HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL



Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: CIIr M. S. Kennedy

Town Clerk: Clare Evans

Tel: 01582 708540

E-mail: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

29th November 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 9th December 2019 at 7.00pm.

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THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED *

Clare Evans Town Clerk

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 5 - 10

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2019.

Recommendation:

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th October

2019.

5. COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pages 11 - 58

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

Corporate Services Committee

4th September 2019 and 23rd September 2019 10063 Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy and Investment Arrangements

10065 Risk Management Strategy & Schedule

10067 Mayoral Robes Policy

Please contact the Head of Democratic Services if you would like a copy of any of these documents

re-sent to you.

Community Services Committee Environment & Leisure Committee

Planning Committee

Town Partnership Committee

2nd September and 28th October 2019

17th September

9th September, 30th September, 21st October 2019

23rd July 2019

Pages 59 - 60

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

Office Provisions Sub Committee Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee 18th June 2019 None to present

Recommendation:

To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the

recommendations contained therein as follows;

10063 Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy and

Investment Arrangements

10065 Risk Management Strategy & Schedule

10067 Mayoral Robes 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 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Pages 61 - 66

Members will find attached the approved Terms of reference for the Partnership Committee along with a covering report provided by Central Bedfordshire Council. These have been approved by Central Bedfordshire Council and have been reported to the Partnership Committee. The Council's Committee Functions and Terms of Reference will be updated accordingly.

Recommendation:

To note the updated Partnership Committee Terms of Reference.

9 VISION

Pages 67 - 78

To present to members the draft Vision 2020/2024 and to confirm next steps.

Recommendation:

To approve the draft Vision 2020/24 subject to consultation.

10 CODE OF CONDUCT - OUTOME

Pages 79 - 84

To report to council on the outcome of 2 code of conduct complaints.

Recommendation:

To note the report.

11 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Pages 85 - 126

To enable members to consider altering the councils Financial Regulations in light of revised NALC model Financial Regulations.

Recommendation:

To approve the Financial Regulations.

12 HRN2 COMMUNITY BUILDING

Pages 127-130

To enable members to consider the councils position in relation to the proposed community building within HRN2.

Recommendation:

- 1. To welcome the provision of community facilities within the HRN2 development;
- 2. To confirm that HRTC are keen to be involved in the development, delivery and management of the facility working in partnership with a third party group such as the Churches Group.

13 COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES

Pages 131 - 136

A report was provided to the Corporate Services Committee on 25th November 2019 regarding Councillor Allowances. The report was presented due to a revised Legal Topic Note (LTN 33) from NALC. Corporate Services Committee requested that the matter be raised at Town Council for consideration.

Members are advised that currently the Town Council cover travel and subsistence costs associated with Members undertaking authorised work of the Council such as attending meetings of outside bodies on which they are a nominated representative.

Historically Members have decided to not pursue a scheme of councillor allowances. As such the role of a Houghton Regis town councillor is undertaken on a completely voluntary basis. Members are reminded that the Town Council does pay a Chairman's (Mayor's) Allowance to cover civic expenses only.

Informal feedback from members indicates a preference for the payment of expenses rather that the provision of an allowance, for accountability and transparency to the electorate.

In carrying out councillor duties members may incur costs relating to travel, subsistence, dependents' carer's allowance, printing and communication.

Members are advised of the following:

Travel - members can already claim a mileage allowance for authorised council duties Subsistence - members can already claim a subsistence allowance when certain condition apply

Dependents' carer's allowance – pls see para 22 of the attached, this confirms that in England local councillors are not entitled to claim this allowance under Local Government (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

Printing – the council is able to print off any documents relating to town council business for councillors to collect

Communication – this would relate to the provision of a telephone and a tablet. These could be provided direct by the council for members to use.

Members are requested to consider if a scheme of members allowances in accordance with the Local Government (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 is required.

The alternative would be to consider a HRTC policy to capture the payment of expenses.

Recommendation:

To request that Corporate Services Committee consider and recommend to Town Council a Councillor's Expenses Policy covering travel and subsistence.

Town Council 7th October 2019 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

M S Kennedy

Town Mayor

D Abbott

J Carroll C Copleston

D Dixon-Wilkinson

Y Farrell
S Goodchild
D Jones
T McMahon
R Morgan

R Morgan A Slough S Thorne

K Wattingham T Welch

Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

2

10080 APOLOGIES

None.

10081 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10082 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

10083 MINUTES

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

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 17th and 25th June 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10084 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Corporate Services Committee

10th June 2019

10th June 2019

Members are specifically referred to the following

for approval;

Minute 9940 - Complaints Policy

Minute 9941- Freedom of Information & Model

Scheme of Publication

Minute 9943 – Volunteering Policy

Minute 9944 – Councillor e-mail addresses.

Members were advised that member training will be provided on the Complaints Policy and on the Volunteering Policy in accordance with the

External Audit suggestion.

Community Services Committee

Environment & Leisure Committee

Planning Committee

24th June 2019.

3rd June and 22nd July 2019.

28th May, 18th June, 8th July, 29th July, 19th

August 2019

Town Partnership Committee

30th April 2019.

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

Office Provisions Sub-committee

5th March 2019.

New Cemetery Sub-committee

28th May and 8th July 2019.

Personnel Sub-committee

15th April 2019.

Resolved:

To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows:

Minute 9940 – Complaints Policy

Minute 9941- Freedom of Information & Model Scheme of Publication

Minute 9943 – Volunteering Policy

10085 TOWN MAYOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Members were advised that he had raised funds for the Mayor's charity and had attended 30 events, the highlights were:

High Sherriff Tea Party Fire Service Charity Skate Park Event Houghton Helpers

10086 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 a management meeting had been attended at SORTED, Cllr Goodchild acknowledged the essential work this organisation supplies across the Central Bedfordshire and highlighted the preparation work done with supporting children to approach adulthood with confidence.

Cllr Goodchild extended an invitation to the Town Mayor to visit SORTED.

Members were advised that SORTED were looking for trustees.

Cllr McMahon advised members she had attended a Green Flag raising at Houghton Hall Park. Tithe Farm Primary School had been visited to consult with their Student School Council, which had been a valuable experience for both students and Cllr McMahon.

An invitation had been extended for the Student Council to visit the Council Offices and chamber to gain an overview of the Town Council.

Cllr Copleston advised members that she and Cllr Welch had met with School Parliament at the Chiltern School.

Cllr Copleston advised members that three meetings with Hospice at Home, one of which was their AGM, their support network is increasing, and new volunteers had been taken on.

Cllr Welch advised members that the visit to the Chiltern School had proved a positive step to building relationships with the Town Council. There had also been a visit to Thomas Whitehead.

Cllr Farrell advised members that a meeting had been attended at the Memorial Hall, the chair had resigned and for the interim, Cllr Wattingham was acting Chair until the next AGM scheduled for 22nd October 2019. Maintenance issues had been discussed, and the clerk had received an update on the car park and members were advised that a preapplication had been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council.

Cllr Thorne advised members that she had attended a Dial-a-Ride meeting. Two new Full-time drivers had been employed enabling some staff to reduce their hours to part-time. Dial-a-Ride were still in ongoing tender negotiations.

Planning training had been attended by Cllr Carroll and Cllr Thorne. Cllr Thorne advised members that she would like to undertake further training on the basics of planning applications and requested to be advised if training on this matter became available.

Cllr Abbott had attended Houghton Regis / Dunstable Best Bar None Awards. Go Houghton in Houghton Regis had won three awards. The award would be collected from the Houses of Parliament. It was requested that a letter be sent to the proprietor of Go Houghton expressing the appreciation of Houghton Regis Town Council.

10087 COUNCILLORS EMAIL ADDRESSES

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.

Resolved:

- 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.

10088 OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT OF LAND AT HRN2

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

The officer recommendation read:

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

Am amendment was proposed to read:

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

Proposed by: Cllr Abbott seconded by: Cllr Carroll

Members for: 14 Members against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Accordingly, this became the substantive motion.

Members voted on the substantive motion.

Members for: 14 Members against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Resolved: 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

10089 AUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2018/19

Members received the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for consideration.

Members noted that the external auditor had not raised any issues under Section 3.

However, in the completion letter, it suggested that the council should offer appropriate training to councillors after significant changes to procedures and policies. Members were advised that this training would be offered at Member Open Sessions as the requirement arose.

- 1. To approve and accept the Annual Return including the external auditor's 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.

10090 PROPOSAL FOR SPORTS FACILITY ENHANCEMENT AT TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND

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

Members requested clarification where Houghton Regis Town Council's contribution of the money would be found. Members were advised that a substantial grant from the Football Association would be applied for and s106 money that was already with Houghton Regis was available for cricket and football enhancement. Central Bedfordshire Council would also provide further funding.

Resolved: To note the report.

10091 CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

Members were advised that staff have requested that the Council to consider whether the office could be closed to visitors between Christmas and New Year. It was offered that telephone services would remain, and staff had offered to be on call should an emergency situation arise. The request was 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 was 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 were reminded that the town council does not provide any core front line services such as social services, housing and highways. These were provided by the principal authority.

The following opening hours were 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 December - Closed

Thursday 2nd January - Normal office hours resume

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

Resolved:

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 December - Closed

Thursday 2nd January - Normal office hours resume

10092 REMEMBRANCE DAY & ARMISTICE DAY POPPIES AND WREATHS

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

Resolved:

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.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.56pm

Dated this 9th day of December 2019

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Corporate Services Committee 4th September 2019 at 4.00pm.

Present:

Councillors:

D Jones

Chairman

(Substitution)

S Goodchild

S Thorne

T Welch

Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

0

Apologies:

Councillor:

K Wattingham

Absent:

Councillors:

D Abbott

C Copleston M S Kennedy

10030 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Wattingham, Cllr Goodchild substituted.

10031 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10032 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

10033 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Staffing Matter

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.

10034 STAFFING MATTER

In accordance with the approved Disciplinary Policy members were advised of an incidence of alleged employee misconduct. Members received a copy of the Policy. Members were advised that the steps outlined in Section 2 had been followed and completed, notably:

The Chair of Corporate Services Committee appointed an investigator to undertake an investigation (Town Clerk);

Members were advised the investigators report was completed within the specified timescale and was submitted to the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and to the Corporate Services Manager (as the Clerk was appointed as the investigator). Members received a copy of this report.

Members were advised that steps had been taken to ensure this type of incident could not recur.

Members requested clarification on what the terminology 'dealt with informally' meant. Members were advised that this would result in a note kept in the personnel records of the staff member, which would be referred to if there were to be a further incident.

Members were requested to;

- 1. consider the investigators report and the recommendations contained;
- 2. decide whether to instigate the disciplinary process and if so to appoint to the Disciplinary Sub Com and the Appeals Sub Comm.

Resolved: To agree that the part played by Staff member 1 in this incident was not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and should be dealt with informally.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.37pm

Dated this 23rd day of September 2019

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Corporate Services Committee 23rd September 2019 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillors:

D Jones

Chairman

D Abbott

C Copleston

Y Farrell

Substitute

K Wattingham

T Welch

Officers:

Debbie Marsh

Corporate Services Manager

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

0

Apologies:

Councillor:

S Thorne

Absent:

Councillor:

M S Kennedy

10055 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

The same selver

Apologies were received from Cllr Thorne, Cllr Farrell substituted.

10056 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10057 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Copleston and Councillor Wattingham declared an interest in minute number 10061 as payment to the SOS Bus were detailed.

10058 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2019 and 4th September 2019.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2019 and 4th September 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10059 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

Personnel Sub-Committee: 15th April 2019.

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings of

the 15th April 2019

10060 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.

Resolved: To note the report.

BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members were requested to receive the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements from April to July 2019.

Members requested clarification on the time limit on several non-cashed cheques dated November 2017, May 2018, October 2018 and November 2018. Members requested advice be sought from Nat West as to the length of time a cheque remained valid and to provide this advice at the next Corporate Services meeting. Members could then consider whether to draft some procedures for officer to use, should a cheque payment remain unpresented for a long period of time.

- Resolved: 1. To approve the monthly Bank and Cash Reconciliation statements from April to July 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.

10062 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members received a list of cheque payments for the period May 2019 to July 2019.

Resolved:

To receive and note the list of cheque payments made in the period May, June, and July 2019 approved for payment by the Town Clerk and two bank signatories.

10063 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS, INVESTMENT STRATEGY & INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENTS

In accordance with the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations 8.4, this Committee was required to annually review the Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

Members were advised that the investment strategy complied with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 and being effective from 1st April 2018, no further guidance had been issued.

Members queried the update of the bank mandate and agreed that the wording under paragraph 1.1 (ii) be amended to read 'When a new Council comes into Office, bank mandates will be updated within 3 months, or as soon as practicable hereafter'.

797 F. G. F. F. C. S. S.

Resolved:

To recommend to Town Council that the Banking Arrangements, and the Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements be approved with a strategy the agreed amendment.

10064 INVESTMENT REPORT

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.

Resolved: To reinvest in both the long term and short-term investment accounts.

10065 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & SCHEDULE

In accordance with Financial Regulation 17.1, the council was responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk prepared, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activates of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements would be reviewed by the council at least annually.

Members received a copy of the Risk Management Strategy and Schedule.

Members were reminded, in association with income generation, that general reserves were around the minimum level.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the HRTC Risk Management Strategy & Schedule be approved.

10066 REVIEW OF CONTRACTS - INTERIM REPORT

In accordance with the approved Committee Functions and Terms of Reference the Corporate Services Committee was required to annually review existing contracts. Whilst this committee would ordinarily be due to review existing contracts in November, it was thought that members might like to have sight of an updated list due to recent appointments. In addition to this and in support of the Town Council operating in an open and transparent way, an additional column had been included to allow for the input of minute numbers.

