

# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr T McMahon**

Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

E-mail: [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)

27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

**To: All Town Councillors**

### Notice of Meeting

**You are hereby summoned to a virtual meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.00pm.**

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

[MEETING LINK<sup>1</sup>](#)

[MEETING GUIDANCE](#)

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

**Clare Evans  
Town Clerk**

***THIS MEETING MAY BE  
RECORDED<sup>2</sup>***

### AGENDA

#### 1. ELECTION OF THE TOWN MAYOR

The following process is suggested:

- The retiring Town Mayor to invite nominations for a Town Mayor to hold office until the Annual Meeting in 2022.
- Members to elect a Town Mayor for 2021-22.
- The newly elected Mayor will receive the Chain of Office from the retiring Town Mayor, make and sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and make an acceptance speech.

<sup>1</sup> If you require a meeting link emailed to you, please contact the Head of Democratic Services at [louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> 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.*

- 
- A vote of thanks will be proposed to the retiring Town Mayor and he/she will receive the Past Mayor's badge.
  - The retiring Town Mayor is invited to reply.
  - The Town Mayor is invited to make his/her Announcements.

## 2. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

The following process is suggested:

- The Town Mayor to invite nominations for a Deputy Town Mayor to hold office until the Annual Meeting in 2022.
- Members to elect a Deputy Town Mayor for 2021-22.
- The newly elected Deputy Town Mayor will make and sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and receive the Chain of Office from the Town Mayor

## 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

## 4. 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.

## 5. 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.

## 6. MINUTES

*Pages 9 - 14*

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

**Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.**

## 7. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MINUTES

*Pages 15 - 38*

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

Corporate Services Committee	None to present
Community Services Committee	None to present
Environment & Leisure Committee	None to present
Planning Committee	8th March 2021 and 29th March 2021
Town Partnership Committee	26th January 2021

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

New Office Provisions Sub Committee	None to present
New Cemetery Sub-Committee	None to present

**Recommendation:** To receive the Minutes detailed above.

## 8. COUNCIL CALENDAR FOR 2021-22

*Pages 39 - 49*

The draft Council Calendar, including meeting dates, member training and briefing dates, and council and civic event dates, for 2021/22 was presented at the Town Council meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. At this meeting Members noted the draft Council Calendar and recommended its approval at the Annual Meeting of Town Council, subject to some alterations as listed under Minute 11563, Strategic Policies 2021/22. In addition, the following alteration has been included:

Town Council changed from 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 to 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021

Community Services Committee changed from 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021

The approval of the calendar of council meetings including the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council up to an including the next annual meeting of the council is in accordance with Standing Order 4.j.ix.

From 7<sup>th</sup> May the provision under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 for the council to be able to meet remotely is removed. However the difficulty is that for a period of time after 7<sup>th</sup> May national restrictions are in place which seek to limit the number of households who can meet inside. If the roadmap is followed hopefully this period will only be until 21<sup>st</sup> June.

Guidance from gov.uk can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

There are a number of council meetings scheduled to take place in this period.

Members are requested to consider how the council should operate during this interim period and are referred to the report attached at Pages 50 - 55

**Recommendation:** 1. To approve the Council Calendar for 2021/22;

**2. From 7<sup>th</sup> May and until national restrictions are lifted for meetings of the council to be held:**

- **in person with restrictions in place on the number of public who can be present and to offer remote access to other cllrs and members of the public who wish to attend**
- **in accordance with the Guidance Notes for Covid Secure Meetings**

**9. COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

*Pages 56 - 75*

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

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

The approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. As detailed under Minute 11563, Strategic Policies 2021/22. The amendments suggested were discussed and considered suitable. As such the attached revised Committee Functions & Terms of Reference is presented for formal approval.

**10. COMMITTEE, SUB-COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

*Pages 76 - 77*

Members are requested to:

1. Nominate and approve membership on the Town Council's Committees, Sub Committees, Working and other Groups;
2. To appoint Chairs of Standing Committees accordingly.

The following summarises the committee structure and associated membership:

*Standing Committees*

Corporate Services Committee	7 members
Environment & Leisure Committee	7 members
Community Services Committee	7 members
Planning Committee	7 members

*Joint Committees*

Partnership Committee	8 members (4 Town Cllrs & 4 CBC Cllrs)
-----------------------	--

*Sub-Committees*

Complaints Sub-Committee*	3 members
Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee*	3 members
Personnel Sub-Committee*	4 members
Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee*	3 members (To be appointed as required)
New Office Provisions Sub Committee	

---

Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee	5 members 6 members
<i>Working Groups</i>	
Events Working Group	
Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group**	7 members (up to)
Combating Crime Working Group	3 members
<i>Steering Groups</i>	
Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan	5 members 5 members

\* To be appointed from Corporate Services Committee

\*\* To comprise Members who do not sit on Events Working Group

Members are referred to the attached pages which provide membership details as requested by councillors.

**Recommendation:**

- 1. To nominate and approve membership on the Town Council's Committees, Sub Committees, Working and other Groups;**
- 2. To appoint Chairs of Standing Committees accordingly.**

## 11. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

*Page 78*

The Town Council is invited to appoint representatives to outside organisations to act as a link between the Town Council and the organisation.

Members will find attached the list of outside organisations with nominations to which the Council appointed representatives in 2020/21. Members are invited to appoint representatives to these outside organisations for 2021/22.

### *Reporting Mechanisms*

Members who are appointed as representatives are requested to attend meetings of the organisations and to report to them items / issues of relevance from Houghton Regis Town Council and in turn to report back to the Town Council or the specified committee on the activities of the organisation. There is a standing item on Town Council agendas to facilitate this.

**Recommendation:**

- 1. To appoint the councillor representatives for the listed outside organisations for 2020/21;**
- 2. To note the reporting back mechanism as set out.**

## 12. STANDING ORDERS

*Pages 79 - 104*

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.vii. Council is required to review its Standing Orders.

---

Standing Orders are ‘the written rules of a local council. they are used to confirm a council’s internal organisational and administrative procedures, procurement and procedural matters for meetings’. <sup>3</sup>

The approved Standing Orders were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. The amendments suggested were discussed and considered suitable. As such the attached revised Standing Orders are presented for formal approval.

**Recommendation: To approve Standing Orders.**

### 13. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

*Pages 105 - 120*

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.vii. Council is required to review its Financial Regulations.

Financial Regulations are ‘the “standing orders” of a local council that regulate and control its financial affairs and accounting procedures’. <sup>4</sup>

The approved Financial Regulations were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. The amendments suggested were discussed and considered suitable. In addition the public procurement threshold values have been altered due to the departure of the UK from the EU. As such the attached revised Financial Regulations are presented for formal approval.

**Recommendation: To approve Financial Regulations.**

### 14. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

*Pages 121 - 123*

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.v. Council is required to review its Scheme of Delegation.

The Scheme of Delegation authorises the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer, Council and Standing Committees of the Council to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed.

The approved Scheme of Delegation was reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. The amendments suggested were discussed and considered suitable. As such the attached revised Scheme of Delegation is presented for formal approval.

**Recommendation: To approve the Scheme of Delegation.**

### 15. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

---

<sup>3</sup> Local Councils Explained, NALC

<sup>4</sup> Local Councils Explained, NALC

---

In order for the Town Council to continue to use the General Power of Competence it needs to resolve that it meets the eligibility criteria (specified below) as contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011:

- At least 2/3 of Members are elected at ordinary elections or at a by-election
- The clerk holds the following recognised qualifications
  - (i) The Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy;

The CiLCA module on the General Power of Competence

**Recommendation: To confirm that Houghton Regis Town Council meets the eligibility criteria for the General Power of Competence as contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.**

## **16. 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.

## **17. WELCOME BACK FUND**

Pages 124 - 145

Members are advised that CBC have invited town councils to take advantage of the Government's Welcome Back Fund. Members will find attached more information in the pages attached.

A response to CBC is required by 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Points to highlight include:

1. Revenue funding only
2. Not to replace committed expenditure
3. Can support neighbourhood centres
4. £15,000 has been allocated to Houghton Regis
5. CBC will require the Council to sign a SLA based around the submitted bid
6. Completion date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022
7. Can be used for:
  - Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely – High Street Ambassadors / Wardens
  - Business facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely
  - Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely
  - Support to promote a safe public environment for a local area's visitor economy – includes events such as a town relaunch, market stall covering, gazebos, signage, lights, benches, green spaces, websites and apps
  - Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street

Due to the timing of this information being received and the publication of the agenda only preliminary thought has been given to a suitable funding bid. These suggestions are put forward:

1. Welcome back Events in Bedford Square (£4,000), Neptune Square (£2,000) and Hillborough Crescent (£2,000) comprising family-based activities / entertainment
2. Local retail and business app / website to promote the local offer, promote special offers

Other suggestions are welcomed.

Members are requested to nominate 2 councillors to meet with the Clerk to develop these ideas further and to put forward the bid to CBC.

- Recommendation:**
- 1. To support the CBC Welcome Back Fund initiative;**
  - 2. To nominate 2 councillors to work with officers to develop the Houghton Regis Welcome Back Fund bid.**

**0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0**



**Town Council**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> March at 7.00pm**

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

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk

Public: 1

**11555 APOLOGIES**

None.

**11556 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11557 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**11558 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

**Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

Cllr Kennedy advised that Cllrs Copleston and Dixon Wilkinson were having technical difficulties joining the meeting but hoped to join as soon as possible.

**11559 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

Corporate Services Committee	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2020 & 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2021
Community Services Committee	26 <sup>th</sup> October & 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2020
Environment & Leisure Committee	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
Planning Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> December 2020, 4 <sup>th</sup> January, 25 <sup>th</sup> January &



Committee would like to mark the event. Ideas were welcomed.

Cllr Kennedy advised that HHP had been a success during lockdown, but its success had brought problems around litter and parking. One consideration had been to charge for parking, but this was not supported generally. Government guidance was being followed regarding the re-opening of the centre.

## **11562 COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

Houghton Regis Town Council had 2 councillor vacancies, one in the Parkside Ward and one in the Tith Farm Ward. An election had been called for both vacancies. Nominations were required to be submitted between 29<sup>th</sup> March and 4pm on 8<sup>th</sup> April to the Deputy Returning Officer, Unit 2, Bury Farm, Mill Lane, Stotfold. SG5 4NU. If either or both vacancies were contested, the election would be held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

## **11563 STRATEGIC POLICES 2021/22**

To provide members with the opportunity to consider key council policies and a calendar of meetings and events for 2021/22. In accordance with Standing Orders these will be presented the Town Council at the AGM, date to be confirmed.

The following comments were made:

- To adjust the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference to include consideration of highways proposals. It was suggested that this function be added to the Planning Committee
- To adjust the Council Calendar 2021/22 to remove the Celebration of Christmas and replace with Santa Float
- To see if Corporate Services Committee would like to consider what would happen if the Council's RFO was not available in an emergency situation
- The council may like to consider bringing forward an emergency plan
- 20<sup>th</sup> November Members Open Session included in error, to be removed
- To provide more time for budget discussions to swap Personal and Town Council meeting dates in January 2022
- Highlighted to members that the Planning agenda 29<sup>th</sup> March included the consultation on the highways works for Windsor Drive
- To hold the AGM on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022 to allow more time should there be an election
- To increase the frequency of the Leaders Briefings to monthly to help ensure Leaders up to date. Clarification was sought on the purpose and objectives of Leaders Briefings and Member Open Sessions.

**Resolved:** To recommend to the Annual Meeting of Town Council approval of the following:

- **Scheme of Delegation**
- **Committee Functions & Terms of Reference subject to extending the Functions of Planning Committee to include consideration of highways proposals**
- **Standing Orders**
- **Financial Regulations**
- **Council Calendar 2021/22 – to be re-examined in light of the suggestions made**

---

**11564 ANNUAL TOWNS MEETING**

Between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June, parish and town councils were required to call an Annual Parish Meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to enable local government electors within the parish to discuss 'parish affairs'. At present there was no legal basis to enable this meeting to be held remotely. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 did not cover this type of meeting.

This meeting was scheduled to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> April. Unfortunately, Regulations do not permit this meeting to be held on this date.

At the time of preparing the agenda, NALC had not issued guidance to the sector regarding the Annual Towns / Parish meeting. As such it may be possible to hold this meeting in late May.

It was advised that DTC, LLTC and BTC had held their annual parish meeting remotely. It was agreed to look into this.

**Resolved: To hold this meeting on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7pm provided that it was legal to do so.**

*Cllr Dixon Wilkinson arrived at 7.35pm.*

**11565 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCILS' AGM**

Members were reminded that the date of the Annual meeting of Houghton Regis Town Council was scheduled for Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021(7pm).

However, Members were advised that the Regulations which enabled local councils to meet remotely expired on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021. NALC have advised that the government were not intending to extend this Regulation, such that all council meetings after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 would need to be held in person. NALC suggested that councils may like to consider holding their Annual General Meeting prior to 7<sup>th</sup> May in order to achieve certainty that the meeting could proceed.

In relation to the date of the Annual Meeting of Houghton Regis Town Council the Standing Orders required the meeting to be held on 'such day in May as the council decides' (Standing Order 4b).

To be held before 7<sup>th</sup> May, possible dates included Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May (although Planning Committee scheduled for 7pm), Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May or Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May. Members were reminded that the by-election was on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The date of the AGM had to be set by Town Council, as such the date needed to be set at this meeting.

At the time of preparing the agenda, NALC had publicised some practical advice on preparing to hold face to face meetings, suggesting steps to take to provide distancing and safety of those attending. NALC state that 'there is still much uncertainty around how legislation or COVID-19 risks may change over the coming weeks and months. NALC will update this guidance as the situation evolves.'

To cover eventualities the following was suggested:

Should Regulations which permit a council to meet virtually be extended beyond 7<sup>th</sup> May, to hold the AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021;

If Regulations which permit a council to meet virtually are not extended beyond 7<sup>th</sup> May, to hold the AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Should an alternative situation arise, it was suggested that the current arrangements, notably the position of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and membership of Committees etc and outside organisations be retained until such time as the AGM was held.

Due to this uncertainty over future meetings, Members were reminded of the delegation arrangements provided to the Mayor and the Clerk under Minute 11207 (Extract):

***Resolved: To delegate authority to the Clerk and the Chair of the council to undertake any measures / make any decisions deemed necessary to provide support to the community and to protect the health and wellbeing of Councillors and staff based on government and NALC advice;***

These arrangements had not been revoked to date and it was suggested that they remained in place until the council was confident that it had the means to legally meet through Town Council, Committees and Sub-Committees.

It was suggested that the Council could suspend the Standing order which required the AGM to be held in May.

**Resolved:**

- 1. Should Regulations which permit a council to meet virtually be extended beyond 7<sup>th</sup> May, to hold the AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021;**
- 2. If Regulations which permit a council to meet virtually are not extended beyond 7<sup>th</sup> May, to hold the AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 such that the AGM can be held virtually.**

## **11566 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – FUNDING REQUEST**

The Town Councils Neighbourhood Plan public consultation had to be put on hold due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Members considered a report in support of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups funding request to commence the consultation as Covid restrictions were easing.

Members commented on the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was suggested that the funding for the consultation be extended beyond that requested. It was agreed to hold a special meeting should further funding be required.

**Resolved: To approve a budget of £6000, from budget heading 401-4062 which will be offset by a transfer in from EMR330, to enable the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to undertake a public consultation on the Town Councils draft Neighbourhood Plan.**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm**

**Dated this                      day of                      2021**

**Chairman**

DRAFT

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Planning Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	D Dixon-Wilkinson J Carroll D Jones M S Kennedy R Morgan S Thorne	Chairman    Substitute
	Officers:	Debbie Marsh Louise Senior	Corporate Services Manager Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	5	
Apologies:	Councillors:	K Wattingham	
Also present:	Councillors:	T McMahon S Goodchild	HRTC Councillor CBC Councillor

**11538 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Morgan substituted)

**11539 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public raised concerns regarding application CB/21/00435/FULL.  
Concerns were:

- the positioning of the vehicular access off Houghton Road,
- the increase of light pollution due to loss of established trees and vegetation
- possible timings of delivery vehicles and opening hours.

It was suggested that during the building process, the pathway opposite the proposed entrance could be improved as currently it was a grass verge which during wet weather was hazardous to walk on, forcing school children and other pedestrians to walk on the road, to avoid the slippery surface.

**11540 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Jones declared an interest in application CB/21/00737/LDCP due to the property's location in relation to his own property. This application had been included on agenda for noting, subsequently, there was no discussion relating to this application.

