the east is a ‘greenfield’ site, un-developed rough pasture. The Ouzel Brook drains southwards towards the River Lea, and the Woodside Link has been constructed from the M1 / A5 junction, running north-south between the brook and the motorway.

1.3 The site is located to the east of Houghton Park Road, roughly rectangular in shape, extending from Fenwick Road in the south, northwards to the edge of the existing housing on Houghton Park Road, with the southern edge of the Kingsland site beyond. The site is approximately 100m wide and does not include all the land up to the brook.

1.4 The Movement and Access Parameter plan shows a single main access point for vehicular traffic to the site from the end of Conquest Road with a second 'emergency access' to the north from Houghton Park Road. On the eastern side of the site the plan shows two points for road access to future development (up to the brook) and two footpath links, connecting with cycle / footpath routes across the site.

1.5 The land-use plan shows a mix of residential development and open space, served by two road loops from the central access road. The open space is shown as five parks within the site, some with play areas, a linear feature following the brook where it crosses the site, and a green / landscaped strip around the western, southern and northern site edges.

2. Planning Policy

2.1 There is a requirement to consider applications in accordance with the adopted local plan (which is currently the South Beds Plan from 2004), which shows the site as green belt. The draft Central Beds Local Plan has reached the stage of awaiting consideration after the recent examination. As such although not finalised or adopted, this Plan should be given some weight in assessing this application. It shows the site as part of the Houghton Regis North scheme, for which the Framework was approved in 2012. The outcome for the Local Plan is unlikely to affect the progress of the Houghton Regis North 1 and 2 developments, where sites are already commenced with levelling and infrastructure being installed. The Woodside Link is a major element of the Framework.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires applications to be considered in light of adopted plans; in the absence of an up to date adopted plan, there is support for sustainable development.

2.3 The HRN Framework (2012) indicates the whole of the area between Parkside and the brook being developed with a mix of residential, schools and a community hub served by a main road and bus network route running north-south. This proposed road would serve the area with a main junction on the Woodside link to the south, and would continue through to the residential and other development proposed to the north (part of the Kingsland site).

3. Issues

3.1 Policy: Ordinarily the current green belt designation in the adopted local plan would require a high bar of justification to be demonstrated to enable development, then usually only a limited range of types – infill, required in connection with agriculture etc. However the approval of the HRN

development in 2012 and the subsequent reserved matters approvals for its implementation, means that the purposes identified for green belt in the National Planning Policy Framework – to prevent settlements merging, to protect open countryside, have very limited application. In addition, it would appear unlikely at this stage that whatever the outcome of the Central Beds Local Plan examination, it would produce any major changes to the HRN developments.

3.2 This policy position, combined with the thrust of the NPPF towards supporting sustainable development, especially in the absence of an up-to-date adopted local plan means that the outline application should be given very careful consideration.

3.3 Scale and Density: The layout gives an overall average density of 24 per hectare, although this will increase if the areas of green / open space are excluded. Nonetheless these densities would be considered broadly acceptable.

3.4 Layout & Design: There are three main concerns with the proposal layout and design:

- firstly, that the proposal avoids any of the education, community or other facilities anticipated for this part of the HRN development shown in the Framework Plan,
- secondly, the proposal fails to integrate with the broader transport scheme for HRN by not showing the central north-south road / bus route through the site, and would therefore not enable this essential part of the transport infrastructure to be implemented,
- thirdly the proposed scheme would rely on all road traffic to and from the site passing along Conquest Road before joining Parkside Drive. This would be a major detriment to the residents on Conquest Road by virtue of noise, disturbance and possibly pollution.

3.5 Conquest Drive is currently a cul-de-sac, with the side gable walls of some houses and the rear gardens of others facing the road. The road is used for casual parking and has a turning-head at the edge of the application site, which the scheme proposes to utilise. There is no data with the application on anticipated traffic flows or the adequacy of Conquest Road or the junction with Parkside Drive.

CB/19/01907/FULL Erection of a single storey storage building to existing Autobox/BCS House
Bcs House, Blackburn Road, LU5 5BQ
For: Mr S Penwright

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council has no objections to this application

CB/19/02214/FULL Double storey side extension
1 Fareham Way, LU5 5RE
For: Mr & Mrs Michalski

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council has no objections to this application

CB/19/02165/FULL Part First Storey, Part Double Storey Side & Single Storey Rear Extension
2 Olma Road, LU5 5AF
For: Mr P Scoropan

Members were advised that this property was in Dunstable, therefore Houghton Regis Town Council made no comment.

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

10011 BUDGET REVIEW

Members received the Planning budget to date.

Resolved: To note the report.

10012 LAND AT OAKWELL PARK, THORN ROAD – 48 NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS

Members were advised that amendments to this application were due to be received and be considered at the next planning meeting. As the Town Council raised concerns in regard to the previous application members were requested to seek the support of the town council’s retained planning consultant, when responding to this application.

Resolved: To request that the Town Councils retained planning consultant review the amended planning application and to provide a report to members for the meeting to be held on the 9th September 2019.

10013 LOCAL PLAN

Members were advised that the Hearing Sessions closed on 25 July 2019. Further information regarding the next stage of the examination process would be available in due course.

Resolved: To note the information.

10014 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

At the meeting of the Planning Committee held on the 29th July 2019 Members were advised that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at its meeting held on the 17th July 2019, considered the public consultation quotations received and reported that they were unable to approve any of them. Following this conclusion, the Steering Group were then made aware that there could be possible support for the regulation 14 consultation, from an alternative source. At the meeting it was resolved that further investigations be undertaken in seeking alternative sources of support for the Regulation 14 consultation and to receive a recommendation from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at the next planning meeting.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at its meeting held on the 5th August 2019 considered a quotation of works received from BRCC (Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity) detailing the work they were able to do in order to support the Steering Group in meeting the Regulation 14 obligation. This quotation was significantly lower than the price detailed in the tender documents, £15,000.

The Town Council received a grant from Locality which still has over £3k remaining. Unfortunately, this grant was itemised over specific headings which could not be used for anything else. It was proposed to contact Locality to obtain consent to vire headings to support the Regulation 14 consultation. If members were supportive of the group working with BRCC then it was anticipated that the cost could be in the region of £7,500, this included costs for additional support not listed i.e. a further community drop in event. As previously stated, if agreed with Locality some of these costs could be offset against the grant already received.

Members asked if there was any opportunity to seek alternative quotes for some of the work required, i.e. leaflet printing and distribution. Officers informed members that the group were able to pick any of the elements of the quote without penalty.

In addition to the group and BRCC's support, it was anticipated that officer support would also be required.

Resolved:

- 1) To support the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with their request to work with Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity in order to fulfil the Regulation 14 obligation;
- 2) That the funds for this, up to the value of £7,500, to be taken from budget code 401-4062 Neighbourhood Plan.

**10015 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN-
UPDATE/PROGRESS**

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – For information this major road project opened on the 11th May 2017.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Linnere – Bellway, Morrisons, Barrett have all expressed an interest in development of this land. It was anticipated that applications, totalling 600 dwellings were expected around September time. The extension to Thornhill School had been agreed with Central Bedfordshire Council who would initially fund the project until funds could be taken back from s106 monies.

Bidwell West – No substantive update to report.

Kingsland – No substantive update to report.

Windsor Drive – No substantive update to report.

Section 106 Monies – No substantive update to report.