Contract	Minute Number	Period	Annual Expenditure	Signed
IT Support & Hosting	9069	Rolling contract	£1,800	3rd October 2017
Website hosting		Annual fee.	£150	

DCK Accounting		Annual arrangement.	£1,000	
Operation Hana	9543	Annual arrangement. 1st October 2018 to 30 th September 2019 – one month's termination notice	£33,000	19 th September 2018
Internal Audit	9690	Annual arrangement	£750 based on 3 days	
Human resources advisor	9942	1 st September 2019 for an initial 12- month period	£2,451.60	24 th June 2019
External audit		5 years from 2017/18 until 2021/22	£2,000	Appointed via Regulation 3 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.
Town centre toilets	6846	1st July 2019 – 30th June 2021 Ongoing	£18,360 plus consumables per annum	13 th May 2019
Insurance	9829	Long term agreement until 31st May 2022	£12,210 plus additional premiums relating to any changes in circumstance.	13 th May 2019
Payroll		Ongoing Annual arrangement	£750	
Photocopier	9695	2018 to 2023	£94 with copying charges	21st December 2018
Xmas lights	9782	April 2019 to 31st March 2024	£10,500	Letter of engagement
Employee Assistance	8835	5 years from 1 st March 2017 – 28 th February 2022	£425	8 th February 2017
Groundwork	9776	1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020.	£18,150	10 th July 2019

Resolved: To note the report.

10067 REPORT ON MAYORAL ROBES

At the Corporate Services Committee meeting held on the 4th March 2019 Members received a report and draft policy on the wearing of ceremonial robes.

Members were concerned that the wording within the policy could be deemed as discriminatory and requested that the item be deferred until clarification on this matter was sought.

Advice was sought from the Town Councils Human Resources consultant. They reported that in order for something to be viewed as discriminatory (either directly or indirectly), the Equality Act 2010 highlights 9 protected characteristics:

- 1. Age
- 2. Gender
- 3. Race
- 4. Disability
- 5. Religion
- 6. Pregnancy and maternity
- 7. Sexual orientation
- 8. Gender reassignment
- 9. Marriage and civil partnership

Whilst this policy does not contravene any of the 9 protected characteristics, Members were advised that based on the Muslim faith, it was impermissible for males to wear silk or real gold.

Therefore, if ever there was a requirement for a Muslim male to wear these ceremonial robes then they could technically object if either of these materials were used.

An amendment was proposed to remove the following footnote from page two of the policy 'The mayor may seek dispensation from wearing these robes from the Clerk should there be a personal reason' as it was now superfluous.

Members for: 4

Members against: 1

Abstentions: 1

Resolved:

To recommend to Town Council that the Ceremonial Robes Policy be approved with the agreed amendment.

10068 REVIEW OF VISION - CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members received a review of the initiatives under this committee.

Resolved:

To note the report.

10069 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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.

10070 STAFF ISSUE

At the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on the 15th April 2019 Members received and discussed a confidential report regarding a staff issue. At this meeting Members resolved 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.

Members discussed ongoing issues and the options to move this matter forwards.

Members fully supported the options outlined in the report however requested that legal advice be sought in order to endorse the advice already received. Members agreed that the cost for this, to a limit of £2,000, be taken from budget heading 190-4059 (Central Services - Other Professional Fees). Members were advised this budget heading would need to be checked against any outstanding commitments before being used.

Members requested that once legal advice had been obtained that special meeting of the committee be called.

Resolved:

To obtain legal advice in order to support the options outlined in the report and to use budget heading 190-4059 (Central Services - Other Professional Fees) to a limit of £2,000, to fund this advice.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm

Dated this 25th day of November 2019

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Community Services Committee 2nd September 2019 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

K Wattingham

Chairman

J Carroll

Y Farrell S Goodchild T McMahon

A Slough

Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

1

Apologies:

C Copleston

10016 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Copleston.

10017 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10018 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

10019 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2019.

Resolved:

To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 24th June 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10020 REPORT FROM GROUNDWORK

David Ramsay was in attendance at the meeting to update members on the youth work Groundwork had completed in Houghton Regis on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that a workshop had been held at All Saints School, focussed on year 8. Since this session, the youth provision attendees had been polite and well mannered.

Members were advised that session attendance numbers were historically sporadic during the summer school closure but this summer had reached 24 / 25 on some days with a lot of positive involvement.

Members were advised that there had been a negative incident which had required police involvement, subsequently a ban had been placed on the young person involved, however support for the young person had also been offered.

Members were advised that the Central Bedfordshire Council Youth Provision budget for Groundwork had been reduced by 25%, members were advised that attempts were being made to retain as much consistency as practicable within the reduced budget.

Members suggested that members of the police force visit the youth provision to develop and build positive relationships within the community.

10021 HRTC YOUTH SERVICES

David Ramsay was in attendance at the meeting to update members on the youth work Groundwork had completed in Houghton Regis on behalf of HRTC in delivering the pop-up youth cafes.

Members were advised that the figures were at their best and had been in the range of 20+ with a high of 28 young people which created a good mix of different characters. Several planned activities had been enjoyed such as DJ Craig, a visit from Wrigglies and a trip to Pizza Hut.

It was suggested that if there were any funding available, the pavilion would benefit from refurbishment, particularly the kitchen which could be used for more community involvement i.e. taster sessions and cooking demonstrations.

Members suggested that grants were sought by Groundwork to aid the youth programme.

Resolved: To note the report.

10022 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Events Working Group
Combating Crime Working Group

5th June and 10th July 2019. 22nd May, 19th June and 17th July 2019.

Resolved:

To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows;

To approve that the council seek to extend the Operation Hana contract with Bedfordshire Police on the same basis until 31st

March 2020.

10023 BUDGET REVIEW

Members received a report on the income and expenditure for Community Services Committee to date.

Members discussed the benefit of including predicted sponsorship monies within the budget, or whether it should be omitted.

Members discussed whether it be pertinent to seek sponsorship from the new developers on site. Members were advised it would more appropriate for sponsorship to be sought in preparation for the start of the new financial year as the larger events held during the first half of the financial year would offer better advertising opportunities for potential sponsors.

Resolved: To note the report.

10024 VISION UPDATE

Members received a review of the initiatives under this committee.

Members discussed the option of removing items which had not been achieved, members agreed that these remain on the document as it was beneficial to see all items both achieved and unattained.

10025 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Members received a report from the Community Development Officer detailing work completed since the last meeting.

Members were advised that a grant of £5,000 had been awarded for the anti-knife crime campaign.

Members were advised that due to budget cuts for the youth provision, the external support for the Youth Council may change. An alternative member of staff/volunteer would need to be arranged.

Members were advised that attendance at the summer playscheme had been excellent, with only four places unattended over all sessions.

Members were advised of preliminary feedback on the family day trip to Southend had been positive. It was suggested that three family day trips be organised, one at Easter, one in the summer and one in the October half term.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the report;
- 2. To request a report on options available regarding support to the Youth Council given the change in the commissioned contract between Central Bedfordshire Council and Groundwork.
- 3. To note the potential for the Anti Knife Crime Knife Campaign to be held.
- 4. In relation to the 2020 holiday activities to:
 - deliver the summer playscheme in the same format that it has been delivered this year;
 - to deliver 3 family day trips, one at Easter, one in the summer and one in the October half term.

10026 TOWN GUIDE

Members were advised that the current edition of the Town Guide expired in 2019.

Members were advised that historically the Guide had included a number of pages of editorial along with a number of pages of advertising. An external company had coordinated and sold the advertising space and had developed and printed the guide. The

Council had provided the editorial pages and photographs. Sufficient copies had been produced which enabled a copy to be delivered to each household plus a surplus to be used at events and ad-hoc.

There had been a cost to the council of production of £1000 as the publication had been largely funded through advertising. The advertising had been sold on the basis that a copy was delivered to each household.

A budget was requested for 2019/20 but ultimately was not agreed. It had not been possible to identify a surplus budget which could be made available in 2019/20. Therefore, members were requested to consider options around:

- Whether the council should continue to produce a guide
- Whether the current format is the right format, notably if advertising is included
- How the guide was circulated notably distributed to each house, key locations

Resolved: To seek to complete a town guide on the same basis in 2020/21.

10027 CCTV COSTS

Members were advised that the air time and warranty for the 3 redeployable cameras expired in September 2019.

A quote had been received. For a 2-year service bundle for all 3 cameras, the cost was £4500 (equating to £500 per year per camera) and for a 3-year service bundle the cost was £5400 (equating to £600 per year per camera). The costs were payable in full and upfront. The cost was higher per camera for a 3-year bundle due to the increase liability of the camera being nearer the end of its economic lifespan.

Members were advised that the cameras were purchased as follows: 2 in 2015 and 1 in 2016. The lifespan of a camera was up to 7 years. As such it was suggested that the 3-year service bundle be purchased and that the council may need to consider replacing all cameras at the end of this period.

Resolved: To purchase a 3-year service bundle at a cost of £5400.

10029 BULK WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACT

Members were advised that the previous council administration sought to establish an agreement with CBC to enable HRTC to subsidise bulk waste collections in the parish to reduce bulk waste in properties and incidences of fly tipping. The report presented a draft Service Level Agreement for consideration.

Members queried the process and were advised that residents would contact Houghton Regis Town Council for a reference number, they would then give this reference number to Central Bedfordshire Council and arrange their collection. Members suggested that a monitoring system be put in place to prevent abuse of the system.

Resolved: To agree the Service Level Agreement and for the project for the Subsidy of Bulk Waste Collections commence as soon as practicable.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.18pm

Dated this 28th day of October 2019

Chairman

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Community Services Committee 28th October 2019 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

K Wattingham

Chairman

J Carroll

C Copleston Y Farrell S Goodchild T McMahon

A Slough

Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Public:

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10103 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

10104 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10105 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Wattingham advised members that he was Chair of the Memorial Hall, Cllr Wattingham left the room during discussion and requested that the Vice Chair, Cllr Copleston, Chair the meeting for the duration of the discussion.

Cllr McMahon advised members that she was on the committee for the Houghton Regis Heritage Society, Cllr McMahon left the room during the discussion.

Cllr Goodchild reminded members that she was the Town Council representative for SORTED, Cllr also advised that she was a member of Houghton Regis Heritage Society and the Singing Café, Cllr Goodchild left the room during those discussions.

10106 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2019.

Resolved:

To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 2nd September 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10107 KEY PARTNERS - ANNUAL REVIEW OF EXISTING

Budget 2020/21

Members were advised that this meeting was held ahead of the budget setting process. Although at an early officer stage of budget considerations it was thought that the council may face budget pressures due to the need to meet committed revenue

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expenses and the aspirations of the council to deliver on the emerging council plan, the Vision. As such it was suggested that members may like to consider, ahead of considering specific grant applications, a desirable budget level to restrict Key Partner grants to. During 2016-2020 Key Partner Grants totalled £25,251. It was suggested that the budget attributable to Key Partner grants be capped at £15,000.

After discussion, it was agreed to award Key Partners 50% of the amount requested.

Key Partner	Amount Requested	Amount of Grant
Dunstable & District CA	£4,000	£2,000
SORTED	£4,000	£2,000
Keech Hospice Care	£5,000	£2,500
Community Action Bedfordshire	£5,000	£2,500
South Beds Dial A Ride	£2,251	£1,125.50
Houghton Regis Memorial Hall	£4,000	£2,000
Full House Theatre	£3,000	£1,500
Houghton Regis Heritage Society	£1,000	£500

Resolved:

- To approve Key Partner status at a maximum level of £15,000 in total.
- To approve the Key Partner Grants as above.

10108 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Large Capital Grant

Members were advised that the following applications had been received for a large capital grant.

Large capital grants were awarded within the financial year in which they were received and were budgeted for the next financial year, as such applicants receive the funding in the April of the following financial year.

Applicant	Amount of grant	
Singing Café	£1,000	
Magpas Air Ambulance	£962	

Small Capital Grants

Members were advised that a small project grant had been awarded:

Applicant	Total proj cost	ect Amount requested	Brief description
Recycled Teenagers	£640.20	£200.00	Day trip to Wrest Park

Members were advised that £2,601 remained in the Small Grant Fund. Members received the following Grant Applications:



Applicant	Total project cost	Amount requested	Brief description
Singing Café	£6,050	£500	Dementia Support through interactive singing
Parkside 50's Club	£1,400	£500	Theatre trip
Networking at Dunstable	£13,400	£500	Promotion for Dunstable and Houghton Regis Business and Community Awards

Resolved:

To approve the Small Capital Grant Applications as detailed.

End of Award Report

In accordance with the Grant Scheme Members received an End of Award Report from the following group:

Recycled Teenagers

Resolved:

To note the End of Award Report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Dated this 20th day of February 2020

Chairman

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Environment & Leisure Committee Tuesday 17th September at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

T McMahon

Chairman

J Carroll

Substitute

D Dixon-Wilkinson

Y Farrell S Goodchild R Morgan A Slough

Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Tony Luff

Head of Grounds Operations

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

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Apologies:

Councillors:

D Abbott

10046 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Abbott, (Cllr Carroll substituted).

10047 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked if Tithe Farm Pavilion was being looked at for new football pitches, as he had concerns over light pollution, parking and sound disturbances. He suggested that HRN2 should be considered a better option to address these concerns and it would help keep traffic away from the town centre.

It was advised that this item had not been presented to council previously, however, preliminary talks had been underway between Houghton Regis Town Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Beds Football Association and the Football Foundation regarding this project.

10048 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

10049 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June and 22nd July 2019.

Resolved:

To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 3rd June and 22nd July 2019 and for these to be

signed by the Chairman.

10050 BUDGET REVIEW

Members received the income and expenditure report for Environment & Leisure Committee to date.

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Members requested clarification on procedures of the budget; who oversees and would advise on any predicted overspends.

Members were advised that issues/concerns would be raised within the accompanying report.

Resolved: To note the report.

10051 VISION UPDATE

Members received a review of the initiatives under this committee.

Members were advised that the cemetery renovation work was underway.

Members agreed that the accomplishments of the Vision had positively impacted the town.

Resolved: To note the report.

10052 TITHE FARM PAVILION AND RECREATION GROUND

Ms L White, Policy Manager, Leisure, Libraries and Countryside, Central Bedfordshire Council was in attendance to the discuss a potential partnership project with members.

Members were advised Houghton Regis needed two all weather football pitches to meet the needs of the current town. The pavilion at Tithe Farm Recreation ground had been visited by members and it was agreed that it was potentially a good site and worthy of further exploration. Further investigation of this site would be required for feasibility.

Members were advised that the work would require match funding, it was suggested that s106 money could be used to subsidise the match funding cost.