**11541 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11542 PLANNING MATTERS****(a) The following planning applications were considered:**

CB/21/00509/FULL Single storey side and rear extension  
31 Therfield Walk LU5 5QB  
For: Mrs and Mr Sylwia and Karol

**Comments:**

**Houghton Regis Town Council objects to this application on the grounds of:**

- **Overdevelopment.**
- **Encroachment onto amenity land that runs alongside the property.**
- **Queries land ownership, as per point above.**

CB/21/00441/FULL Erection of 8no. dwellings with associated works  
Land to the south of The Bungalow, Bedford Road, Bidwell  
For: Jarvis Partnership Homes

**Comments:**

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

- **Overdevelopment**
- **Lack of parking provision – 7 x 3 bed properties and 1 x 2 bed property with 16 residents parking and 2 visitor parking spaces, falls short of parking standards. There is no room on this site for additional on street park thereby, visitors/residents/trade persons will be forced to park inconsiderately. This area will look like a car park and not a development that might blend in with the surrounding Green Belt.**
- **The proposed development is unsympathetic to the adjacent green corridor and therefore does not accord with the HRN Framework Plan.**
- **The proposed post and rail boundary fence will give no privacy to affected residents. Should then these be replaced with close board fences, then this would ‘shut’ the site off.**
- **No exceptional circumstances to support this outward growth.**
- **This proposal cannot be supported under the guise of limited expansion in the Green Belt, as that has already been afforded to the adjacent site.**

**Furthermore:**

**The Town Council challenges that the site no longer serves the purposes of Green Belt land. It is regardless that it is in close proximity to the Bidwell West**



**development site. If anything, this makes this site all the more important. Bidwell is a hamlet, that needs some degree of protection from expansion. The Town Council is not against development, but is committed to preserving, the Bidwell setting.**

CB/21/00439/FULL Convert office/workshop into a 2 bed bungalow  
Regis House, Queen Street, LU5 5BT

**Comments:**

**Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**

CB/21/00524/FULL Erection of detached dwelling (No. 1A)  
1 Newbury Road, LU5 5RA  
For: Mr & Mrs Phillips

**Comments:**

**Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**

CB/21/00435/FULL Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a Class E limited assortment discount foodstore with associated car parking, access, landscaping and associated engineering works.  
Land at Houghton Road and Townsend Farm Road  
Houghton Regis  
Lidl Great Britain Ltd

**Comments:**

**Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application but raised some concerns, as below:**

**Members agreed that should this application go before Central Bedfordshire Councils Development Management Committee then Cllr Morgan should attend the meeting to raise the points discussed.**

**Loss of trees - The Town Council understands that the trees that are there, were planted to help with minimising the pollution that came from the cement works. With the increase to traffic this site will produce, it is requested that the loss of trees is kept to the minimum. Should trees be removed the Town Council requests that the applicant provide, plant and maintain alive for five years one ‘Select Standard’, girth 10-12cm, tree for each one removed. If possible, the siting of the trees to be agreed with Houghton Regis Town Council.**

**Highway issues – The Town Council is concerned that the proposed entrance will cause traffic chaos, due to its close proximity to two sets of traffic lights. Also, the proposed**

entrance will mean vehicles will have to cross the cycle path, thereby potentially causing an increase to the safety of footway users, especially students.

**Vehicle movements -** There is no information to confirm HGV delivery times nor the store opening times. In addition to this the town council is concerned that the potential increase in vehicle movements, accessing and existing the site, from Houghton Road, will have a detrimental impact to those residents living opposite the site.

**Light pollution –** Increase in light pollution should trees be removed. Detrimental impact to those residents living opposite the site.

**Electric car charging points -** Insufficient electric car charging points. The Town Council would like to propose 2 more charging points.

**Access –** The Town Council requests that consideration be given to the vehicle access being from Blackburn Road and the HGV access from Houghton Road. This would reduce the conflict between pedestrians and highway users.

The Town Council acknowledges the orientation of the proposed store in order to take advantage of sustainable energy but maybe the developer could revisit the access points, alongside the comments above.

The Town Council acknowledges that Lidl has a strong sustainability ethos and would welcome the opportunity to work with them, outside the restraints of planning conditions, in order to build on that ethos and support the Town Councils vision of improving the green infrastructure around the town.

The Town Council respectfully suggests that the applicant provide and promote to staff, free Bikeability cycle training to complement the excellent “Secure cycle parking for staff [that] will be provided within the warehouse.”

Finally, the Town Council requests that should the planning permission for advertising hoardings on the Houghton Road edge of the site still exist, that this be revoked.

CB/21/00681/FULL Single storey front extension  
37 Grangeway Footway, LU5 5PR  
For: Mr M Pavel

**Comments:**

Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application, however, would like to raise concerns of possible light infringement to the neighbouring property.

CB/21/00280/OUT      Erection of 4 chalet style bungalows  
Land North of Highfield House, Bedford Road, LU5 6JP  
For: Mr D Carrol

**Comments:**

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

**This site is located in the Green Belt.**

**The Town Council does not accept that this development is in accordance with the surrounding character of the area.**

**Whilst the proposed development is back land development and will not be viewed from the highway, it will however have a detrimental impact on the open character of the site and the adjacent area.**

**This site is not part of the allocated strategic growth sites and therefore does not contribute to the strategic allocation of housing, it is a minor development which will not contribute to the Town.**

**The proposed access would cause visibility restrictions for both drivers and highway users**

**The Town Council attaches great importance to the Green Belt and strongly objects to another infill site and intensification of development in this area.**

CB/21/00382/FULL      Construction of 9 residential dwellings and all ancillary works  
The Orchard, Bedford Road, LU5 6JJ  
For: Bilsby Properties Ltd

**Comments:**

**Houghton Regis Town Council objects to this application on the grounds of:**

- Access
- Overdevelopment
- No footpath or cycle access to the site, thereby making an enclosed standalone development and out of keeping.
- Layout appears cramped

***For Noting***

CB/21/00489/DOC      Discharge of Condition 16 against Planning Permission CB/15/00297/OUT (Outline 'hybrid' planning application with details of main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage in detail only and layout in outline with details of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: Up to 1,850 residential (C3) dwellings (including affordable housing), 2FE Primary School (D1), employment land (Use Classes B1

- [a-c], B2 & B8), local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and community/leisure uses (D1 & D2), layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms, natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthworks)  
Land west of Bidwell (Houghton Regis North Site 2) Parcel 1
- CB/21/00737/LDCP Proposed loft conversion with rear dormer  
119 Tennyson Avenue, LU5 5UG
- CB/21/00744/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission  
CB/20/00348/RM (Resubmission: Reserved Matters following Outline Application CB/15/00297/OUT 'hybrid' planning application) amendment sought to construct a garden room in garden of plot 51 and change garage at plot 52 to a store  
Land to West of Houghton Regis, Watling Street
- CB/21/00718/DOC Discharge of Condition 20 against planning permission  
CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans).  
Houghton Regis North 1, Land to the Northern Edge  
Houghton Regis
- CB/21/00633/DOC Discharge of Condition(s) 3,4,5,6,7,8 against planning permission CB/19/00455/FULL -3 bedroom detached new dwelling Condition 3: Parking Scheme, Condition 4: Vehicle Area Surfaces, Condition 5:Cycle Parking On-Site Condition 6:Vision Display On-Site Condition 7: Details Of Refuse Collection Points, Condition 8:Materials External Works  
Discharge of Condition(s)  
1 Townsend Terrace, LU5 5BB

**(b) The following decision notices were noted:**

***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

None received.

**Refusals:**

None received.

**Withdrawals:**

None received.

**11543 APPEAL NOTICE – CB/20/03276/FULL 4 TOWNSEND TERRACE, HOUGHTON REGIS, LU5 5BB**

At the planning meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 members requested that a letter of objection be submitted to The Planning Inspectorate on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council, in regard to the appeal lodged for the above address.

Members received a copy of the objection.

Members noted this information.

**11544 CB/20/03557/VOC - STABLE COTTAGE, MANOR FARM, SEWELL LAND, SEWELL, LU6 1RP**

Members received notification from Central Bedfordshire Council in regard to the above application.

Members were advised that this application was recommended for approval at its Development Management Committee on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

For information the Town Councils Planning Committee considered this application at their meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and made the following submission to Central Bedfordshire Council:

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

*This site has already been subject to a previous VOC application (CB/19/03323/VOC) which, in the Town Councils opinion, included so many variations that it constituted a revised application and did not fall under the criteria for VOC. For example, the variation also increased the size of the footprint of the proposed developments, albeit by not much but by a figure in total of around 3 metres, removal of bay windows to be replaced with bi fold doors and two additional windows in plots 2 and 4 on the gable end.*

- *The proposed design does not compliment or harmonise with the local surroundings, in particular to the adjacent listed building. Nor does the design pay regard to its setting in a conservation area.*
- *Insufficient parking provision.*
- *The original application (CB/17/05378/FULL) provided very little in design elements. The previous VOC application and this application, should it be approved, will leave a set of semi-detached dwellings of 'box' like design with absolutely no design elements and contrary to Central Bedfordshire Councils Design Guide and thereby incongruous in the hamlet of Sewell.*

Members agreed for Cllr Kennedy to attend the DMC to address the committee and put forward the views of the Planning Committee.

**Resolved:** To consider and appoint a representative to attend Central Bedfordshire Councils Development Management Committee meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021, in regard to this application.

**11545 CB/TCA/21/00094 – WORKS TO TREES – HOUGHTON HALL PARK**

Members received notification, from Central Bedfordshire Council, of proposed works to trees at Houghton Hall Park. Houghton Hall Park lies within Houghton Regis Conservation Area.

Comments were to be received by Central Bedfordshire Council by the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Members supported the proposed works to trees in Houghton Hall Park.

**Resolved:** To consider the Town Councils comments.

**11546 AREA WIDE MASTERPLAN 3 - LINMERE**

As members were aware Central Bedfordshire Council had consulted on the third area masterplan/design code for Linnere.

Members considered a report from the Town Councils planning consultant be in order for the Town Council to consider their response to this consultation.

Members raised concerns that several advertising campaigns had located the development in Dunstable rather than Houghton Regis, members requested that the developers, Barratt Homes, be contacted and this be advised and corrected accordingly.

Members raised concerns that there was a lack of cohesive connectivity between Linnere and Bidwell West and the old Houghton Regis, which could result in a segregation of communities. Inadequate roads links could be detrimental to the efficiency of public transport links.

**Resolved:** To respond to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of the Area Wide Masterplan 3 – Linnere consultation with the following comments:

**The Town Council raises very strong objections to key aspects of the proposed area masterplan, namely the lack of firm proposals for access and movement integration with the existing residential area to the west (Parkside) and the adjoining undeveloped area in-between. Rather than ‘potential’ walking and cycling links with the communities to the west (as shown in the masterplan) the plans should prioritise definite connections that link existing residential areas through new development areas, which facilitate movement to employment, facilities and open spaces.**

**Further, there are environmental objections since the layout of the development's main access routes for vehicles and buses follows a north-south alignment; the lack of definite and co-ordinated walking and cycling links from the site towards the employment areas eastwards and the adjoining areas to the west, will encourage greater un-sustainable use of cars for a range of journey types.**

**Without a comprehensive approach to the access and movement proposed for both this and the adjoining site, there remains concerns that inappropriate levels of traffic might in future pass along Conquest Road and others leading from this side of the estate before joining Parkside Drive. This would be a major detriment to the residents in these areas by virtue of noise, disturbance and possibly safety and pollution problems.**

**In addition, this raises serious equalities objections since the same lack of definite walking and cycling routes could seriously disadvantage those with low access to personal transport.**

**The masterplan as submitted is inward looking rather than seeking to integrate within the locality. As such it poses a real risk that this development will epitomise a 'them and us' split in future between the old and new parts of Houghton Regis unless the plans make deliberate attempts to integrate staples of life like schools, shops, open spaces and community facilities.**

**The distribution of open space exemplifies this inward-looking approach, seeing the site in isolation and missing major opportunities to create 'linear' parks with from the areas of open space in Parkside across to the 'ecological corridor' along the Woodside Link.**

**Without modifications, the plans for Linnere would create a commuter settlement for towns up and down the M1 and fail to integrate as part of Houghton Regis.**

**The Town Council also raises concern that the two brooks, which cross this area, are now missing from the plan. These brooks are chalk streams and therefore assurances need to be made in the protection of these watercourses.**

## **11547 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Members were advised that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group met on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to discuss the way in which the public consultation could be undertaken during the current Covid 19 restrictions.

The steering group agreed that the aim was to start the public consultation after Easter. However, they were advised that this was subject to approved funding.

Previously the Town Council had been successful in being awarded grants, via the governments grant scheme, for the progression of their Neighbourhood Plan. Currently this scheme is not open for applications for the year 2021/22.

Members were advised that earmarked reserves were in the Town Council budget for Neighbourhood Planning. Therefore, it was proposed that a report and request for funding, for the public consultation and associated costs, be submitted for consideration at the Town Council meeting to be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

Members were advised that grant funding from the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government will be applied for, once the application process is open. However, members were informed that grant funding cannot be applied for retrospectively.

A motion was proposed and seconded to read:

To implore that member's support the funding request being made at the Town Council meeting to be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, in order to progress and complete the Town Councils Draft Neighbourhood Plan public consultation.

This motion was agreed and therefore the following resolution was included.

**Resolved: To implore that member's support the funding request being made at the Town Council meeting to be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, in order to progress and complete the Town Councils Draft Neighbourhood Plan public consultation.**

#### **11548 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN– UPDATE/PROGRESS**

**Woodside Link** – No substantive update to report.

**A5 M1 Link** – For information this major road project opened on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

**All Saints View** – No substantive update to report.

**Linmere** – See agenda item 7

**Bidwell West** – No substantive update to report.

**Kingsland** – No substantive update to report.

Members requested that representatives of Central Bedfordshire Council attend the Town Partnership Committee to in order provide Houghton Regis Town Council with an update on the status of the Kingsland site.

**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 9.23pm**

**Dated this 29<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021.**

**Chairman**

***Houghton Regis Town Council***  
**Planning Committee**  
**29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	D Dixon-Wilkinson D Jones M S Kennedy R Morgan S Thorne	Chairman   Substitute
	Officers:	Debbie Marsh Louise Senior	Corporate Services Manager Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	5	
Apologies:	Councillor:	K Wattingham	
Also present:	Councillor:	S Goodchild	Central Bedfordshire Council
Absent:	Councillor:	J Carroll	

**11567 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Morgan substituted)

**11568 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Members of the public addressed the committee in regard to minute number 11572. Residents stated that since the Woodside Link road had opened, the volume of traffic had significantly decreased in Windsor Drive. It was suggested that a speed camera would be a more appropriate approach to slowing speeding motorists down and not to install raised tables as these would have a detrimental impact to the amenity of residents with the increase in noise. Concern was raised that the proposed traffic calming measures and crossing were being installed to coincide with the proposed development on Windsor Drive.

Alan Winter suggested chicanes as a more appropriate means of slowing the speed of traffic.

A member of the public raised concerns in regard to minute number 11573 and the proposed off-street parking places order relating to a car park in Peel Street, Houghton Regis. Members were advised that this member of the public had, on numerous occasions, raised their concerns to Central Bedfordshire Council about the increase of inconsiderate on street parking in nearby residential roads. The proposed order would only serve to further increase the demand for on street parking, by dispersing those who would ordinarily use the car park finding alternative parking spaces.

A member of the public requested clarity, from the Chairman, under minute number 11575 and in particular to the matter of the Windsor Drive FAQ's item. It was advised that this section was merely an opportunity for the committee to receive updates under the headings listed and that anything more specific would be discussed under its own agenda item.

Members were made aware that residents had established a Friends of Windsor Drive group.

#### **11569 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **11570 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### **11571 PLANNING MATTERS**

**(a) The following planning applications were considered:**

CB/21/00631/FULL External fabric alterations including new external windows and doors, new canopy over entrance, enlarged bin enclosure and secure cycle shelter.  
Unit 6, Nimbus Park Houghton Hall Park, Porz Avenue,  
Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5WZ  
For: E & N Hertfordshire NHS Trust

**Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**

CB/20/04236/FULL Dropped Kerb  
116 Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5JD

**Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**

CB/21/00965/FULL Demolish existing detached garage and erect two storey side extension  
2 Millers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FA  
For: G Gillings

**Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**

**The following applications were noted:**

- CB/21/00717/DOC Discharge of Condition 19 against planning permission CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination.  
Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans).  
Houghton Regis North Site 1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis
- CB/21/00953/NMA Non-Material Amendment to planning permission CB/18/03530/RM (Reserved Matters following Outline Application CB/15/00297/OUT-Erection of 264 dwellings, amenity space and parking, public open space, landscaping and associated works)  
Parcels 3 & 4 (Phases 7 7a & 7b Land at Bidwell West, Houghton Regis
- CB/21/00963/DOC Discharge of Condition 9 against planning permission CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans)  
Houghton Regis North 1, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis

- CB/21/00884/DOC Discharge of Condition 15 against planning permission CB/15/00297/OUT (Outline 'hybrid' planning application with details of main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage in detail only and layout in outline with details of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for later determination.  
Development to comprise: Up to 1,850 residential (C3) dwellings (including affordable housing), 2FE Primary School (D1), employment land (Use Classes B1 [a-c], B2 & B8), local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and community/leisure uses (D1 & D2), layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms, natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthworks).  
Land West of Bidwell (Houghton Regis North Site 2)  
Houghton Regis
- CB/21/01095/DOC Discharge of Condition 30 against Planning Permission CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial, and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans.)  
Houghton Regis North 1, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis

**(b) The following decision notices were noted:**

***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

None received.