Resolved: To note the information

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Dated this 9th day of September 2019

Chairman

**Houghton Regis Town Partnership Meeting
30th April 2019 at 7pm**

Present: Central J Kane Chairman
Bedfordshire Ms A Ryan
Councillors:

Houghton Regis D Dixon-Wilkinson
Town Councillors: K Wattingham

HRTC Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services
CBC Officers: Mrs S Hughes Community Engagement
Manager

Public: 0

CBC Councillors: A Swain
Mrs S Goodchild

Apologies: 0

Absent: Councillors: Mrs T McMahon
Ms L Ellaway

807 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

No apologies were received.

808 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

809 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

810 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th January 2019.

Matters arising: an update was requested regarding the planning application CB/18/04641/REG3 under question from the last meeting, members were advised that there was no update to date.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th January 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

811 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 the Corporate Parenting Panel: a report had been considered to understand the population of looked after children in Bedfordshire, public can attend and participate. Also considered was a report from the Adoption Agency, specifically regarding the work around personal advisors.

Members were advised that the meeting of Social Care and Housing was held on 18th March, which looked at how the social care system considered the winter months. At this meeting, it had been discussed how people waiting for housing would wait for a longer period to gain a home in Houghton Regis rather than Dunstable, and it was encouraging that older people were choosing to live in Houghton Regis.

Councillor Ryan advised members that to date there were no updates on Child Services.

Central Bedfordshire Council had completed work on domestic violence and the numbers had shown a positive impact. 1:4 women would experience domestic violence and Central Bedfordshire Council were working together with police and schools.

Councillor Kane updated members on the MAG meeting, HRN1 and HRN2 development had broken ground, expectation was that there would be a building on each plot by the end of the year, Linden homes were expecting occupation by September 2019. Members discussed that now buildings were being built, s106 monies could be utilised.

Disappointment was expressed that the boundary had not changed to incorporate Chalton Parish.

Councillor Kane requested transparency regarding s106 money to ensure that it was not moved around or gets reallocated to a different council. Members agreed that they were looking forward to seeing the essential infrastructure and were looking to revitalize the Recreation Centre with all parties working together.

812 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

Members were encouraged to have a forward plan. Concerns were raised regarding doctor provision in Houghton Regis. Clinical Commissioning Groups (part of the NHS) were focusing on medical centres, however, Dunstable and Biggleswade were scheduled before Houghton Regis which indicated that it would be several years before Houghton Regis Medical Centre would be in operation.

It was requested that an update be provided on an interim plan for Houghton Regis in lieu of the Health Hub.

Members were advised that HRN1 had plans in place to provide two medical facilities, and if agreed with NHS, this would be included in 1st phase in HRN1.

It was requested that school places be included on future workplans. Members were advised that some residents had requested that the building of schools be brought forward, however, s106 money was not available with the number of houses built. It was suggested that some of the s106 money be spent on the older school buildings as these were looking tired and were in need of repair.

It was requested that parking strategy also be included on future workplans as there had been no change in Town Centre parking.

Members agreed that the order of items on the workplan would be as follows:

1. Health
2. Schools
3. Parking

Members were advised that there was provision in the Terms of Reference to arrange special meetings.

Members requested that estate regeneration be included in the workplan and discussed at each meeting, with details of how the 'new Houghton Regis' would integrate with the 'old Houghton Regis'.

813 CBC UPDATE REPORT

Members received the CBC update report.

Members received an update on the parking at Houghton Hall Park, it had been agreed that Moore Crescent Car Park would be open at larger events for a trial period, marshalled by the event organiser.

Members were advised:

- The Recreation Centre was to refurbish their spinning area and the squash courts.
- Library was to visit schools to promote their services
- The streetlights by the Chequers had been repaired
- The bus shelters had been cleaned
- Café Connect were aiming to commission more sessions as they had received funding until July.

It was requested that the Community Engagement Manager investigate whether the replacement lamps were to be LED's. (light emitting diodes) as these were more cost effective to run.

It was requested that cheering volunteering be mentioned to new members, and tickets for the event being held at the Grove on 4th June could be purchased directly from the Grove Theatre.

814 JOINT COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received a report on the joint Committee Terms of Reference for consideration.

Members were advised that this was the final draft of the Terms of Reference and no further amendments would be made, it was requested that this committee formally recommend to Town Council that this be adopted.

Members reminded the Community Engagement Manager that at the last meeting it was requested that it stated within the Terms of Reference that the Chair and Vice-Chair would alternate between Houghton Regis Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council year on year, however this had not been included in the Terms of Reference.

It was agreed that during the first meeting members would agree that Chair and Vice-Chair would alternate between Houghton Regis Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council year on year and would be included in the minutes.

Members agreed this in principle.

Resolved: To note the report.

Councillor Goodchild wished to thank members for the 4 years she had been a member of this Partnership Committee, thanked staff and wished everyone best wishes going forward.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Dated this day 23rd July 2019.

Chairman

Houghton Regis Town Council
New Office Provisions Sub Committee
5th March 2019 at 7.30pm

Present:	Cllrs:	Mrs T McMahon C Slough Mrs Y Farrell T Welch	Chairman Substitution
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
Apologies:	Cllr:	M Kennedy	
Also present:	Cllr:	J Carroll	
Absent:	Cllr:	Ms L Ellaway	

NOP19 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr M Kennedy (Cllr C Slough substituted).

NOP20 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NOP21 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NOP22 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2018.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2018.

NOP23 OPTIONS REPORT

Members received a draft options report compiled by the consultants engaged to assist and in accordance with the agreed Scope of Service.

Members were invited to comment on the options listed.

Members discussed the list and removed several non-viable options and reconsidered some of the previously discounted options.

The remaining shortlisted options were:

1. Existing Peel Street Site: But repair construction faults
2. Existing Peel Street Site: Partly demolish and construct replacement over single or two floors, incorporate a new Debating Chamber or move this function to another premises.
3. Existing Peel Street Site: Fully demolish current building. Rebuild over single or two storeys.
4. Bedford Square Community and Youth Centre - Take over all available rooms for office function. (potentially smaller than Peel Street – survey to verify. Debating Chamber and Meeting Rooms in shared Community Rooms. No direct parking available.
5. Houghton Regis Central Development - Shop unit on street frontage as offices. Community rooms used as Debating Chamber.
6. Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Pavilion
7. Parkside Day Centre
8. Former Morrisons (Netto) Supermarket
9. Townsend Day Centre

The CBC budget setting process indicated that CBC may be willing to consider future options for the Bedford Square Community Centre. An approach has been made to CBC to advise that HRTC were considering options for new offices and as such may like to have further discussions around this centre.

Members suggested that Central Bedfordshire Council be contacted to discuss further the availability of the options listed.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.10pm

Dated this day of

Chairman

8/4

**Houghton Regis Town Council
New Cemetery Sub-Committee
28th May 2019 at 6.00pm**

Present: Cllrs: S Thorne Chair
J Carroll
Y Farrell
M S Kennedy
R Morgan
T Welch

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Also present: Cllrs: D Jones
K Wattingham

NC100 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members were invited to put forward nominations for Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee.

Nominee: Cllr Thorne Nominated by: Cllr Farrell
Seconded by: Cllr Morgan

On being put to the vote Cllr Thorne was elected as Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee.

NC101 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Members were invited to put forward nominations for Vice-Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee.