Members agreed that this project would benefit current residents and would improve facilities in the Tithe Farm area of the town.

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

10053 VILLAGE GREEN PAVILION ALTERATIONS

Members were advised of feedback received on the Village Green Pavilion and to discuss the suitability of having a feasibility study completed.

Members thanked the Head of Grounds Operations for the tour of buildings offered to councillors and advised that it had been a valuable visit.

Members discussed the availability of additional space within the building by the redesign of internal areas and relocating storage space to Tithe Farm Pavilion. Members were advised that it was hoped that both this and the Tithe Farm Pavilion project could run concurrently. Members agreed that the two projects would provide huge benefits to the community.

Resolved:

- 1. To progress the development of alterations to the Village Green once there is more certainty around the Tithe Farm recreation ground project;
- 2. To improve ancillary facilities in the kitchen in the short term, including improved cooking facilities, urn, extractor system, external water source.

10054 PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORT

Members were advised of the outcome of the annual independent play area inspection report.

Members were advised that signage had not been provided by Central Bedfordshire Council, Houghton Regis Town Council had supplied the necessary signs which had been put in place along the public highway.

Members advised of their disappointment that Central Bedfordshire Council had not supplied the relevant signs for the highway.

Resolved: To accept the low level risks as identified.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.02pm

Dated this 18th day of November 2019

Chairman

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Houghton Regis Town Council Planning Committee 9th September 2019 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

D Dixon-Wilkinson

Chairman

J Carroll

S Goodchild

Substitute

M S Kennedy

R Morgan

Substitute

S Thorne T Welch

Officers:

Debbie Marsh

Corporate Services Manager

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

2

Apologies:

Councillors:

K Wattingham

D Jones

Also present:

Councillors:

T McMahon

10035 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones (Cllr Goodchild substituted) and Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Morgan substituted).

10036 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

10037 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she had met with Optimus on two previous occasions during the previous term of office. Accordingly, she took no part in the discussion or vote.

Cllr Welch and Cllr Goodchild reminded members that they were on the Houghton Regis North Stakeholder Committee. Accordingly, they took no part in the discussion or vote.

10038 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 19th August 2019 for consideration.

Councillor McMahon advised that some comments raised in response to planning application CB/19/02130/FULL, The Gates Land East of Bedford Road Bidwell had not been included in the body of the objections to Central Bedfordshire Council and requested they be noted. In particular reference to be noted in respect of the additional impact to the environment, specifically; additional road usage, additional vehicle usage, the air quality, water consumption, wide-ranging strain on general resources and an overall adverse effect on the town.

Resolved

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th August 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10039 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/18/04471/FULL

48 new residential units

Land at Oakwell Park, Thorn Road, LU5 6JH

For: Optimus Consulting Ltd

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

Members were advised that the previous planning application was considered by the planning committee at the meeting held on the 7th January 2019 at which members objected to the application.

Comments: The Town Council objects to the revised proposals for the following reasons:

The revised layout makes a minor adjustment by reducing the overall number of houses by two, but this does not answer the major concerns over the setting of the heritage assets on the site.

- The scheme seeks to exploit the heritage asset and its setting rather than enhancing it.
- Overdevelopment.
- Out of keeping with the listed building and scheduled monument.
- Harmful to the setting of the listed building and scheduled monument.
- Contrary to the provisions of the NPPF regarding heritage.

The scheme requires radical reconsideration of the design approach, omitting the new housing to the north of Oakwell Park House, without this change the scheme should be refused.

Description

The application first submitted in November 2018, shows two groups of houses either side of Oakwell Park House. The site is off Thorn Road and currently contains Oakwell Park House, listed grade II and an area of woodland immediately to the east. Within the woodland is a scheduled ancient monument known as Thorn Spring and contains the remains of a medieval moated site. The scheme involves the retention of the main house as a residence, the demolition of some outbuildings, new vehicular access arrangements and the two groups of new dwellings served by a long cul-de-sac.

The initial submission was for a total of 50 dwellings, detached dwellings at the northern end, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and flats at the southern end.

The Town Council commented on the scheme as follows: Whilst the Town Council did not object to the layout, style of residential units or access it did object to this application on the following grounds:

The scheme seeks to exploit the heritage asset and its setting rather than enhancing it.

Overdevelopment.

Out of keeping with the listed building and scheduled monument.

Harmful to the setting of the listed building and scheduled monument.

Contrary to the provisions of the NPPF regarding heritage.

Requires radical reconsideration of the design approach. Councillors requested this application be called in.

A revised layout has been submitted for 48 dwellings, omitting the two proposed dwellings in the northern group, closest to Oakwell House Park, thereby increasing slightly the remaining 'grounds' of the House on this side.

Policy

The proposed Central Beds Local Plan is waiting to be progressed after the recent Examination of the submission version. The current adopted plan is the South Beds Plan 2009 which shows this area as green belt. However, the approval in 2012 of the Houghton Regis North Framework for extensive mixed development from the former A5 to the M1 effectively sets the policy position for this area.

In relation to the current proposal the Framework shows residential development on the southern part of the site only. The land to the north of Oakwell House is shown as part of the network of green spaces within the overall Framework.

National Planning Policy Framework: the NPPF is broadly supportive of residential development but places considerable weight on the preservation of heritage and related assets.

Conclusion: The combination of the listed Oakwell Park House and the ancient monument create one of the main heritage assets within the parish. The house and the grounds around it recall its status as a country house in a rural setting. The ancient monument although wooded, retains its medieval origins and layout. The new housing particularly to the north of the house will erode the

character of these heritage features and affect the setting particularly of the listed building. Unless the scheme can be further amended to leave the area north of the house un-developed, the scheme should be refused.

CB/19/02244/REG3

Single storey side extension 2 Manor Park, LU5 5BX For: Central Bedfordshire Council

Comments: No objections

CB/19/01925/FULL

Proposed extension to existing dwelling to have a mixed-use home by adding an ancillary use cattery in the garden. The Orchard, Bedford Road, LU5 6JJ

For: A Kavanagh

Comments: Whilst the Town Council had no objection to the proposed development it does have major concerns in regard to highway safety. Although the description on the application states that entry times would be staggered to only allow one car in at a time, Members felt that this would not ensure highway safety in an area where the national speed limit applies. The Town Council respectfully requests that Central Bedfordshire Highways consider this application for the reasons outlined above.

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

CB/19/04616/FULL

Garage conversion/extension

42 Westminster Gardens, LU5 5RT

10040 LOCAL PLAN

No substantive update to report.

Resolved: To note the information.

10041 PLANNING TRAINING

Members were informed that Central Bedfordshire Council had invited the Town Council to nominate 2 representatives to attend a training session about the planning system. Those nominated could attend separate sessions in order to suit their availability. The dates were:

Thursday 19th September – Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford 6-9pm Wednesday 25th September - Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford 6-9pm Monday 30th September - Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford 6-9pm

The objectives of the training were:

- To familiarise participants with the overall framework of the planning system and where development management fits into this
- To explain the basic components of the development management process and where Parish/Town Councils fit in
- To explain some key concepts of the development management decisionmaking process, to enable Town/Parish Councils to relate to these effectively
- To clarify the potential for, and the limitations of, Town/Parish Council input.
- To explain how CBC secures and administers S106 monies and where you could find information for your areas.

Cllr Carroll and Cllr Thorne requested to be put forward for this training.

Resolved: To nominate two members of the planning committee to attend planning training as arranged by Central Bedfordshire Council.

10042 LAND ADJACENT TO ST THOMAS MEETING HOUSE, WINDSOR DRIVE – CB/18/0464/REG3

Members were advised that the application for the proposed development on land adjacent to St Thomas Meeting House, Windsor Drive was due to be presented to the Development Management Committee on the 11th September 2019. Members were requested to propose a representative to address the committee. Members received The Town Councils objection for information.

Members were advised that there would be members of public in attendance and a representative of All Saints Parish Church would be in attendance to speak on behalf of the church. Cllr Carroll advised members that he would be available to attend.

Resolved: To confirm, to Central Bedfordshire Council, the name and contact details of the person prepared to address the Development Management Committee at its meeting to be held on the 11th September 2019, on the proposed planning application on land adjacent to St Thomas Meeting House, Windsor Drive.

10043 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were advised that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group were scheduled to meet on the 4th September 2019. A verbal update would be provided at the meeting.

Members were informed that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at their meeting held on the 4th September 2019 invited a representative from Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity to discuss with the group the ways in which BRCC could support the group in order to comply with the regulation 14 consultation. Although the draft neighbourhood plan along with the executive summary needed some fine tuning, the meeting was very positive with dates for the consultation being proposed. It was proposed that the neighbourhood plan consultation would start on the 4th November 2019 and end on the 16th December 2019. It was suggested that the drop in sessions take place between the 11th – 22nd November.

Resolved:

To note the information

10044 HOUGHTON REGIS NORTH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Members received minutes from the Houghton Regis North Stakeholder Group meeting held on the 28th August 2019.

It was requested that it be looked into to why an invitation to this meeting had not been received by the Houghton Regis Town Council Committee Member of the HRN1 Stakeholder Group Committee.

Resolved:

To note the information

10045 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN- UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link – No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – A safety audit from Central Bedfordshire Council was awaited. Members expressed their disappointment that the safety audit had not been completed within the original timeframe. It was requested that a letter be written to the South West Bedfordshire MP regarding safety concerns of this junction.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Linmere - No substantive update to report.

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 8.04pm

Dated this 30th day of September 2019

Chairman

Houghton Regis Town Council Planning Committee 30th September 2019 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

D Dixon-Wilkinson

Chairman

J Carroll D Jones

M S Kennedy S Thorne K Wattingham

Officers:

Debbie Marsh

Corporate Services Manager

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

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Apologies:

Councillor:

T Welch

Also present:

Councillor:

S Goodchild

10071 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Welch.

10072 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public addressed the committee and raised concerns in regard to planning application CB/19/02584/FULL Sewell Manor Lodge, Sewell Lane, Sewell.

Concerns raised:

- Conservation land
- Greenbelt land
- On a Quaker burial site
- Land of historical value
- Access only via a soft track
- Building would be too high
- Septic tank on high ground, which would result in any overflow affecting the housing on lower ground
- Security lights would be activated by animals and thereby cause light pollution
- Ownership of the land that the access is proposed is in question
- Similar previous application was rejected

Members advised the members of the public that their concerns would be passed on to Central Bedfordshire Council planning department and thanked them for attending.

10073 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

10074 MINUTES

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The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9th September 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10075 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/02550/FULL

Two storey rear extension

Kirtlington, Cumberland Street, LU5 5BW

For: Mr R Brammer

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02584/FULL

Erection of one 3 bedroom dwelling

Sewell Manor Lodge, Sewell Lane, Sewell, LU6 1RP#

For: Mr J Beacon

Members discussed this application at length and agreed that, whilst there had been some minor amendments made, this application had not materially changed from the previous one and therefore the Town Councils reasons for objecting remained the same.

The Town Council places great value on the setting and nature of the buildings in Sewell. The policy package recognises the special quality of this hamlet. The scattered collection of homes and farm buildings was designated as a conservation area in the 1990s, within the green belt and adjoins the Chilterns AONB. The significant open spaces, trees and landscaping which separates the buildings are all part of the area's character.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) sets out the weight attached to protecting the green belt, that development would be inappropriate and harmful to the openness of the green belt.

The justification put forward to support the application describes historic farm cottages replaced by new dwellings in the 1960s. The site of the proposed dwelling does not reflect the location of any of the former buildings, neither is there any comparison of the sizes - from details provided it appears that the dwellings built in the 1960s were far bigger than the cottages they replaced.

Therefore, the Town Council raises the strongest possible objections to the application for the following reasons:

The proposal represents significant damage to the openness of this part of the green belt, constitutes inappropriate development within the meanings of the National Planning Policy Framework, fails to demonstrate the very special circumstances required for development and does not match any of the exceptions set out in para. 145 of the NPPF.

The proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the historic character and setting of the hamlet of Sewell and its conservation area.

The development if approved would represent a significant precedent, seeking to justify development damaging to the quality of the area on the basis of historical structures in the vicinity which were removed many decades previously.

The access is a narrow, rural lane below modern standards and the proposed development represents unacceptable intensification of this access.

The vehicles required during construction would have a significant detrimental impact on the access by virtue of its narrowness and junction onto Watling Street.

The proposed development is in an area of a Quaker burial site. As was the practice in the 1700's & 1800's, graves were not marked and although the Town Council has obtained a list of names of those buried on the site during this time, there is no plan of those interred and therefore development of this site poses a great risk of disturbing those remains.

The applicant claims that the land was previously developed land under the Town and Country Planning Act 1948, however, it is unreasonable to extend the 1948 Act for this application as this act has been superseded and has new criteria.

The Town Council has concerns that the track leading to the proposed development site is not in the applicant's ownership.

Councillors requested this application be called in.

CB/19/02840/FULL Erection of electric substation and hardstanding

Land to North of Thorn Road, Bidwell

For: Bidwell West (Works) Ltd

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02838/FULL

Erection of electric substation and hardstanding

Thorn Farm, Thorngreen Farm Road,

For: Bidwell West (Works) Ltd

Comments: No objections

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

10076 LOCAL PLAN

No substantive update to report.

Resolved: To note the information.

10077 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members were advised that it had been noted that although the draft plan had been amended due to grammatical errors. Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had agreed that further errors needed to be rectified before the draft plan could be put out for consultation. Members noted that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were due to meet on Wednesday 2nd October 2019 in order to discuss consultation dates and duties.

Members were also advised that a meeting had been arranged by Central Bedfordshire Council to meet with the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Martin Small, the Town Councils retained planning consultant for an informal discussion about the plan, prior to submitting their response at the Regulation 14 consultation stage.

Resolved: To note the information.

10078 PLANNING TRAINING

At the planning meeting held on the 9th September 2019, Members nominated Councillor J Carroll and Councillor S Thorne to attend a planning training session on the 19th September 2019, organised by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Councillor Carroll and Councillor Thorne were invited to provide a verbal report on this training to the committee.

Cllr Thorne advised members that the content had not been as rudimentary as she had expected and had focussed heavily on policies.

Cllr Thorne requested a list of abbreviations and acronyms from the Corporate Services Manager to aid her understanding of planning terminologies.

