

# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr Clare L Copleston** Tel: 01582 708540  
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans** E-mail: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

10<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**To: All Town Councillors**

### **Notice of Meeting – Change of Venue**

You are hereby summoned to the Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held at the **Council Offices, Peel Street** on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021** at **7.00pm**.

Due ongoing Covid concerns, members of the public who wish to attend the meeting are encouraged to do so remotely through the meeting link below. Members of the public may also attend in person and, if doing so, are requested to socially distance as much as possible.

To attend remotely through Teams please follow this link: [MEETING LINK](#)

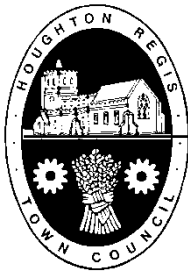
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clare Evans'.

**Clare Evans**  
**Town Clerk**

**THIS MEETING MAY BE  
RECORDED<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</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.*



# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr Clare L Copleston** Tel: 01582 708540  
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans** E-mail: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**To: All Town Councillors**

### Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to the Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held at **Houghton Regis Academy**, Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, LU5 5PX on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021** at **7.00pm**.

**Clare Evans**  
Town Clerk

**THIS MEETING MAY BE  
RECORDED<sup>1</sup>**

### AGENDA

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

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

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

- 3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

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

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

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#### 4. MINUTES

*Pages 6 - 13*

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

**Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021.**

#### 5. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MINUTES

*Pages 12 - 58*

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

Corporate Services Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2021
Community Services Committee	6 <sup>th</sup> September and 25 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
Environment & Leisure Committee	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Planning Committee	27 <sup>th</sup> September, 18 <sup>th</sup> October and 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
Town Partnership Committee	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2021

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

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

*Please contact the Head of Democratic Services if you would like a copy of any of these policies re-sent to you.*

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

<b>11774</b>	<b>Employee Assistance Programme</b>
<b>11777</b>	<b>Freedom of Information and Model Scheme of Publication</b>
<b>11778</b>	<b>Communications Policy and Strategy</b>
<b>11779</b>	<b>Local Government Pension Scheme; Statement of Local Discretions</b>
<b>11780</b>	<b>Press Protocols</b>
<b>11781</b>	<b>Risk Management Plan</b>
<b>11782</b>	<b>Banking Arrangement, Investment Strategy Investment Arrangement Policy</b>

#### 6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A verbal report will be provided.

## **7. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED**

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

## **8. USE OF RESERVES BY E&L**

Pages 59 - 64

Members are advised that at the Environment & Leisure Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 requests were made to Town Council for authorisation to spend from General Reserves. The draft Minutes are attached.

Requests are made for the following:

- Tree survey work outcomes – Minute 11843, £17,000
- Public seating on Parkside Recreation ground - Minute 11850, £1300

Members are advised of the following:

- At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 the level of General Reserves was £251,528
- At the October Town Council meeting the following was agreed:
  1. That £35,000 be transferred out of New Office Provision Earmarked Reserve into General Reserves.
  2. That £100,000 be transferred out of General Reserves into Pavilion Renovation Earmarked Reserve
- It is projected that spend in 2021/22 will use £13,888 of General Reserves. This contribution from General Reserves includes in the Projected spend use of reserves for the additional tree work (approx. £19,000) and for 2 new benches in Parkside Recreation Ground (approx. £1300).
- The project level of General Reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 is therefore £172,640
- As members are aware it is considered good practice to have approximately 3 months net revenue expenditure in General reserves.  
Based on spend in 2021/22 this equates to a General reserve level of around £225,000.

Although it is not recommended that General Reserves be used for revenue expenses such as the tree work identified above, this work is essential for health and safety and as such should not be delayed. Members may like to consider the appropriateness of using general reserves for the seating in Parkside, this is a project which could be budgeted for in 2022/23.

**Recommendation:** To approve the use of General reserves for the following:

- Tree survey work outcomes – £17,000
- Public seating on Parkside Recreation ground - £1300

## **9. POPPY WREATHS**

Pages 65 - 67

It has been requested that the council consider the timing of the relocation of the poppy wreaths from around the memorial stone to the Memorial Hall Garden. This was previously considered at the Town Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The previously presented officers report is attached for information.

Members are requested to confirm the previous Council resolution.

**Recommendation:** To confirm Minute 10092 as follows:

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

## 10. BEDFORD SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTRE CONSULTATION

Pages 68 - 85

To notify members of the CBC consultation on the future use of Bedford Square Community Centre (BSCC).

**Recommendation:** To respond to the CBC consultation on the Future Use of Houghton Regis Community Centre as follows:

1. **The BSCC should remain in full community use; it is at the centre of the community, and it provides a basis for a network of local support, community cohesion, consultations and events, building health and wellbeing opportunities, and social wealth.**
2. **The loss of the BSCC is contrary to the Houghton Regis emerging Neighbourhood Plan which seeks retention of the Community Centre**
3. **The BSCC supports other services located within the Bedford Square centre and also within the wider Houghton Regis town centre. It contributes to the vibrancy of the town centre and the local community.**
4. **The condition of the centre and the internal facilities make it an adaptable and flexible space, ideally place to be the heart of the community. The centre would benefit from a more accessible booking system, local marketing to improve awareness and a more affordable price structure in relation to out of office hours bookings to make it a vibrant and well used facility which is able to serve the needs of the community of Houghton Regis**

## 11. PARISH BOUNDARY REVIEW

Members will recall that at the Town Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October consideration was given to the possibility of an early Community Governance Review (CGR).

The following Resolution was passed:

*That the Council respond to CBC, expressing its interest in having an early Community Governance Review, and in particular its view that the parish boundary with Chalton parish should be amended in the interests of future fair and efficient local government arrangements.*

Ahead of this it was requested that contact be made with Chalton Parish Council to explore their views on this.

A verbal update will be provided.

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

## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: J Carroll  
E Cooper  
Y Farrell  
S Goodchild  
D Jones  
M S Kennedy  
T McMahon  
R Morgan  
A Slough  
C Slough  
S Thorne  
K Wattingham

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

Public: 2

Apologies: Councillors: C Copleston  
D Dixon-Wilkinson

#### 11792 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Copleston and Dixon-Wilkinson.

Members were advised that Cllr Dixon Wilkinson would like to formally send his apologies to the Council until March 2022 as he was currently unwell.

Should the council be minded to formally accept Cllr Dixon Wilkinson's apologies, the 6-month rule which disqualifies a councillor from their position as a councillor would not apply. The situation would be reviewed as necessary at the March Town Council meeting.

Members agreed to accept Cllr D Dixon-Wilkinson's apologies and wished him well.

**Resolved: That the reason, of serious ill-health, for Councillor Dixon-Wilkinson's absence from any meetings since 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 be approved, with the approval of leave of absence being for a period until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**

#### 11793 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members received written correspondence from a member of the public on behalf of Parkside Ward Action Group, requesting additional seating to be installed on Parkside Recreation area. The Action Group offered the Town Council a financial contribution of £200.

It was advised the Environment and Leisure Committee would be looking into the provision of seating and would look at funding additional seating in the next budget.

A question was raised regarding the lack of available funding for a Health Hub. It was felt a Health Hub was needed due to the intended growth of Houghton Regis would render current surgeries oversubscribed.

#### **11794 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr McMahon declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 13 as she was a trustee of the Houghton Regis Heritage Society.

#### **11795 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

An amendment to the minutes was requested. Members approved the minutes as amended.

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 as amended.**

#### **11796 DIGITALISING DOCUMENTATION**

Members agreed to bring this item forward in the agenda.

Following on from the consideration given by the council at its June meeting Members received a further report provided by Houghton Regis Heritage Society (HRHS) suggesting the digitalisation of Minutes and other documentation of the council. David Hill and Roger Turner from the HRHS were in attendance to present the report.

Members remained keen to support the project, a detailed breakdown of costs to the Town Council was requested.

Concerns were raised regarding potential staff time involvement with the processing of future documentation.

**Resolved: To continue to support the project in principle, with more substantial support being subject to adequate resources being made available in the budget for 2022/23.**

#### **11797 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

Corporate Services Committee	1 <sup>st</sup> June and 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Community Services Committee	8 <sup>th</sup> February and 28 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
Environment & Leisure Committee	7 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
Planning Committee	24 <sup>th</sup> May, 14 <sup>th</sup> June, 5 <sup>th</sup> July, 12 <sup>th</sup> July, 26 <sup>th</sup> July, 16 <sup>th</sup> August and 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Town Partnership Committee	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2021

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



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

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

- 11636:** To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Fraud and Ethics Policy
- 11637:** To recommend to Town Council that the Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy be approved.
- 11638:** To recommend to Town Council that the Officer/Member Protocol be approved.
- 11640:** To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure or Holder of High Office Protocol.

#### **11798 TOWN MAYOR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

The Mayor:

- Attended Morrisons get together
- Attended a catch-up session with the Mayor of Leighton Buzzard
- Attended the Mayor of Leyton Linlade's painting party
- Attended a Meet and Greet at Bidwell West
- Attended Houghton Rocks
- Participated in a Fun Run and Doggie Jog
- Attended Dunstable Scout Council AGM
- Attended Houghton Regis Bowles club fundraiser in aid of prostate cancer
- Attended High Sherriff event

The Deputy Mayor:

- Attended Houghton Regis Town Council Pop-Up Café for lunch
- Attended 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Scouts AGM
- Attended a Fire Station event.

#### **11799 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED**

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

**Cllr Thorne** updated members on the following organisations:

Dial-a-Ride had faced difficulties in the current climate

Citizens Advice had been busy and had settled in their new venue

Memorial Hall's car park had been completed, the hall floor had been completed, a new roof had been installed over the fire escape and cellar. Pending works were refreshing the paint in the hall, new railings and a defibrillator placed at the front of the building. Fundraising options had been considered for the cost of a projector for the main hall. Acknowledgement and thanks were given to the Chairman, Cllr Wattingham, for his fundraising efforts.

**Cllr Carroll** had attended three virtual training sessions ran by BATPC on finance which he had found informative.

**Cllr McMahon** had attended virtual training through NALC and had enjoyed a tour of All Saints View, members were advised that previous concerns of noise at the front of the building were unwarranted as there was no noise intrusion.

**Cllr Jones** had attended a BATPC meeting, members were updated on the new appointment of Robin Thomas, County Officer. Also attended was the HR North Stakeholder Group meeting.

**Cllr Goodchild** had received Safeguarding Training, the slides from this training could be shared with members on request.

#### **11800 AUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2020/21**

Members received the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for consideration.

Members were advised that the external auditor had not raised matters under Section 3 of the Return, nor had any matters been raised in the covering letter as minor scope for improvement.

Acknowledgement and thanks were offered to the Town Clerk for the work involved in the submission of the return.

**Resolved: To approve and accept the Annual Return including the external auditor's certificate.**

#### **11801 REVIEW OF EAR MARKED RESERVES**

Members reviewed the status of the Council's Ear Marked Reserves part way through the financial year.

An amendment to the officer recommendation 3 was proposed to read:

That £35,000 be transferred out of New Office Provision Earmarked Reserve into General Reserves.

*The officer recommendation read: To consider allocating funds from General Reserves into specified Ear Marked Reserves.*

Proposed by: Cllr Jones, seconded by: Cllr Wattingham. Members voted in favour of the amendment; accordingly, this became a substantive motion.

Members voted in favour of the substantive motion (3).

An additional motion (4) was proposed to read:  
That £100,000 be transferred out of General Reserves into Pavilion Renovation Earmarked Reserve.

Proposed by: Cllr Jones, seconded by: Cllr Wattingham, members voted in favour of inclusion of the additional motion; accordingly, this became a substantive motion (4).

Members voted in favour of the substantive motion (4).

An additional motion (5) was proposed to read:  
Council confirms that it does not wish for EMR transfers to be included in the budget for 2022/23

Proposed by: Cllr Jones, seconded by: Cllr Wattingham, members voted in favour of inclusion of the additional motion; accordingly, this became a substantive motion (5).

Members voted in favour of the substantive motion (5).