Nominee: Cllr Welch Nominated by: Cllr Kennedy
Seconded by: Cllr Carroll

On being put to the vote Cllr Welch was elected as Vice-Chair of New Cemetery Sub-Committee.

NC102 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

NC103 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NC104 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee meeting held on the 23rd April 2019.

Members noted that the agenda had been detailed as a working party rather than a sub-committee and therefore did not allow for questions from the public.

Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee meeting held on the 23rd April 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

NC105 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference relevant to this sub committee.

Resolved: To note the information.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.07pm

Dated this 8th day of July 2019

Chairman

**Houghton Regis Town Council
New Cemetery Sub-Committee
8th July 2019 at 6.00pm**

Present:	Cllrs:	S Thorne J Carroll Y Farrell M S Kennedy T Welch K Wattingham	Chair Substitution
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	0	
Apologies:	Cllrs:	R Morgan	

NC106 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Morgan (Cllr Wattingham substituted).

NC107 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NC108 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NC109 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-committee meeting held on the 28th May 2019.

Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-committee meeting held on the 28th May 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

NC110 CEMETERY REQUIREMENTS

At the New Cemetery Sub Committee meeting on 23rd April 2019 the following resolution was passed:

That no further speculative enquiries were to be undertaken until officers have determined the likely size and type of facility required, using data regarding expected mortality rates for the town and types of funerals expected for a period of up to 50 years. And that this data information be reported at the July meeting.

Members were provided with the following advice:

Size

The current electorate of Houghton Regis was approximately 12,500, this equated to a population of approximately 18,700.

By 2030/35 it was anticipated that the population may have doubled.

Ideal cemetery duration

It was requested by the Sub-committee that it was desirable for a new cemetery to offer interment options for at least a 50-year period.

Facilities within a cemetery

These should include: ashes plots, burial plots, internal circulation infrastructure, car parking, water and refuse area.

Ashes / burial ratio

Based on a population of 18,700 there were approximately 50 interments per year. This was broken down into new body grave burials, grave re-openers for a second interment, new ashes and ashes re-openers. Taken as an average over the last 3 years, there were 64 ashes interments and 86 burials. This gave an interment ratio of 2 ashes to 3 burials (approx). Considering the population growth, it was estimated that by 2030/35 there would be the demand for approximately 100 interments per year in Houghton Regis. This would equate to 33 ashes interments and 66 burial interments.

Area

Generally, the geology of Houghton Regis was more favourable in the north of the parish. However, it was likely that any area within the parish would be required to provide environmental mitigation measures due to the geology of the area and the stringent requirements of the Environment Agency.

Land requirements

The first acre of a cemetery could typically offer 700 interment spaces as ancillary facilities also needed to be provided. Subsequent acres could offer approximately 800 interment spaces per acre. Based on a 50-year requirement the council would be looking ideally for a 2.5-acre site. This equated to around 2 full size football pitches or a bit larger than the size of the current cemetery including the old section.

Development costs were approximately £120,000 per acre plus land costs. Development costs could be phased to an extent over the lifespan of the cemetery.

Land costs started at around £26,000 / acre for paddock land with the likelihood of non-commercial development. Land costs increased from this figure depending of the development value of the land.

Members discussed alternative choices the residents of Houghton Regis were choosing, as based on a population of 18700 and a death rate of 1% it would be expected that 187 people passed away in HR, however HRTC were only interring 50 per annum, therefore families were either scattering ashes, keeping ashes in their homes, or interring out of town.

A query was raised regarding the required size of land. The Town Clerk was to clarify and feedback to members.

Members were advised that minor repurposing of a small area within the current cemetery would release space giving several more plots, but this was outside of the remit of this sub-committee.

Members suggested that a press release be made to explain to residents the current situation and ask for any suggestions and ideas.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.40pm

Dated this 2nd day of September 2019

Chairman

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Personnel Sub-Committee

15th April 2019 at 6.30pm.

Present: Councillors: D Abbott Vice-Chairman
D Dixon-Wilkinson
Mrs T McMahon Substitute
K Wattingham

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: Ms J Hillyard

PE79 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Hillyard (Cllr McMahon substituted).

PE80 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

PE81 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

PE82 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 21st January 2019 for consideration.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 21st January 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.

PE83 HUMAN RESOURCES PROVISION

The council has retained the services of a local HR company for the last few years, at a cost of £1,260 pa. This contract was now a rolling contract. As such it was appropriate for members to consider the suitability of the current contract and any alternative providers. Members received a report detailing quotations that had been sought to provide this provision.

Members agreed to continue with Company 'D' as the services of this provider fulfilled all Houghton Regis Town Council requirements.

Resolved: To recommend to Corporate Services Committee that Company 'D' be employed as the Town Councils HR provider, from 22nd August 2019.

PE84 REVIEW OF STAFF SICKNESS

Members received a rolling twelve-month record of staff sickness, for all members of staff.

Resolved: To note the information.

PE85 STAFF CAPACITY REVIEW

At the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on the 21st January 2019, Members resolved to undertake a staff capacity review – minute number PE71. For clarity, this review did not include a job evaluation exercise. However, part of the review would consider the previous job evaluation report, undertaken in 2015. Officers felt that Members needed to be reminded of the scope of the capacity review as informal references had been made by members to the capacity review including a job evaluation process. The funding for this review was due to be taken from budget heading 190 (Central Services) – 4059 (Other Professional Fees) in 2018/19. However, this code was significantly overspent in 2018/19.

As the work had not been ordered (pending clarification to members of the scope of the review) the costs would be taken from 2019/20.

As members approved company D to provide human resources support, there was scope within the 190-4059 budget to fund the capacity review. This budget was set to provide for outsourcing payroll services, to provide human resources support and to provide health and safety support. The progression of this capacity review will prevent health and safety support being made available. On balance as staff capacity issues have been raised with members it was felt that this review was necessary to formalise capacity issues and to help guide the new council in setting an achievable corporate plan.

Members queried what the review would highlight, and the outcome.

Members were advised that it would highlight one of the following points:

- Show staff were working under capacity
- Show staff were working within their capacity
- Show staff were working over capacity

The outcome of the capacity review would enable members to make sound judgments on the consideration of additional events / tasks requested of officers.

Resolved: To note the information.

PE86 MANAGING THE OVERTIME BUDGET

Members received a report, for consideration, on options for possible staff savings costs.

Members received an estimated overtime overspend based on figures calculated on the calendar of events and meetings for 2019 / 2020.

Members suggested that some events were scrutinised to determine the precise number of staff required and to tighten requirements and maximise volunteer input.

Resolved: To agree to further investigations being undertaken in support of;

- Offering alternative contracts to staff working overtime at events;
- Charging staff costs arising from working at events to the events budget.

PE87 TOWN CLERK'S ANNUAL LEAVE AND MATTERS RELATING TO OVERTIME WORKING

The Town Clerk had:

- Booked 7 days annual leave between 1st April and 30th June 2019.
- Attended 15 meetings outside of normal office hours from 1st January to 31st March 2019 (compared with 15 meetings in the previous quarter).

Resolved: To approve the Town Clerks annual leave request.

PE88 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

Members were advised that there had been no Freedom of Information requests since the last meeting.

Resolved: To note the report.

PE89 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Staffing matters
- Staff issue

Resolved: In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

PE90 STAFFING MATTERS

Appraisals – were currently being undertaken. Any significant outcomes would be reported to the next meeting.