Cllr Carroll advised members that he had gained knowledge of the ability to approach members of the DMC regarding planning applications. A PowerPoint presentation had been included on the National Planning Policy, he advised that a copy of the slides would be supplied in due course. Cllr Carroll also provided a flow chart leaflet, provided at the event, on s106 monies in Central Bedfordshire. The Chair requested that a copy of this leaflet be circulated to all members of the committee via email.

Resolved: To note the information

10079 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link - No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link – Members are advised that a reply had been received from Mr Andrew Selous, MP for South West Bedfordshire following the Town Council letter of concern in regard to road safety.

The reply stated that following receipt of the Town Council letter, the matter had been immediately been raised with Highways England and that the Town Council would be provided with an update once received.

All Saints View – No substantive update to report.

Linmere – No substantive update to report.

Bidwell West – No substantive update to report.

Kingsland – Members were advised that a report being presented at the Executive Meeting at Central Bedfordshire Council, on the 8th October 2019, had information relating to plans for the Kingsland site. This report could be viewed online on Central Bedfordshire Councils website.

Windsor Drive – Members were advised that Windsor Drive had been listed as an Asset of Community Value for the duration of five years, members requested confirmation of the end date. The Corporate Services Manager was to look into this and advise members in due course.

Section 106 Monies – Members were advised that the most recent s106 report for the parish was on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.

Resolved: To note the information

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.42pm

Dated this 21st day of October 2019

Chairman

Houghton Regis Town Council Planning Committee 21st October 2019 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors:

D Dixon-Wilkinson

Chairman

J Carroll
D Jones
S Thorne

K Wattingham
T Welch

Officers:

Debbie Marsh

Corporate Services Manager

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

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Also present:

Councillor:

S Goodchild

Absent:

Councillor:

M S Kennedy

10093 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

10094 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Residents of Park Avenue addressed the committee in regard to CB/19/02056/FULL Greenside, 134 High Street. Amendments to the proposed plans had been received following comments from Central Bedfordshire Councils Highways officer.

The concerns raised were:

- That the footprint of the building has not changed even though one bedroom had been removed from the plans;
- That there is a breathing pipe located adjacent to the property which raised concerns of contamination;
- That vehicles, regardless of size, would not be able to access the proposed property without having to travel over a number of residents' land;
- That the newly proposed bin collection point was still not suitable and would lead to reduced visibility for all highway users.

Members thanked those attending and advised that the Town Council was only being requested to consider the revised plans in connection with the comments raised by Highways. Members confirmed that the Town Councils previous comments still stood.

Sally Gray addressed the Committee in respect of planning application CB/19/03232/RM Parcels 5a and 5b Bidwell West.

Members were advised that on previous plans a structure had been included which was to support a proposed Visitors Centre. This was now omitted. This was a concern, as should a Visitor Centre be realised in the future, now was the time to forward plan with plans to also include road access.

The proposed site appeared to consider itself in isolation and was ignorant of its close proximity to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Concern was also raised in that building materials could be discarded into the Chalk Pit, as the development was so close to its edge.

Members were informed that due to the lack of proposed landscaping or management to the boundary of the permissive path, cyclists and walkers, could be put in danger.

The Chalk Pit is of great importance to wildlife and any disturbance of their habitat or the opportunity to move around the site, via green corridors, should be kept to the minimum.

Members advised that this application would be considered fully by committee at the next planning meeting to be held on the 11th November 2019.

10095 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Dixon-Wilkinson declared a personal interest in planning application CB/19/03158/FULL Treow House as the applicant was known to him.

10096 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 30th September 2019 for consideration.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

10097 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Non - Delegated

CB/19/02784/FULL

Single storey front extension 10 Fenwick Road, LU5 5RP For: Mrs S Mhlanga

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02870/RM

Reserved Matters: Following Outline CB/15/00297/OUT (1850 dwellings and mixed class use) matters for access, landscaping, layout and scale for 160 dwellings on phase CA2

Thorn Green, Bidwell West For: Abbey Development Ltd

Members were advised that the Town Council had been granted an extension for when responses needed to be received by. In light of this Members agreed to defer this item until the next meeting in order for them to receive a report from the Town Councils planning consultant.

CB/19/02534/FULL

Two storey rear extension 66 Milton Way, LU5 5UE For: Mr & Mrs A Bassi

Comments: No objections

CB/19/02686/FULL

Two storey side extension 1 Leaf Road, LU5 5JG For: Mr D Grigore

The Town Council makes no objection to this application however has the following comment:

 The Town Council are concerned that the visibility splay is sufficient enough for highway and pedestrian users.

CB/19/02865/FULL

Overcladding of existing elevations and replacement of glazing on the front elevation
Unit 33, Humphreys Road, LU5 4TP
For: Legal & General Assurance

Comments: No objections

CB/19/03232/RM

Reserved matters: Appearance, scale and landscaping for residential development of 336 dwellings on Development Parcels 5a and 5b Bidwell West, Houghton Regis. Outline application (CB/15/0297/OUT) was supported by a full Environmental Statement (ES)

Members were advised that the Town Council had been granted an extension for when responses needed to be received by. In light of this Members agreed to defer this item until the next meeting in order for them to receive a report from the Town Councils planning consultant.

CB/19/01907/FULL

Erection of single storey storage outbuilding with use class B2 (general industry)

Bcs House, Blackburn Road, LU5 5BQ

Revised proposals have been received in respect to the above property. Revised proposals – the proposed storage outbuilding would now have a planning use of B2 (general industry) to more closely resemble the prevailing activities of the site. For information Members of the planning committee considered this application at their meeting held on the 19th August 2019.

The Town Council makes no objection to this application however has the following comment:

The Town Council want to be assured that the land proposed for development is within the applicant's ownership.

CB/19/03158/FULL

1.8m high close boarded fence along approx. 3m line to Sundon Road boundary

Treow House, Parkside Drive, LU5 5QL

For: Mr G Lapham

The Town Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

- The proposed fence is not in keeping with the Conservation Area;
- The proposed fence would have an adverse effect on the setting of the adjacent Listed Building:

Comments: The Town Council would support the reinstatement of the original hedge, similar to that which was in place prior to any fence being installed.

Members requested that Councillor A Ryan call this application.

CB/19/02056/FULL

New dwelling

Greenside, 134 High Street, LU5 5DT

Members were advised that revisions had taken place following the issues raised by Central Bedfordshire Councils Highways Management Team.

The Town Councils previous objections still stand and further objects to this application for the following reasons:

- Although the Town Council recognises that a bedroom has been removed from the plans, now detailed as a dressing room, in order to circumnavigate the need for additional parking provision, this application is still overdevelopment;
- Lack of visitor parking;

- Adjacent public car park is already oversubscribed and cannot be relied upon to support visitor parking;
- Proposed bin collection point would still pose a risk to all highway users, bearing in mind the quantity and variety of bins that are now being utilised.

Comments: These amendments do not address the issue of unacceptable development in a Conservation Area. The Town Council respectfully request that Central Bedfordshire Councils Conservation Officer consider this application and maintain their previous opposition to this development for the reasons stated in response to two previous application in 2014 & 2018.

(b) The following decision notices were noted:

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

10098 BUDGET REVIEW

Members received the Planning budget to date.

Resolved: To note the information

10099 APPEAL DECISION – APP/PO240/W/19/3223086 – HIGHFIELD HOUSE, BEDFORD RD

Members considered the outcome of an appeal submitted against Central Bedfordshire Councils planning decision to refuse proposed development at the above location.

Resolved: To note the information

10100 LOCAL PLAN

Central Bedfordshire Council provided the following update:

Over the summer, Examination in Public hearings were held at the Council's main offices in Chicksands. These hearings gave the Inspectors the opportunity to explore the plan and its policies in detail and to hear evidence from Council officers and other stakeholders.

Since the close of the hearing sessions, the Council had been anticipating the Inspectors' feedback and this week the Council received a letter from the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the plan.

This correspondence gave the Council confidence that the Inspectors were content with a number of critical points of policy. However, the letter also raised a number of questions, some of which related to correspondence which the Authority had not seen. In this context, the Council were seeking urgent clarification from the Inspectors about information they seemed to be drawing on and why this had not been shared.

Until the Council received clarification on these important points, the Councils legal advice was that the inspectors' letter should not be published.

Town and Parish Councils would be kept up to date with any developments.

Resolved: To note the information.

10101 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group along with the Town Councils Planning Consultant met with Central Bedfordshire Council officers, on the 3rd October 2019 to discuss the emerging Regulation 14 consultation.

At this meeting Central Bedfordshire Council highlighted some issues they felt should be dealt with prior to public consultation.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with the support of BRCC, were due to meet on the 16th October 2019 to find a way forward to address these issues.

Members were advised that the Neighbourhood Steering Group did not meet on the 16th October 2019 as proposed. Members of the group agreed that a delay to the timing of the public consultation was a preferred option to rushing at the last stage and risk the plan being rejected by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were assured that work was continuing to happen and that the group were looking to meet in November to discuss a work plan which would enable them to achieve public consultation February/March 2020.

Resolved: To note the information.

10102 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 – A series of three manholes need to be dug directly between the site and the war memorial, to allow for storm water and foul drainage from All Saints View to connect to the main drainage system.

These works were planned to start on Monday 7 October and be finished by week commencing 28 October. During this time, sections of road and pathway will be closed and diversions in place. The area needs to be closed off to keep people safe, as some of the holes will be dug to 7 metres deep. The diversions either take people back towards the pedestrian crossing in front of the Green, or via an alleyway into Whitehouse Close and onto the High Street opposite All Saints Church.

Concerns were raised regarding residents' feedback on the deteriorated condition of the small grassed area by the Memorial Stone due to construction vehicles parking on the soft ground.

Members acknowledged that the parking issues had been somewhat alleviated since the agreed use of the old Netto car park, a height barrier installation was awaited to prevent unauthorised encampments; for the interim, it had been agreed that the car park behind the Memorial Hall could be used. Temporary Parking Permits had also been agreed to allow parking behind Bedford Square during the school closure.

Linmere - No substantive update to report.

Bidwell West – Members were requested to consider further themes or street names for this site.

Members were advised that the names previously supplied, which were along a Roman theme, have been used.

Members discussed this matter and supported a proposal to use the names of resorts situated in the North East of England.

Members agreed to provide any other suggestions to the Corporate Services Manager, via email, by the 24th October 2019.

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 9.02pm

Dated this 11th day of November 2019

Chairman

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Houghton Regis Town Partnership Meeting 23rd July 2019 at 7pm

Present:

Central

A Ryan

Chairman

Bedfordshire Councillors:

Y Farrell

S Goodchild

P Hamill

Houghton Regis

D Jones

Town Councillors: R Morgan

(Substitute)

T Welch

HRTC Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

Public:

1

Also

HRTC Councillor: J Carroll

(Left at 7.15pm)

present: Apologies:

Councillor:

K Wattingham

Absent:

Councillor:

D Abbott

ELECTION OF CHAIR 815

Members were invited to put forward nominations for Chair of the Houghton Regis Town Partnership Committee.

In accordance with the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference this position should be filled by a Central Bedfordshire Councillor.

Nominee:

Cllr Ryan

Nominated by:

Cllr Welch

Seconded by:

Cllr Jones

On being put to the vote Cllr Ryan was duly elected as Chair of the Town Partnership Committee.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR 816

Members were invited to put forward nominations for Vice Chair of the Houghton Regis Town Partnership Committee.

In accordance with the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference this position should be filled by a Houghton Regis Town Councillor.

Nominee:

Cllr Jones

Nominated by:

Cllr Farrell

Seconded by:

Cllr Welch

On being put to the vote Cllr Jones was duly elected as Vice-Chair of the Town Partnership Committee.

817 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Morgan substituted) and P Coker, Health Care Hub and S Hughes Community Engagement Manager.

818 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public referred to the s106 money relating to Houghton Quarry and asked when the management of the chalk pit would recommence.

A member of the public referred to SB/07/01448/OUT – Land at Houghton Quarry. Further information was requested on the intended use of the available funds and whether this was to be used for affordable housing?

It was advised that these questions would be responded to in writing.

819 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

820 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2019.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

821 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received the approved Committee Functions and Terms of Reference for this committee. Members were advised that work had been progressing during 2018/19 to revise the Terms of Reference for the Partnership committees across Central Bedfordshire. This Partnership Committee approved the revised Terms of Reference on 30th April 2019. However, the revised Terms of Reference were due to go to the CBC General Purposes Committee in August and then the CBC Full Council in September before they are fully approved.

Members were requested to note that it was intended that there would be new branding launched in parallel.

Resolved: To note the information.

822 HOUGHTON REGIS ESTATE REGENERATION

An update was provided by Ms Alice Arden-Barnatt, the Estates Regeneration Programme Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that the Estates Regeneration Programme had been awarded funding to transform neighbourhoods. Tithe Farm Estate and Parkside Estate had been identified for possible funding. Members were advised that various options had been looked into i.e. delivery of more homes, parking issues and opportunities for development across the area. A member suggested signage be looked at as there were signs of deterioration.

Members raised concerns that residents expectations had been raised previously with the opportunity of funding, however this had not proved successful.

Members requested that this item be included on future agendas for Town Partnership Committee and Ms Arden-Barnatt be invited back to update the committee.

Members agreed to bring forward item 10; Health Care Hub, before item 9; All Saints View.

823 HEALTH CARE HUB

Ms Alice Arden-Barnatt, the Estates Regeneration Programme Manager. attended the meeting to provide an update on the Health Care Hub on behalf of Patricia Coker, Head of Partnerships and Performance. Members were advised that Kingsland had been looked at to integrate the old and new parts of the town.

Members agreed to include this item in the workplan.

824 ALL SAINTS VIEW

Tony Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing, Social Care Health & Housing and Kim Hopcroft, Senior Operations Manager for All Saints View attended the meeting to provide an update on All Saints View.

Members were advised that there would be 168 apartments offering independent living.

Phase 1 expected completion summer 2021 Phase 2 expected completion winter 2023

Members were advised that contractors had been onsite since February and were on track for completion of phase 1. The next few months would see the super structure evolve.