***Refusals:***

None received.

***Withdrawals:***

None received.

**11572 WINDSOR DRIVE**

Members considered proposals from Central Bedfordshire Council for the installation of traffic calming measures in Windsor Drive.

Members discussed these proposals at length.

Members were advised that the proposed traffic calming measures were believed to be funded by monies coming from the s106 arrangements made for the Sandringham Drive Development, albeit that this was in 2008, and not from the proposed development in Windsor Drive.

Councillor Jones proposed the following motion to read:

That the Town Council supports the installation of the Tiger Crossing, but that the Town Council strongly objects to raised tables.

Councillor Kennedy proposed an amendment to this motion to read:

That the Town Council accepts the need for the Tiger Crossing but request Central Bedfordshire Council seek alternative traffic calming measures than those of the proposed raised tables. Councillor Morgan seconded the amendment.

Members voted on whether to accept the proposed amendment to the original proposed motion.

All those in favour:

Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson, Cllr Thorne, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Morgan

Those against:

Cllr Jones

Members voted on the amended motion.

All those in favour:

Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson, Cllr Thorne, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Morgan

Those against:

Cllr Jones

The motion was agreed and therefore the following resolution was included.

**Resolved:** To respond to Central Bedfordshire Council in regard to the installation of traffic calming measures proposals in Windsor Drive, with the following reply:

*That the Town Council accepts the need for the Tiger Crossing but request Central Bedfordshire Council seek alternative traffic calming measures than those of the proposed raised tables.*

### **11573 OFF-STREET PARKING ORDER – PEEL STREET**

Members were advised that Central Bedfordshire Council were proposing to make an off-street parking places order relating to a car park in Peel Street, Houghton Regis. Details attached.

Members were, in principle, supportive of the proposal but felt that further information was required before a full and final response could be given.

Members were aware that provision within the car park was provided for those residents living in Bedford Square and raised questions on where residents and traders would park. If this could still be provided and how it would be monitored.

Members agreed to support, in principle, Central Bedfordshire Councils proposed off-street parking places order but requested further information be forthcoming before making their full and final comments.

**Resolved: To request further information in order to consider the Town Councils response to Central Bedfordshire Councils proposed off-street parking places order relating to a car park in Peel Street.**

#### **11574 LOCAL PLAN PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION – MARCH 2021**

Central Bedfordshire Council have published Proposed Main Modifications relating to its Emerging Local Plan.

Central Bedfordshire Council submitted its Local Plan to Government in February 2018. The Local Plan sets out a policy framework to guide development across the Council area up-to 2035, including to support the delivery of housing, employment and infrastructure.

The Local Plan was now at the Examination stage where independent Planning Inspectors consider if the plan meets the appropriate requirements and if it can be adopted. This process has already involved public hearings that took place in May to July 2019 and December 2020. All the stages of the Examination were available on the Council's website at the following link:

<https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-exam>

As part of an Examination process, Planning Inspectors may recommend Main Modifications (changes that materially affect the plan's policies) to make a submitted local plan sound and legally compliant. These Proposed Main Modifications must be published for public consultation, so the Inspectors' have an opportunity to consider any representations on the proposals prior to publishing their report on the plan.

The Town Council, as a consultee, were invited to express their views on these Modifications.

Members were advised that the consultation began on Friday 19th March 2021 for a period of six weeks and would finish at 12 noon on Wednesday 5th May 2021.

**Resolved: To defer the Town Councils response to Central Bedfordshire Councils proposed Modifications Consultation to the next meeting of the planning committee.**

#### **11575 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN UPDATE/PROGRESS**

**Woodside Link** – No substantive update to report.

**A5 M1 Link** – No substantive update to report.

**All Saints View** – No substantive update to report.

**Linmere – Linmere and Bidwell West** – Members were advised that there were no substantive updates to report in regard to either sites, however members were provided with the following information:

*A spokesperson for Central Bedfordshire Council said, “As part of the Houghton Regis North (HRN) development, Central Bedfordshire Council had granted planning permission for 7,000 homes in Houghton Regis. These homes were part of a wider development which included a range of leisure, community and school facilities, and more information on this can be found on their website. In total, it was estimated that a total of 8,065 homes would be built in Houghton Regis, up until 2035. The locations of the additional 1,065 homes were subject to planning permission.”*

**Bidwell West** – No substantive update to report.

**Kingsland** – No substantive update to report.

**Windsor Drive** – Members were provided with a FAQ’s sheet, produced by Central Bedfordshire Council, in regard to a proposed development of up to 100 affordable homes for rent and shared ownership on this site.

**Section 106 Monies** – No substantive update to report.

**Resolved: To note the information**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.32pm**

**Dated this 19<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021**

**Chairman**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP  
COMMITTEE  
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET  
ON 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

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

Also in Attendance: R Morgan HRTC Councillor  
T McMahon HRTC Councillor  
Tony Keaveney Assistant Director Housing Services, Social Care,  
Health & Housing Directorate  
Gina Croxford Community Action Bedfordshire  
Bex McBrearty Community Action Bedfordshire

Apologies: 0

Members of the public: 4

**876 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

None.

**877 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public raised concerns regarding item 6, Housing Projects and Related Issues:  
Windsor Drive Recreation area:

- Lack of parking limits the full recreational use of Windsor Drive Recreation Ground
- Ground is frequently used for football practice and valuable to the community
- Although not formalised, the Neighbourhood Plan lists this space as protected
- Suggested that this has been brought forward to gain permission before the Neighbourhood Plan is formalised.

It was advised that the challenges were prolific around affordable housing, and the provision of football pitches within Houghton Regis was being addressed.

#### **878 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

#### **879 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### **880 IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS: TIME 2 CONNECT**

Gina Croxford, Community Engagement Manager, and Bex McBrearty, Community Connections Adviser from Community Action Bedfordshire, were in attendance at the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

Members were advised that it had been a challenging year for community development work as interactions had been limited to online. Members were advised that good connections had been made with several local organisations, a virtual weekly Café Connect online support group where residents can connect had been set up, it was hoped that user numbers would grow.

Members were advised that there had been a heightened need for help regarding poverty issues within the Houghton Regis area, highlighting the need for better and further reaching awareness of available services.

Members were advised that a new system of asset mapping was being looked into for ease of use and further reaching information of an in-depth directory for Houghton Regis specifically for residents to access.

Members were advised that there was a diverse age-range of residents contacting Community Action Bedfordshire for advice.

#### **881 HOUSING PROJECTS AND RELATED ISSUES**

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

Members were advised of a current budget consultation for proposed schemes in Houghton Regis. Windsor Drive recreation ground had significant investment proposed for this area for schemes including; community safety projects and an affordable housing development of 100 homes subject to the budget proposal and planning consent being secured. Members were advised that there would be a 'Planning for Real' event to engage with the community regarding the development of Windsor Drive.

## **882 TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION**

Members received a verbal update on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Members were advised of an issue of a sewage / drain which was located under the site, talks were ongoing with Anglian Water and the Football Foundation to resolve this. A full report would be presented to the Environment & Leisure Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, which would include details of the bearing this would have on the project.

Clarification was sought on the implications for HRTC on the s106 funding already secured should this development not go ahead. It was advised that this would be given consideration and would be included in the report to the HRTC Environment & Leisure Committee.

## **883 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**

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

Councillor Hamill updated members on the proposed new leisure centre for Houghton Regis. Houghton Regis was considered a priority under the Leisure Strategy to receive a new leisure centre ahead of Leighton Linlade and suggested that the leisure centre currently based in Houghton Regis was not fit for purpose.

Councillor Goodchild updated members on the Corporate Parenting Panel and Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committees on which she served.

Members received an update on the Clinical Commissioning Group regarding the public engagement undertaken offering local people the opportunity to share their views on the creation of a single Clinical Commissioning group.

A report had been received from the East of England Ambulance Service which provided a performance update across Central Bedfordshire. Also received; a presentation from CAMS highlighting how the spike in children's mental health had been addressed and the higher demands met, a report on the services available to the Homeless and rough sleepers, a housing acquisitions report and an annual report on customer relations.

Updates had also been received on the Covid vaccination programme, modernisation of the health service and the deliverance of a new state of the art mental health facility.

A meeting of Looked After Children had also been attended.

Councillor Ryan updated members on Children's Services, there had been a written statement of action received regarding children with special needs. £1.1m had been invested into the special education needs sector. Concerns had been raised over the number of assessments that had been requested and subsequently denied due to lack of funding.

Children in poverty taskforce was undergoing changes due to the change in administration and it was hoped this would make the service more accessible.

Councillor Wattingham wished to thank the Houghton Regis Town Council Officers who had been helping out at the vaccination centre, and thanks went to Councillor Hamill for his work on the leisure centre.

#### **884 CBC UPDATE REPORT**

Members received The CBC update report information.

- Covid-19 Stewards were working across Central Bedfordshire
- Houghton Regis Chalkpit – ongoing talks with the Wildlife Trust
- Houghton Hall Park had employed a Ranger and were working on new volunteering opportunities within the park
- Business investments and skills, grant applications would include figures of funding in future reports
- Representatives from Advantage Schools Trust were due to attend the April Town Partnership meeting
- Garden waste collections resume on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021
- Sustainability plan, tackling climate change and tree planting fund
- Champions, how have 218 community champions who are helping to spread messages
- Ward Councillor and Community Asset grant schemes update
- Cheering volunteering awards, all virtual, further information pending
- Budget consultation – closed on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

#### **885 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

Members received the Partnership Committee workplan for information.

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

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

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

Members asked whether there would be a charge implemented of the collection of garden waste. Members were advised that there was no knowledge of a possible charge, but this would be confirmed.

Concerns were raised over the number of residents using Houghton Hall Park, and social distancing, including while queueing for the onsite coffee van. Members were advised that Covid Stewards would address large numbers and groups of people.

## **886 INFORMAL INFORMATION SHARING**

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

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

It was hoped that as these ideas became more tangible that they could be presented for formal consideration.

The Terms of Reference of this Committee state:

### **Meetings and Quorum**

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

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

Some concerns were raised over the balance of membership and as such it was agreed to defer this item to a future meeting.

**887 PARTNESHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION**

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

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

**Co-option**

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

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

It was suggested that a service user of the leisure centre be invited to attend the Town Partnership Committee meeting to provide feedback on current services.

Members were advised that there was an opportunity at the beginning of the agenda for anyone who wishes to speak.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.48pm**

**Dated**

**Chairman**

Date	Month		Day	Committee meeting	Event	Lead Officer	Time
1st - 10th	April	2021	Saturday		Online Easter Trail	Civic and Events Officer	TBC
12th	April	2021	Monday	Annual Town's Meeting		Town Clerk	7pm
13th	April	2021	Tuesday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Corporate Services Manager	6pm
19th	April	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
19th	April	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
21st	April	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
26th	April	2021	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX			
27th	April	2021	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Town Clerk	7pm
29th	April	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic & Events Officer	5pm
3rd	May	2021	Monday	Bank holiday			
4th	May	2021	Tuesday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm

5th	May	2021	Wednesday	<b>Town Council (AGM)</b> <i>N.B. If meeting guidelines change to allow virtual meetings to be held after 7th May, this meeting will be rescheduled for 19th May 2021.</i>	Inauguration	Town Clerk	7pm
17th	May	2021	Monday	<i>Leaders Briefing</i>		Town Clerk	3.00pm
19th	May	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
24th	May		Monday		Launch Family Cooking Challenge and creative art Challenge	Community Development Officer	NA
24th	May	2021	Monday	Proposed new Cemetery Sub-committee		Town Clerk	6pm
24th	May	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7.00pm
1st, 2nd & 3rd	June		Tues-Thurs		Pick up a cooking challenge pack or creative art pack from HHP	Community Development Officer	11-2pm
1st	June	2021	Tuesday	<i>Member Open Session</i>		Town Clerk	6pm



1st	June	2021	Tuesday	Corporate Services		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
3rd	June	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
4th	June		Friday		Virtual Family Cooking lesson and creative art winners	Community Development Officer	1-3pm
7th	June	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3pm
7th	June	2021	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Town Clerk	7pm
14th	June	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
16th	June	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
21st	June	2021	Monday	Town Council		Town Clerk	7pm
28th	June	2021	Monday	Community Services		Town Clerk	7pm
1st-25th	July	2021			Virtual Carnival	Civic and Events Officer	TBC
5th	July	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3pm
5th	July	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
8th	July	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm

12th	July	2021	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Corporate Services Manager	6pm
20th	July	2021	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Town Clerk	7pm
21st	July	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
23rd	July	2021	Friday		Skate Jam Event	Community Development Officer and Civic and Events Officer	TBC
26th	July	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
27th	July	2021	Tuesday		Open Air Cinema	Community Development Officer and Civic and Events Officer	6-8pm
	August	2021	Saturday		Mayor's Coffee Morning TBC	Civic and Events Officer	TBC
2nd	August	2021	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX			
9th	August	2021	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX			
10th	August		Tuesday		Family Zumba on the green	Community Development Officer	2-4pm
16th	August	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3pm
16th	August	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
17th	August		Tuesday		Family Circus	Community Development Officer	2-4pm
18th	August	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am

24th	August		Tuesday		Family Sports Day	Community Development Officer	1-4pm
26th	August	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
30th	August	2021	Monday	<i>Bank holiday</i>			
31st	August		Tuesday		Family Picnic Party and the Sunflower Competition Winner	Community Development Officer	2-4pm
TBC	September		TBC		Houghton Together Event	Community Development Officer	TBC
TBC	September	2021	Friday		Mayoral event	Civic and Events Officer	7pm
4th	September	2021	Saturday		Houghton Rocks	Civic and Events Officer	7am - 7pm
6th	September	2021	Tuesday	<i>Leaders Briefing</i>		<i>Town Clerk</i>	<i>3.00pm</i>
6th	September	2021	Monday	Community Services		Town Clerk	7pm
7th	September	2021	Tuesday	<i>Member Open Session</i>		<i>Town Clerk</i>	<i>6pm</i>
7th	September	2021	Tuesday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
13th	September	2021	Monday	Corporate Services		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
15th	September	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am

20th	September	2021	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Town Clerk	7pm
27th	September	2021	Monday	Proposed new Cemetery Sub-committee		Town Clerk	6pm
27th	September	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
30th	September	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
TBC	October	2021	Friday		Mayoral event	Civic and Events Officer	7pm
4th	October	2021	Monday	Town Council		Town Clerk	7pm
11th	October	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3pm
11th	October	2021	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Corporate Services Manager	6pm
18th	October	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
19th	October	2021	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Town Clerk	7pm
20th	October	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
25th	October	2021	Monday	Community Services (Grants)		Town Clerk	7pm
28th-29th	October		Thurs-Fri		Halloween Event with Youth Council	Community Development Officer	6-8pm
28th	October	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm

1st	November	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
1st	November	2021	Monday	Community Services		Town Clerk	7pm
7th	November	2021	Sunday		Fireworks Display	Civic and Events Officer	7pm
8th	November	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
11th	November	2021	Thursday		Armistice Day	Civic and Events Officer	
14th	November	2021	Sunday		Remembrance Sunday	Civic and Events Officer	
15th	November	2021	Monday	Member Open Session		Town Clerk	6pm
15th	November	2021	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Town Clerk	7pm
17th	November	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
22nd	November	2021	Monday	Corporate Services		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
26th	November		Friday		Crafty November	Community Development Officer	3-5pm
29th	November	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
2nd	December	2021	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
4th	December	2021	Saturday		Mayors Carol Service	Civic and Events Officer	5pm

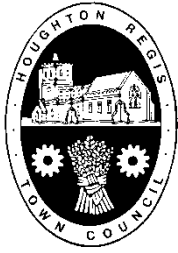
6th	December	2021	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
6th - 8th	December	2021	Monday - Wednesday		Santa Float	Civic and Events Officer	6pm
11th	December	2021	Saturday		Santa's Grotto	Civic and Events Officer	10am
13th	December	2021	Monday	Town Council		Town Clerk	7pm
15th	December	2021	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
20th	December	2021	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
27th	December	2021	Monday	Bank Holiday			
3rd	January	2022	Monday	Bank Holiday			
10th	January	2022	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
10th	January	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
17th	January	2022	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Corporate Services Manager	6pm
19th	January	2022	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
24th	January	2022	Monday	Town Council		Town Clerk	7pm

25th	January	2022	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Town Clerk	7pm
31st	January	2022	Monday	Proposed new Cemetery Sub-committee		Town Clerk	6pm
31st	January	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
3rd	February	2022	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
7th	February	2022	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
7th	February	2022	Monday	Community Services		Town Clerk	7pm
12th	February	2022	Saturday		Pride of Houghton Awards	Civic and Events Officer	
14th	February	2022	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Town Clerk	7pm
16th	February	2022	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
21st	February	2022	Monday	New Office Provisions Sub-Committee		Town Clerk	6pm
21st	February	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
25th	February		Friday		Exotic Pet Day	Community Development Officer	3-5.30pm
21st	February	2022	Monday	Member Open Session		Town Clerk	6pm
28th	February	2022	Monday	Corporate Services		Corporate Services Manager	7pm

3rd	March	2022	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
14th	March	2022	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
14th	March	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
16th	March	2022	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
21st	March	2022	Monday	Town Council		Town Clerk	7pm
25th	March		Friday		Community Engagement Day	Community Development Officer	3.30-5.30pm
31st	March	2022	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
4th	April	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
9th	April	2022	Saturday		Easter Egg Hunt	Civic and Events Officer	
11th	April	2022	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Town Clerk	3.00pm
11th	April	2022	Monday	Annual Towns' Meeting		Town Clerk	7pm
18th	April	2022	Monday	Bank holiday			
19th	April	2022	Tuesday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Corporate Services Manager	6pm



20th	April	2022	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
25th	April	2022	Monday	Proposed new Cemetery Sub-committee		Town Clerk	6pm
25th	April	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
26th	April	2022	Tuesday	Town Partnership			7pm
28th	April	2022	Thursday	Events Working Group		Civic and Events Officer	5pm
2nd	May	2022	Monday	<i>Bank holiday</i>			
9th	May	2022	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX			
16th	May	2022	Monday	Planning		Corporate Services Manager	7pm
18th	May	2022	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Community Development Officer	11am
18th	May	2022	Wednesday	Town Council (AGM)		Town Clerk	7pm



**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Title:** Council Meetings

**Purpose of the Report:** To consider the nature and format of council meetings from 7<sup>th</sup> May until national restrictions are eased.