For information Members were advised that the position of Council Cleaner had become vacant. Members were advised that this position had been advertised and to date 4 applications had been received.

Resolved: To note the information.

PE91 STAFF ISSUE

Members received a confidential report, for discussion, regarding a staff issue.

Members discussed the Terms of Reference for this committee and requested that they be looked at by the Corporate Services Manager with a view to strengthening the Terms of Reference and making them more definitive to enable the Personnel Sub-Committee to deal with staff issues when matters of this nature arose. Members were advised that this would be reviewed at the AGM.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To advise Corporate Services Committee of staff management processes and the resource being accorded to them and to recommend an option for a way forward;**
 - 2. To consider a set of behaviour standards for employees;**
 - 3. To consider a team charter for members and employees**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Dated this day of 2019

Chairman



Date: 7th October 2019

Title: Councillor Email Addresses Report

Purpose of the Report: To provide further information to Members in support of the use of official Town Council email addresses

Contact Officer: Debbie Marsh, Corporate Services Manager

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1. To endorse the recommendation from Corporate Services Committee Minute 9944;**
- 2. For all elected Town Councillors to use an official Town Council email address for all Town Council official correspondence.**

2. BACKGROUND

In the light of the attached advice, from the Information Commissioners Officer (ICO), GDPR requirements and risk management, Members agreed, at the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on the 10th June 2019, that the council should provide an official email address and recommend all councillors use these accounts.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Setting up all councillors with an individual @council address is best practice. It facilitates councillors having all council related correspondence easily identifiable in one dedicated account, not mixed in with other correspondence. That does not mean, however, that all correspondence with councillors is copied in to every councillor.

At the meeting a member of the council raised concerns regarding the security of the Houghton Regis Town Council issued e-mail addresses. Concerns were expressed that the emails could be accessed, at any time, by any officer, via the server.

Members are advised that the council email addresses are provided under Office 365. This means that all copies of emails are stored in the cloud and not on the server. As such they are effectively password protected by the email address owner. The only means of access by another party would be if an instruction was given to the councils IT support to redirect emails to another account holder. The only time this has been done is if a member of staff is unexpectedly away from work for a period of time and as such operationally it has been necessary to monitor their emails for business continuation purposes.

At the Corporate Services Committee on 10th June it was requested that the wording be amended to state under what circumstances the emails would be accessed and that this member provide this wording. Whilst wording has not been forthcoming to date, it is suggested that members note that councillor email addresses will not be accessed by a member of staff unless that councillor has given their authority for a particular reason.

4. COUNCIL VISION

The proposed action supports the Objectives of Council's Vision;

5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- Revisions to the Town Councils Communication Policy & Communication Strategy could be completed to reflect this decision.

Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications

Financial Implications

- The cost for providing individual email addresses was approved at the budget setting process in February 2019.

Risk Implications

- Possible breach to data protection legislation

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

Press Contact

There are no press implications.

5. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

In providing each elected member with an official Council email address ensures a clear demarcation between council business and other.

6. APPENDICES

None.



Date: 7th October 2019

Title: HRN2 Public Open Space

Purpose of the Report: To enable consideration of the opportunity for HRTC to take on the management and maintenance of specified areas of public open space within HRN2

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To confirm to Central Bedfordshire Council that HRTC agree to take on under a lease the management and maintenance of the following areas within HRN2 subject to the associated s106 funding being provided:

1. Play areas – PA1-PA5
2. Formal Park – incs PA6 and drainage areas
3. Public sports pitches – 6.79ha Parcel Z

2. BACKGROUND

The development of HRN2 is currently being brought forward. As such Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) have approached HRTC to ask that formal consideration be given to Houghton Regis Town Council (HRTC) taking on the management and maintenance of specified areas of public open space within HRN2.

Members are advised that there has been a previous HRTC decision (Appendix A) to seek to take on various community assets and facilities within the strategic development sites and as such the Clerk has indicated to CBC that it is likely that there will be general support from HRTC to take on the management and maintenance of these areas.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Appendix B sets out how CBC has determined the open space management arrangements for land within HRN2.

The open space has been split into different categories and the management arrangements are to be as follows (extract from letter):

Open Space	Definition	Management Organisation
Countryside Recreation Public Open Space	public open space identified in the Development Phasing Plan as Parcel AA;	CBC, with the view to nominate The Wildlife Trust
Structural Open Space	means those areas of Public Open Space which are identified on the Development Phasing Plan as parcels A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, T, U, V, Wand X;	Private Management Company (as arranged by the developer)
Play Areas	means the areas identified as Play Areas (PA1-PA5) on the Development Phasing Plan;	CBC, with the view to nominate Houghton Regis Town Council
Formal Park	means a formal park (including PA6) and associated drainage areas the design and specification of which are subject to the approval of the Council to be located on the Formal Park Site;	CBC, with the view to nominate Houghton Regis Town Council
Public Sports Pitches	means the site for the Public Sports Pitches being	CBC, with the view to nominate Houghton Regis Town Council

	an area of 6.79 hectares and identified on the Development Phasing Plan as Parcel Z;	
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HRTC are being asked for formally consider taking on the management of the following:

4. Play areas – PA1-PA5
5. Formal Park – incs PA6 and drainage areas
6. Public sports pitches – 6.79ha Parcel Z

Appendix C provides the Landscape Phasing Plan showing the locations of these facilities.

Members are advised of the following points:

1. The level of s106 which will be provided to assist with the management of these areas is as follows:
Play Areas: £110,523 minimum. The s106 includes for a potential uplift contribution of up to £28,000 depending upon the value of the development.

Formal Park: £414,039 minimum.

Sports Pitches MUGA Changing Rooms and Car Parking Maintenance Contribution– Minimum of £996,000. The s106 includes potential additional uplift of up to £520,000.

2. The timescales of delivery of these areas are as follows:
Play Areas: Not more than 75% of the dwellings within each parcel before completion and transfer of the play area to CBC. CBC will then transfer to HRTC.
Formal Park/Sports Pitches – No more than 500 dwellings occupied before completion and transfer prior to completion of 800th dwelling.

3. The timescales of the release of s106 funding is as follows:

A fifth of the play area contribution shall be paid on completion and transfer of each play area.

The payments for the formal park/sports pitches will be the relevant percentage (see formula below) on the date of transfer. Additional contributions are provided annually based upon the formula until all contributions are paid on delivery of the 1800th dwelling.

$A (100/B) \times C$

Where:

A = the Relevant Percentage

B = the total number of Dwellings permitted to be developed on the Site under the Planning Permission; and

C = the total number of Dwellings Occupied on the Site on the last day of the calendar month which is two calendar months prior to the date of calculation.

4. As the open space is to be transferred to the CBC initially, HRTC will need to agree management arrangements CBC at the outset. In the longer term HRTC will have discretion as to how to maintain these areas and indeed it is envisaged that they will be maintained in line with current practices.
5. The open space/drainage and play areas will mainly be detailed / specified through the reserved matters planning applications. Where they are not, CBC will make these available to HRTC for comment.
6. The land would be transferred to HRTC under a long term lease. HRTC would have to met the costs of legal support to secure this.
7. A changing pavilion has been identified for the sports pitches. It is unclear whether this will be designed by the developer, but the s106 identifies that the design has to be approved by CBC (therefore it can be reasonably assumed it will be the developer). It should also be noted that the transfer of the formal open space (including the changing pavilion) can only happen if it has been completed to the reasonable satisfaction of CBC.