Members were advised that digital signage within Red House Court would be introduced and updated regularly. Central Bedfordshire Council were in discussion with Morrisons regarding use of the disused land to enable contractor parking.

Members were advised of the numbers of properties for rent, shared ownership and outright purchase:

71 Rent

71 Shared ownership

26 Outright purchase

Members were advised that these figures could be subject to change and were dependent on demand.

Members requested an update on the commercial aspect of the build, they were advised that there had been a substantial amount of interest. Members were assured that this commerce was to enhance the businesses in Bedford Square rather than compete with it.

Concerns were raised regarding the location of the crossing on the High Street. Members were advised that Highways have further studies to complete to verify the requirements of the crossing. It was requested that a member of highways be invited to a Town Partnership Committee meeting to speak with councillors.

825 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.

A member suggested that the presentation of reports from members be offered in an alternative format for future meetings. The Chair and Town Clerk would discuss alternatives.

Councillor Goodchild updated members on Social Care. A pot of money had been allocated to support the changes of GP Practices due to a lack of GP's. CBC was working with the Clinical Care Committee. Work would be completed regarding patients self-care and GP's would focus on patients with more urgent needs, referring other patients to practice nurses.

Councillor Ryan updated members on Childrens Services. Thornhill Primary School would be going to their Board for an expansion to create a further 70 places.

Work would be carried out to CBC play areas in Parkside.

Councillor Farrell updated members on a visit to CBC and was advised that a campaign of 6,400 leaflets had been organised which involved a leaflet to be distributed to houses in selected roads to educate on recycling. Councillor Farrell had suggested an invite from CBC Waste Team be extended to members to visit the recycling plant.

826 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan for 2019/20.

Carried forward from 2018/19 were reports on:

- CBC Update report comprising updates from service departments including Houghton Regis Library, Houghton Hall Park, All Saints View
- Joint Committee review
- HRN 2 Community Building
- Estate Regeneration
- Work Plan review

In addition, the Committee had been asked to consider adding to this work plan the following items:

- 1. Ownership and management of Tithe Farm Road car park and the possibility of introducing parking controls i.e. free for 3 hours (CBC member request)

 Members agreed a written report to be submitted but not to include on the work plan.
- 2. Policing levels in Houghton Regis, specifically consideration of call charges to the 101 number and the 01582 471212 number which may be free under some phone tariffs, police call answering times (CBC member request)
- 3. Off road bikes and the possibility of a dedicated reporting phone number (CBC member request)
 - Members agreed an invitation be extended on behalf of the Town Partnership Committee to the PCC or a representative to discuss items 2 & 3.
- 4. Management and maintenance of the Chalk Pit (resident request via HRTC) *Members agreed to add this item to the work plan.*
- CCTV within recreational areas to act as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour (CBC member request)
 Members agreed a written report to be submitted but not to include on the work
- 6. Leisure and sports facilities including future football provision (officer suggestion and request from resident)

 Members agreed to add this item to the work plan.

827 CBC UPDATE REPORT

Members received the CBC update report.

Resolved: To note the report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.51pm.

Dated this 29th day of October 2019.

Chairman

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Houghton Regis Town Council New Office Provisions Sub Committee 18th June 2019 at 6pm

Present:

Cllrs:

D Jones

Chairman

D Dixon-Wilkinson

T McMahon A Slough S Thorne

Officers:

Clare Evans

Town Clerk

Louise Senior

Head of Democratic Services

NOP24 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members were invited to put forward nominations for Chair of the New Office Provision Sub Committee.

Nominee:

Cllr Jones

Nominated by:

Cllr McMahon

Seconded by:

Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson

On being put to the vote Cllr Jones was duly elected as Chair of New Office Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2019 - 2020.

NOP25 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

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

Nominee:

Cllr McMahon

Nominated by:

Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson

Seconded by:

Cllr Slough

On being put to the vote Cllr McMahon was duly elected as Vice Chair of New Office Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2019 - 2020.

NOP26 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

NOP27 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NOP28 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NOP29 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2019.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2019.

NOP30 TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

Resolved: To note the information.

NOP31 PROJECT UPDATE

Members were advised that the consultant was working on drafting the Focused Options Report based on the 9 shortlisted options.

Enquiries had been made to Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to Options 4, 7 and 9 but to date no substantive repsonse had been received. The surveyor had also made equiries relating to options 5 and 8, the results of which would be included in the Options report.

The report would be available for the scheduled meeting on 9th September 2019.

Resolved: To note the report.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.14pm

Dated this 9th day of September 2019

Chairman

Report to

Houghton Regis Partnership Committee

Leighton Linslade Partnership Committee

Biggleswade Joint Committee Dunstable Joint Committee

Subject

Joint Committees Terms of Reference

Date

7 October 2019

1. Recommendation

- a) To note the Town Joint Committees Terms of Reference approved for adoption by Central Bedfordshire Council at its meeting held 26th September 2019.
- b) That each Town Council (Houghton Regis, Leighton Linslade, Biggleswade and Dunstable) also adopt the Terms of Reference and confirm with Central Bedfordshire Council.
- c) That the branded templates developed for the Joint Committees be utilised.

2. Introduction

2.1 The final version of the Terms of Reference were considered by General Purposes Committee on the 9th September and full Council on 26th September. Modifications were made following advice from the Monitoring Officer and clarifications sought by the General Purposes Committee.

2.2 The amendments requested related to:

- Reference to Town Joint Committees (to avoid confusion with other joint arrangements in the CBC Constitution)
- **Co-option** clarification as to who can co-opt and remove co-optees from the Town Joint Committee and annual reviews.
- Governance confirmation that Minutes and actions should be reported to both CBC and the relevant Town Council

3. Conclusion

Once adopted the Joint Committees can work within the framework of the new Terms of Reference and utilise the branded templates for agendas and minutes of meetings and other communications.

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Town Joint Committees: Terms of Reference Final version

Purpose

- 1. To influence decisions and help shape initiatives and their delivery for the benefit of the whole town taking into account the needs of the town, customers, employees, residents, visitors, traders, property owners and developers.
- 2. To develop and encourage public participation and engagement and take into consideration the resident voice in the work of the Town Joint Committee

Objectives

- 1. Help improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural vitality of the town
- 2. Ensure a partnership and collaborative approach to achieve the delivery of town regeneration, including influencing Section 106 funding received for town improvements and community facilities.
- 3. Opportunities to delegate funding decisions to the Town Joint Committees should be explored, such as Section 106 received to spend on community facilities.
- 4. The Town Joint Committee will make decisions on any joint funding allocated to it.
- 5. Influence and help shape strategies / plans that impact on the future viability of the town.
- 6. Provide a forum for briefing Members of the Town Joint Committee on all key issues affecting the town, at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 7. Make recommendations on strategically significant projects to the relevant Council's decision-making committees, including Committees of the Town Council.
- 8. Develop and maintain joint branding of communication, agendas and minutes.
- 9. To enable communities to discuss services and influence decisions at the local level as to how these services are delivered
- 10. To provide a forum for two-way communication about public service delivery and the implementation and effectiveness of policies affecting the town.
- 11. Promote resilience by encouraging communities to do more for themselves and champion local solutions.
- 12. Consider the ways in which proposals and initiatives can help to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations.

Membership

- 1. Four Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and four Councillors from Biggleswade Town Council (Biggleswade Joint Committee).
- 2. Four Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and four Councillors from Houghton Regis Town Council (Houghton Regis Partnership Committee).
- 3. Five Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and five Councillors from Leighton-Linslade Town Council (Leighton-Linslade Partnership Committee).
- 4. Five Councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and five Councillors from Dunstable Town Council (Dunstable Joint Committee).

Who must be elected representatives of the wards.

- 5. Two substitutes from each Council will be permitted to attend meetings as full Committee representatives. A Councillor who sits on both CBC and the Town Council can substitute. Central Bedfordshire Council Councillors shall not substitute a Town Councillor on the Town Joint Committee and vice versa.
- 6. Substitutes for Central Bedfordshire Council Members on the Town Joint Committee must be a ward councillor in the town in the first instance or if not available a substitute must be an Executive Member. Substitutes for the Town Council Members of the Town Joint Committee will be a ward town councillor
 - 7. Members are appointed annually.
 - 8. All Members of the Town Joint Committee should have the interests of the town as a priority, not their own wards.

Meetings and Quorum

- 1. At least 3 Members from each Council must be in attendance for the meeting to be quorate.
- 2. Meetings will be held a minimum of once per year and up to 4 per year and take place at venues in the area
- 3. The Town Joint Committee may also organise extra ordinary meetings at the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- 4. In addition to the Committee meetings, the Town Joint Committee can organise other forms of engagement to take place such as themed discussions / task and finish groups and community conferences, including joint meetings or events with other Town Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire.
- 5. All meetings will be open to the public unless exempt items are discussed

Chair and Vice Chair

1. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed from and by the Joint Committee's core membership; each Council must be represented in either role.

- 2. The appointed Chair and Vice-Chair will hold their post for a period of one year, after which they may stand for re-election.
- 3. The Vice Chair will preside in the absence of the Chair. If neither is present, the Town Joint Committee members in attendance will appoint a Chair from amongst them for the duration of that meeting.
- 4. The Chair and Vice Chair will be responsible for the content of the Committee agendas and will allow committee members and other stakeholders to submit agenda topics which will be included unless the proposed agenda item is not relevant to the Purpose and/or Objectives of the Town Joint Committee.

Secretariat

- Either Council can administer the Town Joint Committee, according to their own Standing Orders. The Town Joint Committee will decide annually which Council is to administer the Committee.
- 2. Agendas, minutes and press releases will be issued under joint branding.
- 3. The secretariat will prepare, monitor and keep up to date an annual work plan to set the broad direction and priorities for the Town Joint Committee.

Decision making arrangements

- 1. Only members of the Town Joint Committee can vote. Co-opted Members have no voting rights.
- 2. The Town Joint Committee will not have any decision-making powers regarding planning applications and will not seek to duplicate or hinder the work of Central Bedfordshire Council as the Local Planning Authority.
- 3. The Town Joint Committee will reach decisions by a simple majority. The Chairman will have the casting vote in the case of a tie.

Co-option

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

Governance

 The Minutes and action log for the Town Joint Committee will be presented both to the relevant Town Council and to Central Bedfordshire Council. The detail of where this will be presented will be determined by the Councils and reported back to the Town Joint Committee.

September 2019



TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item 9

Date:

9th December 2019

Title:

VISION 2020/2024

Purpose of the Report: To present to members the draft Vision 2020/2024 and to

confirm next steps.

Contact Officer:

Clare Evans, Town Clerk

RECOMMENDATION 1.

To approve the draft Vision 2020/24 subject to consultation.

BACKGROUND 2.

The council has completed work over the summer and autumn to compile a corporate plan for the period April 2020 to March 2024.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Draft Vision is presented in Appendix A for consideration and comment.

The Vision is presented as follows:

Our Aspirations:

- 1. To develop and enhance partnerships between HRTC, stakeholders, partners, community groups and residents
- 2. To effectively and proactively represent our community
- 3. To positively **promote** the town
- 4. To develop a new cemetery
- 5. To ensure the council is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

Our Delivery Plan:

Objective 1: Grow your own

• To support HHP kitchen garden

- To support appropriate management of the community orchard at Sandringham Drive
- Establish allotments within new housing developments
- Encourage healthy eating and food awareness
- To increase edible planting
- Enhance biodiversity and support wildlife

Objective 2: Houghton Goes Green

- To reduce the use of paper by the council
- To increase recycling by the council
- To encourage sustainable transport including use of public transport, walking and cycling
- To provide outdoor fitness equipment in parks and open spaces

Objective 3: A safe and vibrant town

- To reduce the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and crime levels
- To reduce enviro crime
- To improve access to bulk waste removal services
- To seek to reduce speeding around schools
- To provide clean and accessible town centre toilets
- To provide Christmas lights
- To communicate well with residents and stakeholders
- To support local businesses and retailers
- To welcome new residents
- To help to deliver a safe space for vulnerable people

Objective 4: Our community

- To create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion
- To enhance existing facilities to enable improved community use and accessibility
- To provide activities for young people, families and older people
- To help to protect and preserve historic gems
- To provide high quality green spaces for leisure and recreation, healthier living, urban attractiveness, improved air quality
- To provide a range of play facilities for all to enjoy
- To support local organisations
- To support HHP to seek to develop the site to its full potential
- To complete the extension of the existing cemetery to provide a beautiful and tranquil place of rest for future generations

Consultation

It is suggested that the Vision be subject to public consultation. To date member support has been provided to share the Vision with local school councils and the Hub Cafe. Some additional ideas have been put forward and support has been shown for the main elements of the Vision.

It is suggested that the draft Vision be shared as follows:

- Social media
- Website
- Drop boxes at the library and at the council offices
- Face to face consultation at council events (Santa's Grotto)

A report to Council would then be presented advising of the consultation responses and recommending final approval.

4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Members are advised that the aspirations of the Vision have been incorporated into the draft budget for 2020/21.

5. COUNCIL VISION

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

- 1. A stronger local economy which promotes local businesses;
- 2. Face the challenges & maximise the opportunities of growth;
- 3. A safer town with reduced fear of crime;
- 4. A more active, engaged and inclusive community;
- 5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- The Vision will be used the direct the work of the council over the next 4 years. It sets the strategic direction and provides guidance to staff and members.
- Regular reporting on the Vision will be provided through the council's committees.
- There are staff issues arising relating to new projects / initiatives.
- It is suggested that the Vision be subject to consultation

Legal Implications

• Power available to carry out project – Local Government Act 1972 s142

Financial Implications

• There are financial implications arising from the Vision for the next 4 financial years. Failure to provide sufficient budget may jeopardise the delivery of the Vision.

Risk Implications

- Capacity the draft Vision does identify some new projects. There may be capacity issues arising.
- There are reputational risks arising should the Vision be approved but not followed.

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 issue does not discriminate.

Press Contact

It is suggested that the draft Vision be subject to consultation. The press will be used to support this consultation process.