**Contact Officer:** Clare Evans, Town Clerk

---

## 1. RECOMMENDATION

**From 7<sup>th</sup> May and until national restrictions are lifted for meetings of the council to be held:**

- **in person with restrictions in place on the number of public who can be present and to offer remote access to other cllrs and members of the public who wish to attend**
- **in accordance with the Guidance Notes for Covid Secure Meetings**

## 2. BACKGROUND

From 7<sup>th</sup> May the provision under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 for the council to be able to meet remotely is removed. However, the difficulty is that for a period of time after 7<sup>th</sup> May national restrictions are in place which seek to limit the number of households who can meet inside. If the roadmap is followed hopefully this period will only be until 21<sup>st</sup> June.

Guidance from gov.uk can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

There are a number of council meetings scheduled to take place in this period.

Members are requested to consider how the council should operate during this interim period.

### 3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The following points are made:

1. Remote meetings are not legal after 7<sup>th</sup> May;
2. The High Court judgement on remote meetings is anticipated by the end of April so it may be possible to provide further information at the meeting;
3. For the continuation of council business, options include:
  - a) For no meetings of the council to be held until all lock down restrictions are lifted or the legislation comes into place for remote meetings to be held, whichever is the sooner. Officers would continue with ongoing projects and would use the time to plan ahead as far as possible;
  - b) For members of the council to meet remotely to provide guidance and for this guidance to be considered and authorised / endorsed by the Chair and the Clerk;
  - c) For meetings of the council to be held in person with restrictions in place on the number of public who can be present and to offer remote access to non-elected members of the committee/sub-committee and additional members of the public, who wish to attend

Should members consider that option 3, to meet in person, is the preferred option then the following measures will be put in place to seek to ensure that the meetings are Covid safe:

*Meetings of Town Council* from 7<sup>th</sup> May until national lockdown measures are lifted<sup>1</sup> will be held in a local venue (anticipated to be Bedford Square Community Centre or Houghton Regis Memorial Hall – dependent on availability), the number of members of the public who are able to attend in person will be restricted in accordance with the capacity of the venue, however members of the public will be invited to continue to attend remotely

*Meetings of Committees and Sub Committees* from 7<sup>th</sup> May until national lockdown measures are lifted<sup>1</sup> will be held in the Council Chamber the number of members of the public who are able to attend in person will be restricted to 3 in accordance with the capacity of the venue (advance booking will be required), however members of the public and any councillor who wishes to attend but is not a member of the committee or subcommittee will be invited to attend remotely

*Meetings of working groups and other informal meetings* (including Leaders Briefings and Member Open Sessions) will continue to be held remotely via Teams from 7<sup>th</sup> May until national lockdown measures are lifted<sup>1</sup>. During this period each meeting or group will be invited to consider how it would like to meet after national lockdown measures are lifted.

Guidance notes for Covid secure meetings are attached to provide further clarity and reassurance.

### 4. COUNCIL VISION

#### **Aspirations**

A2 To effectively and proactively **represent** our community

---

<sup>1</sup> Anticipated to be 21<sup>st</sup> June in accordance with the government's roadmap

A5 To ensure the **council** is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

### Corporate Implications

- It is imperative to keep members, staff and visitors safe
- There is a desire to maintain and continue council services
- Should meetings be held in an alternative venue to the Council Chamber it will not be possible to provide a visual recording. It may be possible to provide an audio recording, the quality of which will depend on the clarity of people speaking at the meeting

### Legal Implications

- There is no legal provision to enable remote meetings to continue
- The government roadmap out of lockdown restrictions must be followed
- Under the Health and Safety at Work Act the council has a duty to protect employees and others from getting hurt or ill through work.

### Financial Implications

- A hire charge would be applied for meetings held outside of the Council Chamber

### Risk Implications

- Service delivery – this may be jeopardised should council meetings not continue for a period of time
- H&S – any meetings must be held in a Covid secure way

### 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

The decision relating to this agenda item will be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

To enable the council to conduct its business, it is suggested that Option 3, meetings in person with public access in person restricted, be agreed. These meetings would be held in accordance with the guidance attached which would minimise the risk from Covid.

## **7. APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Guidance Notes for Covid Secure Meetings**



## Guidance Notes for Covid Secure Meetings

### 7<sup>th</sup> May onwards whilst national restrictions apply

---

#### Background

From 7<sup>th</sup> May the provision under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 for the council to be able to meet remotely are removed. However, the difficulty is that for a period of time after 7<sup>th</sup> May national restrictions are in place which seek to limit the number of households who can meet inside. If the roadmap is followed hopefully this period will only be until 21<sup>st</sup> June.

There are a number of council meeting scheduled to take place in this period. The following sets out how these meetings will operate to seek to ensure that they are Covid safe. To ensure social distancing only elected members, or their appointed substitutes, of committees or sub-committees and the Clerk of the meeting and up to 3 members of the public will be able to attend in person. Anyone else wishing to join the meeting will be invited to do so remotely.

#### Measures to reduce risk

##### *Minimal attendees*

- Only members of the committee or sub-committee and the Clerk will be able to attend the meeting in person plus 3 members of the public.
- Non-committee / subcommittee members and members of the public will be able to attend the meeting remotely. Places will be allocated on a first come first serve basis and only where that person advises that they do not have the means to join the meeting remotely.
- Meetings of Town Council will be held in an alternative venue to enable all councillors to attend in a Covid safe environment.

##### *Hands, Face, Space*

- Physical attendees will be required to use hand sanitiser upon entry
- The chamber will be laid out to ensure people are seated 2m apart (to enable attendees not to have to wear face masks or visors during the course of the meeting)
- Any refreshments required must be brought to the meeting by the individual and taken away at the end of the meeting.

##### *Reduced meeting time*

- The content of the agenda will be limited to include agenda items which require a decision to be made;

- Where an agenda item is usually included for noting, a report will be circulated to members prior to the meeting for information;
- Members will be requested to contact officers ahead of the meeting to seek clarification on any matter

#### *Chamber Layout / Meeting Etiquette*

- Doors and windows to be kept open. (confidential items will not be included on these agendas)
- On entry to use hand sanitiser
- Face coverings to be worn on entry and exit but not during the course of the meeting as people are at least 2 m apart.
- Chair and Clerk to sit at the top table
- Cllrs to take next available seat so not to walk behind each other starting with the front of the Chamber & seated in order towards the exit
- All to be encouraged to speak up and clearly.
- Cllrs to bring personal IT device or own paper agenda and to take all with them at the end, including paperwork.
- Cllrs to leave the building immediately the meeting concludes, wearing face masks, those closest to the door to leave first to minimise the need to walk behind each other.



## Houghton Regis Town Council

### Committee Functions & Terms of Reference

Date of Approval:	Town Council 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Date of Review:	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2016; 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2017 (amendments to HRNPSG approved 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2017); 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2018; 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2019

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Meetings of Houghton Regis Town Council are to be conducted in accordance with the approved Standing Orders of Houghton Regis Town Council.
- 1.2 Legislation requires certain statutory functions of Houghton Regis Town Council to be discharged by the council itself. Houghton Regis Town Council cannot delegate responsibility to a committee or sub-committee for:
  1. levying or issuing a precept,
  2. borrowing money,
  3. approving the council's annual accounts,
  4. considering an auditor's report made in the public interest,
  5. confirming (by resolution) that it has the statutory criteria to exercise the power of general competence or
  6. adopting or revising the council's code of conduct.



<b>2. Committee Overview Houghton Regis Town Council</b>		
<b>Department</b>	<b>Areas of Responsibility</b>	<b>Democratic Management</b>
<b>Corporate Services</b>	Policy review & development Financial management Personnel matters Democratic management Health & safety matters	Corporate Services Committee Disciplinary, Grievance and Appeals Sub-Committee Personnel Sub-Committee
<b>Environment &amp; Leisure Services</b>	Facilities management Leisure services Recreation management Cemetery & churchyard management	Environment & Leisure Committee
<b>Community Services</b>	Community services Youth services Communications Events Mayoral services Community grants Community safety	Community Services Committee Events Working Group Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group Combating Crime Working Group
<b>Planning</b>	Planning applications Planning policy Strategic development <a href="#">Highways consultations</a>	Planning Committee Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
<b>Town</b>	Town Centre Town development	Town Council Town Partnership Committee New Cemetery Sub Committee New Office Provisions Sub Committee Complaints Sub Committee Complaints Appeals Sub Committee

### 3. Functions & Terms of Reference

#### Town Council

##### *Functions*

At the Annual meeting to conduct business in accordance with Standing Orders as follows:

- a. The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- b. Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
  - i. In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
  - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
  - iii. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - iv. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - v. Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - vi. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 6
  - vii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - viii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
  - ix. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

At other meetings of the Council:

- To annually review the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Health & Safety Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy, Banking Arrangements/Investment Policy, and the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference
- Before the end of January to determine the Council's overall budget for the forthcoming financial year and to set the precept accordingly.

- To receive auditors' reports and other comments and make recommendations to Corporate Services as to any policy matters arising from them.
  - To receive reports from committees and recommendations made therein.
  - To receive the Town Mayors announcements.
  - To consider and approve any short or long-term borrowing requirements including interest rates and borrowing period;
  - To approve a 4-year rolling programme of policy review
  - To receive conclusions drawn at any meeting of the Complaints and Complaints Appeals Sub-Committees.
- Terms of Reference
- The Town Council consists of all councillors.
  - The quorum shall be one third of all councilors (five)
  - In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
  - In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
  - If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.
  - In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.

## **Corporate Services Committee**

### *Functions*

- To consider any matters referred to it by the Council or other Committees.
- To respond on behalf of the Council to initiatives from other organisations relating to matters under the Committee's jurisdiction.
- To exercise management of health and safety issues in respect of all the services of this Committee.
- To consider and determine any new contracts and any renewals of existing contracts under the jurisdiction of this committee.
- Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities.
- Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
- To manage and maintain the Council Offices including office equipment and furniture.
- Reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018)
- and to take action to comply.
- To receive information relating to the number of Freedom of Information requests received by the Clerk
- Reviewing policies of the Council as required by the Policy Document Review Schedule

- 
- 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
    - To receive bank and cash reconciliation statements.
    - To receive and annual report (based on the previous financial year) on loans taken out, repayments made and outstanding liability
    - To confirm the use of direct debits, standing orders, BACS, CHAPS
  - Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
  - To recommend to Council the writing off of irrecoverable amounts.
  - To assemble and submit to the Town Council estimates of income and expenditure for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November each year.
  - To monitor periodically the income and expenditure of the Committee.
  - To consider and determine any proposed expenditure or reduction in income for which no provision has been made in the approved budget.
  - To set the level of charges for facilities in respect of all the services of this Committee.
  - Monitor and review risk management issues
  - To exercise overall responsibility for staffing issues, excluding the appointment of the Town Clerk, who shall be appointed by the Town Council
  - To determine staff conditions of service including salary scales, working hours, employee assessments and evaluations etc
  - To determine all matters relating to staff including staffing resources and structures
  - To consider, determine and approve staff and Member training requirements
  - To receive information relating to the number of freedom of information requests received by the Town Clerk.

### *Terms of Reference*

- The Corporate Services Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Corporate Services Committee shall consist of seven Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (four).
- To appoint sub-committees or working groups as necessary including setting out membership and terms of reference.

## **Environment & Leisure Committee**

### *Functions*

- To consider any matters referred to it by the Council or other Committees.
- To respond on behalf of the Council to initiatives from other organisations relating to matters under the Committee's jurisdiction.
- To exercise management of health and safety issues in respect of all the services

of this Committee.

- To consider and determine any new contracts and any renewals of existing contracts under the jurisdiction of this committee.
- To assemble and submit to the Town Council estimates of income and expenditure for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November each year.
- To monitor periodically the income and expenditure of the Committee.
- To consider and determine any proposed expenditure or reduction in income for which no provision has been made in the approved budget.
- To set the level of charges for facilities in respect of all the services of this Committee and to control the collection of revenues thereof.
- Reviewing policies of the Council as required by the Policy Document Review Schedule
- Annually review its inventory of land and assets including buildings.
- To provide and maintain all recreation grounds and pavilions, open spaces and play areas in the control of the Council.
- To manage and maintain sports provision including football pitches, the bowls green and cricket table.
- To manage and maintain the Houghton Regis Town Cemetery and All Saints Churchyard.
- To provide and maintain seats, noticeboards, litterbins and dog waste bins.
- To purchase and maintain such vehicles and equipment as may be required to carry out the Council's duties in connection with the facilities under the control of the Committee.
- To monitor all matters relating to leases and bye-laws in connection with the facilities under the control of the Committee.

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Environment & Leisure Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Environment Committee shall consist of seven Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (four).
- To appoint sub-committees or working groups as necessary including setting out membership and terms of reference.

#### **Community Services Committee**

- To consider any matters referred to it by the Council or other Committees.
- To respond on behalf of the Council to initiatives from other organisations relating to matters under the Committee's jurisdiction.
- To exercise management of health and safety issues in respect of all the services of this Committee.
- To assemble and submit to the Town Council estimates of income and expenditure for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November each year.
- To monitor periodically the income and expenditure of the Committee.

- 
- To consider and determine any proposed expenditure or reduction in income for which no provision has been made in the approved budget.
  - To set the level of charges for facilities in respect of all the services of this Committee.
    - To consider and determine any new contracts and any renewals of existing contracts under the jurisdiction of this committee.
  - Reviewing policies of the Council as required by the Policy Document Review Schedule
  - To encourage and regulate activities and events at Council properties, venues and locations.
  - To advise Environment & Leisure Committee of events using land / buildings
  - To award financial grants to local organisations within an overall budget approved by the Town Council
  - To review the grant application process as necessary
  - To oversee and manage the promotion of the Town and the Council, including the council's newsletter and website, Christmas lights, Pride of Houghton, events
  - Consider community service provision provided by outside organisations
  - To provide community support to enhance community service provision
  - To liaise with other organisations on community issues
  - To provide support and promotion of the Town centre and the retail offer

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Community Services Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Community Services Committee shall consist of seven Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (four).
- To appoint sub-committees or working groups as necessary including setting out membership and terms of reference.

### **Planning Committee**

#### *Functions*

- To consider any matters referred to it by the Council or other Committees.
- To respond on behalf of the Council to initiatives from other organisations relating to matters under the Committee's jurisdiction.
- To exercise management of health and safety issues in respect of all the services of this Committee.
- To assemble and submit to the Town Council estimates of income and expenditure for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November each year.
- To monitor periodically the income and expenditure of the Committee.
  - To consider and determine any new contracts and any renewals of existing contracts under the jurisdiction of this committee.
- To consider and determine any proposed expenditure or reduction in income for which no provision has been made in the approved budget.

- Reviewing policies of the Council as required by the Policy Document Review Schedule
- To consider all planning related applications within the Parish and to make representations to the appropriate authority on behalf of the Town Council.
- To consider matters surrounding the growth proposals, including strategic development proposals and documents from local authorities and other agencies and bodies.
- To consider highways proposals from local authorities and other agencies and bodies and to make representations to the appropriate authority on behalf of the Town Council.
- To oversee the development and introduction of a Neighbourhood Plan for Houghton Regis.