- Resolved:**
- 1. To note the Schedule of Ear Marked Reserves 2021/22**
  - 2. To consider the allocation of Ear Marked Reserves to Town Council and committees during the budget setting process**
  - 3. That £35,000 be transferred out of New Office Provision Earmarked Reserve into General Reserves.**
  - 4. That £100,000 be transferred out of General Reserves into Pavilion Renovation Earmarked Reserve.**
  - 5. Council confirmed that it does not wish for EMR transfers to be included in the budget for 2022/2023.**

## **11802 COUNCIL MEETING ARRANGEMENTS**

Members were requested to consider the nature and format of council meetings going forwards from January 2022.

An amendment to the officer recommendation 2 was proposed to read:  
Meetings of committees and sub-committees will be held in the council chamber with remote access being available to non-members and residents until April 2022, a review will be carried out March 2022;

*The officer recommendation read: Meetings of committees and sub-committees will be held in the council chamber with remote access being available to non-members and residents.*

Proposed by: Cllr Jones, seconded by: Cllr Morgan. Members voted in favour of the amendment; accordingly, this became a substantive motion (2).

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- Resolved:**
- 1. To note that meetings of Town Council will be held in larger local venues (no remote access or visual recording possible) until April 2022, after which time they will be held in the council chamber (with remote access and recording possible);**
  - 2. Meetings of committees and sub-committees will be held in the council chamber with remote access being available to non-members and residents until April 2022, a review will be carried out March 2022;**
  - 3. Meetings of individual working groups and other informal meetings will consider how they would like to meet (in person, hybrid or remote)**

### **11803 STAFF WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

Members were requested to consider staff working arrangements from January 2022 in the form of hybrid working arrangements.

Members were advised that since the introduction of hybrid working office arrangements, careful consideration had been given to staffing to ensure forward facing services had not been disrupted.

Members were advised that a statistics report would be produced on the number of visitors the office received after 4pm. This data would aid the consideration of the offices closing to members of the public at 4pm, to allow the practicable implementation of the staff Flexitime Policy.

- Resolved:** For the council to continue to offer hybrid working arrangements to staff from January 2022.

### **11804 REVIEW OF NUMBERS OF COUNCILLORS**

Members were advised that CBC had contacted town and parish councils to explore whether there was an interest in carrying out a Community Governance Review (CGR) ahead of the anticipated timeline of 2023. This review could consider the number of town or parish councillors and the parish boundary.

CBC received a request for an early CGR from Arlesey Town Council (at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021) as this council was interested in reducing the number of parish councillors due to long standing councillor vacancies.

The Democratic Services Manager at Central Bedfordshire Council suggested that the number of councillors a parish or town council had should be reflective of the case work from residents and of the requirements of each council. There was no standard or guidelines as to the number of electorate each town or parish councillor should or could represent.

The Democratic Services Manager, CBC, also suggested that HRTC may like to consider exploring with Chalton Parish Council the suitability of the parish boundary between the 2 parishes.

Members suggested that with the growth of Houghton Regis, the number of councillors needed to adequately service the town was expected to increase. Members wanted to have an appreciation of what measures CBC would put in place to support councillors.

Members considered the precept impact on Chalton if the boundary was to change.

A motion was proposed to read:

That the Council respond to CBC, expressing its interest in having an early Community Governance Review, and in particular its view that the parish boundary with Chalton parish should be amended in the interests of future fair and efficient local government arrangements.

Members voted in favour of the substantive motion.

**Resolved: That the Council respond to CBC, expressing its interest in having an early Community Governance Review, and in particular its view that the parish boundary with Chalton parish should be amended in the interests of future fair and efficient local government arrangements.**

#### 11805 CHRISTMAS RECEPTION OPENING

The following Christmas reception opening hours were suggested:

Friday 24th December	Open 9am to 1pm
Monday 27th December	Closed
Tuesday 28th December	Closed
*Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
*Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
*Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	Closed
Monday 3rd January	Closed
Tuesday 4th January	Normal reception hours resume

*\* During these times, the Council can be contacted on: 01582 708540 or by email [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)*

Telephone services would remain, the grounds staff would check the play areas and pavilions on 29th December and 31<sup>st</sup> December and staff would be on call should an emergency situation arise. Members were reminded that the town council does not provide any core front line services such as social services, housing and highways. These were provided by the principal authority.

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**Resolved:** To approve the reception opening hours between Christmas and New Year as follows:

<b>Friday 24th December</b>	<b>Open 9am to 1pm</b>
<b>Monday 27th December</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Tuesday 28th December</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>*Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>*Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>*Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Monday 3rd January</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Tuesday 4th January</b>	<b>Normal reception hours resume</b>

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.16pm**

**Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of December 2021**

**Chairman**

**DRAFT**

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Corporate Services Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 at 7.00pm.**

Present: Councillors: J Carroll  
E Cooper Substitute  
C Copleston  
Y Farrell Substitute  
S Goodchild  
M S Kennedy  
C Slough

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: D Jones  
K Wattingham

**11764 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones (Cllr Cooper substituted) and Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Farrell substituted)

**11765 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11766 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**11767 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11768 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN**

Personnel Sub-Committee: 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings of the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021.**

**11769 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members received the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date.

#### **11770 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS**

Members received the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for May, June and July 2021.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for May, June and July 2021;**
- 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.**

#### **11771 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS**

Members received a list of payments for the period May 2021 to August 2021 (inclusive).

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **11772 INVESTMENT REPORT**

In accordance with Committee Functions, Financial Regulation 8 and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

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

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

The amount of notice required to withdraw funds to finance the all-weather pitch was queried. This would be confirmed and fed back to the committee.

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **11773 INSURANCE CLAIMS**

Members were advised that there had been no insurance claims from the 1st June 2021 to date.

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **11774 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP)**

Members were advised that the current Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)



contract does not end until February 2022, however due to the administration of committee meetings, the need to revisit this provision was required now if members were to support the continuation of this service.

Members advised of the value of such provision and as such supported the recommendations.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To support the continuation of this provision**
- 2. To recommend to Town Council that company B be appointed to provide this provision at the end of the current contract.**

#### **11775 HUMAN RESOURCES PROVISION**

The council had retained the services of a local HR company for the last few years. This contract was now a rolling contract. As such it was appropriate for members to consider the suitability of the current contract and any alternative providers.

It was intended to seek quotes for this service in accordance with the attached specification. Members feedback on the suitability of the specification was invited.

Feedback from members regarding the current supplier of this service was positive. Members were advised that the current supplier would be included in the quotation process.

**Resolved:** **To seek competitive quotes for this service provision based on the HR specification.**

#### **11776 CIVIC HANDBOOK**

Members received, for information, updated Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Handbooks.

Members were reminded that the town council's Ceremonial Robes Policy would also accompany this handbook.

It was queried whether the Deputy Mayor should wear their chain when the Mayor was also present at the same event and wearing their chain. After discussion, the statement within the handbook was to remain as specified, allowing the chain to be worn by the Deputy Mayor with the agreeance of the Town Mayor.

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **11777 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND MODEL SCHEME OF PUBLICATION**

The Town Council was required to review annually the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and the Model Publication Scheme. These documents were last reviewed by this committee on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

Members received a copy of the approved document. Some amendments had been made, shown as track changes, to reflect changes in legislation. It was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose.

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

Members were advised that photocopying costs remained adequate.

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

#### **11778 COMMUNICATIONS POLICY AND STRATEGY**

Members received an updated Communications Policy and Strategy.

Amendments had been made, shown as track changes. Members were advised that the inclusion of Press Policy had been removed as the Town Council had a standalone Press Protocol Policy.

The following point was highlighted:

- **Town Guide**

The Community Services Committee had delayed this publication due to Covid-19 and the reliance of the publication of business advertisements

Although amendments had been made to this policy, it was suggested that this document remained suitable and fit for purpose

Members were advised that the next edition of the Town Crier was due in October.

Members acknowledged the additional effort made during Covid to reach residents and keep information updated and relevant, with the more recent addition of posts championing the new Town Ranger.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Communications Policy and Strategy be approved.**

#### **11779 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME: STATEMENT OF LOCAL DISCRETIONS**

Members received the Town Councils Local Government Pension Scheme: Statement of Local Discretions.

There had been no amendments to the regulations, therefore it was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Local Government Pension Scheme: Review of Statement of Local Discretions be approved.**

#### **11780 PRESS PROTOCOLS**

Members received the Town Councils Press Protocols Policy.

There were slight amendments to this policy as shown by track changes.

Although amendments had been made to this policy, it was suggested that this document remained suitable and fit for purpose.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Press Protocols Policy be approved.**

#### **11781 RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 17.1, the council was 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.

Members were advised of the following:

- Income generation, that general reserves were within the 3-9 month banding;
- Non-compliance with legislation, it was highlighted that there would be a reduced risk to the council with enhanced member training through take up of opportunities and through making training mandatory (at the local level) for cllrs

Members were advised that the BATPC had offered online training and it was hoped that further training would be available soon.

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

#### **11782 BANKING ARRANGEMENT, INVESTMENT STRATEGY & INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENT POLICY**

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

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

Therefore, this policy remained fit for purpose.

**Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements be approved.**

#### **11783 VISION UPDATE**

For information Members received an extract from the approved Vision 2020/2024 as it related to the work of this committee.

Members were advised that Central Bedfordshire College had been approached to begin the recruitment process for an office apprentice, members acknowledged the additional work for officers, but felt it offered a good growth opportunity for young

people.

It was suggested, that as some items within the Vision were difficult to quantify, a review could be provided in the March Town Crier.

Members were advised that due to Covid, events and activities had been re-designed to reach people in an alternative way, using social media as a priority platform.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.11pm**

**Dated this 22<sup>nd</sup> Day of November 2021**

**Chairman**

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Community Services Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	K Wattingham C Copleston T McMahon S Goodchild A Slough S Thorne E Cooper	Chairman      Virtual
	Officers:	Clare Evans Tara Earnshaw Louise Senior Dave Ramsay	Town Clerk Community Development Officer Head of Democratic Services Lead Youth Worker

Public: 0

Also present: Councillor: R Morgan

**11731 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

None.

**11732 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11733 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**11734 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11735 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN**

Events Working Group 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 and 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Combating Crime Working Group 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

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

**11736 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members received the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Community Services Committee to date.

**11737 REPORT FROM GROUNDWORK**

Diana Hegley from Groundwork was in attendance to update members on the work completed on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that detached sessions had been provided, promoting the provision with a limited number of young people and were waiting to get back into the youth club venue. Members were advised that Groundwork were still able to use the youth club for sessions once it is back up and running with the provision continuing at two sessions per week under the new centre management.

**11738 HRTC COMMUNITY AND YOUTH SERVICES**

Members received reports on youth work recently completed including:

- Pop-up youth café
- Youth Council
- Community services

In addition, members were also advised that Ward Councillor grant funding had been secured for a youth project to deliver training and development opportunities around catering and hospitality. Specifically, the grant would be used as follows:

- Food hygiene level 2 on-site training at the Pavilion for 6-8 young people £300- £350
- Professional Chef session - £300
- Posh nosh for the community- £150 (Young people putting their knowledge into action)
- Trip to take those young people involved to a top or higher end restaurant. Depending on the funding available this could be a local quality restaurant-maybe Chez Jerome in Dunstable (£250), or a Michelin style restaurant (£1000).

This additional funding was very much welcomed and appreciated.

Members were advised that feedback from the summer events held on the Village Green had been positive and had been enjoyed by a wide number of people. Members feedback was that it had been very inclusive, enjoyed by families that found pricey summer activities cost prohibitive.

Members acknowledged the positive impact the events had within the community and feedback from the Lead Youth Worker was that of a real sense of community and partnership working.

Members were advised of consideration being given to establishing a core group of older members of the community for the sharing of ideas and strategies to develop services and facilities to support older members of the community.



Members were advised that Redhouse Court were not encouraging members of the public to pursue activities within the building due to the vulnerability of the residents due to Covid.

Members were updated on the idea of Posh Nosh which would expand young people's experiences with food, culture, and community, young people would learn to create food and experience serving their food, learning skills and higher techniques in addition to a food accreditation in food hygiene.

#### **11739 BULK WASTE REMOVAL SCHEME**

Members were advised that this initiative had been well received within the community with a consistent and at times high take up rate. CBC officers had been supportive and accommodating in promoting and managing this project. Members were advised that uptake figures had been 14 collections of fridge/freezers and 49 collections of other items.

Although it was relatively early in the financial year Members may receive an additional funding request to increase this budget for 2022/23. This would be put forward during the budget setting process in due course.