4. COUNCIL VISION

The proposed action supports the Objectives of Council's Vision;

2. Face the challenges & maximise the opportunities of growth;
4. A more active, engaged and inclusive community;
5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- HRTC have a track record of managing and maintaining such provisions. The management of these additional provisions is effectively an extension of what HRTC already do
- This represents significant additional work in the longer term and additional grounds staff will be required in due course
- Enables a consistency of approach of service delivery between existing community and HRN2

Legal Implications

- Power available to carry out project – Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976, s19
- The transfer of the land and facilities will need to be under a formal legal arrangement. At this stage it is envisaged that the land and facilities will be provided under a long term lease. Legal advice / support will be required.

Financial Implications

- There are financial implications arising from this report both in terms of expenditure and income. Further work will need to be completed should member agree in principle to the management and maintenance of these areas and facilities.

Risk Implications

- This additional work needs to be carefully planned to ensure no disruption to current service delivery
- Need to review the capacity of existing staff especially within the grounds team to ensure sufficient staff resource is provided
- Develop and enhance the reputation of HRTC within HRN2

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

Press Contact

- There are no press implications at this stage.

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The council have previously resolved to seek to have transferred to it all open space provision and facilities (26th January 2015, Minute 7988, Appendix A). This report supports that previous resolution.

CBC are offering the council the opportunity to have transferred to it play areas, the formal park and public sports pitches within HRN2 (Appendix B).

This represents a significant expansion of services and has resulting staffing and financial resources. However, the management of these facilities will be supported by s106 contributions.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A:	Previous HRTC decision
Appendix B:	Letter from CBC
Appendix C:	Open Space Phasing Plan

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Town Council
26th January 2015 at 7.30pm

Present:	Councillors:	Miss L Ellaway J Carroll E Costello Mrs S Gilchrist RD Hines DJ Jones AL Roberts Ms M Rolfe AS Swain K Wattingham AD Winter	Town Mayor
	Central Bedfordshire Council:	Cllr Mrs S Goodchild	
	Officers:	Clare Evans Stuart Oliver	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk
	Public:	5	
Apologies:	Councillors:	M Hunting R Shimmin	
		Sgt L Wilson	Bedfordshire Police

7974 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors M Hunting and R Shimmin.

7975 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Proposed new cemetery

The question was put as to whether any councillors had changed their minds over the suitability of Orchard Close as the site for the new cemetery. Members were advised that this question should not be answered at the meeting as it was not an agenda item listed for discussion. This position was accepted.

Details of expenditure on the progression of the new cemetery project was requested. This would be provided.

Motorbike theft

It was advised that last August a motorbike had been stolen and subsequently recovered. Concerns were expressed over the process which was followed to have the motorbike returned. It was requested that the Town Council raise these concerns with Bedfordshire Police.

Nuisance motorbikes

The Town Council was asked to liaise with Bedfordshire Police on working on a pro-

active and effective solution to the problem of nuisance motorbikes around the town.

7976 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Costello declared an interest in Agenda item 11, Former Co-Op site and accordingly did not vote on the matter.

7977 MINUTES

Minute 7866 – Community Defibrillator

Members were advised that the Memorandum of Understanding had been signed. The equipment had been received and quotes were being sourced for its installation.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 29th September and 8th December 2014.

7978 REPORT FROM THE POLICE

Representatives from the local Policing Team were unable to attend the meeting due to a team training day. A written report was circulated. Members discussed the issues outlined in the report.

Resolved: To note the report.

7979 COMMITTEE MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the following committees and consider any recommendations contained therein:

Planning & Licensing Committee 24th November, 15th December 2014
Environment & Leisure Committee 10th November and 27th November 2014

Minute 7879 Proposed Cemetery

Members discussed the petition previously submitted. It was requested that the Orchard Close Cemetery Working Group consider the petition.

Corporate Services Committee 1st December 2014
Community Services Committee 3rd December 2014

Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above.

7980 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

It was formally advised that Mrs Harris Small had resigned from her position as Town Councillor. Members recognised the time and effort Mrs Harris Small had given to the Town Council and formally expressed their appreciation.

The Town Mayor reported that Christmas had been a very busy Mayoral time, particular highlights were the Celebration of Christmas event and the visits to the local schools. More recently she had attended a Burns Night which had been particularly enjoyable.

7981 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED

The following verbal reports were provided:

Cllr Mrs S Gilchrist and A Winter

Attended the meeting of the Children's Centre Advisory Board which had outlined the changes to the management of the Children's Centres.

7982 BUDGET 2015/16

Members considered the following information:

- Explanation of additional budget suggestions
- Draft Budget
- Draft Budget notes
- Summary of Movements of Earmarked Reserves for 2014 / 15
- Predicted Summary of Movements of Earmarked Reserves for 2015 / 16

Members were advised that the Tax Base for Houghton Regis would be 4466.

The Labour Group made the following suggested amendments:

299-4869 CAP Tithe Farm Pavilion Renovation. Reduce budget from £25,000 to £0
 306-4059 – Other Professional Fees increase budget by £7,000 to £40,000
 To fund the suggestions through the use of around £30,000 of General Reserves

The Liberal Democrat Group made the following suggested amendments:

Excess of Expenditure over Income Per draft budget dated 12/12/14	£40,724
Corporate Services Committee:	
Add: increase in 190-4059 Other Professional Fees	£5,000
Environment & Leisure Committee:	
Add: Increase in 291-4042 equipment repairs & maintenance	£5,000
Community Services Committee:	
Less: Increase in 304-1091 Miscellaneous Income	(£2,000)
Excess of Expenditure over Income per agenda Budget dated 19/1/15	£48,724
Less: Community Services	
Remove 302-4229 Community Development- Village Agents Scheme	(£10,000)
Reduce 304-4223 Community Development Events (Revised provision £2,000)	(£10,000)
Excess of expenditure over income for year	£28,724
Financed by:	
Increase in Precept	£10,550
Use of General Reserves	£18,174
	£28,724

The vote was taken on the Liberal Democrat Group amendments which recorded 3 against and 8 in favour. Accordingly the suggested amendments were accepted.

Resolved: To approve the budget for 2015-16 subject to the amendments detailed above and to confirm a precept requirement of £783,350 for 2015/16, retaining a Band D equivalent of £175.40.

7983 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were advised that at the meeting on 8th December the following Resolution was agreed:

To identify land use issues and aspirations, which would typically be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan, and to explore alternative options of achieving them.

Following this meeting, a meeting of the Strategic Development Working Group was held to give initial consideration to land use issues and aspirations. At this meeting, held on 14th January 2015, the following Resolution was agreed:

To identify the following land use issues for subsequent consideration:

- Protection and enhancement of the town centre;
- Protection and enhancement of other retail outlets;
- Protection of existing car parks;
- Protection of existing green spaces.

Members were requested to endorse this Resolution to enable options for achieving these aspirations to begin to be explored with Central Bedfordshire Council.

Resolved: To identify the following land use issues for subsequent consideration and exploration with Central Bedfordshire Council:

- Protection and enhancement of the town centre;
- Protection and enhancement of other retail outlets;
- Protection of existing car parks;
- Protection of existing green spaces.

7984 FORMER CO-OP SITE

Members received a presentation from the Assistant Director of Housing at Central Bedfordshire Council on future considerations for the former Co-Op site, Red House Court and the Red House. Members received an extract from the Housing Revenue Account Draft Budget proposal.