#### Delegated Powers to Officers – Planning

- Delegated applications include all applications received for consultation purposes including all planning applications, advertisement and signs.
- All delegated decisions, which are recommended for approval, will be provided in writing, to Members of the Planning Committee.
- A list of proposed delegated decisions (relating to new or proposed listed buildings, conservation areas, tree preservation orders, building preservation orders, highways, byways, bridleways and footpaths) will be circulated to all Councillors. If a Councillor wishes an application to be decided by the Committee, a written request must be made to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.
- No applications will be delegated that fall into the following categories:
  - a) To which a written objection from a member of the public has been received by the Town Council
  - b) Any application for more than five dwellings (including flats, apartments and maisonettes)
  - c) Any application for retail or employment space
- The Town Clerk or their nominated officer, must be fully aware of the location and possible planning considerations of an application.

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Planning Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Planning Committee shall consist of seven Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (four).
- To appoint sub-committees or working groups as necessary including setting out membership and terms of reference.

#### **Houghton Regis Town Partnership**

This is a joint Houghton Regis Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council committee. See Appendix A, attached, for relevant Committee Functions & Terms of

Reference.

### **Complaints Sub-Committee (reporting to Town Council)**

#### *Functions*

To act as the Complaints Committee in accordance with the Council's approved Complaints Procedure, including:

- To consider and make recommendations on any complaints received which fall under the approved Complaints Policy;
- To report its deliberations to Town Council;

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Sub Committee shall comprise 3 councillors;
- Membership of the Sub Committee shall be drawn from Town Council who have not been named within the complaint.
- The quorum shall be three members.

### **Complaints Appeals Sub-Committee (reporting to Town Council)**

#### *Functions*

- To consider and make recommendations on any appeals which relate to complaints received which fall under the approved Complaints Policy;
- To report its deliberations to Town Council;

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Sub Committee shall comprise 3 councillors;
- Membership of the Sub Committee shall be drawn from Town Council who were not members of the original Complaints Sub-Committee and have not been named within the complaint.
- The quorum shall be three members.

### **Personnel Sub-Committee (Reporting to Corporate Services Committee)**

#### *Functions*

- Overview of staffing structure and staffing budget, ensuring that it is commensurate with objectives of the Council.
- Review staff sickness absence.
- Receive reports and review of Employee Assistance Programme
- Review staff training
- Identify and agree training needs for the Town Clerk and Members



- Ensure Council employees are working in a safe environment
- To consider and recommend to Corporate Services Committee any changes to employees pay, emoluments or terms and conditions of employment
- Review Job Description and Contract of Town Clerk annually or when there is a significant change
- Receive notification of the Town Clerk's annual leave and matters relating to overtime working and sickness.
- Succession plan for key staff who may wish to retire.
- Agree the recruitment process for the Town Clerk and other senior members of staff.
- If supported by the conclusion of a disciplinary process to consider the termination of contract for the Town Clerk and other senior members of staff.
- Act as interview panel for the posts of Town Clerk and other senior members of staff (final approval for the appointment of the Clerk rests with Council as per Standing Orders).
- Appoint one member of the Committee as the Clerks Appointed Person, preferably the Chair, to act as contact for day to day matters, support, handle leave requests, absence from work and to feed matters to Committee where any decisions/action is needed and to undertake the Clerks appraisal.
- Report any outcomes of employee complaints received.

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Personnel Sub-Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Personnel Sub-Committee shall consist of 4 Councillors.
- Membership of the Sub Committee shall be drawn from Town Council
- The quorum shall be three members.

#### **Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee Group (reporting to Corporate Services)**

*Due to the sensitive nature of the matters raised under this Sub-Committee, these meetings are not open to the public.*

#### *Functions:*

- Delegated powers to hear and action, as appropriate, employee disciplinary, grievance and appeal matters where these are beyond the authority delegated to the Clerk in the Scheme of Delegation;
- To consider and recommend to Town Council any disciplinary, grievance or appeal relating to the Clerk

#### *Terms of Reference:*

- The Disciplinary, Grievance and Appeals Sub-Committee shall consist of 3 Councillors.

- Membership of the Sub Committee shall be drawn from Town Council.
- The quorum shall be three members.

### **Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee (reporting to Town Council)**

#### *Functions*

1. To consider any matters referred to it by the Town Council or any other Committee
2. To consider and determine matters surrounding the development of a new cemetery for Houghton Regis, including but not restricted to:
  - Environmental matters
  - Policy matters
  - Visual impact matters
  - Design matters
  - Public consultation matters
  - Future operation and management of the cemetery
3. To commission specialist services such as may be deemed appropriate in progressing options for future cemetery provision.
4. To report and to make such recommendations to Town Council as appropriate.

#### *Terms of Reference*

- The Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee shall consist of 6 members. The quorum shall be half of its members (three).

### **Events Working Group (reporting to Community Services Committee) (meetings to be held within normal working hours)**

#### *Functions*

- To set an annual programme of events and to request suitable funding from the Community Services Committee no later than October in each financial year
- To consider all aspects relating to planning and hosting of council events, including health and safety requirements
- To monitor and review each council event.
- Delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk and the Civic & Events Officer to take decisions on the arrangements for council events.
- To report to the Community Services Committee on the outcome of its deliberations.

#### *Terms of Reference*

- 
- The Events Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
  - The Events Working Group shall consist *of up to* seven Councillors. As the Working Group has no delegated authority to take decisions there is no quorum of members required.

**Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group (reporting to Community Services Committee) (meetings to be held within normal working hours)**

*Functions*

- To consider the nominations put forward from members of the public in relation to the Pride of Houghton Award scheme and determine the award winners.

*Terms of Reference*

- The Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group shall consist of 3 councillors. The quorum shall be three members.
- The Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group shall not comprise of any co-opted members or members of the Events Working Group.

**Combating Crime Working Group (reporting to Community Services Committee) (meetings to be held within normal working hours)**

*Functions*

- To monitor the Council's Service Level Agreement with Bedfordshire Police for the provision of additional policing within the parish of Houghton Regis known as Operation Hanna
- To receive bi-monthly written reports and monthly verbal reports from Bedfordshire Police on the work completed under Operation Hanna
- To consider the forthcoming months actions by Bedfordshire Police under Operation Hanna
- To monitors the Council's Service Level Agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council for the management of the re-deployable CCTV cameras
- To manage the formulation and implementation of the Council's Community Safety Strategy
- To manage action under the Council's enviro crime project
- To report its decisions to Community Services Committee

*Terms of Reference*

- The Combating Crime Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Combating Crime Working Group shall consist of five councillors. The quorum shall be half its members (three).

### **Office Provisions Sub Committee (reporting to Town Council)**

#### *Functions*

1. Reflecting on the growth agenda to give consideration to;
  - a) the suitability of the current office provision
  - b) the requirements of future office provision
2. To give consideration to future office provision including options for retaining or developing the current site, options for renting / leasing, purchasing or developing;
3. To commission specialist services such as may be deemed necessary in progressing options for future office provision;

#### *Terms of Reference*

1. The New Office Sub Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders;
2. The New Office Sub Committee shall consist of five councillors, the quorum of which shall be 3.

### **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (reporting to Planning Committee)**

The Steering Group comprises Members of Houghton Regis Town Council, a Member of Central Bedfordshire Council and representatives from the Community.

See Appendix B, attached, for relevant Committee Functions & Terms of Reference.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Houghton Regis Town Partnership Committee <sup>1</sup>**

#### **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 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 Committees should be explored, such as Section 106 received to spend on community facilities.
4. The 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 Joint Committee on all key issues affecting the town, at the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
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.

---

<sup>1</sup> These were considered by the Partnership Committee at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April. The Terms of reference remain to be formally approved by Central Bedfordshire Council.

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 Committee and vice versa.
6. Substitutes for Central Bedfordshire Council Members on the 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 Joint Committee will be a ward town councillor
7. Members are appointed annually.
8. All Members of the 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 Committee may also organise extra ordinary meetings at the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
4. In addition to the Committee meetings, the 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 Joint Committees in Central Bedfordshire.
5. All meetings will be open to the public unless exempt items are discussed

### **Chairman and Vice Chairman**

1. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be appointed from and by the Joint Committee's core membership; each Council must be represented in either role.
2. The appointed Chairman and Vice-Chairman will hold their post for a period of one year, after which they may stand for re-election.
3. The Vice Chairman will preside in the absence of the Chairman. If neither is present, the Committee members in attendance will appoint a Chairman from amongst them for the duration of that meeting.
4. The Chairman and Vice Chairman 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 Joint Committee.

### **Secretariat**

1. Either Council can administer the Joint Committee, according to their own Standing Orders. The 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 Committee.

### **Decision making arrangements**

1. Only members of the Committee can vote. Co-opted Members have no voting rights.
2. The 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 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 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 Committee by joint agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
2. The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually.

## Governance

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

## APPENDIX B

### Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

<b>HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Background</b>
1.1	Houghton Regis Town Council has resolved to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and has determined that it will cover the Parish of Houghton Regis.
1.2	The Town Council, while retaining full responsibility for the Plan, recognizes that the content of the Plan must be driven by the community and the need to draw on skills and expertise from outside the Council.
1.3	A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will lead the project to successful completion.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Name</b>
2.1	The name of the group will be <b>Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. (HRNPSG)</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
3.1	The main purpose of the Group is to oversee the preparation of the Plan in order that it will be progressed to Independent Examination and a successful community referendum and ultimate adoption.
3.2	The Steering Group will engage the local community to ensure that the Plan is truly representative of the ambitions of Houghton Regis. The Group will maximize support for the approach taken in the NP by ensuring high levels of community engagement throughout the plan-making process.
3.3	Liaise with, and direct the work of, consultants and specialists engaged to further the Plan as appropriate.
3.4	Consider the options and develop policies to inform the future development and use of land in the neighbourhood area.
3.5	Be aware of the development areas identified in the Local Plan, including establishing further development areas if they are required.
3.6	Ensure the NP is supported by effective on-going programmes of



		communication and consultation with the community, CBC, businesses, adjoining parishes, developers and other key parties.
	3.7	Identify sources of funding.
	3.8	Liaise with statutory, and other, relevant authorities and organizations to ensure the Plan is as comprehensive and inclusive as possible.
	3.9	Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organizations in the community as possible.
	3.10	Determine the types of consultation and information gathering to be used.
	3.11	Be responsible for the analysis arising from consultations and the production and distribution of the final reports.
	3.12	Conform to national policies and with EU and Human Rights legislation.
	3.13	Report back regularly to the Town Council on progress, significant issues and budgetary implications.
	3.14	Present key documents and the draft NP for consultation with the Town Council, local residents, CBC, businesses, the Independent Examiner, and assist in arrangements for the Referendum.
	3.15	Present recommendations for the implementation of The Plan.
	<b>4.</b>	<b>Membership and Conduct</b>
	4.1	The HRNPSG will be formed from current Town Councillors, CBC Councillors for the town and local members of the community. The Group will be comprised of up to 12 members, the composition of which to be 5 Town Councillors, (appointed by the full Town Council), 1 CBC Councillor and 6 representatives from the local community. The Town Clerk, or Senior Manager, will be present in an <i>ex-officio</i> , non-voting capacity at all meetings. The Group will only be quorate when 50% of its members are present.
	4.2	The HRNPSG may co-opt additional support to carry out specific task for as short or long a period as necessary.
	4.3	Membership is voluntary.
	4.4	All members of the HRNPSG must abide by the Code of Conduct of Houghton Regis Town Council and in doing so must submit a register of interests.
	4.5	All members of the HRNPSG must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to the decisions or recommendations made by it. This may include membership of an organization, ownership or interest in land or business or any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the HRNPSG.
	4.6	A person will cease to be a member of the HRNPSG upon notification to the Chairman in writing of their wish to resign.
	<b>5.</b>	<b>Meetings</b>
	5.1	The HRNPSG will elect a Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer from its membership to remain in these positions until the project is complete. If these positions should become vacant, the Group will elect an alternative.
	5.2	In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the HRNPSG will elect a Chairman from its members present at the meeting, for that meeting.

5.3	The HRNPSG will arrange its own meeting schedule and will meet as required.
5.4	At least 7 days clear notice of meetings will be sent to members via email.
5.5	The Secretary will keep a record of meetings and circulate the Minutes to HRNPSG members and the Town Council (via the Planning Committee Clerk) no more than 14 days after each meeting.
5.6	Decisions made by HRNPSG will be by consensus at Group meetings. Where a vote is required, each member will have one vote. A simple majority vote will be required to support any motion. The Chairman will have one casting vote.
<b>6. Working Groups</b>	
6.1	HRNPSG may establish working groups for dealing with specific issues, made up of Members of the Steering Group and volunteers from the community, to aid them in any NP related work.
6.2	Each working group will have a lead person from the HRNPSG.
<b>7. Affiliations, Interests and Contributions.</b>	
7.1	The HRNPSG will not itself be affiliated to any particular political party. It is recognized that Councillors and community members may have such affiliations, which will be declared where relevant.
7.2	The Localism Act and Houghton Regis Town Council's Code of Conduct will apply to all members of the HRNPSG. All members of the HRNPSG must declare any pecuniary interest that may be perceived as being relevant to a decision of the HRNPSG. This may include membership of an organization, ownership of land or a business, or any other matter that may be considered to be relevant. Such declarations must be recorded and publically available.
7.3	Having declared an interest, that member will not take part in a discussion or vote on the related issue. In event of disagreement, the Chairman's decision will be binding. Organizations and businesses may assist in the production of the NP and may contribute to the cost of producing it. Details of any donations or assistance must be made publicly available and must not influence the recommendations of The Plan.
<b>8. Finance</b>	
8.1	Funding, including grants, will be applied for and held by the Town Council, who will ring-fence the funds for Neighbourhood Plan development work.
8.2	HRNPSG will notify the Town Council (via the Planning Committee) of any planned expenditure <b>before</b> it is incurred
<b>9. Conduct</b>	
9.1	It is expected that all HRNPSG members will abide by the principles and practice of the Town Council Code of Conduct, including the declaration of interests.
9.2	Whilst members as individuals will be accountable to their parent organizations, the HRNPSG as a whole is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that

	9.3	The Plan reflects their collective expectations. HRNPSG will achieve this through applying the following principles:
	i	Be clear and open when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
	ii	Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect, regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion and belief; and
	iii	Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.
<b>10 Changes to the Terms of Reference</b>		
	10.1	This document may be amended with the support of at least two-thirds of the current membership at a HRNPSG meeting and with the approval of the Town Council.
<b>11 Dissolution of the HRNPSG</b>		
	11.1	The HRNPSG will continue to operate until the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.
	11.2	Upon dissolution of the HRNPSG, any remaining resources will be passed to the Town Council.



**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2021/2022**

---

**STANDING COMMITTEES – 2021/2022**

**Corporate Services**

Cllrs:

J Carroll, C Copleston, S Goodchild, D Jones, M Kennedy, K Wattingham, **Vacancy**

**Environment & Leisure**

Cllrs:

D Dixon Wilkinson, Y Farrell, T McMahon, R Morgan, A Slough, S Thorne, **Vacancy**

**Planning**

Cllrs:

J Carroll, D Dixon Wilkinson, Y Farrell, D Jones, M Kennedy, R Morgan, **Vacancy**

**Community Services**

Cllrs:

C Copleston, T McMahon, S Goodchild, A Slough, S Thorne, K Wattingham, **Vacancy**

**OTHER COMMITTEES – 2021/2022**

**Town Partnership**

Cllrs:

T McMahon, D Jones, K Wattingham, M Kennedy

**SUB-COMMITTEES – 2021/2022**

**Complaints Sub-Committee**

**(Reporting to Town Council)**

Cllrs: To be appointed as required.

**Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee**

**(Reporting to Town Council)**

Cllrs: To be appointed as required.

**Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee**

**(Reporting to Corporate Services, comprising members of Corporate Services)**

Cllrs: To be appointed as required.