Members discussed the possibility of repurposing of some items and requested consideration be given to possible avenues to enable this strategy to be encouraged.

#### **11740 CHRISTMAS TREE**

Members were reminded of previous considerations for the annual town Christmas tree. Issues which were considered related to the difficulty of sourcing a tree on an annual basis, the sustainability of cutting down a tree for a short period and the suitability of the location of the tree.

Officers were tasked with investigating whether there was a more sustainable option of planting a living tree in All Saints View (ASV).

ASV have confirmed a location within the forecourt area at the front of ASV for Christmas 2022. The exact location cannot be advised until the building work was further progressed. Members were requested to consider the suitability of this location.

To also consider options to provide a light feature in the current Bedford Square location.

Siting a permanent tree in ASV would be a long term, sustainable option, supportive of the Vision. It would also provide a suitable and safe area for the switch on event. However, it may be perceived as being too far off the main road. However, this could be mitigated by an additional light feature being provided in the current location.

Members raised concerns that the proposed positioning of the tree could look like an ASV Christmas tree, aimed at their residents, rather than a tree for the town's community.

It was requested that members of the community be consulted on the idea of a more sustainable tree option and the relocation of the Christmas Tree to ASV. The findings of the consultation would be reported back to the next Community Services

Meeting in November.

**11741 VISION UPDATE**

Members received an extract from the approved Vision 2020/2024 as it related to the work of this committee.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.50pm**

**Dated this 25th day of October 2021.**

**Chairman**

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Community Services Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**25<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: K Wattingham Chairman  
C Copleston  
T McMahon  
S Goodchild  
S Thorne

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: A Slough

Absent: E Cooper

**11815 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Slough.

**11816 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11817 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr Goodchild declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Houghton Regis Heritage Society and was also a member of the Baptist Church. Accordingly, she did not participate in discussions relating to those grant applications.

Cllr Thorne declared non-pecuniary interests in Dial-a-Ride, Memorial Hall, and Citizens Advice and was also a member of Houghton Regis Heritage Society. Accordingly, she did not participate in discussions relating to those grant applications.

Cllr McMahon declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Houghton Regis Heritage Society as she was a trustee. Accordingly, she did not participate in discussions relating to this grant application.

Cllr Wattingham declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Memorial Hall as he was the Chairman. Accordingly, he did not participate in discussions relating to this grant application.

**11818 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

## **KEY PARTNERS - ANNUAL REVIEW OF EXISTING**

### *Consideration process*

Representatives from these organisations had been invited to the meeting to present their annual review / update. Due to a meeting conflict SORTED were unable to attend as it their AGM on the same evening. SORTED had submitted their Annual Report which was available upon request.

Members were reminded that Key Partner status had been awarded to these organisations for the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Members were reminded that a report was presented to the Community Services Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> June which highlighted a significant organisational change with services being transferred from Community Action Bedfordshire (CAB) to Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC). Key Partner Status was awarded to CAB to enable them to provide support to local organisations. BRCC would like to use the grant to promote, support and enable residents of Houghton Regis to participate in the Chiltern Vale Timebank for the duration of the Key Partner status period.

Representatives from Keech, BRCC, Dial-a-Ride and Houghton Regis Heritage Society were in attendance at the meeting to present their annual review / update.

Members suggested that BRCC apply for Key Partner status in their own right next year and were reminded that they could apply for a small capital grant in this financial year.

Dunstable & District CA	£2,000
SORTED	£2,000
Keech Hospice Care	£2,500
South Beds Dial A Ride	£1,125.50
Houghton Regis Memorial Hall	£2,000
Full House Theatre	£1,500
Houghton Regis Heritage Society	£500

**Resolved: To approve the release of funding as detailed for the financial year 2021/22.**

### **Large Capital Grant**

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

A representative from the Singing Café attended the meeting to speak in support of their application.

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

<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Total project cost</i>	<i>Amount requested</i>	<i>Brief description</i>
Singing Café	£4000	£1000	To fund the services of a music therapist to support the weekly Singing Café.

### **Small Capital Grants**

Members were advised that no Small Capital Grant applications had been received.

Members were advised that £2,800 remains in the Small Grant Fund.

### **End of Award Report**

In accordance with the Grant Scheme successful applicants were required to submit an End of Award Report. Members received the End of Award form from Community Action Bedfordshire for 2020/21.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm**

**Dated this 7<sup>th</sup> day of February 2022**

**Chairman**

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Environment & Leisure Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman  
E Cooper  
C Copleston Substitute  
Y Farrell  
R Morgan  
A Slough  
S Thorne

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk  
Tony Luff Head of Grounds Operations  
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillors: D Dixon-Wilkinson

**11750 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr D Dixon-Wilkinson (Cllr C Copleston substituted).

**11751 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public raised concerns regarding agenda item 10.

Concerns highlighted were:

- The Annual Playground Inspection Report does not cover the recreation grounds themselves including any seating within them.
- The lack of benches within Parkside Recreation Ground.
- Benches were needed close to the play area in Parkside.
- There were only two bins which, due to their age and condition, were in need of replacement.

It was advised that budget availability would be looked at for 2022/23. The member of the public confirmed that they would send in the questions posed and requested a written response. This was agreed.

**11752 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**11753 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Members received a revised copy of the minutes held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

**Resolved: To confirm the revised minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11754 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN**

Allotments Working Group 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

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

**11755 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members received the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Environment & Leisure Committee to date.

Members were advised that a number of football teams had cancelled their pitch hire which had resulted in a change to the predicted income for pitch hire.

**11756 HOUGHTON REGIS RANGER UPDATE REPORT**

Members were updated on the Town Ranger initiative.

Members were advised that the feedback received had been extremely positive and encouraging, the app could now be downloaded from the Houghton Regis Town Council website, the app was not available from android or Apple stores as this had proven cost prohibitive.

Members discussed the most appropriate committee or working group to receive update reports on the Town Ranger initiative, it was agreed that this would be discussed at a later date and confirmed accordingly.

**11757 HOUGHTON REGIS CEMETERY UPDATE REPORT**

Members were updated on the current interment capacity of the cemetery. It was advised that there were approximately 30 ashes plots remaining.

Members shared positive feedback on the Garden of Remembrance received from visitors to the area.

**11758 TITHE FARM ALL WEATHER UPDATE**

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

Members were advised that the planning application had been revised to exclude the alterations to the existing pavilion due to concerns that the additional information requested (elevation plans) would delay the consideration of the application and thus have a detrimental impact on the Football Foundation grant application timescale.

Members were invited to visit a similar project in Cranfield, which was being run by Beds F.A. on behalf of the Parish Council.

Members were advised that £25,000 Community Asset Grant had been received from Central Bedfordshire Council. This was very welcomed.

#### **11759 ANNUAL PLAYGROUND INSPECTION**

Members were updated on the outcomes of the annual play area inspection.

The report had indicated that there had been two moderate risks, with all other risks reported as low or very low.

It was requested that the report be sent to Cllr McMahon and Cllr Carroll.

It was suggested that visual improvements to the play areas could be achieved by painting the fences. It was requested that the gates be painted red in contrast to the fence to support the Dementia Friendly Strategy.

Members were advised that a concern had been raised that the pathways on Parkside Recreation ground were not DDA compliant. It was confirmed that the pathways were 1.75m wide and that the DDA width was 2m. This would be further investigated and a response provided to the resident.

Members considered the need for additional benches on Parkside Recreation area, it was highlighted that this was a lengthy pathway for people to walk without an opportunity to rest partway. Members were advised that this would be put forward during the budget setting process.

The suggestion of a ‘chatting bench’ was raised, a bench with a sign to say that if you sat here, you were happy to chat. This initiative was designed to help tackle mental health issues, enabling people to feel less isolated.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To note the remedial works to address the moderate risks;**
- 2. To accept the low risks as identified and to continue monitor.**

#### **11760 ALLOTMENTS**

Members were requested to consider the following:

1. The purchase of required grounds equipment and a noticeboard
2. To have additional bases installed so that the plots can be let at half plot sizes

Members were advised quotes had been requested for bases, a response was awaited.



- Resolved:**        **To authorise the expenditure of up to £15,000 from EMR Allotments for**
- 1. The purchase of required grounds equipment and a noticeboard**
  - 2. To have additional bases installed so that the plots can be let at half plot sizes**

#### **11761 MACHINERY RENEWALS PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Members were presented with a machinery renewals programme to aid budget considerations.

Members were advised electric equipment was a more eco-friendly way of operating wherever possible, with petrol equipment only relied upon when heavier duty equipment was necessary.

- Resolved:**        **To support the machinery renewals programme.**

#### **11762 DOG WASTE BAG DISPENSERS**

Members were advised that CBC were offering town and parish councils two dog waste bag dispensers free of charge. CBC were requesting that the town council then tops up the dispensers as required. The cost of bags was approximately £30 for 800 bags.

Members agreed to accept this offer and gave consideration to where they should be sited. It was agreed to site at Parkside recreation Ground and Tithe Farm recreation Ground.

#### **11763 VISION UPDATE**

Members received an extract from the approved Vision 2020/2024 as it related to the work of this committee.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.14pm**

**Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of November 2021**

**Chairman**

***HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL***

**Planning Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held on  
27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman  
J Carroll  
Y Farrell  
M S Kennedy  
R Morgan

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

Public: 3

Apologies: Councillor: D Dixon-Wilkinson

Also present: Councillors: T McMahon  
S Goodchild

**11784 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson.

**11785 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public queried the lack of substantive update on the agenda regarding Windsor Drive, agenda item 8. Members were advised that a meeting had been arranged for the following day. The question raised: what was the councils stand on the proposed development?

It was advised that the council did not have a stand on this as councillors had received the invitation after the agenda had been published, and as such had not had the opportunity to discuss prior to this meeting. The understanding was that the scheduled meeting was to provide information to attendees, if subsequently a planning application was brought forward, the application would be considered on its merits.

**11786 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr C Slough declared a non-pecuniary interest in application CB/21/03958/FULL as the applicant was known to him personally. Accordingly, he did not participate in any discussion around this application.

Cllr Kennedy declared a non-pecuniary interest in application CB/21/03843/FULL as the applicant was known to him personally. Accordingly, he did not participate in any discussion around this application.

**11787 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

## **11788 PLANNING MATTERS**

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

CB/21/03532/ADV Advertisement: Internally illuminated fascia sign.  
4 Hillborough Crescent, LU5 5NS

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

CB/21/03958/FULL Erection of first floor side/rear extension  
86 Douglas Crescent, LU5 5AT  
For: Mr & Mrs Page

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

CB/21/03843/FULL Single storey side extension  
29 Dellmont Road, LU5 5HU  
For: Mr & Mrs Dye

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

CB/21/03858/ADV Advertisement: 2 x illuminated 'Lidl' fascia signs, 1 x illuminated flagpole sign, 1 x column mounted poster display unit, 2 x small wall mounted billboards, 3 x large wall mounted billboards & 1 x directional sign.  
Land at Houghton Road and Townsend Road LU5 5BQ  
For: Lidl Ltd

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

CB/21/04007/FULL Erection of 7 detached dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping  
Land East of Bedford Road, South of Red Cow Farm,  
Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5ES

**Comments: The Town Council objects to this application for the following reasons:  
Insufficient residents and visitor parking;  
There is not a sufficient land available within the site for safe vehicular and pedestrian access or egress;  
The proposed access is directly opposite the already approved development CB/17/02512/OUT and thereby**

**will conflict with each other;**

**Whilst not a planning objection the Town Council makes the following request, that an archaeological survey is undertaken on this site.**

CB/21/04107/FULL Discharge of Condition 19 against planning permission CB/19/02130/FULL (Demolition of existing residential dwelling and erection of 119 dwellings including the creation of a new vehicular access, recreational open space, parking infrastructure and associated landscaping and ancillary works).  
The Gates, Land East of Bedford Road, Bidwell, Houghton Regis

**No comments were made as the application was a discharge of condition**

CB/21/04114/FULL Discharge of Condition 13 (Part A) to planning permission CB/21/01242/Full (Development of the site for E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 Uses to include Trade Counter, including details of access, servicing, landscaping, boundary treatment and associated works) Part A - Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Investigation, by Cotswold Archaeology (Ref. MK0541), dated September 2021.  
Land east of Watling Street and South of A5 M1 Link, Watling Street, Houghton Regis

**No comments were made as the application was a discharge of condition**

CB/21/04116/FULL Discharge of Condition 23 against planning permission CB/21/01242/FULL (Development of the site for E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 Uses to include Trade Counter, including details of access, servicing, landscaping, boundary treatment and associated works)  
Employment Site North of Thorn Road Thorn Road Houghton Regis

**No comments were made as the application was a discharge of condition**

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

CB/21/03967/NMA	Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/20/01537/FULL (Erection of a mixed use Local Centre comprising 52 no. apartments, 1 no. day nursery (Use Class D1), 1 no. retail unit (Use Class A1) 4 no. retail units (Use Classes A1/A3/A5) and associated infrastructure works including a haul road, landscaping and public realm) amendment sought for conditions 4 & 20 to replace approved elevation plans to facilitate a change of materials Land to West of Houghton Regis, Watling Street, Houghton Regis
CB/21/03493/DOC	Discharge of Condition 1 to planning permission CB/20/04656/FULL (Addition of porch (Retrospective)) 44 Fensome Drive, LU5 5SH
CB/21/03767/DOC	Discharge of Condition 6 against Planning Permission CB/20/01001/RM (Reserved Matters following Outline planning permission CB/12/03613/OUT for the construction of The Farmstead, which is a mixed-use complex of buildings located within the AMP2 area, and incorporating a community hall, café, office space and potential small retail units, with associated car parking.) Houghton Regis North 1, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis
CB/21/04101/GPDE	Prior Notification of Householder Extension: Single storey rear extension 11 St Andrews Lane, LU5 5EE

***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

None received.