In relation to this the following questions had been put to the Town Council:

1. Should circa £28m be made available in the HRA Budget to deliver comprehensive re-development of this town centre site?
2. Should the approach to re-development be across two sites (former Co Op site, Red House and Red House Court) or one site only (former Co Op site)?
3. Should the proposed development combine both residential and mixed use, defined in the report in quite open terms as a complimentary retail offer, public sector use and community hub on the basis of flexible space?

4. Should the aspiration be a landmark building and high quality development that truly improves the town centre street-scene?
5. Should the scope of proposals include an improved local heritage offer?
6. Should the timeline for this project establish the main period for collaboration and detailed input to shape the ideas to the period between June and September 15?

It was advised that the formal consultation process was anticipated to be June to September 2015.

Resolved: To welcome the proposed high quality and comprehensive redevelopment of the former co-op site, Red House Court and the Red House for a mixed use development comprising Independent Living apartments, retail and flexible community space;

To welcome commitments made by CBC officers to establish a collaborative approach with HRTC and to engage fully with all stakeholders, on the basis of a Planning for Real approach.

To highlight to CBC the following issues and to request that detailed consideration is given to them at the appropriate time in the project development process:

Car parking: the former Co-Op site included a significant level of town centre car parking. Since the closure of this car park parking opportunities are insufficient to support the town centre. The redevelopment of the site should either include town centre car parking or an alternative strategy should be developed to ensure an optimal provision of parking in the town centre;

Retail; a mixed use development is considered to be desirable for this strategic town centre site to retain the vitality and viability of the town centre. CBC are asked to ensure that proposed retail provision is complementary to the town centre so that existing businesses are not compromised but are supported and enhanced;

Community space: the Bedford Square Community Centre offers a significant community facility within the town centre and in addition the Houghton Hall Park project includes provision for a Heritage Centre including community space. CBC are urged to ensure that any further community space is complementary to these buildings to ensure suitable and desired community space provision;

Local heritage offer: with the growth agenda planned for Houghton Regis, promotion of the heritage of Houghton Regis is supported. The Houghton Hall Park project seeks to re-establish a historical landscape and provides a Heritage Centre. The creation of a heritage offer within the Red House has the potential to enhance this further but CBC are urged to ensure that the offers in both the Heritage Centre and in the Red House are complementary to and supporting of each other.

7985 HOUGHTON HALL PARK

Members were formally advised that the Houghton Hall Park, Parks for People lottery application was successful for £2,196,600 which formed 72% of the total project value of £3,033,081.

Members received a Houghton Hall Park Highlights Paper.

Resolved: To congratulate the Houghton Hall Park Board for the success of the Parks for People Lottery application.

7986 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Resolved: To defer consideration of the Safeguarding Children Policy & Code Of Behaviour.

7987 TRAINING STATEMENT OF INTENT

Resolved: To defer consideration of the Training Statement of Intent.

7988 FACILITIES WITHIN HRN1 & 2

As advised through the SDWG CBC officers were willing to receive preliminary aspirations of the Town Council in relation to facilities located within HRN1 & 2 which the Council would like to see developed and / or to have the management of.

At the SDWG meeting on 14th January 2015 the following was agreed to be recommended to Town Council. Members were requested to endorse this recommendation.

Resolved: To advise CBC of the following:

General

Education provision, Environmental safeguards and Healthcare facilities are currently outside of the remit of HRTC, however it is requested that CBC commit to enabling HRTC to have a holding watch over the progression of these facilities / services to support an informed position of HRTC within the community it serves.

Education provision

Refer to General and section within Community facilities.

Environmental safeguards

Refer to General

Transport and travel plans

Whilst it is not considered that HRTC would be a direct service provider it is requested that HRTC are a stakeholder in transport developments and transport plan formulation and to assist in information provision, sharing and promotion.

Community Facilities

It is anticipated that HRTC will continue to provide community services across the parish of Houghton Regis including the growth area.

In terms of community facilities HRTC desire to have community facility land and / or buildings transferred to it on the basis that it is a democratically elected statutory body. Delivery of premises and ultimately services is likely to be secured through partnership working with other statutory organisations and the voluntary and community sector.

HRTC consider it imperative to the successful development of new communities that community facilities and services are provided at the outset. As such HRTC request that CBC acknowledge this requirement and seek to ensure that provision is made for interim facilities whether through the use of suitable physical space such as education space (which may be underused initially) or through the establishment of community houses.

Healthcare facilities

Whilst it is not considered that HRTC would be a direct service provider it is requested that HRTC are a stakeholder in provision and would be able to assist in information provision, sharing and promotion.

Open space

This facility includes a wide variety of provision including:

- Countryside Recreation Sites (country parks, nature reserves etc)
- Urban Parks
- Large Recreation Areas Formal (including sports provision)
- Large Recreation Areas Informal
- Small Amenity Spaces
- Play Areas for Children (and young people)
- Facilities for Young People
- Allotments
- Cemeteries and Churchyards
- Access and public rights of way

HRTC desire to have transferred to it all open space provision, outside of Access and Public Rights Of Way, and facilities on the basis that it is a democratically elected statutory body,. Delivery of management and maintenance would be considered on a site by site basis being determined by the nature and purpose of each site and options would include, particularly for countryside recreation sites, partnership delivery with the voluntary and community sector.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Dated this 26th day of January 2015

Chairman

Development Management

Central Bedfordshire Council
 Priory House, Monks Walk
 Chicksands, Shefford
 Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Contact Stuart Robinson
Direct Dial 0300 300 4822
Email Stuart.Robinson@Centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Your Ref CB/15/00297/OUT
Date 14/06/2019

Good afternoon,

BIDWELL WEST – OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS – S106 AGREEMENT, SCHEDULE 1, PART 4

Schedule 1, Part 4 of the Bidwell West Section 106 Agreement identifies that several areas of open space must be managed and maintained by either the Council, the Council's nominee or a private management company.

Following these discussions, the Council has determined that the open space should be managed as follows:

Open Space	Definition	Management Organisation
Countryside Recreation Public Open Space	public open space identified in the Development Phasing Plan as Parcel AA;	CBC, with the view to nominate The Wildlife Trust
Structural Open Space	means those areas of Public Open Space which are identified on the Development Phasing Plan as parcels A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, T, U, V, Wand X;	Private Management Company (as arranged by the developer)
Play Areas	means the areas identified as Play Areas (PA1-PA5) on the Development Phasing Plan;	CBC, with the view to nominate Houghton Regis Town Council
Formal Park	means a formal park (including PA6) and associated drainage areas the design and specification of which are subject to the approval of the Council to be located on the Formal Park Site;	CBC, with the view to nominate Houghton Regis Town Council
Public Sports Pitches	means the site for the Public Sports Pitches being	CBC, with the view to nominate Houghton Regis Town Council