**Personnel Sub Committee**

**(Reporting to Corporate Services, comprising members of Corporate Services)**

Cllrs:

J Carroll, D Jones, M Kennedy, K Wattingham,

**New Office Sub Committee**

Cllrs:

D Dixon Wilkinson, D Jones, T McMahon, A Slough, S Thorne

**New Cemetery Sub Committee  
(Reporting to Town Council)**

Cllrs:

J Carroll, Y Farrell, M Kennedy, R Morgan, A Slough, S Thorne

**WORKING GROUPS – 2021/2022**

**Events Working Group  
(Reporting to Community Services)**

Cllrs:

Y Farrell, T McMahon, A Slough, Lib Dem TBC, K Wattingham, **Vacancy, Vacancy**

**Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group  
(Reporting to Community Services)**

Cllrs:

J Carroll, D Dixon Wilkinson, S Thorne,

**Combating Crime Working Group  
(Reporting to Community Services)**

Cllrs:

C Copleston, Y Farrell, M Kennedy, T McMahon, K Wattingham,

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group  
(Reporting to Planning)**

Cllrs:

J Carroll, D Dixon Wilkinson, S Goodchild, D Jones, M Kennedy



# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

---

## Outside Organisations – 2021/22

Outside Organisations	Member	Meetings details
<b>All Saints View Stakeholder Group</b>	Cllr McMahon	
<b>Bedfordshire Association of Town &amp; Parish Councils</b>	Cllrs: D Jones, S Goodchild, <i>1 vacancy</i>	
<b>Chews Foundation</b>	Cllr A Slough	Mtgs in June and December. Currently held via Zoom but will revert back to being held at Chew's House, High Street South, Dunstable
		Next two meetings are Tuesday 8th June and Tuesday 7th December at 10am
<b>Citizens Advice</b>	Cllr S Thorne	6th May, 16th Sept 4th Nov 2pm Virtual
<b>Hospice at Home Volunteers</b>	Cllr Copleston	
<b>Houghton Hall Park Project Board</b>	Cllr Kennedy	
<b>Houghton Hall Park MAG</b>	Cllr T McMahon	
<b>Houghton Regis North Stakeholder Group*</b>	<i>Cllr J Carroll</i> <i>D Jones</i>	
<b>Memorial Hall Committee</b>	Cllrs: Y Farrell & S Thorne	Tuesday 11th May at 7pm Then meetings every other Month
<b>Houghton Regis Aspirations Group</b>		Agreed by Partnership on 27 <sup>th</sup> April. One cllr to be nominated from those sitting on Partnership Committee
<b>SORTED</b>	Cllr S Goodchild	
<b>South Beds Dial-a-Ride</b>	Cllr S Thorne	TBC at mtg on 28 <sup>th</sup> April

\*One seat is available on this group



## Houghton Regis Town Council

### Standing Orders

Date of Approval:	Town Council 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2015
Date of Review:	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2016; 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2017; 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2018; 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 (following advice from NALC); 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2019

Based on NALC Model Standing Orders 2018

#### Contents

- Preface
- 1. Meetings Generally
- 2. Proper Officer
- 3. Responsible Financial Officer
- 4. Ordinary Council Meetings
- 5. Disorderly Conduct at Meetings
- 6. Committees & Sub-Committees
- 7. Presence of Non-Members of Committees at Committee Meetings
- 8. Working Groups
- 9. Extraordinary Meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub-Committees
- 10. Questions
- 11. Motions For A Meeting That Require Written Notice To Be Given To The Proper Officer
- 12. Motions at a Meeting that do not require Written Notice
- 13. Rules of Debate at Meetings
- 14. Rules of Debate – Resolutions
- 15. Previous Resolutions
- 16. Draft Minutes
- 17. Accounts and Accounting Statements
- 18. Financial Controls And Procurement
- 19. Estimates / Precepts
- 20. Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds
- 21. Management of Information
- 22. Handling Staff Matters
- 23. Voting on Appointments
- 24. Canvassing of And Recommendations by Councillors
- 25. Code of Conduct and Dispensations
- 26. Code of Conduct Complaints
- 27. Restrictions on Councillor Activities
- 28. Communication with District and County or Unitary Councillors
- 29. Relations with The Press/Media
- 30. Responsibilities to Provide Information
- 31. Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation
- 32. Standing Orders Generally
- Appendix A – Procedure for Recording Meetings

## PREFACE

This is a set of Standing orders based on the model set of Standing orders produced by NALC (April 2018). Standing Orders that are in **bold type** contain legal and statutory requirements and are to be adopted without changing them or their meaning. Standing Orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but do not contain statutory requirements therefore they may be adopted or amended to suit a council's needs.

If the words "Local Council's" are used, it means Parish and Town Council's in England and Community and Town Council's in Wales.

It is, of course, recognised that local councillors can be male or female. Therefore, wherever the masculine gender is used this should be interpreted as also meaning the feminine gender.

The Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to use the title "Town Mayor". The title confers no additional powers on the chairman, and, in particular, has no implications for his conduct in meetings.

### Notes:

- *The word "Chairman" includes "Town Mayor" and means the person actually presiding at a meeting*
- *The word "Vice-Chairman" includes "Deputy Town Mayor"*
- *Where appropriate use of the word "he" is to include the meaning "she"*
- *The word "Council" includes "committee," where any function has been delegated.*

## STANDING ORDERS

### 1. MEETINGS

- Full Council meetings
- Committee meetings
- Sub-committee meetings

Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.

All meetings of the Town Council shall be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street, Houghton Regis at 7pm unless the Council decides otherwise.

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**



- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e 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.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 1(e) above shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 1(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 1(e) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 1(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting procedures, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**  
*See Appendix A for the Procedure for Recording Meetings*

- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**  
*See standing orders 4(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council.*
- s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
  - i. the time and place of the meeting;
  - ii. the names of councillors who are present and absent with or without apologies;
  - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights.
  - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting

- when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
  - vii. the resolutions made.

**u A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**

**v No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

*See standing order 6d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*

**w If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

x A meeting shall not normally exceed a period of 2.5 hours unless by agreement of those Members present.

## **2 PROPER OFFICER**

a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

b The Proper Officer shall:

- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
  - **serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such a manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email) and**
  - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them);**

*See standing order 1(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 1(c) for a meeting of a committee.*

- ii. subject to standing order 11, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under the freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with and subject to the council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;  
*(See also standing order 20);*
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of Planning Committee if an extension of time is not agreed by the Planning Department;
- xvi. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

*See also standing order 20.*

- c. The Proper Officer or other staff member(s) nominated by the Council shall be present at every meeting of the council, committee or sub committee.

### **3 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- a The council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

### **4 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in**

**the case of an equality of votes.**

- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
  
- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if there is one ) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
  - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
  - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
  - iii. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - iv. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - v. Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - vi. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 6;
  - vii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - viii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
  - ix. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

**5 DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is not adhered to, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
  
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

- c If a resolution made under standing order 5(b) above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

## **6 COMMITTEES & SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**
- c **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full council;
  - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 6(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
  - v. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
  - vi. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman and vice chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
  - vii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which shall be no less than three;
  - viii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - ix. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
  - x. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - xi. may dissolve a committee.

- e All committees may exercise on behalf of the Council any of the functions delegated to them as set out in their terms of reference and subject to any statutory provision. No committee shall be obliged to exercise the functions delegated to it, but can if it so wishes refer matters to the council for decision;
- f Each Committee shall submit to the Council a report of the proceedings of any meetings held since the Council last met.

## **7 PRESENCE OF NON-MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- a. Any Councillor may attend, and with the permission of the Committee Chair speak on particular matters at a meeting, not in private session, of a Committee or Sub-Committee of which he is not a member but may not vote.
- b. A member who has proposed a resolution, which has been referred to any committee of which he is not a member, may explain his resolution to the committee but shall not vote.
- c. A Member of a Committee, who is not able to attend for any reason, may appoint as a substitute a Councillor who is not a member of that Committee. Notification of such a substitution shall be given to the Town Clerk or the Chairman before the start of the meeting. This substitute Member may take part in the proceedings as if he were a member of it.

## **8 WORKING GROUPS**

- a. The Council may create working groups, whose name, and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.
- b. The Clerk shall inform the members of each working group of the terms of reference of the group.
- c. A working group may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the Council or Committee or Sub Committee
- d. A working group may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.
- e. Working Group meetings are to be held in normal office hours (to start not earlier than 10am and to finish not later than 6.30pm)

## **9 EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.**



- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee or a sub-committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within 3 days of having been requested by to do so by 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee, any 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee and a sub-committee.

## 10 QUESTIONS

- a A councillor may seek an answer, at a meeting of the council, a question concerning any business of the Council provided 2 clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
- b Questions from a councillor not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.
- c Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

## 11 MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and, in any event, shall relate to the performance of the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 10 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 11(b), correct obvious grammatical or

typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 11(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, in writing to the Proper Officer, so that it can be understood at least 8 clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.

## **12 MOTIONS NOT REQUIRING WRITTEN NOTICE**

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer;
  - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - ii. to move to a vote;
  - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
  - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
  - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
  - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
  - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
  - viii. to require a written report;
  - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
  - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
  - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
  - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
  - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
  - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
  - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);

- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close a meeting.

### **13 RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS**

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 13(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon

separately.

- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
  - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
  - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;
  - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect

mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under Standing Order 13(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.



#### **14 RULES OF DEBATE – RESOLUTIONS**


- a No discussion of the Minutes shall take place except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
- b. A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- c. A member shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chairman.
- d. The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- e. Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide whom to call upon.
- f. Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.

#### **15 PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**




- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 6 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 11, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 15(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

#### **16 DRAFT MINUTES**

-  Full Council meetings
-  Committee meetings

 Sub-committee meetings

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 12(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
-    e **If the Council’s gross annual income and expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f **Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 16(e) and standing order 30(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.**

**17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of “Governance and Accountability for Local Council’s – a Practitioners’ Guide”.
- b All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council’s financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each member a list of all

receipts and payments.

- d The Responsible Financial Officer shall provide to each Standing Committee meeting a statement to summarise:
  - i. the committees' income and expenditure for the year to date;
  - ii the committee's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
  - iii the balances held which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- e As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
  - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
  - ii. to the full council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- f The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to each councillor at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

## **18 FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT**

- a The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.
- b The council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
  - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
  - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;
  - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
  - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the

- 
- council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
- v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- c Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- d A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(h) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means is used to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- e Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
  - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
  - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- f Neither the council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- g A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with**



**an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**

- h. **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

## **19 ESTIMATES / PRECEPTS**

- a. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January. Once the Estimates have been accepted they shall be known as the Budget.
- b. Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than 30<sup>th</sup> October.

## **20 EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

- a. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b. **Subject to standing order 20(a) above, any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

## **21 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

- a. **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal**

**data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**

- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- e To assist councillors and staff such information will normally be printed on pink papers and marked as confidential.

## **22 HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- b The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- c In accordance with standing order 21(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 22(a).
- d Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in above shall be provided only to the Clerk.
- e The Clerk shall conduct an appraisal of all Council employees and shall keep a written record of it. The Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of Corporate Services Committee or in their absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Council shall conduct an appraisal of the Clerk and shall keep a written record of it. Significant outcomes of the appraisals shall be reported to the Corporate

Services Committee.

- f Any grievance shall be handled in accordance with the Council's approved Grievance policy.
- g Any disciplinary matter shall be handled in accordance with the Council's approved Disciplinary policy.
- h Any staff sickness shall be handled in accordance with the Council's approved Sickness Management policy.

## **23 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

## **24 CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

- a. Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.
- b. A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- c. This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

## **25 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

*See also standing order 1(u).*

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting

- after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
  - d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
  - e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
  - f A dispensation request shall confirm:
    - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
    - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
    - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
    - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
  - g Subject to standing orders 25(d) and (f), dispensations requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the council, or committee or a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
  - h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 25(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following apply:**
    - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
    - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
    - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

## 26 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Code of conduct complaints will be received, investigated and decided upon by the District or Unitary Council (Central Bedfordshire Council).
- b Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 21 above, report this to the council.
- c Where the notification in standing order 26(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 26(e).
- d The council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- e **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

## **27 RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

## **28 COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the Unitary Council representing the area of the council.

## **29 RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

## **30 RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

*See also standing order 31.*

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

## **31. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION (Below is not an exhaustive list).**

*See also standing order 21*

- a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d. **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e. **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f. **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

## **32 STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements,

- shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 21.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.
  - d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

## APPENDIX A

### Procedure for recording meetings

The Openness of Local Bodies Regulations 2014 allows any person attending a public local government meeting to report proceedings by taking photographs, filming, audio recording, or by using social media.

It is courteous to advise the council or committee via the clerk that recording will take place.

Where the council has been notified of filming in advance a notice shall be displayed "Please note that filming, recording or photography may take place at this meeting when the public and press are not lawfully excluded"

1. The council and officers shall afford reasonable facilities for the recording of the meeting.
2. Any filming, recording or photography of meetings shall only be permitted from the Public Seating Areas.
3. No additional lighting or flash photography shall be used except by agreement of the chairman.
4. Recording equipment shall not be left unattended at meetings.
5. Devices that may emit an alarm tone shall be switched to silent mode.
6. Persons recording the meeting shall not interrupt or interfere, or cause to make such noise as the chairman regards as disruptive, while a meeting is in progress. The chairman may direct recordings to stop if the interruption, interference or noise prevents the smooth running of the meeting.
7. Commentary by the recording person(s) shall not be permitted during the recording.
8. Only council members and council officers may be expressly recorded. Permission to record other persons present must be agreed with those persons. Permission to record those under 16 must be given by their parent or guardian.
9. All recording shall be visible to anyone at the meeting.
10. The council shall not be liable for any publishing actions of the person(s) making the recording. Permission to publish content identifying a member of the public is advisable.
11. Recording will be suspended if a resolution is passed by the meeting to exclude the public.
12. Recording will be suspended if the Chairman suspends the meeting due to disorderly conduct.
13. Anyone reporting proceedings by making use of social media should not disturb the business of the meeting,
14. Any kind of reporting or filming of the meeting should be compliant with the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Act and the laws of libel and defamation.
15. Only the official signed minutes of the council and its committees will be recognised as the formal, statutory and legally binding record of the meeting.





## Houghton Regis Town Council

### Financial Regulations

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

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

#### Contents

1. GENERAL .....	2
2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL) .....	4
3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING .....	6
4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND .....	6
5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS .....	7
6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS .....	8
7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES .....	10
8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS .....	10
9. INCOME .....	11
10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES .....	12
11. CONTRACTS .....	12
12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS .....	14
13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT .....	14
14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES .....	14
15. INSURANCE .....	15
16. CHARITIES .....	15
17. RISK MANAGEMENT .....	15
18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS .....	16

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> 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 orders<sup>1</sup> 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;

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## **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.

- 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.

### **4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND**

- 4.1. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 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').
- 4.3. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year at 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. 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. 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. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.7. 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 and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of 15% of the budget.
- 4.8. 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.
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. 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. 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. 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. 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.;
  - b) 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. 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. 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. 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.
- 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 alone, or by 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.
- 6.16. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written notification by the supplier and supported by authority for change signed by the Clerk.
- 6.17. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk / RFO and 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 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.
- 6.19. 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 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.
- c) 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 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
  - c) 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.
- 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. 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;
    - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
    - 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 Regulations<sup>2</sup>.

- 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)<sup>3</sup>.
- 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<sup>18</sup> 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 £250 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.2 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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

<sup>3</sup> Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts [209,000 Euros \( £189,330+81,302\)](#)
- b. For public works contracts [5,225,000 Euros \(£4,733,252+551,413\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> Based on NALC's model standing order 18 © 2018 National Association of Local Councils

## **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 £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.
- 15.2. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.3. 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.

\* \* \*





## Houghton Regis Town Council

### Scheme of Delegation

Date of Approval:	Town Council 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
Date of Review:	24 <sup>th</sup> May 2017; 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2018; 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2019; 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2020

This Scheme of Delegation authorises the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer (which may be one and the same person), Council and Standing Committees of the Council to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed.

#### 1. **Responsible Financial Officer**

The Town Clerk shall be the Responsible Financial Officer to the Council and shall be accountable for the Town Councils accounting procedures, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time.

#### 2. **Proper Officer**

2.1 The Town Clerk shall be the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is specifically authorised to:

- 2.1.1 Receive declarations of acceptance of office;
- 2.1.2 Receive and record notices disclosing pecuniary interests;
- 2.1.3 Receive and retain plans and documents;
- 2.1.4 Sign Notices or other documents on behalf of the Council;
- 2.1.5 Receive copies of By-laws made by a Primary local authority;
- 2.1.6 Certify copies of By-laws made by the Council;
- 2.1.7 Sign summonses to attend meetings of the Council.
- 2.1.8 To receive documents in relation to Complaints received under The Members' Code of Conduct and report this at the next convenient meeting of the Council.
- 2.1.9 Ensure compliance with all legal requirements impacting upon the business of the Council

2.2 In addition, the Town Clerk has the delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

- 2.2.1 The day to day administration of services, together with routine inspection and control.
- 2.2.2 Authorisation to call any extra meetings of the Council or any Committee as necessary, having consulted with the Chairman of the Council and/or Chairman of the appropriate Committee.

- 2.2.3 Day to day supervision and control of any staff employed by the Council, for example, to recruit staff, manage development and training needs, record and monitor absences, approve leave arrangements and handle informal grievances and disciplinary matters;
- 2.2.4 Undertake training or attendance at Conferences as previously authorised within budget.
- 2.3 Delegated actions of the Town Clerk shall be in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation and with specific directions/policy given by the Council from time to time.

### **3. Council**

The following matters are reserved to the Council for decision, notwithstanding that the appropriate Committee(s) may make recommendations thereon for the Council's consideration.