***Refusals:***

None received.

***Withdrawals:***

None received.

**11789 4 TOWNSEND TERRACE, LU5 5BB - CB/20/03276/FULL**

Members were advised that the appeal relating to the above planning application for conversion and extension of double garage into a single storey two bedroom detached dwelling, with off street parking and rear private garden had been dismissed.

Members were reminded that the town councils planning committee objected to this application.

**11790 TOWNSEND FARM ROAD AND BLACKBURN ROAD – WAITING RESTRICTIONS**

Members were informed that Central Bedfordshire Council were consulting on the following scheme:

- A00154 Townsend Farm Road and Blackburn Road, Houghton Regis – Waiting Restrictions

Members were advised that any comments should be submitted by the 29th September 2021.

It was considered by the HRTC Planning Committee on 27th September 2021. In response the following comments were made:

There is a (priority) post box sited in close proximity to the bus stop. This is used extensively by local businesses. The Council would support the provision of a short stay bay being provided to enable use of the post box.

There is no advanced stop line shown for cyclists at the traffic lights at the junction with Blackburn Rd. This should be provided.

The plan also shows a cycle symbol on a grass verge, this may need to be reconsidered.

**Resolved: To consider the Town Councils response to the proposed waiting restrictions on Townsend Farm Road and Blackburn Road.**

#### **11791 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.

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

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

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

**Windsor Drive** – No substantive update to report.

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

**Resolved: To note the information**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.12pm**

**Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of October 2021.**

**Chairman**



**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**

**Planning Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held on  
18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman  
J Carroll  
E Cooper Substitute  
S Thorne Substitute  
C Slough

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: Y Farrell  
R Morgan  
D Dixon-Wilkinson

In attendance: Luke Webb Living Space Housing  
S Goodchild  
Also present: T McMahon  
M S Kennedy

Absent:

**11806 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson, Cllr Farrell (Cllr Thorne substituted) and Cllr Morgan (Cllr Cooper substituted).

**11807 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11808 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**11809 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11810 PLANNING MATTERS**

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



CB/21/04197/FULL Single storey front extension  
30 Northview Road, LU5 5AH  
For: Mr C Done

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

CB/21/03999/FULL Erection of detached dwelling  
1 Newbury Road, LU5 5RA  
Mr & Mrs O'Dell

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

- Loss of amenity land
- Parking impact

CB/21/04042/FULL 6 metre single storey rear extension  
11 St Andrews Lane, LU5 5EE  
For: Mr I Zaharia

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

CB/21/03860/FULL Community sports facility enhancements/improvements including upgrading of an existing grass pitch to a floodlit FTP, a new additional pavilion building and additional car parking.  
Tithe Farm Recreation Ground, Tithe Farm Road, LU5 5JF  
For: Houghton Regis Town Council

**Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council noted this application.**

CB/21/02162/FULL Aluminium bi-fold doors fitted to the rear of the property with a steel lintel supporting. Porcelain tile patio fitted in rear garden and front garden converted to driveway by removing grass and laying tarmac. (Retrospective)  
16 Coopers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5US  
For: Mr S Avery

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

CB/21/01883/FULL Erection of 60 dwellings including access from Bedford Road and full landscaping details  
*Members were advised that this application was being reconsulted on*  
Land at Bedford Road, LU5 6JS  
For: Living Space Housing

**Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council appreciated**

**the revisions made to the application and withdraw their previous objections. Therefore, the Town Council had no objections to the amended application of 57 dwellings.**

CB/TRE/21/00502 Works to Trees Protected by Tree Preservation Order SB/03/0005/GI&G2: Remove Norway Maple Tree, 30% crown reduction to Poplar Tree, sever ivy to Norway Maple Tree and remove broken branches. Remove 3 Leyland Cypress Trees.  
Land at Unit 17, Humphrys Road, LU5 4TB

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

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

- CB/21/04194/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/21/01226/full-Two storey rear extension and internal alterations following demolition of existing wc/utility and lobby at ground floor level. Amendment sought - proposed double west element of scheme to be reduced in scope, to provide a single storey rear extension with kitchen, day room, utility and cloakroom.  
24 Manor Park, LU5 5BX
- CB/21/04206/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/21/01242/FULL (Development of the site for E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 Uses to include Trade Counter, including details of access, servicing, landscaping, boundary treatment and associated works) Amendment sought: Change in cladding and sub-station detail.  
Land east of Watling Street and South of A5 M1 Link, Watling Street, Houghton Regis
- CB/21/04210/DOC Discharge of Condition 24 against planning permission CB/19/02130/FULL (Demolition of existing residential dwelling and erection of 119 dwellings including the creation of a new vehicular access, recreational open space, parking infrastructure and associated landscaping and ancillary works - Surface Water Drainage Scheme  
The Gates Land East of Bedford Road, Bidwell
- CB/21/04190/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)

Land To The North Of Houghton Regis, Sundon Road

- CB/21/04167/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission  
CB/21/00661/Full (Single storey side extension with garage conversion) amendment sought - Change to front of extension - original showed window - new drawings show door to extension external.  
133 Leafields, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LU
- CB/21/04383/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission  
CB/19/03232/RM (Reserved matters: Appearance, scale and landscaping for residential development of 336 dwellings on Development Parcels 5a and 5b Bidwell West, Houghton Regis. Outline application (CB/15/0297/OUT) was supported by a full Environmental Statement (ES).) amendment sought: Amendment to approved bricks as shown on approved layout plans P19-0483\_14\_01 J Facing Materials Layout, P19-0483\_14\_02 J Facing Materials Layout and P19-0483\_14\_03 J Facing Materials Layout. Proposed amendment as follows: Wienerberger Crofters Medley - to be replaced by Weathered Wren  
Parcels 5a & 5b, Bidwell West, LU5 6JQ
- CB/21/04322/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission  
CB/20/01538/FULL (Erection of a 3 storey, 66 bed care home for older people with associated access, car parking and landscaping) amendment sought: Change to the approved brick type  
Land west of Bidwell, Houghton Regis. LU5 6JQ
- CB/21/04403/DOC Discharge of Condition 22 against planning permission  
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, LU5 5BQ

- CB/21/04357/DOC Discharge of Condition 5 and 6 against planning permission CB/21/000435/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 Road
- CB/21/04358/DOC Discharge of Condition 7 to planning permission 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 Road
- CB/21/04360/DOC Discharge of condition 19 against planning permission 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 Road

***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

***Refusals:***

None received.

***Withdrawals:***

None received.

**11811 PEEL STREET/TITHE FARM ROAD CAR PARK – CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDER A00157**

Members were advised that an experimental traffic order came into operation on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at the location above. For reference Members received the Public Notice and plan.

Members were advised that comments needed to be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council by 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

Members raised concerns that the imposed restrictions had impacted parking in surrounding areas and agreed that parking in Houghton Regis should be looked at holistically.

Members requested a letter be sent to Central Bedfordshire Council emphasising that the Town Council's opinion in that there needed to be a holistic approach to parking in Houghton Regis. Members requested this item be placed the agenda for the meeting to be held during February 2022.

**Resolved:**                    **To defer the consideration of the Town Councils response to Central Bedfordshire Councils experimental Traffic Order A00157 at Peel Street/Tithe Farm Road car park.**

#### **11812    TEMPORARY FOOTPATH CLOSURE – PART OF FOOTPATH NO. 40**

Members were advised that a temporary footpath closure came into effect on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 on part of Footpath No. 40. Members received the Notice and plan.

This temporary closure was required to replace bridge joints on the footbridge.

#### **11813    NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE**

As members were aware, the Town Councils Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had recently undertaken a statutory Regulation 14 consultation in regard to the Town Councils draft Neighbourhood Plan.

It was expected to take a number of weeks to collate, process and respond to all the feedback that had been received. Following this, work would then start on the document again.

Once all revisions had been made and the Town Council submitted the plan to Central Bedfordshire Council (under Regulation 15). Regulation 15 is the point at which Central Bedfordshire Council would take over the arrangements moving forward. Central Bedfordshire Council would then start a submission consultation (Regulation 16) which had to take place prior to the Examination.

The submission consultation was a 6-week consultation but a circa 8-week period from submission of the plan to end of the consultation, taking into account Central Bedfordshire Council reviewing the submitted documentation, arranging the consultation and collating all comments to be sent to the appointed Examiner. This consultation would be open to all, but it was statutory consultees and anyone who responded to the Regulation 14 consultation that Central Bedfordshire Council would notify. It was expected that any comments received at this stage were raising objection to the plan as submitted or reinforcing previous points which had not been taken onboard.

During this consultation, arrangements would be discussed and made with Houghton Regis Town Council in regard to looking at suitable referendum dates.

It was anticipated that the Examination would take in the region of 6-10 weeks however, this is dependent on a number of factors – Examiner concerns, questions that need clarification from Houghton Regis Town Council, speed of response to these, Examiner availability. There would then be a period of notice required prior to the referendum taking place therefore, it could be that the referendum could take place in the Spring 2022 however, it was more likely to be early Summer.

Members were advised that 252 responses had been received.

#### **11814    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.

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

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

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

**Windsor Drive** –

Members were informed that Central Bedfordshire Council had invited local councillors, from both the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council, to a site visit on the 28th September 2021. This visit was used to informally discuss councillor's views on the current use of the land. It was understood that the Friends of Windsor Drive were also invited to a site visit.

Central Bedfordshire Council confirmed that it remained their intention to consult publicly on the future use of the land.

Members advised that information shared at the meeting could have been more definitive and some information, based on questions asked, was unavailable.

Members discussed whether to continue to include Windsor Drive on future agendas. It was agreed that it was to remain on future agendas.