	an area of 6.79 hectares and identified on the Development Phasing Plan as Parcel Z;	
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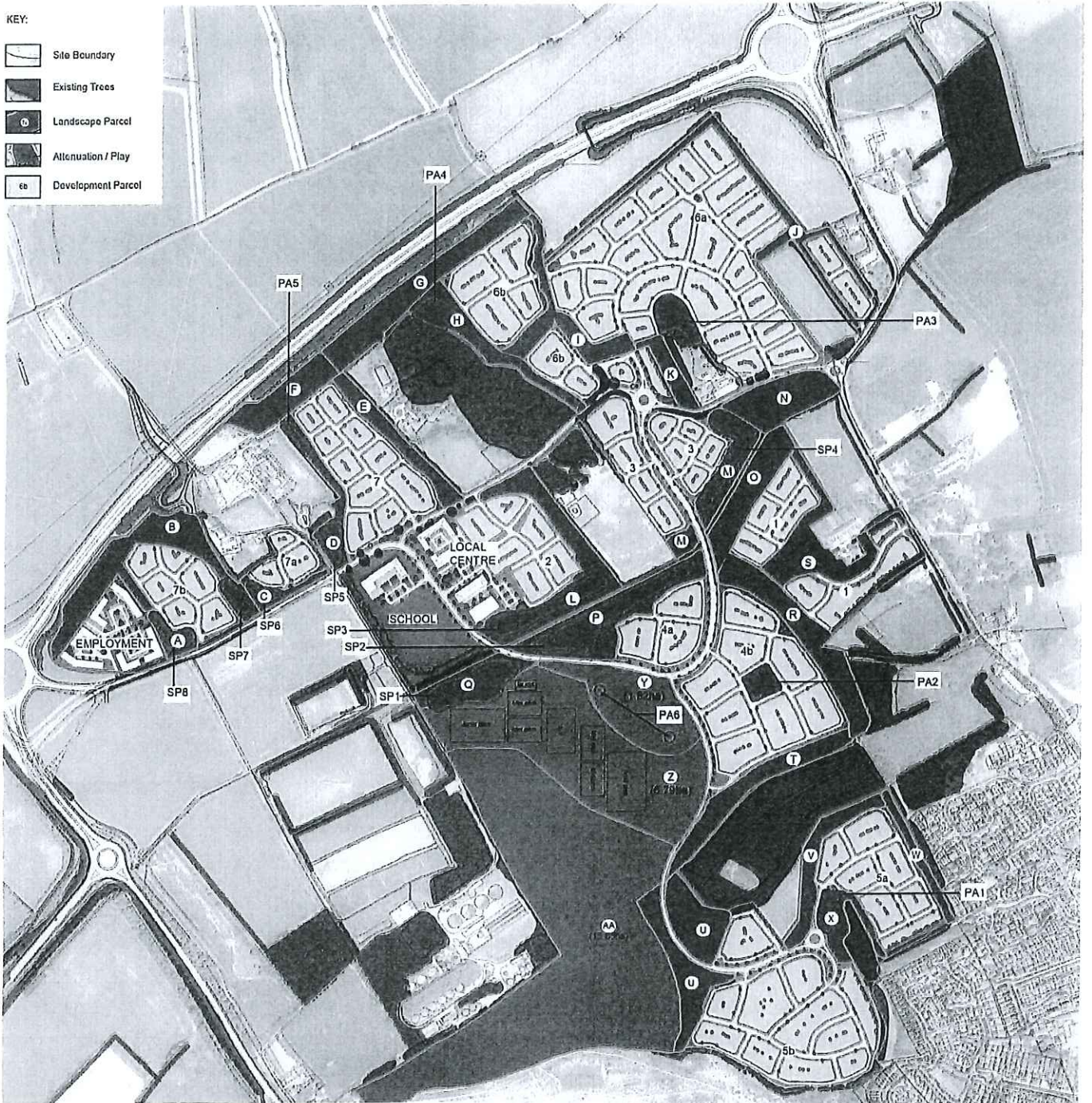
Please note that, where the land will be managed by a nominee, the land will first adopted by CBC, to then be leased to the Nominee.

Whilst I appreciate that these matters will still be subject to future management details, it would be appreciated if you could provide your broad agreement with these arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Robinson
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Delivery - Strategic Delivery Team
Regeneration and Business Directorate

- KEY:
- Site Boundary
 - Existing Trees
 - Landscape Parcel
 - Attenuation / Play
 - Development Parcel



Development Parcel / Phase	Strategic Public Open Space	Provision / Responsibility	Drainage
Phase 1	O, S	Developer	
Phase 2	L	Developer	Storage Pond 3
Phase 3	M, N	Developer	Storage Pond 4
Phase 4a	P	Developer	Storage Pond 2
Phase 4b	R, T	Developer	
Phase 5a	V, W	Developer	
Phase 5b	U, X	Developer	
Phase 6a	J	Developer	
Phase 6b	G, H, I, K	Developer	
Phase 7	D, E, F	Developer	Storage Pond 5
Phase 7a	C	Developer	Storage Pond 6
Phase 7b	A, B	Developer	Storage Pond 7
Local Centre	-		
Employment	-		Storage Pond 8
Formal Park	Y, Q		Storage Pond 1
Public Sports Pitches Site	Z		Storage Pond 1
Countryside Recreation Public Open Space	AA		
Allotments	Within Parcels B, F and U		
Play Areas	Within development parcels: 4b PA2 5a PA1 6a PA3 6b PA4 7 PA5		
Strategic Formal Park Area	Y PA6		

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Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19 Part 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with Proper Practices.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
 - The **annual internal audit report** is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2019**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both):
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2019
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the review and is able to give an opinion on the limited assurance review, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2019 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2018/19**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2018/19**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2019 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 & 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (i.e. no empty highlighted boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the Annual Governance and Accountability Return contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible prior to approving the annual governance statement and before approving the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both).
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (Section 2, page 5). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on page 5. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2018) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2019).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2019.**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', is an explanation provided?	✓	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been provided?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2019 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

Houghton Regis Town Council

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

The internal audit for 2018/19 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2017/18, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. ("Not Covered" should only be ticked where the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2017/18 AGAR)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
L. During summer 2018 this authority has correctly provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

06/06/2019

13/11/2018

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Rosanne Fleming-Nulty

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date 06/06/2019

If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

K. NOT COVERED AS COUNCIL DOES NOT MEET CRITERIA

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

We acknowledge as the members of:

Houghton Regis Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
			has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets should be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

17/06/2019

and recorded as minute reference:

9954

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

www.houghtonregis.org.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19 for

Houghton Regis Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2018 £	31 March 2019 £	
1. Balances brought forward	670,355	575,880	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	822,451	834,904	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	108,766	193,627	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	-437,847	486,087	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-25,222	37,501	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	-562,623	664,351	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	575,880	416,472	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	874,387	705,431	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	3,304,064	3,457,201	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	301,242	275,539	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.
		✓	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2019 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date 07/06/2019

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

17/06/19

as recorded in minute reference:

119/55

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2018/19

In respect of

Houghton Regis Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2019; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2018/19

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

Not applicable

3 External auditor certificate 2018/19

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2019.

*We do not certify completion because:

Not applicable

External Auditor Name

Mazars LLP, Durham, DH1 5TS

External Auditor Signature

Mazars LLP

Date

21 August 2019

*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)



Mrs C Evans
 Houghton Regis Town Council
 Council Offices
 Peel Street
 Houghton Regis
 Bedfordshire
 LU5 5EY

Direct line +44 (0)191 383 6348
 Email local.councils@mazars.co.uk

22 August 2019

Dear Mrs Evans

Completion of the audit for the year ended 31 March 2019

We have completed our audit for the year ended 31 March 2019 and I have pleasure in enclosing the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The External Auditor's Certificate and Report is given in Section 3.