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The draft Vision encapsulates the current work of the council whilst providing for new initiatives and projects. It seeks to enhance community facilities, services and community spaces. Feedback from the community would help to ensure that the detail of the plan and the corresponding work of the council was supported by the community.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Draft Vision 2020/2024

HRTC Corporate Plan

Version 3 – November 2019

Our Vision: Our Town (2020-2024)

Our Aspirations

Aspiration	How	w	Delivery timeframe	Resource requirement	Committee
To develop and enhance	•	To engage with partners to support the enhancement of	Ongoing	Staff time	As applicable
stakeholders, partners, community groups and residents	•	Services within the town To press for the enhancement of services as required	Ongoing	Staff time	As applicable
	•	To engage in the development of the strategic growth areas	Ongoing	Staff time	As applicable
		and to ensure integration between the existing town and the			
	•	To respond and participate in consultation processes	Ongoing	Staff time	As applicable
To effectively and proactively	•	To engage with partners on issues extending beyond the scope	Ongoing	Staff time	As applicable
represent our community		of the town council notably but not restricted to: town centre, planning and the growth area, transport and car parking,			
					As applicable
To positively promote the town	0	Civic role within and outside of the town	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
	•	Promotion of events outside of the town	Annual	£1000	Com Serv
To develop a new cemetery	•	To identify and investigate any emerging land possibilities	Ongoing	Staff time EMR	TC/PNCSC
				available	

To ensure the council is fit for	•	Regular review of services (in particular events,	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
purpose and efficient in its delivery		communications and software packages)		Corp Serv
ot services	•	Regular review of facilities and premises	Ongoing	Staff time	F&I
	•	Development of new council offices	Ongoing	Staff time	TC/OPSC
				£500,000	
	•	Maximise income opportunities (investments, chargeable	Ongoing	Staff time	Corp Serv
		services, hire charges / fees)		Income	E&L
				opportunities	
	•	Review staff structure in particular additional staff support	Ongoing	Additional staff	As applicable
		required for events, cemetery, finance and ad hoc support		£30,000/annum	
		required for sessional work re playscheme, family trips, youth council			
	•	To support councillor and staff development & training	Ongoing	Current rev	Corp Serv
				budget	
				available	
	•	Introduce electronic payments system (links to staff resource)	2020	Staff time	Corp Serv
				£500 / annum	
	0	Increased use of online forms	2020	Staff time	Corp Serv
				£2000 / annum	
	•	To stay informed and up to date and to communicate this out	Ongoing	Staff time	Corp Serv

Our Delivery Plan

Objective 1: Grow your own					
Delivery	Actions	Current / new work	Delivery timeframe	Budget requirement	Committee
1.1 To support HHP kitchen	• Staff support – grounds	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	E&L
garden	Promotion	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
	• Finance	Current	Ongoing	Current rev	
			12 E 2 E 2 E 2 E 2 E 2 E 2 E 2 E 2 E 2 E	budget available.	
1.2 To support appropriate management of the	 Link in with informal group – may be able to support establishment of this group on a more formal basis 	New	2020	Staff time	Com Serv
community orchard at Sandringham Drive	Staff support – grounds	New	2020	Staff time	E&L
1.3 Establish allotments within	 To work with promotors of development sites 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	E&L
new housing developments	Promotion	New	Ongoing	Staff time	
1.4 Encourage healthy eating	 To work with the HRTC pop up café provision 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
and food awareness	 Partnership project with HHP 	New	2021	Staff time	E&L
	 Community kitchen, pantry, fridge 	New	2021	Staff time	Com Serv
1.5 To increase edible planting	 Provide fruit bushes and fruit trees 	New	2020	£1000	E&L
1.6 Enhance biodiversity and	 Wildflower planting 	New	2020	£300	E&L
support wildlife	 Enhance biodiversity within current assets (old 	New	2020	N/K	E&L
	section of cemetery, HHP, DKD, hedgerows)				8

Objective 2: Houghton Goes					
Green					
Delivery	Actions	Current / new	Delivery	Budget	Committee
		WOLK	timetrame	requirement	
2.1 To reduce the use of paper by the council	 Electronic mailing to members increased use of IT 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Corp Serv
	 Electronic mailing for community events and civic events 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
2.2 To increase recycling by the council	Offer recycling at events	New	2020	£1000	Com Serv
	 Improve recycling within the office 	New	Ongoing	Staff time	Corp Serv
	Offer recycling within open spaces	New	2020	£1000	F&I
2.3 To encourage sustainable transport including use of	 Promotion of possibilities - general and specific 	New	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
public transport, walking and cycling					
	 Provision of ancillary facilities such as cycle racks, seating 	New	2021	£1000	E&L
	 Incentives provided to people using sustainable transport to access the town centre / community services / events 	New	2020	£500	Com Serv
2.4 To provide outdoor fitness equipment in parks and	Parkside, Tithe Farm recreation grounds	New	2020	£5000	E&L
open spaces					

Objective 3: A safe and vibrant town						
Delivery	Ac	Actions	Current / new work	Delivery timeframe	Budget requirement	Committee
3.1 To reduce the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and	•	Partnership working with Bedfordshire police and CBC Community Safety	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv /
crime levels	•	High visibility policing project (Op Hana)	Current	Ongoing	£33,000/ annum	
	•	Use of redeployable CCTV cameras	Current	Ongoing	£5000 /	
	•	Encourage Neighbourhood Watch schemes	New	2021	Staff time	
3.2 To reduce enviro crime	•	Tackle incidences of graffiti, small scale fly-tipping, broken glass etc	Current	Ongoing	Staff time £1000 rev	Com Serv / CCWG
3.3 To improve access to bulk waste removal services	•	To implement a subsidy scheme in partnership with CBC	New	2020	£2400 / annum Staff time	Com Serv / CCWG
3.4 To seek to reduce speeding around schools	• •	Speed assessment Consideration of options	New	2021	£2000 / school Staff time	Com Serv / CCWG
3.5 To provide clean and accessible town centre toilets	•	Funding of cleaning of town centre toilets	Current	Ongoing	£20000 / annum	Com Serv
3.6 To provide Christmas lights	•	Funding of Christmas lights	Current	Ongoing	£15000 / annum	Com Serv
3.7 To communicate well with residents and stakeholders	•	Website maintenance	Current	Ongoing	£1000 / annum	Com Serv
	•	Website refresh / redesign	New	2021	£5000	Com Serv
	•	Social media – multi media management options	New	2020	£300	Com Serv

	0	Town Crier	Current	Ongoing	£2700/	Com Serv
QC					annum	
	0	Town Crier – increase pages, recyclable paper	New	2020	£2000/	Com Serv
					annum	
	•	Noticeboards maintenance	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
	•	Noticeboards change to electronic notice board similar to bus stops	New	2021	N/K	Com Serv
	•	Quarterly banners detailing events for the season	New	2020	£500	Com Serv
3.8 To support local businesses and retailers	•	Shop Local	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
					£200	
	•	Sponsorship opportunities	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
					Income	
					opportuniti	
2 O To					es	
3.9 TO WELCOINE NEW RESIDENTS	•	New residents 'Welcome Pack'	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
					£200	
	•	Provide to house builders	New	2020	Staff /	
					member	
					time	
	•	Provide to estate agents	New	2020	Staff /	
					member	
					time	
	•	Provide to new residents ad hoc	New	2020	Member	
					time	
3.10 To help to deliver a safe	•	Partnership project to deliver a safe space for people	New	0000	N/N	
space for vulnerable people		at risk of crisis		7070	N/N Staff time	Com serv

Objective 4. Odi colliniality					
Delivery	Actions	Current / new work	Delivery timeframe	Budget requirement	Committee
4.1 To create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion	Development of a sporting hub and all-weather pitch	New	2020	£1.5m, HRTC contrib £300-500k Staff time	As applicable
	 Work with partners on the delivery of community facilities with the strategic growth area 	New	2020	N/K	
4.2 To enhance existing facilities to enable improved	 Village green pavilion refurbishment 	New	2022	N/K Staff time	E&L
community use and accessibility	 To create a dementia friendly town with supportive services, signs, assistance, aids 	New	2022	N/K Staff time	Com Serv
4.3 To provide activities for young people, families and older people	 Young people (Pop up café, Summer playscheme, Youth Council, Preventative projects (Anti-knife crime campaign) 	Current	Ongoing	£29,000 Staff time	Com Serv
	 Families (day trips, events, music in the park, re-use, recycling, repair) Older people (gentle sports, social events) 	Current New New	Ongoing 2021 2021	£40,000 £12,000 £10,000	
				Staff time	y .
4.4 To help to protect and preserve historic gems	All Saints Church HHP	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	As
	Red House	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
4.5 To provide high quality green spaces for leisure and recreation, healthier living, urban attractiveness, improved air quality	Ongoing grounds maintenance	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	E&L

4.6 To provide a range of play facilities for all to enjoy	Ongoing maintenance	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	E&L
4.7 To support local	 Provision of a grant scheme 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	Com Serv
Organisations	Advice	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
H-007	 Promotion 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
4.8 To support HHP to seek to	Grounds care	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	E&L
develop the site to its full	Financial	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
potential	 Accepted project partner 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	
4.9 To complete the extension	 Physical implementation 	Current	Ongoing	Staff time	E&L
provide a beautiful and				£100,000	
tranguil place of rest for	 Delivery of service 	New	Ongoing	Staff time	
future generations					



TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item 10

Date:

29th November 2019

Title:

CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

Purpose of the Report: To report to council on the outcome of 2 code of conduct

complaints.

Contact Officer:

Clare Evans, Town Clerk

RECOMMENDATION 1.

To note the report.

2. BACKGROUND

In accordance with the Councils approved Code of Conduct Complaint Handing Policy¹ Members were advised that the monitoring officer had received 2 separate code of conduct complaints. The complaints have been investigated by the monitoring officer. The outcomes are advised in this report.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

In relation to one complaint it was found that there should be no further action.

In relation to the second complaint, Members will find attached the Decision Notice. This has been redacted of 3rd party information. The decision notice has been published on the town council website.

The council is advised that an apology was provided and has been accepted.

COUNCIL VISION 4.

The proposed action supports the Objectives of Council's Vision; 5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

5. **IMPLICATIONS**

¹ https://www.houghtonregis.org.uk/council-policies-procedures

Corporate Implications

• There are no corporate implications.

Legal Implications

• There are no legal implications.

Financial Implications

• There are no financial implications.

Risk Implications

• There are reputational risks to the council.

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 direct press implications for the council, however there may be press comments to respond to.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The code of conduct complaints have been investigated and decision notices have been received from the monitoring officer. The decision notices are reported to the town council in accordance with the councils Code of Conduct Complaint Handing Policy.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Decision notice - redacted

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF COMPLAINT DECISION NOTICE

Subject Member: Cllr Tim Welch - Houghton Regis Town Council ('HRTC')

1.	Backg	round and Summary of Allegations
1.1.	Counci Comple	August 2019, the Monitoring Officer ('MO') of Central Bedfordshire I received a formal complaint ('the ainant') of Market William Which was received via the DHRTC.
1.2	dealing people aggres Subjec	mary, the allegations against the Subject Member are that in his is with the Complainant, relating to a proposed project to support with mental health concerns, his conduct was rude and sive. The Complainant asserts that as a holder of public office the t Member has a duty to uphold the Nolan Principles and by tion he had failed to do so.
2.	Eviden	ce Considered
2.1.		llowing documents and information were considered for the es of this complaint:
	2.1.1.	The original complaint email from the Complainant to the Clerk of HRTC;
	2.1.2.	Additional email from the Complainant to the MO received on 12 September 2019 with further details of her complaint;
	2.1.3.	Written responses from the Subject Member received on 20 September, which included an undated letter from and 24 October;
	2.1.4.	HRTC Members Code of Conduct https://www.houghtonregis.org.uk/useruploads/policies/170327%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf
3.	Jurisdi	ction
3.1.		omplaint to be considered in connection with the Member's Code luct, the following test must be satisfied:
		he complaint was made against a person who, at the time the illeged action took place, was a member of HRTC; and

the Subject Member had signed up to the Members' Code of Conduct in force at the time the alleged action took place; and

b)

- c) the Subject Member was conducting the business of their authority or acting, claiming to act or giving the impression of acting as a representative of the authority.
- 3.2. Both the MO and Independent Person are of the view that all three parts of the test are satisfied.
- 4. Monitoring Officer's Summary of the Facts
- 4.1 In assessing whether there is a breach or potential breach, and whether further action is warranted, the complaints must be considered from an objective view point bearing in mind the provisions of HRTC's Members' Code of Conduct.
- 4.2 The circumstances of the complaint relate to a meeting arranged by the Complainant, in her professional capacity as Secretary of in association with and the to hear more about a new initiative to support anyone with mental health concerns in Houghton Regis which took place on 20 August 2019. On 20 July, the Complainant emailed all HRTC councillors, including the Subject Member, and Central Bedfordshire Council ward councillors together with representatives from other local organisations, professionals and individuals in the community who may have been interested in attending the meeting.
- 4.3 The Complainant says after she received an email from the Subject Member asking for the meeting to be cancelled, she was contacted by him by phone and she alleges the Subject Member was verbally abusive, swore and said he was disgusted by the proposal to be discussed at the meeting and continued to say that provided a service that would be undermined by the proposal. The Complainant says she tried to explain again that no decisions had been made and she would not be cancelling the meeting unless the Subject Member could give a good reason to do so. She claims the Subject Member repeated that there were safeguarding issues but would not clarify what these were as it was confidential. She alleges she asked the Subject Member not to swear and he then said 'he would attend the meeting and bring lots of people with him who agreed with his point of view' and that this was said aggressively.
- 4.4 The Complainant, Subject Member and others attended the meeting on 20 August. The Complainant alleges at the meeting it was further highlighted that the Subject Member was ill-informed and unwilling to listen to others. She claims he was aggressive in tone at the meeting and made accusations against an individual present at the meeting which were both unjust and untrue. She claims the Subject Member also made reference to the work of which she says is a business, not a commissioned organisation and does not have registered health care professionals on the staff. She claims the Subject Member stated, incorrectly, that this organisation is available 24/7, is at the end of a phone and accessible in the evening. She asserts that all

this information was incorrect and that the Subject Member was non-receptive to the facts. She claims at the request of the individual the Subject Member insulted to apologise the Subject Member shrugged his shoulders. She says this behaviour was witnessed by all attendees and after the meeting she was approached by two of the visiting professionals who were appalled by his behaviour, particularly his rudeness and stating that he is 'disgusted' by the project proposal.