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

**Resolved: To note the information**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.04pm**

**Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of November 2021.**

**Chairman**

***HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL***

**Planning Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held on  
8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	D Jones J Carroll Y Farrell M S Kennedy R Morgan C Slough	Chairman
	Officers:	Debbie Marsh Louise Senior	Corporate Services Manager Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	1	
Apologies:	Councillors:	D Dixon-Wilkinson	
Also present:	Councillors:	T McMahon S Goodchild	Central Bedfordshire Council

**11830 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson.

**11831 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11832 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**11833 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2021  
and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11834 PLANNING MATTERS**

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

CB/21/03507/FULL Repositioning of garden wall and new fencing  
25 Fenwick Road, LU5 5RP  
For: J Stone

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

- **Enclosure of amenity land. This land is not in the ownership of the applicant.**
- **Overdevelopment**
- **Height along with the proposed re-alignment, the proposed fence would be overbearing and be visually detrimental to those residents living at numbers 31 to 39 Fenwick Road**



CB/21/04308/FULL Single storey front and side and two storey rear extension  
Dalziel, Chalk Hill, LU6 1RS  
For: Mr & Mrs P Hannington

**Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council acknowledges that the site of the proposed development has extensive land, it does however object to this application on the grounds of:**

- **Overdevelopment in the Green Belt**

**The Town Council would support a less excessive proposal.**

CB/21/04768/RM Reserved Matters: following Outline Application  
CB/12/03613/OUT (5'150 dwellings and 202'500sqm of mixed use) development of 202 new homes, with associated highways, a LAP, drainage, utilities and car parking. Of those 202 homes, 60 are to be private units for open market sale, 14 affordable housing units for the purposes of delivering the 106 obligations for the AMP1 site and 128 additional "affordable" units. Approval for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale  
Houghton Regis North Site 1 Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis

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

- **Density too high**
- **Insufficient parking**
- **Overdevelopment**
- **Cramped and poor design – thereby conflicts with Central Bedfordshire Councils Design Guide**
- **Gardens below minimum area as recommended in Central Bedfordshire Councils Design Guide**

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

CB/21/04501/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission  
CB/21/02467/VOC (Variation of condition 17 of planning permission CB/20/03300/REG3 (Erection of a three storey secondary school and sports hall providing 6 forms of entry (900) pupils, together with a 220 pupil sixth form, sports pitches including an all-weather pitch, Change condition from an Above Ground Level condition to a Pre-Occupation Condition.) Change of brick specification from 'Michelmersh Black Wire Cut' facing brick to 'Brickability Lanzarote Black' smooth facing brick.  
Kingsland Secondary School, Parkside Drive, LU5 5PY

CB/21/04555/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission  
CB/19/00883/RM (Reserved matters of appearance, scale and landscaping for residential development of 255

dwelling following outline CB/15/0297/OUT) Amendment sought: Omission of the proposed car port link between plots 224-232 (apartments) and Plot 233.

Parcels 4a and 4b Bidwell West LU5 6JQ

CB/21/04500/DOC Discharge of Condition 3 against planning permission CB/19/03323/VOC (Variation of condition 13 of planning permission CB/17/05378/FULL - Demolition of large mechanical storage unit and abutting dwelling and erection of 4 no. semi-detached cottages)  
Stable Cottage, Manor Farm, Sewell Lane, Sewell, LU6 1RP

It was queried that the cottages specified in this application were already erected. Members requested that this be queried with Central Bedfordshire Council planning department.

CB/21/04770/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/20/00449/RM (Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) Amendment to a turning head between plots 9 and 10 which includes footpaths being provide and 2 visitor spaces being lost.  
Land To The North And East Of Houghton Regis, Sundon Road

CB/21/04639/LDCP Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Erection of a single storey rear extension  
34 St Michaels Avenue, Houghton Regis, LU5 5DN

### ***Permissions / Approvals / Consents***

#### ***Refusals:***

None received.

#### ***Withdrawals:***

None received.

### **11835 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT – PUBLIC NOTICE – HIGH STREET**

Members were advised that the Secretary of State had given notice of a proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in order to authorise the stopping up of two irregular shaped areas of High Street, at Houghton Regis in Central Bedfordshire.

Members received copies of the public notice, draft order and draft plan.

Members requested further information to be provided before a response from the Town Council could be considered. This item would be included on the next planning agenda.

**Resolved: To defer this item to the next planning meeting**

### **11836 NATIONAL HIGHWAYS' ROUTE STRATEGIES**

Members were advised that Highways England were keen to undertake a thorough review of how the strategic road network was currently performing and to understand the needs of their strategic partners, road users and local communities, to inform where their network may need potential investment in the future.

Members were invited to use an online feedback tool which had been created to capture as many views as possible.

The online tool was open until 30 November 2021.

Members suggested that the link be promoted on the Town Council's social media sites to encourage as much feedback as possible.

Members suggested to make not comment in response to Highways England Route Strategies consultation but to comment on the lack of improvements to road markings on the A5 link road.

**Resolved: To make no comment in response to Highways England Route Strategies consultation.**

### **11837 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.

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

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

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

**Windsor Drive** – No substantive update to report.

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

**Resolved: To note the information**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.43pm**

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

**Chairman**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP  
COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021**

Present:    HRTC Cllrs:            D Jones (Chair), T McMahon, K Wattingham  
                  CBC Cllrs:                P Hamill (Vice Chair), Y Farrell, S Goodchild  
                  Co-opted Member:        David Gibbons  
                  CBC Officers:             Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager  
                  HRTC Officers:            Clare Evans, Town Clerk

Also in Attendance:    HRTC Cllrs:            J Carroll, E Cooper  
                                  CBC Cllr:                T Stock, Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing  
                                  CBC                        G Coombs, Head of Facilities Management  
                                  CBC                        J Dickinson, Assistant Director, Communities  
                                  CBC                        I Hooley, Head of Place Delivery  
                                  BRCC                      G Croxford, Community Engagement Manager  
                                  BRCC                      B McBrearty, Community Connections Advisor  
                                  HR Baptist Church    T Haines, Community Worker

Members of the public:            3

Apologies:            CBC Cllrs:            A Ryan

Absent:                HRTC Cllrs:            M Kennedy

**904    ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Members were invited to elect a Chairman for Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2021/22 in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Cllr Farrell proposed Cllr Jones  
Cllr Wattingham seconded Cllr Jones

All members voted in favour of Cllr Jones as Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee.

Accordingly, Cllr Jones was elected as Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee.

Cllr Jones thanked Cllr Ryan for her work as the previous Chairman of the Partnership Committee.

**Resolved:    To elect Cllr Jones as Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2021/22.**

**905 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Members were invited to elect a Vice Chairman for Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2021/22 in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Cllr Wattingham proposed Cllr Hamill  
Cllr Farrell seconded Cllr Hamill

All members voted in favour of Cllr Hamill as Vice Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee.

Accordingly, Cllr Hamill was elected as Vice Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee.

**Resolved: To elect Cllr Hamill as Vice Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2021/22.**

**906 CONFIRMATION OF THE SECRETARIAT**

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the Committee were required to confirm the secretariat for the Partnership Committee for 2021/22.

**Resolved: To confirm that HRTC will continue to provide the secretariat for the Partnership Committee for 2021/22.**

**907 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION**

The Terms of Reference require the list of Co-opted Members to be reviewed annually, by the Town Joint Committee. Members were advised that David Gibbons was a co-opted member during 2020/21. Mr Gibbons had expressed an interest in continuing in this role.

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**

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.

**Resolved: To confirm David Gibbons as a co-opted member of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2021-22.**

**908 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Ryan.

## **909 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A concern was raised on behalf of Craft & Coffee over the future use of Bedford Square Community Centre for a Central Bedfordshire College provision. As a regular user the group felt aggrieved that they had not been advised of the future unavailability of the centre, that they had equipment stored there and concerns were expressed over the affordability of other local venues. The Chairman advised that this subject would be dealt with under agenda item 11.

Mr Haines advised that he was attending the meeting in place of Rev Skinner in relation to the item on Bidwell West.

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

Cllr Goodchild declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item on Bidwell West as she was a member of the Houghton Regis Baptist Church.

Cllr McMahon declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item on Place Delivery as she was a member of the Houghton Regis Heritage Society and a committee member of Craft & Coffee.

## **911 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.**

## **912 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members considered the Terms of Reference which relate to this committee.

It was requested that an agenda heading be included for Any Other Business. It was advised that this was not possible as legislation required councillors to be notified in advance of issues which they were expected to discuss. It was confirmed that the draft agenda was shared with the Chairman and Vice Chairmen so additional items could be included if required. It was advised though that sufficient notice was required in order to enable officers to prepare a full committee report.

It was confirmed that although an alternation between CBC and HRTC as Chairman was discussed during the formulation of the Terms of Reference this had not been included in the final version.

The arrangements for onward reporting of the Partnership minutes were queried. It was advised that this was an issue for all Partnership committees. A further report would be provided. In the meantime, there was an existing process where the CBC member who was the Chairman or Vice Chairman could report any issues to the Monitoring Officer who would then progress the issue with the Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

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

Gina Croxford, Community Engagement Manager, and Bex McBrearty, Community Connections Advisor of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) were in attendance at the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

Members were advised that significant work had been undertaken to ensure a smooth transfer of services from Community Action Bedfordshire to BRCC. Currently new marketing material was being put together for the project. A physical workspace was provided at Houghton Hall Park. The service was open Monday to Wednesday and at other times by appointment only. The service was seeing 8-12 people per day. Connections had been maintained with local services and organisations, and it was anticipated that engagements with residents would increase now social restrictions were lifting.

**914 PLACE DELIVERY**

Ms Hooley, Head of Place Delivery, Central Bedfordshire Council was in attendance at the meeting to update members on the Welcome Back Fund (WBF) and the Levelling Up Fund (LUF).

Members were advised the LUF application had been submitted in June 2021. The project related to the Kingsland site and includes community, health, wellbeing and sport facilities. The total project cost was anticipated to be £24m, an application for £19.4m had been made. An announcement from central government was anticipated in the Autumn. In the meantime, CBC would continue with the initial design steps of the project on an at risk basis.

The name for the new school on this site had recently been announced as Houstone. This name had been chosen due to its links back to the historical and cultural past of the area.

The Welcome Back Fund business plan had been agreed by central government. The project was now in its implementation stage.

Mr G Coombs, Head of Facilities Management, Central Bedfordshire Council was in attendance at the meeting to update members on the future use of Bedford Square Community Centre. Due to a pressing need for accommodation by Central Bedfordshire College for SEND and NEET service providers, discussions had taken place to enable the use of this building for this service. Members were advised that the pre covid use of the site had been considered and was deemed to be low usage and as such CBC had looked at possibilities to run CBC services from the site.

It was confirmed that CBC would work with users to support them in providing another venue.



Members expressed the following concerns:

- Local councillors had not been informed
- The community had not been informed
- There had been no community engagement about the change in use of the building in terms of availability, affordability, ease of access, storage etc
- Other local community facilities had been lost
- Although other local community facilities were planned these were some years off delivery
- The building was poorly managed by CBC which was reflected in its usage
- Significant efforts were being made by CBC and HRTC to encourage footfall in the town centre, this undermined this work

In response it was advised:

- The college would be there under a 12 month agreement
- Concerns of the Partnership Committee would be shared with other departments within CBC
- The previous venue in Dunstable for this service was no longer available
- CBC saw this as an opportunity for post 16 education, not as a decision to close a community centre
- The youth club would continue to be able to operate from the Centre
- It is anticipated that the College will cover all associated revenue costs for the venue. The CBC Corporate management team would be considering the issue of rent for the venue

It was confirmed that arising issues would be considered further by CBC.

## **915 BIDWELL WEST**

Mr Haines, Community Worker, attended the meeting to update members on the Bidwell West community facility. The following was advised:

- The land for a community centre had been allocated
- It was hoped to submit a Business Plan to CBC by the end of the year, there would be community engagement on this Plan
- It was hoped to be able to provide a temporary community building, work was continuing on this.

## **916 TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION**

Members received the agenda report as presented to the HRTC Environment & Leisure Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021. A further update was provided:

- Letters included a FAQ sheet was being delivered to local residents this week to advise them of the project. This would also be on the website and social media
- The planning application was to be submitted in July / August, this would include the community space
- The tender was underway for the all-weather pitch and car parking improvements
- The tender process would commence soon for the pavilion

## **917 INFORMAL INFORMATION SHARING**

Members were referred to Minute 898. The previously involved CBC members expressed concerns over the format proposed. The Chairman acknowledged that this was disappointing.

It was noted that Cllr Stock attended as many meetings of Partnership Committees as possible so that the Committee had a link into the CBC Executive.

## **918 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

The Community Engagement Manager confirmed that a report would be presented to the next meeting on governance. It was also advised that the Community Engagement Manager would look at timings for other regular agenda items.

It was requested that a report be made as soon as possible on the future management and maintenance of the Chalk Pit.

The following items were also suggested:

- An 18 hole putting green in Houghton Hall Park
- Recruitment, employment and skills

## **919 CBC UPDATE REPORT**

Members received the CBC update report for information. The following points were highlighted:

The report provided a broad reflection and perspective for the locality

### Community Safety

#### Safer Communities and Partnerships Team

This team was doing a lot of work and were keen to know of local issues. They were working to create a Community Safety Plan

#### Parking Enforcement

364 visits were conducted between 26<sup>th</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> June, which resulted in 20 PCN's being issued

During the pandemic there had been a more relaxed approach to parking enforcement in residential areas. A normal approach was now being employed.