If there are any significant matters arising from the audit, they are summarised in the External Auditor's certificate in Section 3. If we have identified minor scope for improvement we have recorded this on page 2 of this letter. The Council must consider these matters and decide what action is required. In most cases this will be self-evident. In some instances we have referred to further guidance available, in particular, in the publication "*Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners' Guide (England) 2010*". This can be obtained via your NALC or SLCC branch, or downloaded free of charge.

Action you are required to take

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 set out what you must do at the conclusion of the audit. In summary, you are required to:

Publish (which must include publication on the authority's website) a statement:

- that the audit has been concluded and that the statement of accounts has been published;
- of the rights of inspection conferred on local government electors by section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; and
- the address at which, and the hours during which, those rights may be exercised.
- Keep copies of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum.
- Ensure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return remains available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was first published.

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 do not specify the period the Completion Notice needs to be on the council's website but this period must be reasonable.

Mazars LLP – Salvus House - Aykley Heads - Durham - DH1 5TS
 Tel: +44 (0) 191 383 6300 – Fax: +44 (0) 191 383 6350 – www.mazars.co.uk

Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an integrated international advisory and accountancy organisation. Mazars LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC308299 and with its registered office at Tower Bridge House, St Katharine's Way, London E1W 1DD.

We are registered to carry on audit work in the UK and Ireland by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Details about our audit registration can be viewed at www.auditregister.org.uk under reference number C001139861.

VAT number: 839 8356 73





Minor scope for improvement in 2019/20

The Council has not provided training to councillors since the last update of the code of conduct. In future the Council should ensure that appropriate training is provided to councillors after significant changes to procedures and policies.

Audit fee

We enclose our fee note for the audit, which is in accordance with the audit fee scales set by SAAA, and available at <http://www.localaudits.co.uk/fees.html>

We would be grateful if you could arrange for this to be paid at the earliest opportunity.

Mazars Green Policy

Protection of the environment in which we live and operate is part of Mazars' values and principles and we consider it to be sound business practice. One of our impact areas is to reduce our consumption of paper per staff member by 5% year on year.

In order to help us to achieve this, we will only be returning a hard copy of your AGAR to the council on request. Please email us no later than **31 October 2019** if you require a hard copy of your AGAR otherwise we will securely dispose of it.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Waddell'.

Cameron Waddell
Partner



ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
Agenda Item 7

Date: 17th September 2019

Title: PROPOSAL FOR SPORTS FACILITY ENHANCEMENT AT TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND

Purpose of the Report: To invite members to discuss a potential partnership project to deliver refurbished / replacement pavilion and an all-weather pitch at Tithe Farm Recreation Ground.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To support the proposed partnership project to deliver refurbished / replacement pavilion and an all-weather pitch at Tithe Farm Recreation Ground.

2. BACKGROUND

Over recent years the town has experienced some changes, some of which have been policy lead (such as the emergence of the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan) and some have been developer lead such as the beginnings of the development with the strategic growth area. There have been numerous consultations around all these aspects which have clearly demonstrated a range of aspirations from residents and other stakeholders for new and enhanced facilities within the existing town and within the growth area.

Along with this but more specifically various discussions have taken place concerning the land at Windsor Drive and the Kingsland Campus. These have been in relation to the future use of these sites and their potential to support local aspirations. This potential project has been as a result of these discussions.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Ms L White, Policy Manager, Leisure, Libraries and Countryside, Central Bedfordshire Council will be attending the meeting to discuss this project with members.

Preliminary discussions have been held with the Bedfordshire Football Association (Beds FA) and with the Football Foundation (FF).

The project would comprise an all-weather pitch, improved car parking and a refurbishment / rebuild of the pavilion at Tithes Farm recreation ground.

The project would be delivered in partnership between HRTC, CBC and the Beds FA. The project would be funded through a FF grant, a contribution from CBC (using s106 funding) and through a contribution from HRTC. It is likely that the project costs will be in excess of £1.3m. The project would deliver a much needed facility to Houghton Regis and would serve to establish Tithes Farm recreation ground as a sports and youth hub.

A preliminary discussion has been held with Houghton Athletic as the largest club in the town. Whilst the club manager is supportive of a project to develop an all-weather pitch in Houghton Regis, he has expressed concerns over locating this facility at Tithes Farm due to security concerns and has suggested that a more suitable location may be with HRN2. Members are invited to consider.

Members are requested to consider this potential project and at this stage to determine their support for it.

The first step would be for a condition survey to be completed on the pavilion to determine its suitability for refurbishment or whether a partial or full rebuild is required. CBC have offered to reimburse HRTC for the cost of completing this condition survey.

4. COUNCIL VISION

The proposed action supports the Objectives of Council's Vision;

2. Face the challenges & maximise the opportunities of growth;
3. A more active, engaged and inclusive community;
5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- This is a major project for the town council. At this stage members are requested to confirm their support for the project. Further reports will be made to committee going forwards.

Legal Implications

- There will be legal implications as the project develops.

Financial Implications

- There will be financial implications as the project develops.

Risk Implications

- There will be risk implications as the project develops.

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

Press Contact

Should members be minded to support this project the decision relating to this agenda item should be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This is an exciting project which offers the opportunity to enhance sporting facilities within the town. It is however a significant project which would have financial and capacity implications.

7. APPENDICES

None

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Date: 7th October 2019

Title: Remembrance Day & Armistice Day Poppies and Wreaths

Purpose of the Report: To confirm the duration that Remembrance Day & Armistice Day Poppies and Wreaths remain on display.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To continue to maintain poppies and wreaths around the memorial stone until end of November each year. After this period to seek to relocate them to the Memorial Hall garden and to offer to dispose of them early in the New Year if required by the Memorial Hall.

2. BACKGROUND

The custom and practice of Houghton Regis Town Council has been to remove Armistice Day and Remembrance Day poppies and wreaths from around the memorial stone at the end of November each year.

Some feedback from residents has been received via social media which has questioned the suitability of this timeframe.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Members are advised that there is no national guidance on how long poppies and wreaths should remain around memorial features.

Feedback from the British Legion is that arguably it is more disrespectful for poppies to be left out to start to look tatty or get thrown or blown around than to remove them before this happens.

The custom and practice of HRTC has been to remove the poppies and wreaths before the Christmas period so that the period of remembrance does not overlap with the Christmas festivities. This practice also ensures that the poppies and wreaths do not get

weathered excessively. Members are also requested to note the staff resource in repositioning the wreaths after poor weather.

The council now organises a significant Armistice Day Service and a Remembrance Day Service so that the town and local organisations can pay their respects to the armed forces of today and yesterday.

Should members feel that the wreaths should be displayed for longer it may be possible to relocate them to the Memorial Hall garden.

4. COUNCIL VISION

The proposed action supports the Objectives of Council's Vision;

5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

This recommendation formalises the custom and practice of the Town council and will help to support the council in responding to future queries.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

Risk Implications

There are no risk implications.

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

Press Contact

There are no press implications.

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

National guidance on Remembrance Day and Armistice Day focuses on the days themselves. There is no national guidance on the duration that poppies and wreaths should remain at memorial features.

The British Legion suggest that it is more respectful for poppies and wreaths to be removed before they become weathered.

A transfer of the poppies and wreaths to the Memorial Hall garden, which is more sheltered, would seem appropriate should members feel that the poppies and wreaths should remain on display for a longer period than has been the custom previously.

8. APPENDICES

None

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