- (i) Setting the Precept;
- (ii) Borrowing money;
- (iii) Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this Scheme of Delegation and approving Terms of Reference for the Council's Standing Committees;
- (iv) Making, amending or revoking By-laws;
- (v) Making of Orders and entering into Contracts under any Statutory powers;
- (vi) Matters of principle or policy;
- (vii) Nomination and appointment of representatives of the Council to any other authority, organisation or body;
- (viii) Any proposed new undertakings;
- (ix) Prosecution or defence in a court of law;
- (x) Nomination or appointment of representatives of the Council at any inquiry on matters affecting the Town, excluding those matters specific to a committee;
- (xi) Approval of the Annual Return (Statement of Accounts) (at no later than the June Council meeting);
- (xii) Appointment or dismissal of the Town Clerk;
- (xiii) Any other matters not otherwise devolved/delegated to a Committee of the Council.

### **4 Standing Committees**

Standing Committees are authorised to act at all times in accordance with their Terms of Reference as agreed by Council. In the event of a dispute regarding where authority for a specific issue may lie it will be the decision of Council which will determine.

### **5 Sub-Committees and Working Groups**

Sub-Committees and Working Groups may be formed by resolution of the appropriate Standing Committee at any time but before being established a written report must first be prepared with evidence to the committee outlining why such sub-committee/working group is necessary and why the work cannot be undertaken by the committee itself. It will be for the standing committee to formally approve the terms of reference of such sub-committee/working party.

**6 Delegation – Limitations**

Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups shall, at all times, act in accordance with the Councils Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation and, where applicable, any other rules, regulations, schemes, statutes, By-laws or orders made and with any directions given by the Council from time to time.



Clare Evans  
Town Clerk  
Houghton Regis Town Council

Our ref: CBC/TC/01  
Date: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Ms Evans

Re: Welcome Back Fund

As our town centres gradually reopen, the Council is working very closely with both the Government and local partners to safely welcome back our residents and businesses. To this end, the Council has been allocated funding from the Government's Welcome Back Fund, for the purpose of encouraging shoppers and employees to return in a safe way, but also to ensure that economic activity returns as quickly as possible.

The Council is very keen to work with you on developing projects and activities that contribute to this aim. We are able to allocate WBF funding towards this purpose, should you wish to participate in this programme. The WBF funding is part of a legacy European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) scheme, for which the Council is the accountable body. The funding is intended for specific activities towards the safe opening of High Streets and town centres, as approved by the Government.

The WBF funding allocation has been determined based on precept levels and also the Local Plan designation for your town centre, so as to ensure funding is at a level appropriate to the size of the town centre and the challenges faced. A total of £15,000 has been allocated to Houghton Regis Town Council towards the cost of eligible activities during the current financial year. A Service Level Agreement will be required, which recognises Houghton Regis Town Council as a Delivery Partner to the Council. Any expenditure incurred by the Town Council, will be reclaimed from the Council on a defrayed basis.

I appreciate that managing grant funding such as this can be a complicated process, however, we will endeavour to simplify this as much as possible. Attached to this letter, you will find a form for setting out proposed activities, which we will use to confirm eligibility. This document will act as your Delivery Plan and will also form the basis for your Service Level Agreement.

The Government has issued a set of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) which can be viewed here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/980130/Welcome\\_Back\\_Fund\\_FAQs.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980130/Welcome_Back_Fund_FAQs.pdf). Further guidance regarding the Fund generally can be located at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welcome-back-fund>.

In order to ensure we can start delivering schemes as quickly as possible, whilst recognising you will require sufficient time to consult with TC members, please submit your proposed Delivery Plan by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May, by email to Sam Caldbeck [samuel.caldbeck@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:samuel.caldbeck@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk). If you do not wish to utilise your allocation, please advise Sam as soon as possible and by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May at the latest. Sam, (tel: 0300 300 4410) is a member of the Place Delivery team at the Council and is available to assist you in the preparation of your Delivery Plan and any other queries you may have.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Collins".

Councillor Kevin Collins  
Executive Member for Planning & Regeneration

Cc Ward Member's



**Welcome Back Fund (WBF)**

**Frequently Asked Questions V1 – 23 April 2021**

**Please Note:** These FAQs relate to the WBF Guidance Version 1 – 16 April 2021. These FAQs build on and replace the previously published Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF) FAQs V.7. For any queries, please contact the central fund inbox at [RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk](mailto:RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk).

**CONTENTS**

**ELIGIBILITY..... 2**

**EXPENDITURE AND REQUIREMENTS: ..... 9**

**CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND CLAIMS: ..... 11**

**BRANDING AND PUBLICITY: ..... 14**

**PROCUREMENT:..... 15**

**STAFFING: ..... 17**

## ELIGIBILITY

### 1. *What are the WBF eligibility rules?*

**Answer:** The scope of the WBF includes eligible activity from RHSSF (strands 1-4) along with two new strands of activity (5 + 6) as set out in the WBF Guidance. The same ERDF eligibility rules will apply as they did in RHSSF. In general activities should be eligible under the WBF if they are set out in a local authority's funding agreement with the CLGU team and:

- It is additional i.e. it must not substitute planned domestic expenditure.
- It is revenue expenditure, capital is excluded (see [ERDF Guidance](#)).
- It is not categorised as [State Aid](#).
- It is compliant with ERDF programme rules (see [branding](#) and [procurement requirements](#)).

For the avoidance of doubt, all activity considered eligible under strands 1-4 of the RHSSF can still be delivered through the WBF as part of your new, combined allocation in addition to the eligible activity outlined within this document.

### Questions related to Strand 1 - Support to develop an action plan for how the local authority may begin to safely reopen their local economies.

#### 2. *We would like to procure a consultant to deliver WBF activity, is this eligible?*

**Answer:** The procurement of consultants to deliver WBF activity is eligible, provided the procurement process is ERDF compliant and directly linked to the delivery of one of the strands of eligible activity, e.g. support to develop an action plan or to provide business-facing support. This could be a dedicated officer for the delivery of Covid-19 recovery projects and plans at the local level.

### Questions related to Strand 2 - Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

#### 3. *Are High Street Ambassadors/Wardens eligible?*

**Answer:** The provision of roles to support delivery of a local authority High Street Strategy/ Action plan is permitted and is eligible under strand 2 of the WBF. Sometimes these roles have been described as 'High Street Ambassadors/Wardens'.

- This role is to provide information to the public on the High Street or Neighbourhood Shopping Area (NSA) on the measures in place to ensure the safe reopening.
- This could include:
  - advising the public on Covid-19 regulations such as social distancing and wearing a face covering.
  - directing the public to hygiene stations.
  - leafleting; advertising walker; verbal messaging.



HM Government



European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

- ensuring the public are aware of any temporary public realm changes in place to support the safe reopening of their High Street/Neighbourhood Shopping Area.
- A High Street Ambassador must be a new, paid, full-time equivalent (FTE) job on a fixed term contract, created from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 onwards.
- In claiming for the role, you will be required to provide evidence of the role and its purpose, this includes written confirmation of the post, start date, duration, and the number of hours per week. The letter must state the role is funded by ERDF as WBF activity and include both the HMG and ERDF logo.
- **WBF High Street Ambassadors have no enforcement powers.** However, they may be used to in addition to provide information to the public in the High Street or Neighbourhood Shopping area on the measures in place to ensure the safe reopening of these areas.
- Materials and tools needed for the role are eligible under the fund. Please ensure you follow ERDF regulations for this expenditure to be eligible.
- A Communication/ Information Officer, which is already eligible under the WBF, remit may be expanded to include the role of a High Street Ambassador.
- You should ensure you continue to follow ERDF regulations in relation to branding and publicity. This is set out on page 13 of the WBF Guidance.

**Questions related to Strand 3 - Business-facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.**

**4. *Can the WBF be used to support privately owned shopping centres or on privately owned land?***

**Answer:** Support for privately owned spaces is not within scope of the WBF. Local Authorities are encouraged to work in partnership with public sector landowners when implementing temporary public realm changes. Support for privately owned spaces is not within scope of the six types of eligible activity listed in the WBF Guidance

**Questions related to Strand 4 - Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.**

**5. *Is there any flexibility around physical interventions that might add value to the safety and appeal of our High Streets over a slightly longer period?***

**Answer:** As set out in the WBF Guidance on page 8, this is a revenue only funding project intended to help local authorities address the longer-term impact of Covid-19 on local economies. This can include activities that last as long as restrictive measures are in place as well as activities that help future proof High Streets.

Temporary measures mean interventions that are;

- revenue expenditure only;
- items/activity that are moveable; and
- directly or indirectly connected to the purpose of making high streets, neighbourhood shopping areas and public spaces more Covid-secure.



HM Government



European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

**6. Are we able to work in partnership with Local Highway and Transport Authorities when planning and implementing areas of work within scope of the WBF?**

**Answer:** As per the WBF Guidance, councils in receipt of WBF funds are encouraged to work in partnership with relevant organisations when developing and delivering activities in scope of the WBF, this includes Local Highway and Transport Authorities. Subject to the terms included within the Grant Funding Agreement, Delivery Partnerships can be created with such organisations where there is a need for the defrayal of financial costs to deliver eligible activity – please see question 33 for more information.

**7. Can we fund hand sanitiser stations on the High Street/Neighbourhood Shopping Areas?**

**Answer:** The provision of hand sanitiser stations on the street in supported areas would be an eligible cost under strand 4 of the WBF. As per question 13, this activity must not replace already committed expenditure.

**8. We would like to purchase planters to act as barriers on designated High Streets and Neighbourhood Shopping Areas. Is this eligible for WBF Funding?**

**Answer:** The purchase or installation of planters capable of being removed is eligible for funding under the WBF fund. As set out in the WBF Guidance page 8, this is a revenue only funding project and permanent changes are not permitted.

In addition:

- Planters must not be located on privately owned land and not directly benefit only a single business within the locality.
- The cost of purchasing planters should be reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

Additionally, the maintenance of planters are in scope of the WBF, although staffing costs must adhere to the staffing principles as set out on page 16 of these FAQs. Local authorities can also undertake procurement of a provider to maintain the planters for the period of use. All procurements must follow full ERDF Procurement [rules and guidance](#).

**[Questions related to Strand 5 - Support to promote a safe public environment for a local area's visitor economy.](#)**

**9. Can the WBF be used to support events?**

**Answer:** The WBF can be used to support and promote safe events under strand 5. All activity undertaken should respect the most recent social distancing guidelines as per the [Safer Public Places guidance](#) and the [Guidance for managing beaches, the countryside](#), and need to be part of the local authority's Covid-19 recovery plans. Activities of a celebratory nature or town relaunch for example are eligible, this is not exhaustive. This activity must be additional and procured in line with the ERDF Procurement Guidance – internal recharges are not eligible and state aid considerations should also be taken into account.

Please note that this funding cannot support activities which provide direct revenue generation for local authorities as income/payments for the creation/running/maintenance of events. Activity is limited to public space (land in public ownership).



## 10. Are Marshals eligible?

**Answer:** The provision of Marshals is eligible under strand 5 of the WBF. This role is to provide support to the public in public spaces and is not limited specifically to activity on High Streets. The roles may be put in place to serve an on-going need or a short term need to support specific events. Several roles fall under this job title including but not limited to:

- Helping control the flow of people, footfall and traffic as well as support to ensure social distancing guidelines are adhered to.
- Support public space cleaning and maintenance including litter picking, graffiti removal and toilet provision.

Marshals should not be used to directly support revenue generating car parks.

In addition:

- Similar to Ambassadors/Wardens, a High Street Marshal must be a new, paid, full-time equivalent (FTE) job on a fixed term contract.
- In claiming for the role, you will be required to provide evidence of the role and its purpose, this includes written confirmation of the post, start date, duration, and the number of hours per week. The letter must state the role is funding by ERDF as WBF activity and include both the HMG and ERDF logo.
- Necessary materials and tools needed for the role are eligible under the fund. Please ensure you follow ERDF regulations for this expenditure to be eligible.

Local authorities should look to agree spending plans on Marshals before recruiting to ensure the activity is eligible.

## 11. Are we able to fund market stall coverings, or new gazebos to enable more businesses to trade outdoors?

**Answer:** This is eligible under strand 5 of the WBF. The material should only be deployed in public spaces on public land and must not be located on privately owned land. All eligible activities are to be delivered in a way that does not result in State Aid. For example, the provision should be available to all and at no cost. The material includes gazebos, marquees and stall coverings though this is not an exhaustive list. In addition:

- Where activity is to be located adjacent to businesses, it should benefit more than one business.
- The cost of purchasing gazebos or stall coverings should be reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

## 12. We want to fund public space maintenance and improvements, for example signage/lights/benches/bunting. Is this eligible and how can we demonstrate additionality?

**Answer:** These activities are eligible as per strand 5 of the WBF Guidance which allows for beautification activities to boost the look and feel of High Streets.



The WBF is intended to be additional it should not be replacing source funding for already committed expenditure and must provide additional value through the intervention.

**13. Can we spend funds outside our core town centre, i.e. neighbourhood/district centres, precincts etc?**

**Answer:** As per the WBF Guidance, the temporary public realm Covid-19 adaptations can be made across High Streets or Neighbourhood Shopping Areas. These are not restricted to your core town centre; however, they should be within the boundaries of your local authority area. The WBF allows a more flexible approach supporting public space, it does not necessarily need to be adjacent to commercial areas, making it easier to support for example promenades and other public areas.

**14. Can WBF funding be utilised to support the changes required to enable the reopening of public toilets?**

**Answer:** Under strand 5 temporary changes to toilets are eligible for funding. This could include:

- Additional toilet provision such as portable toilets.
- Repairs and maintenance associated with temporary changes to toilets.
- Cleaning regimes, consumables and staffing arrangements (staffing costs must adhere to the staffing principles as set out on page 16 of these FAQs).

This activity is limited to public space (land in public ownership). Privately owned facilities, for example toilets in privately owned shopping centres, are not eligible for cleaning/cleansing.

**15. Can we fund seating areas and greener, more attractive/accessible public spaces?**

**Answer:** The purchase, improvement or installation of moveable seating and the provision/improvement of green and accessible public spaces is eligible for funding under strand 5 of the WBF fund.

In addition:

- Seating/new spaces must not be located on privately owned land.
- Where activity is to be located near to businesses and there is more than one business in the locality, the benefit must be to more than one business.
- The cost of purchasing seating or setting up new green spaces should be reasonable and demonstrate value for money.

**16. Can we make changes to parking bays directly on High Streets or identified Neighbourhood Areas?**

**Answer:** The WBF can be used to make temporary changes resulting in the removal of pre-existing parking bays on identified High Streets and neighbourhoods to allow for social distancing on pavements.

Parklets and the erection of seating within parking bays and publicly owned car parks is also within scope of strand 5 of the WBF fund. No WBF activity should directly result in State Aid.



**17. Are we able to claim the costs of the revenue lost through maintaining paid carparking spaces as free spaces to encourage people back to the High Street?**

**Answer:** Loss of carparking revenue cannot be claimed under the WBF.

**18. Can we fund new cycle lanes, paths and cycle storage?**

**Answer:** Temporary changes to pre-existing cycle paths/lanes which are located on identified High Streets and Neighbourhood Areas and directly linked to the changes to footpaths for social distancing are within the scope of WBF funding under strand 4.

The funding of new cycle paths or lanes is not within the scope of the WBF fund and cannot be claimed. Furthermore, activity under strand 5 can be undertaken in public areas that are not adjacent to commercial areas, for example, promenades or other public areas.

As long as they are removable, the provision of storage for bicycles such as racks is within scope of the strand 5 of the WBF. As set out in the WBF Guidance page 8, this is a revenue only funding project and permanent changes are therefore not permitted.

**19. Can the fund be used to create/develop websites/apps?**

**Answer:** This is within scope strand 5 of the WBF. The production of websites would need to be directly in line with scope of the WBF fund and focused on the provision of information relating to the creation and promotion of a safe environment for local trade and tourism. This includes but is not limited to Click and Collect /Virtual High Streets and websites promoting safe celebration events.

Full [ERDF branding](#) and [procurement](#) requirements must be adhered to.

[Questions related to Strand 6 - Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street.](#)

**20. What do you mean by activities that help to future proof High Streets?**

**Answer:** Local authorities can use the WBF to support the development of local plans to ensure the medium to long-term success of your local economy. This could build on an existing short-term recovery plan, but it's important to consider long-term strategic and operational aspects local authorities need to put in place now.

The High Streets Task Force has published a [Transformation Route Map](#) which helps place leaders to identify priorities from four strategic approaches to renewal:

- Restructuring (building the capacity and partnerships to deliver change);
- Repositioning (using data to develop an inspiring vision);
- Rebranding (establishing an identity and sense of place); and
- Reinventing (activating and animating your place with diverse activities).

Local authorities may wish to use the WBF to finance a new position or a secondment (from either within the local authority or another relevant organisation, such as a Town Council or



HM Government



European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

Business Improvement District) to develop such a plan or route map, as well as coordinate some specific development processes such as local engagement.