### Leisure, Libraries and Countryside

#### Houghton Regis Leisure Centre

Use of the centre was increasing due to restrictions being lifted. Incentives were being worked on.

#### Houghton Regis Library

There had been a number of changes to library services in response to the recent lifting of restrictions. These would be kept under review to ensure that staff and visitors were kept safe.

#### Houghton Hall Park

The café re-opened at the end of May.

Time 2 Connect were based there.

Business, Investment, Employment & Skills

The team had worked hard to deliver the business support funding to those eligible.

Transformation

Community Assets Grant Scheme

An outcome on applications would be available early August.

Members requested that more meeting time be allocated to considering the CBC Update report.

The remote access to the meeting failed at 9.15pm, accordingly the meeting was closed at this point.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.15pm**

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

**Chairman**

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Environment & Leisure Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	T McMahon C Copleston E Cooper Y Farrell R Morgan A Slough S Thorne	Chairman Substitute
	Officers:	Clare Evans Tony Luff Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Grounds Operations Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	3	
Apologies:	Councillors:	D Dixon-Wilkinson	
Also present:		S Goodchild J Carroll	

**11838 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson (Cllr Copleston substituted)

**11839 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public asked whether any members of the committee had an interest in item 13, Parkside benches or were a member of Parkside Ward Action Group.

There were no declarations of interest declared.

**11840 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**11841 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Resolved:** To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

**11842 MINUTES OF WORKING GROUPS**

Allotment Working Group 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Allotment Working Group 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
(Draft)

In addition, members were referred to draft Minutes of the Allotments Working group held on 5<sup>th</sup> October. At this meeting it was resolved to recommend to Environment & Leisure Committee the approval of the draft Tenancy Agreement. As this project was moving forwards it was considered prudent to bring this forward to this meeting for formal approval.

An amendment to the officer recommendation was proposed by Cllr Morgan, seconded by Cllr Farrell, to read:  
To approve the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, subject to the word 'bush' being removed from point 8j

*The officer recommendation read: To approve the Allotment Tenancy Agreement*

Members were in favour of the amendment.

Members voted in favour of the amended recommendation.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive the minutes detailed above.**
- 2. To approve the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, subject to the word bush being removed from point 8J.**

#### **11843 TREE SURVEY WORK**

Members were advised of required tree work resulting from the findings of the tree survey.

Immediate work included:

- East End Willow Tree was dead and required felling and the other Willows needed pollarding at a total cost of £2730 (including replanting)
- Two Sycamore trees needed felling to ground level at a total cost of £1050 (including replanting)

Other necessary short term work was highlighted to members, however, as this additional work had not been budgeted for, members agreed to request that Town Council release funds from General Reserves to complete this work.

It was highlighted that several trees behind Moore Crescent Pavilion were strangled by ivy, members were advised the Grounds Team would tackle this issue when resources were available.

It was suggested that there could be some cost-free options for replacement trees, however, members stated a reluctance to replace the felled Sycamore trees with further Sycamore trees.

Members were advised that there was further medium term work due to be completed the following year.

An additional recommendation was proposed by: Cllr A Slough, seconded by: Cllr Morgan to read: To request Town Council authorises expenditure up to £17,000 from General Reserves to complete the required short term tree work throughout the town.

Members voted in favour of the additional recommendation.

- Resolved:**
- 1. For health and safety reasons, to authorise the above remedial works and to source suitable replacement trees.**
  - 2. To request Town Council authorises expenditure up to £17,000 from General Reserves to complete the required tree work throughout the town.**

#### **11844 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members received the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Environment & Leisure Committee to date.

The cost of water at the Village Green was queried. Members were advised that the Houghton Hall Park Kitchen Garden used water from the pavilion, members were advised an invoice had been sent to Houghton Hall Park for their water usage.

#### **11845 BUDGET 2022/23**

For this committee the draft budget had been difficult to prepare notably due to:

- Price increases in materials possibly due to Brexit and Covid
- Uncertainties over gas and electric supply costs, members were advised that the Council's broker has suggested a 30% increase in budget

It was queried some pavilions had standing gas pipes on site and it was suggested that these be capped and removed. Members were advised that the cost to cap and remove the pipes was a significant cost in comparison to the minimal charge for the standing pipe to remain in situ. It was requested that the Town Clerk investigate.

Members discussed the viability of improving the pavilions energy efficiency and options for energy generation such as solar energy, it was suggested that grant funding may be required to enable financial capability for this to move forward.

Members were requested to note that the fees under this committee had yet to be set so some adjustments may be required.

#### **11846 ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE FEES 2021/22**

To set the hire charges under the control of Environment & Leisure Committee for 2022/23.

Members discussed the attributes of the Moore Crescent Pavilion and the Village Green Pavilion and some felt that the fees did not reflect the differences in the pavilions. The seasonal restrictions of the Moore Crescent Pavilion were highlighted to members, thus albeit a more desirable pavilion, it was less flexible in its hirability.

Members agreed that the pavilions needed more marketing, the option of increasing fees to cover marketing costs were discussed.

An amendment to the recommendation was proposed by: Cllr Copleston, seconded by, Cllr Farrell, to read:  
To approve the Environment & Leisure Schedule of Fees for 2022/23 excluding the pavilion charges.

*The original officer recommendation read: To approve the Environment & Leisure Schedule of Fees for 2022/23*

Members were in favour of the amendment.

Members voted in favour of the amended recommendation.

**Resolved: To approve the Environment & Leisure Schedule of Fees for 2022/23 excluding the pavilion charges.**

#### **11847 UPDATED POLICY CONSULTATION BRIEFING - ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING REGULATIONS**

Members received a policy consultation briefing from NALC, on the current DEFRA Environmental Permitting Regulations consultation.

The briefing stated, the DEFRA consultation affected all burial authorities, and existing cemeteries/burial grounds. It also stated that if implemented, the proposals under consultation could reduce remaining burial capacity by up to 50%.

The stated purpose of the proposals was to improve the way groundwater activities, and some related surface water discharge activities, were regulated.

The closing date of the DEFRA consultation was 22nd December, while NALC had also asked for responses by 5pm on 27th November, to help inform it's response.

Advice was sought from the Council's cemetery consultants who advised that they were working with Defra on this guidance. It was also highlighted that everything that was published in this document was already in place under the EA Statutory guidance, as such concerns were expressed over the value of the article.

Members were advised that the 12-month survey which was underway, would have to be undertaken with any piece of prospective land.

#### **11848 TITHE FARM ALL WEATHER UPDATE**

Members were provided with a report to update members on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Members shared their positive experiences of visiting Cranfield. Members agreed to invite the FA to come and present to councillors.

#### **11849 THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY**

*The Queen's Green Canopy* (QGC) was a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invited people from across the United Kingdom to "**Plant a Tree for the Jubilee**".

This had also been promoted by the National Association of Civic Officers (NACO).

Various grant sources were available including CBC and the Woodland Trust. It was thought that these were likely to be saplings rather than more mature trees.

Suggested locations included:

- Village Green in one of the raised beds (in the draft budget there was a funding request for a refurbishment of these)
- Adjacent to the Town Sign (in the draft budget there was a funding request for a refurbishment of this planting bed)
- Houghton Hall Park
- In the area of the willow trees on East End (a second existing tree may be removed as per a separate agenda item)
- In Moore Crescent (2 existing trees may be removed as per a separate agenda item)

Members discussed various pockets of land for tree planting, it was suggested that a public engagement strategy was undertaken.

Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting and survey residents in the meantime.

#### **11850 PUBLIC SEATING ON PARKSIDE RECREATION GROUND**

Members were reminded that at the Town Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October it was advised that a communication had been received from a member of the public on behalf of Parkside Ward Action Group, requesting additional seating to be installed on Parkside Recreation area. The Action Group offered the Town Council a financial contribution of £200.

Subsequent to the Town Council meeting that group were advised that the Environment and Leisure Committee would be looking into the provision of seating and would look at funding additional seating in the budget for 2022/23.

Members were invited to consider making budget provision in the draft budget for 2022/23 or to request approval from Town Council to use General Reserves to fund additional seating in 2021/22.

Given the size of the recreation ground and the fact that outside of the play areas themselves there was only 1 public bench available, it was suggested that 2 benches were purchased. A steel framed bench with back and side arms made from recycled materials was in the region of £500 each plus delivery, total approximately £1300.

Members discussed the need for the additional seating on Parkside Recreation ground and whether two new seats would be enough for such a large area of land.



Members agreed for two benches to be purchased now, and two further benches to be purchased in 2022 with dementia friendly colours considered.

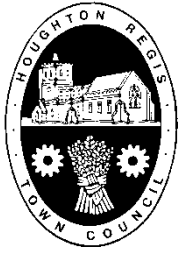
**Resolved: To request approval from Town Council to purchase 2 new benches for Parkside Recreation ground using general reserves up to a value of £1300.**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.00pm**

**Dated this 14<sup>th</sup> day of February 2022**

**Chairman**

DRAFT

**TOWN COUNCIL****Agenda Item 13**


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<b>Date:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Remembrance Day &amp; Armistice Day Poppies and Wreaths</b>
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	<b>To confirm the duration that Remembrance Day &amp; Armistice Day Poppies and Wreaths remain on display.</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Clare Evans, Town Clerk</b>

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**1. RECOMMENDATION**

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

**2. BACKGROUND**

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

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

**3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **4. COUNCIL VISION**

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

5. A strong efficient and proactive Town Council.

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Corporate Implications**

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

##### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

##### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications.

##### **Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications.

##### **Equalities Implications**

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

This project / issue does not discriminate.

##### **Press Contact**

There are no press implications.

#### **7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

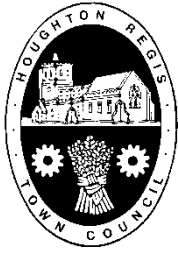
National guidance on Remembrance Day and Armistice Day focuses on the days themselves. There is no national guidance on the duration that poppies and wreaths should remain at memorial features.

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

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

**8. APPENDICES**

**None**



**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Title:** BEDFORD SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTRE

**Purpose of the Report:** To notify members of the CBC consultation on the future use of Bedford Square Community Centre (BSCC)

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

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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

To respond to the CBC consultation on the Future Use of Houghton Regis Community Centre as follows:

1. The BSCC should remain in full community use; it is at the centre of the community, and it provides a basis for a network of local support, community cohesion, consultations and events, building health and wellbeing opportunities, and social wealth.
2. The loss of the BSCC is contrary to the Houghton Regis emerging Neighbourhood Plan which seeks retention of the Community Centre
3. The BSCC supports other services located within the Bedford Square centre and also within the wider Houghton Regis town centre. It contributes to the vibrancy of the town centre and the local community.
4. The condition of the centre and the internal facilities make it an adaptable and flexible space, ideally place to be the heart of the community. The centre would benefit from a more accessible booking system, local marketing to improve awareness and a more affordable price structure in relation to out of office hours bookings to make it a vibrant and well used facility which is able to serve the needs of the community of Houghton Regis

## 2. BACKGROUND

Up until September 2021 the BSCC was used as a community centre. In September 2021 CBC decided to accommodate the post 16 alternative education provision at this

venue until September 2022. Currently the centre remains bookable by community groups in the evenings and weekends.

The CBC consultation document is attached at Appendix A. This document sets out more detail on the background, previous use of the centre, current use of the centre, community space in Houghton Regis, proposed future use of the centre, and details on how to feed into the consultation.

The consultation period closes on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021. However, dispensation has been sought, and confirmed, that the Town Council are able to submit their comments during the week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

### **3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Preliminary feedback from members includes the following points:

#### *General*

There is strong feeling that the BSCC should remain in full community use;  
Feelings that the BSCC is at the centre of the community and it provides a basis for a network of local support

Community center's build health and wellbeing, improve intergenerational relationships, social wealth, social interaction opportunities

#### *Policy*

Suggestions were made that this change is contrary to specific areas of national legislation and also to CBC governance / policy

The Houghton Regis emerging Neighbourhood Plan seeks retention of the Community Centre

#### *Impact of current use*

Some local groups have not set up elsewhere including Craft & Coffee, Recycled Teenagers, Knitting Club, Computer Club

Some concerns were expressed that there had been an increase in ASB recently in the town centre

Generally there was strong feeling that the centre should be brought back into full community use, the following reasons were provided:

- Loss of a central community provision has had a detrimental impact on local community cohesion
- There is no central venue for town events such as community consultations, community events
- The Bedford Square centre comprises the Houghton Regis library, health centre, community centre, public toilets, and central concourse area. These services are mutually supportive of each other and the loss of one facility has a detrimental impact on the other services.
- The centre as a whole provides support to local retailers and adds to the vibrancy of the town centre as a whole.