- The Subject Member provided the MO with an undated letter from purportedly from its

 This letter supports the Subject Member and claims the Subject Member was acting on his own initiative when he was seeking to highlight the work of
- 4.6 The Subject Member provided comments on the complaint in his email to the MO received on 24 October in which he denies the allegations of rudeness and claims the Complainant was rude to him.
- 5. Independent Person's Advice

11:

- 5.1.1 In relation to the telephone conversation and the allegation of being rude and bullying there is insufficient evidence to prove this.
- 5.1.2 I have examined the Code of Conduct in force at the time and in particular the following:
 - (i) Members must always act in the public interest;
 - (ii) Members must never use their position as a member of the Council improperly to secure for themselves, or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage;
 - (iii) Members must set an example by their behaviour and shall act in a way that enhances public trust and confidence in the integrity of the Council and its members; and
 - (iv) Members must show respect and courtesy to others.
- 5.1.3 In making this examination I have considered the evidence provided by the Complainant and applied the civil standard, namely the balance of probabilities.

- 5.1.5 On (ii) above, there is insufficient evidence to support the allegation that the Subject Member favoured this service, namely because a Director was also a Labour councillor. My advice is that the allegation of attempting to secure an advantage for another is not proved to the standard required.
- 5.1.6 On (iii) and (iv) above, there is evidence that the Subject Member did not behave in a courteous manner at a meeting attended by professionals and the public. At this stage this is the opinion of the Complainant and, with a reasonable number of attendees, it should be possible to find witnesses who could support or reject this allegation.
- 5.1.7 My advice is that there are a number of potential breaches of the Code of Conduct and consequently the matter should proceed to the next stage. I would hope that an informal resolution could be found, rather than requiring the Monitoring Officer to undertake a full scale investigation, with all its expense, delay and inconvenience.

Initial Assessment Decision

- 6.1 The MO and Independent Person agree there are a number of potential breaches of the Code of Conduct and consequently the matter should proceed to the next stage.
- 6.2 The next stage is informal resolution or formal investigation. The Subject Member is invited to accept his conduct was unacceptable and to offer an apology to the Complainant. The Complainant is invited to accept the apology. If that occurs the complaint will be closed.
- 6.3 If the Subject Member refuses to accept his conduct was unacceptable and to offer an apology or an apology is not accepted by the Complainant, the MO will take account of this in deciding whether the complaint merits formal investigation.

Approved by:	
Dated:	14 November 2019



TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item 11

Date:

29th November 2019

Title:

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Purpose of the Report: To enable members to consider altering the councils Financial

Regulations in light of revised NALC model Financial

Regulations.

Contact Officer:

Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the Financial Regulations.

BACKGROUND 2.

NALC have issued revised Model Financial Regulations (FR) and supporting guidance notes. This report is presented to enable members to consider the revised model financial regulations and the guidance notes.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The current HRTC Financial Regulations have been reviewed in light of the revised model FR. An annotated copy is attached at Appendix A. Members are requested to approve the suggested alterations.

COUNCIL VISION 4.

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

5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

IMPLICATIONS 5.

Corporate Implications

There are no corporate implications.

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.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

It is suggested that a number of minor alterations are made to the HRTC Financial Regulations in light of the revised NALC model Financial Regulations.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A: HRTC Financial Regulations - annotated Appendix B:

NALC Model Financial Regulations

Appendix C: NALC Model Financial Regulations Guidance



Houghton Regis Town Council

Financial Regulations

Date of Approval:	Town Council 29th September 2014
Date of Review:	18 th May 2016: 18 th July 2017; 3 rd July 2018; 15 th May 2019

Based on NALC Financial Regulations May 2014 and amended by NALC Financial Briefing F01E-16 $\,$

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 29th September 2014.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders¹ and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
 - for the timely production of accounts;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of Council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.
- 1.9. In accordance with the Council's Staffing Structure, the Clerk / RFO is supported by the Accounts Officer. Where RFO is referred to in the Financial Regulations the Accounts Officer may carry out part or all of the stated requirement under the supervision of the Clerk / RFO.
- 1.10. The RFO;
 - · acts under the policy direction of the council;

Commented [CE1]: In conformity with Model Financial Regulations 2019

Commented [CE2]: Included in existing FR, provided for clarity. Retain.

¹ Model standing orders for councils © 2018, are available via NALC's website.

- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.12. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
 - entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.13. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
 - procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible:
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.14. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax Requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- · declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors,

shall be a matter for the full council only.

- 1.15. In addition, the council must:
 - determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of the revenue budget provided; and
 - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.16. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) or *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners' Guide*, available from the websites of One Voice Wales (OVW) and SLCC as appropriate.

Commented [CE4]: Delete as not relevant to HRTC

Commented [CE3]: Model FR refer to £5,000. HRTC may

2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate Guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, the Corporate Services Committee shall consider and verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The Corporate Services Committee chairman shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council.

Commented [CE5]: The model FR refer to a member other than the Chairman. HRTC has delegated authority to the Corporate Services Committee. Retain.

- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
 - be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - · perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

- 3.1. Each committee shall review its three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than the end of November, prepare detailed estimates with explanations of all receipts and payments including the use of general and ear marked reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the relevant committees and the council.
- 3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The council shall ensure that a minimum of 3 months net revenue expenditure is in general reserves.
- 3.5. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.6. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

Commented [CE6]: In accordance with Model FR.

Commented [CE7]: Model FR require a month to be

inserted. This is as existing. Retain

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Commented [CE8]: This is included in the model FR. Amendments are shown. Authority to spend within approved Revenue budgets is included in the Scheme of Delegation. Suggest include as provided.

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

4.

- 4.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
 - The council for all items over £5000
 - A duly delegated committee of the council for items over £500
 - The Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £500

- 4.1.4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue code other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget codes or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').
- 4.2.4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.3.4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year at the Corporate Services Committee and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Corporate Services Committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1000. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.5.4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.6.4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.7.4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide each committee with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least as the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of 15% of the budget.
- 4.8.4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency. The council shall seek credit references in respect of members or employees who act as signatories.
- On a regular basis, and not less than monthly, the RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, by two signatories, and present the schedule, together with the relevant invoices. The two signatories shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied themselves shall authorise payment. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the two signatories.

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Commented [CE9]: Included as per model FR

Commented [CE10]: Model FR suggest £500. This was recently consider by HRTC and it was agreed to increase this limit to £1000. Retain.

Commented [CE11]: This review is completed at each committee mtg, exc Planning Committee, as a quarterly review does not sit comfortably with the usual calendar of mtgs. Retain as shown as the committee reporting is in excess of quarterly reporting.

Commented [CE12]: Included as per Model FR. Not suggested as necessary due to stringent internal controls. Delete as shown.

- 5.3.5.2. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed, to members, through the Corporate Services Committee. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.4.5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.5.5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, within the suppliers payment terms.
- 5-6-5.5. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
 - a) When a payment is necessary the Clerk / RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment a list of payments shall be submitted to authorised signatories for approval. If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of council, where the Clerk / RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
 - An expenditure item relating to continuing contracts and obligations provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the authorised signatories;
 - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £50,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the authorised signatories.
- 5.7-5.6. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any Policy statement approved by council.
- 5-8-5.7. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.9.5.8. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be effected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of the Corporate Services Committee.

Commented [CE13]: The Model FR show this as 1 para. This has been adapted to fit HRTC. Retain as existing.

Commented [CE14]: This shows the Model FR. It does not fit with the payment system of HRTC. Retain as existing.

Commented [CE15]: Worded to fit HRTC. Retain as existing.

Commented [CE16]: Adapted to fit HRTC. Retain

Financial Regulations Houghton Regis Town Council

6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to the authorised signatories shall be signed by two members of council and countersigned by an authorised officer in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at the regular meeting (not less than monthly) of the authorised signatories. Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the authorised signatories.
- 6.7. Payments made by variable Direct Debit, Standing Order, BACS or CHAPS are to be signed by two members and an officer and payments are reported to the authorised signatories.
- 6.8. The approval of the use of Direct Debit, Standing Order, BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council every year.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the Clerk payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the authorised signatories as made.
- 6.10. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Clerk in a sealed dated envelope.
- 6.11. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.12. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely off site.
- 6.13. The council shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall, software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.14. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk /RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The Bank Mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.15. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

Commented [CE17]: Adapted to fit HRTC. Retain

Commented [CE18]: Adapted to fit HRTC. Retain

Commented [CE19]: Adapted to fit HRTC. Retain

- 6.16. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written <u>hard copy</u> notification by the supplier and supported by <u>hard copy</u> authority for change signed by the Clerk. A <u>programme of regular cheeks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.</u>
- 6.17. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk / RFO and authorised officers will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1000 unless authorised by council or committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.18. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the clerk / RFO and authorised officers and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.18.6.19.A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits......
- 6.19.6.20 The Clerk / RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the Clerk / RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
 - a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £250-100 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
 - b) The RFO shall maintain as postage float of up to £800 for the purpose of postage.
 - Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
 - d) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.2 above.

7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Corporate Services Committee.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential

Commented [CE20]: It is suggested that this programme would be onerous and time-consuming. The Accounts officer checks the invoice for payment details, and should these not match the data stored within the accounts software it would be investigated prior to payment. Delete last sentence.

Commented [CE21]: Addition suggested to aid efficiencies of working.

Commented [CE22]: Model FR suggest £500. HRTC recently agreed to increase this to £1000. Retain.

Commented [CE23]: Addition suggested as per Model FR plus inclusion of authorised officers to aid efficiencies of working

Commented [CE24]: The model FR extend beyond this wording. HRTC does not refer a pre-paid debit card. Suggest deletion.

Commented [CE25]: Petty cash currently comprises £50 cash and £200 in the Petty cash bank account. It is suggested to close the petty cash bank account as alternative mechanisms for emergency payments are available but to increase cash to £100.

Commented [CE26]: As per model FR. Retain.

record. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

- a) by the internal auditor;
- b) by the external auditor; or
- by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.

8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for Borrowing Approval, and subsequent arrangements for the Loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal Borrowing Approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.4. The Council shall ensure the approved Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy and Investment Arrangements are in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance and shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.5. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.6. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.7. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. INCOME

9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

Commented [CE27]: As per model FR. Retain

10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1. A schedule of Purchase Orders shall be maintained by the RFO for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared.
- 10.2. All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 (1) below.
- 10.3. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.4. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11. CONTRACTS

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
 - a. Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
 - b. Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations².
 - c. The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)³.
 - d. When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
 - e. Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which

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² The regulations require councils to use the Contract Finders website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

³ Thresholds currently applicable are:

a. ——For public supply and public service contracts £181,302

a.b. For public works contracts £4.551,413

f.

12.

12.1.

12.2.

12.3.

the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council. Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders 184 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010. Commented [CE28]: As per model FR. Retain. When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £250 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.2 above shall apply, Formatted: (none) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate... Formatted: (none) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken, Formatted: (none) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any Formatted: Indent: Left: 2.54 cm, No bullets or numbering tender, quote or estimate. Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated Formatted: Normal, Indent: Left: 2.54 cm, Space Before: 0 pt, After: 0 pt, Line spacing: single, No bullets or committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is numbering, Hyphenate, Tab stops: Not at -2.54 cm + not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract). Commented [CE29]: As per model FR. Retain. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council. Commented [CE30]: As per model FR. Retain.

Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved

by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where

14

the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

Commented [CE31]: As per model FR. Retain.

13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. Delivery Notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

Commented [CE32]: As per model FR. Retain.

14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. INSURANCE

15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the Clerk/ RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.

Commented [CE33]: Model FR suggest £250. HRTC previously decided to set at £500. Retain as existing.

Adopted 29th September 2014

- 15.1-15.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO Accounts Officer of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 45.2.15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 45.3.15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council, or duly delegated committee.
- +5.4.15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

16. CHARITIES

16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.

Commented [CE34]: Suggested by FR. Suggest change to Accounts Officer.

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16

Financial Regulations Houghton Regis Town Council This page is intentionally left blank



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[ENTER COUNCIL NAME] MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2019 FOR ENGLAND

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [enter date].

1. General

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders¹ and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
 - for the timely production of accounts;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. [The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.]
- 1.9. The RFO;

¹ Model Standing Orders for Councils (2018 Edition) is available from NALC (©NALC 2018)



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- acts under the policy direction of the council;
- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices:
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
 - entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate:
 - · a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
 - procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.



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- 1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:
 - setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
 - · approving accounting statements;
 - approving an annual governance statement;
 - borrowing;
 - writing off bad debts;
 - declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
 - addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.
- 1.14. In addition, the council must:
 - determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of [£5,000]; and
 - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council [Finance Committee].



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- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
 - be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships;
 and
 - has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - perform any operational duties for the council;
 - · initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.



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3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

- [3.1. Each committee (if any) shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of [November] each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.]
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than [month], prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the [relevant committee and the] council.
- 3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
 - the council for all items over [£5,000];
 - a duly delegated committee of the council for items over [£500]; or
 - the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below [£500].

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').



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- 4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in [October] for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of [£500]. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of [£100] or [15%] of the budget.
- 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency. [The council shall seek credit references in respect of members or employees who act as signatories.]
- 5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council [or finance committee]. The council / committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council [or finance committee]. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the



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Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.

- 5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council [or Finance Committee] meeting.
- 5.5. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
 - a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];
 - b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee]; or
 - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of [£10,000], provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee].
- 5.6. For each financial year the Clerk and RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council [,or a duly authorised committee,] may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or Finance Committee].
- 5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.



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- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.9. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council [or duly delegated committee].
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by [one] two member[s] of council [and countersigned by the Clerk,] in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council [or Finance Committee] at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided



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that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.
- 6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.14. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk [RFO] shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those



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accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.

- 6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by [two of] the Clerk [the RFO] [a member]. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk [and the RFO] and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of [£500] unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.19. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council [Finance Committee]. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the [council] [relevant committee] and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the [council] [relevant committee].
- 6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk [and RFO] and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.21. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk [or RFO] (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

OR

- [6.22. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
 - a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of [£250] for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.



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- b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.2 above.]