As part of this, the WBF could also support:

- Work to establish local partnerships and networks.
- Sector-specific engagement and support.
- Place-based capacity building exercises to support place managers and leaders.
- Capacity building (i.e. training) for local place managers and leaders to respond adequately to future economic shocks.
- Piloting activities to test how events and High Street offers can be restarted and maintained safely.
- New positions or secondments (from either within the local authority or another relevant organisation, such as a Town Council or Business Improvement District).
- Coordination of local plans or projects for recovery.

**21. Are all of the interventions listed in the Safer Public Spaces Guidance (section 4.2) and the Guidance for Managing Beaches, the Countryside and Coastal Areas eligible?**

**Answer:** The WBF is not intended to fund all of the interventions listed in the [Safer Public Spaces guidance](#) and the [Guidance for Managing Beaches, the Countryside and Coastal Areas](#). The six strands of eligible activity under this fund are defined in the WBF Guidance and this FAQ document.

## **EXPENDITURE AND REQUIREMENTS:**

### **22. How long can activities to be delivered through the Welcome Back Fund last?**

**Answer:** The financial completion date for the WBF is 31 March 2022. We expect activity to end by 31 March 2022 however there is potential for activity to extend beyond 31 March 2022 in certain circumstances.

For example:

- If you have a contract for a supplier to install, maintain and then remove barriers, then as long as it's started before 31 March 2022 (both defrayed and barriers installed), the activity could be delivered beyond this date as long as it's been procured as one contract and the standard terms are to pay for it all up front.
- The same would apply for a footfall supplier contracted prior to 31 March 2022 (where the standard terms are for a one-year contract or subscription).
- We would not be able to fund salaries or other accruals after 31 March 2022.

### **23. Strand 6 of eligible activity refers to 'responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19.' What does this mean?**

**Answer:** This strand is complementary to strand 1 but recognises that the impact of Covid-19 on local economies will be significant beyond the immediate reopening of High Streets and town centres.

The High Streets Task Force defines medium term activities that range between 3-5 years. Therefore, in addition to the development of reactive action plans to ensure a safe and successful reopening under strand 1, and strand 6 local authorities are able to develop plans to address the medium-term, ongoing impacts of Covid-19.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- Research to inform the development of a local strategic plan over a longer term.
- Development of pilot projects and strategic responses to address and reverse the long-term impacts of Covid-19 on local economies, particularly where they relate to the High Street.
- Strategies to assess and evaluate the impact of current activity being delivered to manage the local economy post-reopening safely and successfully.
- The development of datasets including footfall, vacancy rates and sentiment data.

### **24. As this funding is an expansion to the RHSSF, are we required to resubmit a Grant Action Plan or Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)?**

**Answer:** MHCLG will issue a WBF Activity Form to identify and agree local authority proposals in response to the WBF.

Local authorities with existing GFAs will then need to enter into an agreement to vary current GFAs. Local authorities without a GFA currently in place will need to enter into a new GFA.

Once GFAs have been varied or created and new activities have been agreed with Contract Managers through a Welcome Back Fund Activity Form, we will be able to reimburse expenditure through the quarterly claims process.

Speak with your Contract Manager to confirm eligibility of new activity before spending at risk. Additionally, as outlined within the WBF Guidance, all existing activity under the RHSSF remains eligible, remaining unspent allocations can be rolled over and combined with RHSSF/WBF allocation.

**25. *We would like to extend an existing contract, i.e. footfall or consultancy services to continue up to 31 March 2022 but are concerned that the new contract amount will exceed the minimum procurement threshold. What are the implications of this?***

**Answer:** The final date for WBF project delivery is 31 March 2022. This can include contracted activities and services, though extensions to activities will need to be within the scope of any existing procurements/contracts. If you are considering extending an existing contract, you will also need to ensure that all aspects of the procurement remain compliant with ERDF guidance.

For example, if the original contract value is below the threshold of £25,000 and an extension of the contract (which, as a rule of thumb, can be up to 50% on top of the original contract value) takes the overall value above £25,000 then the contract must then be advertised in accordance with the ERDF Procurement Guidance. Consideration should also be given as to whether this is a new contract due to unforeseen circumstances or an extension of an existing contract.

**26. *Will the 4% management costs from the RHSS funding still be available in the WBF?***

**Answer:** The amount available to you under the 4% Management and Administration allocation will increase commensurately with your funding allocation.

**27. *Can we still claim 15% Flat Rate Indirect Costs (FRIC) for direct staff costs?***

**Answer:** 15% FRIC can be claimed for eligible, direct staff costs. Please speak to your Contract Manager if you have any queries about staffing or the submission of claims.



## **CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND CLAIMS:**

### **28. How is the money going to be awarded?**

**Answer:** Once GFAs have been varied or created and new activities (under strands 5 and 6) have been agreed, funding can be reimbursed from MHCLG in arrears through a quarterly claims process.

### **29. When can we start to spend our new allocation?**

**Answer:** As the WBF Guidance has now been published local authorities can spend WBF allocations at risk however we encourage local authorities to agree proposals with MHCLG as early as possible.

### **30. Does the initial RHSS funding still need to be spent by 30 June 2021, or can we now use it with the new funding to spend before 31 March 2022?**

**Answer:** The WBF is an extension to the original RHSSF project. This means that original allocations under the RHSSF can be rolled over and combined with new WBF allocations until March 2022.

### **31. Can we combine our allocation with another local authority?**

**Answer:** Two local authorities may combine their WBF allocations if they wish.

- One council would be designated the lead local authority who would enter in the GFA with MHCLG, the other local authority would enter into a delivery partner agreement with the lead principle local authority.
- This would then be treated as one allocation, with the two local authorities able to split funding across the combined geography as agreed between them.
- Both local authorities would need to be in the same ESIF Category of Region in order for this to be considered. Category of Region listings can be found [here](#).
- We would need written confirmation from both parties that both are content to enter into such an arrangement. This should evidence that it has been considered at the appropriate level within each council and confirm who will be the lead local authority.
- This is in addition to the existing option for local authorities to enter into delivery partner agreements with other tiers of local authority who do not have an WBF allocation, (for example parish councils).

If you wish to pursue this as an option, please contact the WBF mailbox in the first instance. [RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk](mailto:RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk).

### **32. Can we access the Welcome Back Fund if we didn't originally access the RHSSF?**

**Answer:** WBF allocations (including previous RHSSF allocations) are available to all local authorities. Local authorities without a GFA currently in place will need to enter into a GFA. Please contact MHCLG via the inbox at [RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk](mailto:RHSSFund@communities.gov.uk) if you are interested in taking up this funding.



### **33. What are the expectations and requirements for Delivery Partnerships under the Welcome Back Fund?**

In delivering this funding we expect to see engagement with businesses, business organisations, lower tier authorities (such as town and parish councils) and other relevant stakeholders as part of the development of Welcome Back Fund plans. However, we understand that different areas will prioritise different activities according to local need it is for local authorities to determine the best delivery mechanism by which to do this.

If you identify another organisation (such as a Town/Parish Council, Business Improvement District or other relevant stakeholder) as the most appropriate provider for any eligible activity you can deliver said activity through a Delivery Partner arrangement subject to the terms included within the GFA.

An ERDF Delivery Partnership is a financial arrangement where the other organisation can defray costs themselves in the same way that the lead local authority with an WBF allocation can. This means that the lower tier would also need to adhere to the same ERDF rules on procurement, branding, and publicity and so on. Please note all ERDF Delivery Partnership arrangements will require a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the identified Delivery Partner (we are not able to provide a template SLA).

Any Delivery Partner will need to adhere to the requirements set out in the WBF Guidance and ensure compliance with ERDF rules on procurement, branding, and publicity. At the claims stage the principle local authority will need to ensure that the Delivery Partner has the appropriate systems in place and evidence to support financial claims for reimbursement of funding from MHCLG.

### **34. Who can be a Delivery Partner?**

**Answer:** If identified as the most appropriate provider, eligible activities can be delivered through Delivery Partnership arrangements with organisations such as, but not limited to:

- Town/Parish Councils.
- Country Councils.
- Local Highways or Transport Authorities.
- Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce (or other relevant Business Representative Organisations).
- Destination Management Organisations.

Please note that whilst the above list is not exhaustive, you should speak to your Contract Manager when identifying any potential Delivery Partner.

### **35. We do not wish to create a financial Delivery Partnership arrangement but still want to demonstrate engagement with local stakeholders. How can we do this?**

**Answer:** ERDF Delivery Partner arrangements may not be suitable in every case where a lower tier of authority does not necessarily require the ability to defray financial costs, i.e. a town council may wish to contribute ideas and feedback on local priorities and the delivery impact of activities whilst not directly spending a WBF allocation. Local authorities can in this instance, demonstrate engagement and consultation with local partners by providing a





HM Government



**European Union**

European Regional  
Development Fund

summary of an outline of engagement activities proposed or undertaken. This will be initially reviewed through the WBF Activity Form and through quarterly progress monitoring reports.



HM Government



European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

## **BRANDING AND PUBLICITY:**

### **36. Are we required to comply with ERDF Branding and Publicity?**

**Answer:** Local authorities are required to fully comply with the ERDF Branding and Publicity Guidelines for all activity including the temporary installation of planters. Please read the Branding FAQ for further information and follow the ERDF Branding and Publicity Guidance.

### **37. What are the requirements for the use branding logos?**

**Answer:** Local authorities are required to use the HMG and ERDF logos as this is a national project. You may choose to use regional logos in addition if you wish.

If you have previously used a regional logo alongside the ERDF logo, we would not consider this ineligible. However, moving forward, as set out in the WBF, the HMG logo should be used alongside the ERDF logo.

### **38. Are the branding and logos required to be printed on every piece of signage, pavement sticker or temporary public realm adaptation, for example?**

**Answer:** Local authorities are required to ensure that all activity funded by the WBF is compliant with the ERDF Branding and Publicity Guidance and the WBF Guidance which states:

'Display of at least one poster of minimum A3 size, readily visible to the public (e.g. the entrance area of a public building) at the location of the activities being implemented and containing information on the work being delivered'

Posters or display boards will need to be located prominently in at least one location for each Highstreet or neighbourhood area where WBF activity is in place.



HM Government



European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

## PROCUREMENT:

### **39. *We have followed our council's procurement guidelines on expenditure at risk and this differs from ERDF guidelines. Does this matter?***

**Answer:** All procurement that you wish to claim through the WBF must have been undertaken following the [ERDF Procurement Guidance](#).

### **40. *Can we use Existing Suppliers for WBF activity?***

**Answer:** Local authorities may use existing frameworks where they have been compliantly procured (e.g. correct procurement route, Official Journal of the European Union -OJEU- requirements have been met), in which case the framework documentation would not need the ERDF/HMG logos. However, call offs from that framework to be used for the WBF project would need to be compliant with both ESIF procurement and branding requirements. Existing contracts, which have now expired, are not a basis for direct awards.

### **41. *Can we use Single Tender Justification Forms?***

**Answer:** Where there is only one possible supplier, you would need to retain evidence of such and complete the Single Tender Justification Form. We are unable to approve these, but you will need to submit them to your Contract Manager. There are very few instances where a sole provider of a service or item can be adequately evidenced.

### **42. *Can we use the Extreme Urgency Route set out in Regulation 32 of the Project Change Request?***

**Answer:** The EU Commission are very unlikely to consider any procurement or activity undertaken for the WBF to constitute 'Extreme Urgency' and therefore the use of the Extreme Urgency Route is not recommended for any procurement associated with the WBF.

For both OJEU and sub-OJEU contracts using the Extreme Urgency Route set out in regulation 32 of the PCR is increasingly risky. Any Grant Recipient claiming to be able to make a direct award under that route will have to provide very clear and irrefutable evidence that they meet every limb of the tests set out in that regulation.

### **43. *What are the VAT requirements?***

**Answer:** As per page 29 of the [ESIF Procurement Requirements](#), threshold values are exclusive of VAT.

### **44. *What if we are not able to obtain 3 quotes for relevant procurements?***

**Answer:** It is considered very unlikely that 3 quotes would not be obtainable for the activities eligible within the WBF. Should the activity be of such a unique nature that not more than two companies can be found or provide quotes, this would need to be evidenced to demonstrate that 3 quotes have been attempted and the rationale as to why they could not be secured.



**45. *Is there any flexibility on deviating from the ERDF procurement process?***

**Answer:** We are unable to 'sign off' local authority deviations from the processes set out in the Procurement Requirements. If extenuation circumstances exist as set out in the ERDF procurement guidance, local authorities would need to complete Annex 2 or 3 of the Guidance as applicable and submit to their Contract Manager for consideration.

**46. *Can we procure at risk before WBF Plans are agreed?***

**Answer:** Procurement can be undertaken at risk during the pre- contracting period. The actual final details of each procurement will be captured at claims and reviewed for compliance with [ERDF Procurement Guidance](#).

## STAFFING:

### **47. What are the Staffing Key Principles for the WBF?**

#### **Answer:**

- WBF should not be replacing the source for already committed expenditure.
- WBF can't be used to pay for sunk costs.

If the local authority has a member of staff who could write the Action Plan or undertake the public facing communications activity for example, within their existing, normal hours, then the local authority could not claim their hours as an WBF eligible cost.

If the local authority has a works department or design team that could do the work in their existing hours, then that would not be an eligible cost. If those staff have no spare capacity, then overtime is eligible as long as the tasks are additional to the pre-existing tasks and the underlying activity is eligible in itself under the WBF guidance. The local authority would need to be able to evidence and justify the use of overtime in this scenario. Hourly rates would be required and would be based on the basic annual salary (see ERDF Eligibility Guidance for details). No overtime premiums would be claimable.

Where the local authority does not have current staff employed to carry out the activity, you may employ new staff to do so as long as the underlying activity is eligible in itself under the WBF Guidance. It must be directly aligned with one of the four strands of activity. For the avoidance of doubt, project administration or project management staff costs are only claimable within the 4% Management and Administration allowance (within your total WBF allocation).

Where local authorities have staff within their employment who do not currently work full time or they are not currently employed to undertake the broad type of work within scope, their hours may be increased with an appropriate HR letter and following ERDF Eligibility Guidance to enable them to undertake the necessary activity. Staff time will be claimed using either hourly rate (timesheets) or fixed percentage methodology, set out within the ERDF Eligibility Guidance.

Staff could in principle be re-deployed to undertake an eligible activity as an alternative to employing additional staff or procuring contract staff, but if so, Value-for-Money would need to be evidenced. The re-deployed staff member's costs could only be claimed at the salary rate appropriate for that role, and not at the staff member's existing rate. It would also be necessary to show the costs of the re-deployed staff member were not a sunk cost for the local authority. Thus, a staff member currently at 0.5 FTE who increases that to 0.75FTE to be re-deployed to undertake a WBF activity during the extra 0.25 FTE, could claim the additional 0.25 FTE cost. However, a staff member not currently employed to undertake a RHSS activity and who is not increasing the hours they work at the local authority, is likely to be a sunk cost to the local authority – the local authority has to pay that employee's costs anyway, so if they are re-deployed to WBF work there is no marginal cost to the local authority and so the cost could not be claimed.



HM Government



**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund



## Welcome Back Fund

Please complete as fully as possible and submit via email to [samuel.caldbeck@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:samuel.caldbeck@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

For guidance on activities, please refer to the FAQ's and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welcome-back-fund>

Town Council Name	Name of Lead Contact	
	Telephone Number	
	Email Address	
	Name of Deputy Contact	
	Telephone Number	
	Email Address	

## 1. Proposed Activity

Please complete the table below to reflect the activities you propose to use the WBF for.

No.	Area of Scope	Using bullet points briefly set out the specific activities you will undertake	Briefly set out how the activity does not duplicate existing activity (additionality)	Total Indicative Budget £ per item Gross
1	Support to develop an action plan for how the local authority may begin to safely reopen their local economies.			
2	Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely			
3	Business-facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.			
4	Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.			

5	Support and promote a safe public environment for a local area's visitor economy			
6	Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of CV-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street.			

**Locations of activity to be covered by WBF.**

Please list the locations that you intend to support with this activity and give details of which strand of activity will be implemented at each location. <i>Insert more rows if required.</i>		
Type High Street / Neighbourhood Shopping Area	Name of location	Postcode(s)



## 2. Procurement

Please provide details of all the procurements you have and/or will undertake in relation to WBF eligible expenditure.

**It remains the responsibility of the Local Authority and relevant Delivery Partner(s) to ensure all procurements are compliant with [ERDF Procurement Requirements](#). Below are the thresholds that you should adhere to:**

Value of contract	Minimum Procedure	Advertising Required
£0 - £2,499	Direct award	None
£2,500 - £24,999	3 written quotes or prices sought from relevant suppliers of goods, works and services	None
<b>£25,000 – Relevant Public Contracts Regulations threshold</b>	Formal tender process in line with the Interpretative Communication and the relevant guidance set out below	1) Advertised on <a href="#">Contracts Finder</a> and 2) the opportunity is advertised on the ESIF grant recipient's website for a reasonable time period.