### **4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

BSCC offers a central location for a community facility. The condition of the centre and the internal facilities make it an adaptable and flexible space. The centre would benefit from a more accessible booking system, local marketing to improve awareness and a more affordable price structure in relation to out of office hours bookings to make it a vibrant and well used facility which is able to serve the needs of the community of Houghton Regis.

## 5. COUNCIL VISION

### **Aspirations**

- A1 To develop and enhance **partnerships** between HRTC, stakeholders, partners, community groups and residents
- A2 To effectively and proactively **represent** our community
- A3 To positively **promote** the town

### **Objective 3: A safe and vibrant town**

- 3.7 To communicate well with residents and stakeholders
- 3.8 To support local businesses and retailers

### **Objective 4: Our community**

- 4.1 To create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion
- 4.2 To enhance existing facilities to enable improved community use and accessibility
- 4.7 To support local organisations

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

### **Corporate Implications**

- There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendations.

### **Legal Implications**

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations

### **Financial Implications**

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations

### **Risk Implications**

- Reputation – HRTC has an obligation to represent views of the local community. This is supported through participation in this consultation

### **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**

Details of the consultation have been shared on the council's website and social media.

**7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

The recommendation above seeks to encapsulate views and formulate a suitable response to CBC.

**8. APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** CBC consultation on the Future Use of Houghton Regis Community Centre





have  
**your**  
say...

## ...on the future use of Houghton Regis Community Centre

Find out more about the Council's proposals for the  
community centre at Bedford Square and have your say.

Find Central Bedfordshire Council online at



[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations)

**Central  
Bedfordshire**

# Consultation on the future use of Houghton Regis Community Centre

## Background

Central Bedfordshire Council is consulting on the long-term plans for the Community Centre in Bedford Square, Houghton Regis, and we want to hear your views.

Earlier this year, the Council was faced with a difficult and pressing need to accommodate young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) who would otherwise have been left without an education provision following the financial collapse of the previous provider Develop. A new provider had been secured (Central Bedfordshire College), but they did not have a suitable venue.

The Council made an urgent decision to temporarily accommodate the post 16 alternative education provision in Bedford Square Community Centre until July 2022. This was not a decision that was taken lightly. Alternative venues were considered that were either in Dunstable (where the Develop provision was provided) or in the next town of Houghton Regis. Unfortunately, the building that Develop used was not available to hire and there was no available space on the Kingsland campus in Houghton Regis.

The learners need an environment suitable for their needs so office accommodation like the Council's Watling House building or the College's own buildings were not considered appropriate. These are learners who cannot thrive in a mainstream learning environment (like a school or college) and need a friendlier, informal setting for their learning.

Central Bedfordshire College have been using the Centre Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm from the start of term in September.

The Council has contacted groups who used the Centre prior to it being closed during the pandemic, to understand their requirements and whether they can continue to use the Centre or, if not, whether there are alternative suitable venues. Given the Centre has been closed due to the pandemic, the needs of some of the groups has changed so it was also important to understand their requirements.

There are other community facilities in Houghton Regis, and more due to open shortly at All Saints View. All of the Centre users we've been able to contact are either continuing to use the Centre, have been matched to another community facility to operate from temporarily or told us they no longer require a space to meet.

The Centre is listed under planning regulations as a dual use building for community and educational activities but has primarily been used as a traditional community centre hosting community activities. The Community Centre is a public funded building that wasn't used to its full capacity (25.2% total utilisation of bookable time by groups or individuals, and 7% was use by Central Bedfordshire Council). The Council has to ensure value for money in all that it does, so this presents an

opportunity to consider ‘dual use’ of the Community Centre on a longer-term basis, increasing the use of the building which will help cover its running costs.

## Your views are important to us

The Council is now consulting on a long-term plan for use of the Centre. This consultation document explains how the Centre was previously used, how it is currently being used, and the Council’s proposals for the future.

## Previous use of the Centre

The Centre provided the following indoor community space available to any community group or individual to hire:

Room	Size	Capacity (maximum)
Pine Room (Reception / Office)	11.1m <sup>2</sup>	2 people
Ash Room	83.9m <sup>2</sup>	30 people
Oak Room, including Sycamore Hall area and excluding storerooms	120.6m <sup>2</sup> (47.1m <sup>2</sup> for hall)	80 people seated or 110 standing
Willow Room	40.4m <sup>2</sup>	20 people
Maple Room (small Interview room)	17.5m <sup>2</sup>	4 people
Computer Room	25.4m <sup>2</sup>	12 people

Bedford Square is well served by buses, so it is easy to get to, particularly for those on a low income/without a car.

From the Council records, there were around 40 different groups or individuals that booked the Community Centre in the 12 months before the Centre closed due to the pandemic. The largest number of bookings were made by the Council (or it’s directly commissioned services) which accounted for 70% of the c1,200 bookings made.

Previous users ranged in number of bookings, we have grouped them into frequent, infrequent and very infrequent users below.

- 42% of users used the building frequently (more than once a month)
- 30% of users used the building infrequently (less than six times a year)
- 28% of users used the building very infrequently

The Centre was available to hire between the hours of 8am and 12pm, Monday-Sunday (except Christmas Day and New Year’s Day). Over the 12 months prior to closure, the Centre was in use as follows (please note that where a booking was made in an individual’s name, this will appear as ‘individual booking’ in the table below):

<b>Booking/user</b>	<b>% hours booked</b>	<b>Booking/user</b>	<b>% hours booked</b>
Central Bedfordshire Council	7%	Individual booker 1	0.03%
RCCG Church	3%	Individual booker 2	0.06%
Craft & Coffee	2%	Individual booker 3	0.18%
SNOOCS	2%	Individual booker 4	0.03%
NHS	1%	Individual booker 5	0.10%
Oak Bank Drop in	1%	Individual booker 6	0.08%
Jewels Art	1%	Individual booker 7	0.10%
Kids Time	1%	Individual booker 8	0.20%
SSG Services	0.10%	Individual booker 9	0.14%
Café Connect	0.21%	Individual booker 10	0.25%
Heritage Society	0.13%	Individual booker 11	0.06%
Turn Around Dance Theatre	0.08%	Individual booker 12	0.06%
Fullhouse Theatre	1%	Individual booker 13	0.14%
Global Training & Mentoring CIC	0.05%	Individual booker 14	1%
Hope Church	0.25%	Individual booker 15	2%
Houghton Regis Town Council	1%	Individual booker 16	2%
HOT Academy	0.10%	Hurricane Boxing Club	0.41%
Bible Class	0.04%	Yawn Life	1%
Knitting & Crochet Group	1%	Prayer Group	1%
Recycled Teenagers	1%	U3A Computer Group	0.40%
Universal Credit Claimants	0.2%		
Total time used	32.2%		
Total time unused	67.8%		
Total time used by CBC or commissioned services	7%		
Total time used by others	25.2%		

23,296 bookable hours based on usage in 2019 (16 hours a day, 4 bookable rooms over 364 days - leap year and no bookings on Christmas or New Years Day).

The cost of hiring the Centre was as follows:

Room	Private Hire		Not for Profit Hires (Session up to four hours. Valid charity number required)	
	Monday - Saturday	Sunday & Bank Holiday	Weekday	Weekend & Bank Holiday
Ash Room	£12.50 / hour	£17.50 / hour	£10 / Session	£15.00 / Session
Oak Room (including Sycamore Hall)	£15.00 / hour	£20.00 / hour	£10 / Session	£15.00 / Session
Willow Room	£12.50 / hour	£17.50 / hour	£10 / Session	£15.00 / Session
Computer Room	£12.50 / hour	£17.50 / hour	£10 / Session	£15.00 / Session
Interview room	£12.50 / hour	£17.50 / hour	£10 / Session	£15.00 / Session
In addition to the above, there is a £17 per hour charge if the council considers it necessary for safety and security, or if the building needs to be opened and closed. Bank holidays are charged at £34 per hour.				

The running cost of the Community Centre is £37,816.80 per annum.

The income from room hire was £1,280 in 2019-2020.

### Current use of the Centre

The College is currently using the Centre Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm, term time only. The Centre is currently available to others to hire outside of these hours.

Below are the current temporary arrangements.

The following groups continue to use the centre:

Group	Booking Day	Booking Time	Room Booked
Youth Central	Every other Wednesday	5.30pm - 7.00pm	Ash Room

Groundwork	Tuesday & Wednesday	5.30pm - 7.00pm	Sycamore Room
RCCG Church	Tuesday & Sunday	6.30pm - 7.30pm 9.00am - 1.00pm	Oak & Ash Room
YAWN	Monday	7.00pm - 9.00pm	Ash Room
SNOOSC	Saturday	9.00am - 5.00pm	Oak & Ash Room
Kids Time	First Thursday of month (Kids Time will be using an alternative venue for sessions outside of this time – see table below)	4.00pm - 8.00pm	Oak Room
Heritage Society	Bi Monthly Mid Week	7.00pm - 9.00pm	Oak Room

Six groups previously used the Centre and have been found alternatives with our help or independently.

<b>Groups</b>	<b>New Location Offered/Booked</b>
Kids Time	Dunstable Leisure Centre (booked directly by Kids Time)
0-19 Locality Group	The Village Green Pavilion - booked
Craft & Coffee	Red House Court and then All Saint View when it opens - offered
Global Training	Houghton Regis Scout Hut - offered
Oak Bank Drop In	Houghton Regis Pavilion and Scout Hut - offered
Recycled Teenagers – Not restarting until the new year except the Christmas party	HHP for the Christmas party then All saint view - offered

- 20 previous user groups haven't told us whether they need space or not, but these users were very infrequent users.

The arrangements summarised above mean that:

- Seven groups were unaffected by the dual use
- One group will use the Community Centre for some sessions and an alternative venue for other sessions
- Six groups have been matched to an alternative venue
- Three groups no longer require space
- 22 groups haven't told us whether they need a space or not

## Community space in Houghton Regis

There are seven accessible facilities in Houghton Regis which can hire out space at certain times to community groups or individuals to use. Details of these and their

current availability are provided in Appendix 1. The Community Centre has been included for comparison but also because it is still available to the community to use outside of learning hours. The map in Appendix 2 shows where these venues are in relation to the Community Centre, and the nearest bus stops to those venues.

All Saints View is included in the total because it is opening soon and is a three minute walk from Bedford Square. All Saints View is an independent living scheme for people aged 55 and over. It will include 168 one and two-bedroom apartments as well as a range of amenities for residents and the general public to enjoy, including a restaurant, bar and café, retail outlets, hair, health and beauty treatment rooms and community space inside and outside the building.

## Proposed future use of the Centre

We want to find a way forward that works for as many groups and residents as possible and makes the best use of council resources. The Council has a duty to consider overall value including economic, environmental and social value; balancing the needs of different residents and Centre users.

The Council is proposing for the Community Centre to have continued dual education and community use on a permanent ongoing basis.

This would mean for the College to continue using the Centre Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm during school term time to provide the post 16 education support for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability. The College would pay a rent and service charge for this use. It would provide continuity and consistency to the young people, their parents and carers who had to adapt to Bedford Square as a new venue when the previous provider went into administration.

The Centre would continue to be available for community groups and individuals to hire outside of these times and the College will manage the bookings. This would be after 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 8am-12pm Saturday and Sunday and weekdays in the school holidays. The hire charges would continue to be as outlined above, subject to review through the Council's normal fees and charges setting process.

This would mean that Youth Central, Groundwork, Redeemed Christian Church of God Church, SNOOSC, and Heritage Society will be able to continue to use the Centre as they are now. Other groups would be able to book available space in the Community Centre.

As shown in Appendix 1, there is a range of existing and newly created community space available in close proximity to Bedford Square. This means that any new community groups or individuals looking for space should be able to find suitable venues for hire.