7. Payment of salaries

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the [council] [relevant committee].
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
 - a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
 - b) by the internal auditor;
 - c) by the external auditor; or
 - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.



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- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

8. Loans and investments

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk or RFO.
- 8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.5. The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. Income

9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.



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- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- [9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).]

10. Orders for work, goods and services

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three



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or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.5. The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

11. Contracts

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
 - a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
 - b) Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations².

² The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts



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- c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)³.
- d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
- e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders[], ⁴[insert reference of the council's relevant standing order] and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below [£3,000] and above [£100] the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.
- i) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- j) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

b) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,551,413)

³ Thresholds currently applicable are:

a) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£181,302)

⁴ Based on NALC's Model Standing Order 18d ©NALC 2018



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[12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works]

- [12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).]
- [12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the council.]
- [12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.]

[13. Stores and equipment]

- [13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.]
- [13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.]
- [13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.]
- [13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.]

14. Assets, properties and estates

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed [£250].



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- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 14.6. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. Insurance

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers [in consultation with the Clerk].
- [15.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.]
- 15.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to council at the next available meeting.
- 15.5. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined [annually] by the council, or duly delegated committee.

16. [Charities]

[16.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with



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Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.]

17. Risk management

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.

The Model Financial Regulations templates were produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in July 2019 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

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GUIDANCE ON THE MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS TEMPLATES FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

This guidance document provides information on how to use the Model Financial Regulations templates for England and Wales, produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in 2019.

Dates and timeframes

Stated dates or months may be changed to suit local circumstances.

Where the word "regularly" is used in the text it is for the individual council to set the required interval, monthly, quarterly, or half-yearly. This period should never exceed 12 months.

Amending the regulations for your council

Where the guidance has information in [square brackets] this part may be deleted if not relevant. An alternative option may have been provided.

The value inserted in [square brackets] in any of the paragraphs (other than the EU Procurement and Public Contract Regulations 2015 thresholds referred to in 11.1a (England), 11.1b (England) and 11.1k (Wales) may be varied by the council and should be reviewed regularly and confirmed annually by the council.

The appropriate approved list referred to in paragraph 11.1b (Wales) shall be a list drawn up by the clerk and approved by council but, normally shall be based on the list maintained by the district council for such works, if such list is maintained. In the absence of an appropriate list, the words in square brackets should be omitted

You will find information that requires amending for your local council in paragraphs.

England:

- 1.8 and 1.14
- 2.2
- 3.1 and 3.2
- 4.1, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.8
- 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6

- 6.3, 6.4, 6.6, 6.15, 6.17, 6.18, 6.19, 6.20, 6.21 and 6.22
- 7.3
- 9.10
- 11.1
- 12, 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3



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- 13, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4
- 14.2
- 15.1, 15.2 and 15.5

Wales:

- 1.8 and 1.14
- 2.2
- 3.1 and 3.2
- 4.1, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.8
- 5.1, 5.2, 5.5 and 5.6
- 6.3, 6.4, 6.6, 6.15, 6.17, 6.18, 6.19, 6.20, 6.21 and 6.22
- 7.3

- 16 and 16.1
- 17.1 and 17.2
- 18.2
- 9.10
- 11.1
- 12, 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3
- 13, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4
- 14.2
- 15.1, 15.2 and 15.5
- 16 and 16.1
- 17.1 and 17.2

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TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda Item 12

Date:

29th November 2019

Title:

HRN2 COMMUNITY BUILDING

Purpose of the Report: To enable members to consider the councils position in

relation to the proposed community building within HRN2.

Contact Officer:

Clare Evans, Town Clerk

RECOMMENDATIONS 1.

1. To welcome the provision of community facilities within the HRN2 development;

2. To confirm that HRTC are keen to be involved in the development, delivery and management of the facility working in partnership with a third party group such as the Churches Group.

2. BACKGROUND

As part of the HRN2 development, community facilities are being provided under a s.106 arrangement. There have been discussions between Houghton Regis Town Council, representatives of a Churches Group and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) to explore some of the issues regarding the facility's functions, funding and future management.

The s.106 agreement is between the developers and CBC. The capital funding for the facility will come via the s.106 in pre-agreed stages related to housing occupancy levels. As such the development of the facility may come in phases to match the funding stream. The following phases were previously suggested to help shape thoughts:

- a) Phase 1: an initial structure containing a small community meeting place, an office, store and a base for a community worker,
- b) Phase 2: an expansion from phase 1 providing a larger multi-purpose space for community group activities (e.g. mums & toddlers, indoor sports, church services, larger meetings, celebrations, etc.), plus offices available for local services - PCSOs, Health Visitors and other health services, with car parking designed to accommodate visiting services such as mobile library etc.,

c) **Phase 3**: an expansion from phase 2 providing café, more meeting space facilities, with a shared car parking space, plus outdoor play equipment and sports (e.g. 5-a-side astro-turf, tennis courts and MUGA).

An early priority is to outline the proposed uses in each phase. This selection will enable design work to be carried out and calculate the extent, construction and size of each phase. This and the range of the activities will determine the capital funding required from the s.106 provision, whether additional capital funding will be required, and the level of revenue funding to ensure the successful and sustainable operation through the lifetime of the project.

The Churches Group have completed a considerable amount of work on this project and are keen to see the facility develop to become central to the local community. The Group have suggested the early placement of local community worker to give new residents support and information, etc, and liaise with them to gain input to future needs and help shape subsequent phases.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

HRTC considered this facility at its meeting on 26th June 20181.

The outcome from this meeting was:

Houghton Regis Town Council moves to a process to identify a suitable partner to deliver and manage a Community Building in HRN2.

Members are reminded that the s.106 agreement is between the developers and CBC. It is for CBC to follow their internal corporate processes to enable this facility to be brought forward.

CBC have continued discussions with the Churches Group and with HRTC. It is anticipated that CBC will be writing to the Churches group and to HRTC to set out their position imminently.

It is suggested that with a new council in place that it may be desirable to review the position of HRTC in relation to this project.

Members are invited to consider this project and to consider future involvement of HRTC.

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.

¹ https://www.houghtonregis.org.uk/useruploads/documents/180626.pdf

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

• None at this stage but as this project develops there may be Corporate Implications arising.

Legal Implications

 None at this stage but as this project develops there may be Legal Implications arising

Financial Implications

 None at this stage but as this project develops there may be Financial Implications arising

Risk Implications

- This report aims to establish a more positive approach to this project and to working with potential partners
- Other Risk Implications may arise as this project develops, specifically capacity risks and service delivery risks

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.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The previous council administration considered this project and were keen to see community facilities develop to support this emerging community. There were mixed feelings around how the facility was to be delivered and managed in the longer term. Considerations were further complicated due to the lack of a defined process by CBC. It is suitable for this new council administration to consider this project and to set out its position.

7. APPENDICES

None.

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AUGUST 2019

LTN 33 | COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES

Introduction

This Note will consider the payment of allowances to local council chairmen and the different types of allowances that can be paid to councillors generally. The relevant law for England is set out in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations") and for Wales in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 ("the 2011 Measure"). Unless otherwise stated statutory references are to the 2003 Regulations.

The Parish Basic Allowance

- 2. A local council is able to pay a parish basic allowance ("PBA") for each year to its chairman only or to each of its *elected* members (Regulation 25). The amount payable to the chairman may differ from that of other members but otherwise the sum shall be the same for each member.
- The PBA is not a salary. It is a figure, which is calculated to cover the expenses that are normally associated with the basic duties of being a local councillor. The purpose is also not to reimburse individual councillors for specific expenses. Travelling and subsistence allowances are treated separately (see paragraph 7 below). There is no set figure and amounts may differ according to local factors.
- 4. Regulation 25 (6) provides that as soon as reasonably practical after setting the levels at which the PBA is to be paid and to whom, the council must arrange for the publication in a conspicuous place for a period of at least 14 days within the area of the council, a notice containing the following information
 - a. any recommendation in respect of PBA made by the parish remuneration panel (see below);
 - b. the level or levels at which the authority has decided to pay PBA and to which members it is to be paid; and
 - c. a statement that in reaching the decision, regard was had to the recommendation of the parish remuneration panel.



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- 5. The council must keep a copy of the information referred to in the notice available for public inspection on reasonable notice (Regulation 25 (7)).
- 6. The 2003 Regulations also require a notice to be published when the report of the parish remuneration panel is made to the council (Regulation 30). It may be possible for the two separate requirements to be satisfied by the publication of one notice with the proviso that it contains all of the required information and timescales allow it to be dealt with in this manner.

Parish Travelling and Subsistence Allowance

- 7. Regulation 26 permits a local council to pay to both elected and co-opted members allowances in respect of travelling and subsistence. This includes an allowance in respect of travel by bicycle or other non-motorised form of transport undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within the following categories -
 - the attendance at a meeting of the council or of any committee or sub-committee of the council, or of any body to which the council makes appointments or nominations or of any committee or subcommittee of such a body;
 - b) the attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the council is a member:
 - c) the performance of duties in connection with a tender process;
 - the performance of any duty which requires the inspection of any premises;
 - e) the carrying out of any other duty approved by the council, or any duty of a class so approved, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of any of its committees or subcommittees.

Recommendations

8. Regulation 25 (2) and Regulation 28 provide that where a local council proposes to pay the PBA, it must have regard to the recommendations which have been made in respect of it by the parish remuneration panel in setting the level of that allowance. The same requirement is not specified within Regulation 26 and so on face value it would appear that the council can set the level of travelling and subsistence allowance without reference to the panel. However in NALC's view it would be



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appropriate for councils to also take the view of the parish remuneration panel into account.

Parish Remuneration Panel

- 9. Regulation 27 states that a parish remuneration panel may be established by a responsible authority (which is defined as a district or unitary county council). In some areas panels will not be set up as there is no duty to do so. The implication is that the panel is established when a request to do so is made by an appropriate local council. The process of making such a request is not specified within the 2003 Regulations and how this is achieved in practice will differ around the country.
- 10. The expenses of the parish panel are to be met equally by those local councils in respect of which recommendations are made (Regulation 27(4). Although the 2003 Regulations are not specific, it may be assumed that the cost is spread between those local councils that actually make a request.
- Regulation 28 provides that when convened, a parish remuneration panel will produce a report making recommendations as to -
 - the amount of PBA payable to members of the local council (the council must take this into account in setting the agreed level);
 - the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable (see above comments on taking this into account);
 - whether the PBA should be payable only to the chairman of the council or to all of the elected members;
 - d) if the PBA is to be paid to all members whether the level to be paid to the chairman should be higher and if so, what that higher figure should be;
 - e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive the travelling and subsistence allowance.
- 12. A copy of this report is sent to each council about which recommendations have been made.

Levels of Allowances

13. Regulation 29 enables the parish remuneration panel in making its recommendations, to apply the same level to all the local councils for



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which it was established or else recommend different levels for different councils.

14. The parish remuneration panel shall express its recommendations as to the level of PBA both as a percentage of the sum that an independent remuneration panel has recommended for principal authorities (this figure can be 100%) and as a monetary figure.

What to do after receiving the recommendation?

- 15. Regulations 30 and 31 provide that as soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving the report from the parish remuneration panel, the council must -
 - ensure that copies are available for public inspection on reasonable notice;
 - b) publish a notice in a conspicuous place for a period of at least 14 days which:
 - 1. states that it has received the recommendation
 - 2. describes the main recommendations and specifies the recommended amounts of each allowance and
 - states that copies of the panel's report are available for inspection upon giving reasonable notice and give details of how a request to inspect should be given.
- 16. A reasonable fee can be charged for the provision of a copy of the report.
- 17. The council is required to maintain records of payments made in respect of the allowances specifying the name of the recipient and the nature of the allowance. These records can be inspected by any local government elector for the parish without payment of a fee upon giving reasonable notice. Copies must be provided if so requested and a reasonable fee can be charged.
- 18. At the end of a year (which means any period of 12 months ending on 31 March in any year), the council must publish a notice in a conspicuous place for a period of at least 14 days stating the total amount that it has paid in the year to each councillor in respect of the PBA and for the parish travelling and subsistence allowance.



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Election to Forgo an Allowance

19. Regulation 32 enables a member to elect in writing to the proper officer that he or she wishes to forgo all or any part of their entitlement to the above allowances.

Recovery of Payments Made

20. Regulation 25 (8) provides for the recovery of allowances already paid to a member. An authority may require that where payment of PBA has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned ceases to be a member of the authority or is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period,

Chairman's Allowance

21. S.15 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (s.34 (5) for Wales) remain in force. This enables a local council to pay its chairman for the purpose of enabling him/ her to meet the expenses of his/ her office such allowance as the council thinks reasonable. This means that councils can make this payment without the need to refer to the parish remuneration panel.

Dependants' Carer's Allowance

22. In England local councillors are not entitled to claim this allowance under the 2003 Regulations.

Tax Implications

23. When paying parish basic allowances to elected members, local councils are obliged to deduct income tax. HM Revenue & Customs ("HMRC") treats all councillors equally so local councillors will be subject to tax provisions in the same way as principal authority councillors. There may also be similar considerations with regard to travel and subsistence allowance in certain circumstances. Councils are advised to consult HMRC for guidance on the tax treatment of allowances. Also advice can be requested from NALC's Accounts and Audit Advisor.

Councillors' allowances in Wales

24. Under the 2011 Measure, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales prescribes the maximums for community and town councillors' allowances in Wales. Details are published in the Panel's annual reports



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and can be found on the Panel's website: https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales. Each community/ town council must formally decide to apply the determinations if they decide to pay allowances. If a council does adopt the determinations, members are currently entitled to:

- £150 a year to cover telephone, IT and other costs.
- Up to £1500 for additional duties if mayor, £500 if deputy-mayor or for other roles.
- Reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs when on official business
- A financial loss allowance
- Reimbursement of the costs of care for a dependent child or adult of up to £403 a month (including formal and informal carers, e.g. babysitters for council meetings when no one else is available to care for a councillor's child(ren).

Councils should consult HMRC for taxation questions.

Other Legal Topic Notes (LTNs) relevant to this subject:

LTN	Title	Relevance
11	Celebrations and Similar Events	Sets out how chairmen may use their allowance in respect of celebratory events
	3	

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