## Have your say

This consultation will run for eight weeks from Tuesday 13 October 2021 to Wednesday 8 December 2021. You can submit your feedback online at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations).

Alternatively, paper copies of the consultation summary document and questionnaires can be requested by emailing [consultations@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) or telephoning 0300 300 8301.

The feedback and options will be collated and a further report setting out the consultation feedback and recommendations will be reviewed by the Council's Executive in February 2022.



**Appendix 1: Analysis of accessible facilities available for community groups or individuals to hire**

Venue Name	Venue Address	Proximity to BSCC	Contact Number	Days / Hours of Availability	Room(s) Capacity	Hire Rates (hourly / per half/day)	Storage Available y/n	Kitchen facilities available y/n	Disabled Parking/Access y/n	Accessible?
Bedford Square	Bedford Square Community Centre Tithe Farm Rd, Houghton Regis, Dunstable LU5 5ES		Sarah Mortimer 07415 382667 smortimer@centralbeds.ac.uk	Evenings only from 5:30pm and weekends	Pine Room 11.1m2, Ash Room 83.9m2, Oak Room 120.6m2 (47.2m2 for the hall), Willow Room 40.4m2, Maple Room 17.5m2, Computer Room 25.42	Charges as set out above.	N	Y	Y	Y
Houghton Regis Library	Bedford Square, Houghton Regis, LU5 5ES	0 miles	0300 300 4881	Monday - Saturday 9:15 until 17:45	Conference /meeting room = 16 people	£7.40 per hour, £25 for 4 hours, £51 for 8 hours	N	N	Y	Y
All Saints View (from 2022)	High Street, Houghton	0.1 miles	0300 300 8302	TBA	Multi-purpose	TBA	Y	Y	Y	Y

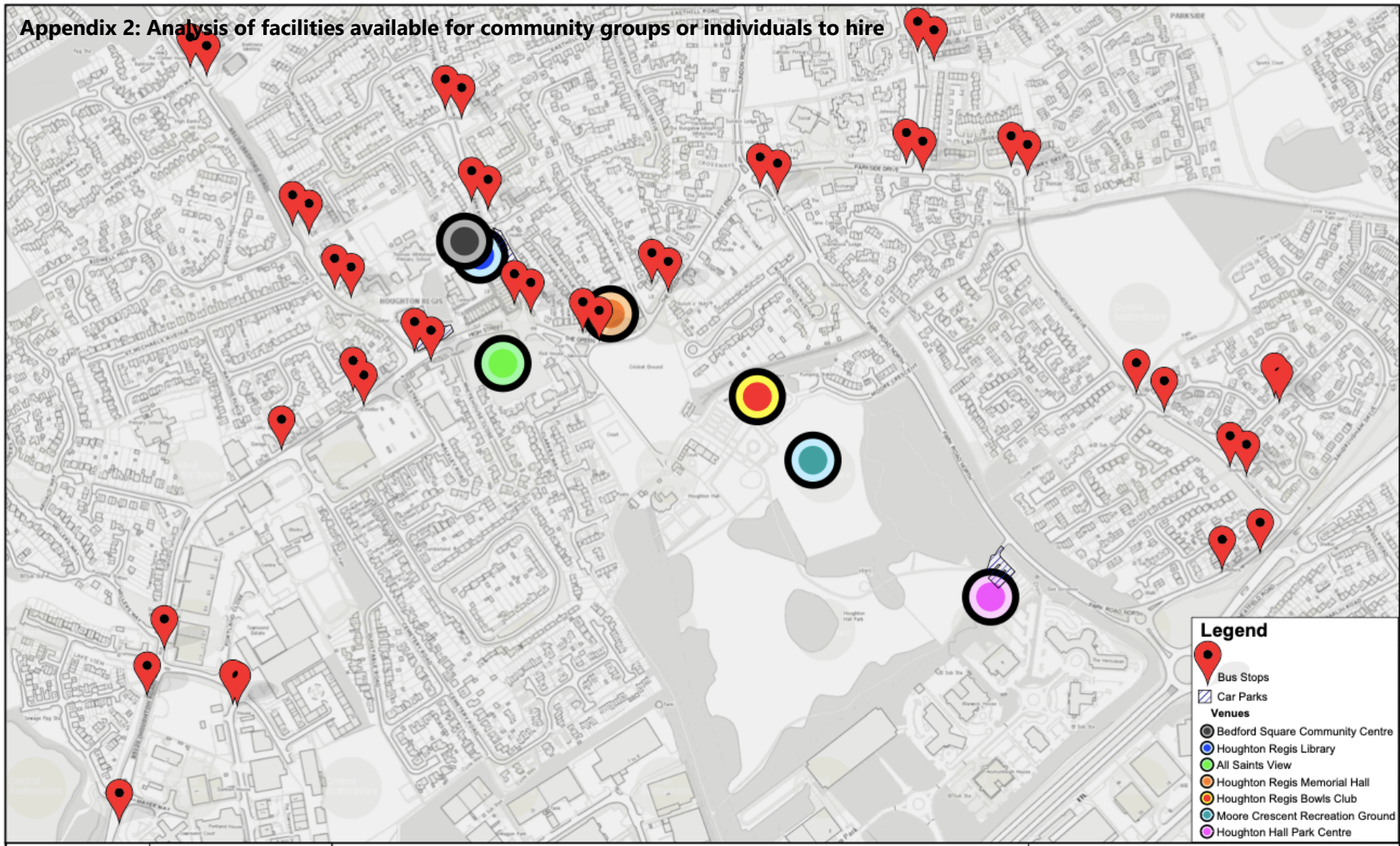
	Regis, Dunstable				room 01 79.19m2 Multi- purpose room 02 139.87m2 actual numbers to be confirmed					
Houghton Regis Memorial Hall	The Green, Houghton Regis, LU5 5DX	0.2 miles	07598 125775	Fully booked apart from weekends on occasion. Please contact hall directly	66 seated or 80 standing	Please contact the bookings Secretary on 075981257 75	N	Y	Y	Y
Moore Crescent Sports Club	Moore Cres, Houghton Regis, Dunstable	0.6 miles	01582 708540 info@hough tonregis.o rg.uk Clare.evans @houghto nregis.org. uk and Zunaira.Sab ih@hought onregis.org .uk.	Contact Town Council for availability (Oct-Apr)	48 seated or 60 standing	£7 per hour community groups £28 per hour for other users. And £29 unlock and lock up evenings and weekends if the hirer doesn't	N	N	Y	Y

						have their own key				
Houghton Regis Bowls Club	Moore Cres, Houghton Regis, Dunstable	0.6 miles	07908 677166 mark.wilkinson23@ntlworld.com	Contact Town Council for availability (Oct-Apr)	48 seated or 60 standing	£7 per hour community groups £28 per hour for other users. And £29 unlock and lock up evenings and weekends if the hirer doesn't have their own key	N	Y	Y	Y
Houghton Hall Park Centre	Park Rd N, Houghton Regis, Dunstable LU5 5FU	0.8 miles	0300 300 8301	Contact HHP directly for booking	20 people in the meeting room	Weekday - £11/14 per hour Half day rate (4 hrs) £40/£54 /Full Day £75/£102* Weekends- Half day rate (4hrs) £59/£40*	N	N	Y	Y

Details of Council fees and charges are available here:

[https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/27/about\\_your\\_council/178/annual\\_accounts\\_fees\\_and\\_charges\\_budget\\_statements\\_and\\_budget\\_books/3](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/27/about_your_council/178/annual_accounts_fees_and_charges_budget_statements_and_budget_books/3)

**Appendix 2: Analysis of facilities available for community groups or individuals to hire**



**Legend**

- Bus Stops
- Car Parks
- Venues**
- Bedford Square Community Centre
- Houghton Regis Library
- All Saints View
- Houghton Regis Memorial Hall
- Houghton Regis Bowls Club
- Moore Crescent Recreation Ground
- Houghton Hall Park Centre



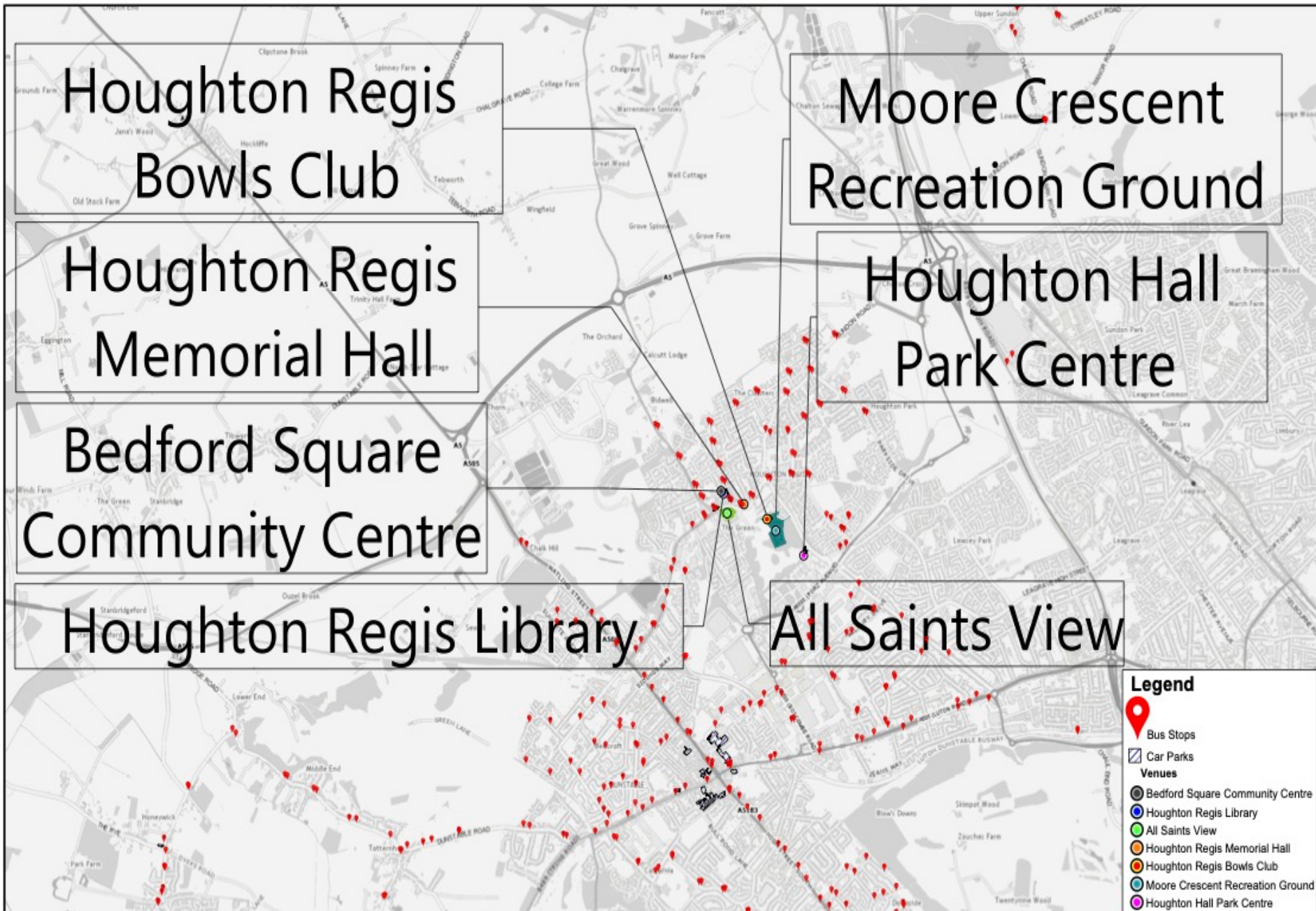
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Scale 1:5000 @ A3  
EM 3806

**Properties In Proximity of Bedford Square,  
Houghton Regis**

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**Legend**

- Bus Stops
- Car Parks
- Venues**
- Bedford Square Community Centre
- Houghton Regis Library
- All Saints View
- Houghton Regis Memorial Hall
- Houghton Regis Bowls Club
- Moore Crescent Recreation Ground
- Houghton Hall Park Centre



Date: 12 October 2021

Scale 1:30000 @ A3  
EM 3808

Properties In Proximity of Bedford Square,  
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# **Central Bedfordshire in contact**

## **Contact us...**

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on the web: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Write to Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House,  
Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