



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr Yvonne Farrell**

Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

e-mail: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

8th December 2022

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To: All Town Councillors

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to the Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on Monday 19th December 2022 at 7.00pm.

Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting may do so in person or remotely through the meeting link below.

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

Please follow this guidance if attending the meeting remotely [LINK](#)

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED¹

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.

¹ *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.*

3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with

he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

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

4. MINUTES

Pages 7 - 29

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 20th June, 29th September and 3rd October 2022.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th June, 29th September and 3rd October 2022.

5. COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pages 30 - 77

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

Corporate Services Committee	30 th May, 18 th August and 4 th October 2022
Community Services Committee	5 th September 2022
Environment & Leisure Committee	26 th September 2022
Planning Committee	27 th September, 10 th October, 31 st October and 21 st November
Town Partnership Committee	26 th April 2022

Pages 78 - 83

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

New Office Provisions Sub-Committee	21 st February 2022
New Cemetery Sub-Committee	18 th July 2022

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;

12208: To recommend to Town Council that the Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements policy be approved.

12209: To recommend to Town Council that the Internal Audit Planning, Reporting & Review Policy and Internal Audit Specification be approved.

12210: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Working Safely with Coronavirus Policy.

12211: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Menopause Policy.

12212: To recommend to Town Council that the Freedom of Information Act (2000) Policy and the Model Publication Scheme be approved.

12213: To recommend to Town Council that the Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy be approved.

6.

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. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Members are advised that Cllr Copleston is unable to remain as the Town Council representative on Hospice at Home.

Members are requested to appoint another representative.

The next meeting of Hospice at Home is on Wed 15th February 2023 at 1pm at Nevil

Recommendation: To appoint a councillor representative for Hospice at Home.

9. CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE

Pages 84 - 87

To advise members of the national Civility & Respect Project.

Recommendation: To take the Civility & Respect pledge as follows:

By signing the Pledge, Houghton Regis Town Council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the Local Council Award Scheme
Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

10. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Pages 88 - 110

Review of this policy is to be carried out annually by Town Council.

Members are advised that advice was sought from the Town Councils HR provider as to the suitability of the Town Councils current policy. The response was that whilst the current policy was still suitable the Town Council may like to consider updating the policy, by going one step further than the basic equal opportunity policy (which reflects compliance with the law) and positively encourage a more diverse workforce.

Members will find a report and policies attached.

Recommendation: To consider and adopt the Town Councils Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

11. HONORARY FREEMAN & FREEWOMAN POLICY

Pages 111 - 116

Review of this policy is to be carried out every 4 years by Town Council.

Members are reminded that the Town Council has the power to confer the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, s249.

Members will find a report attached.

Recommendation: To review and approve the Town Councils Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy

12. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FINAL DRAFT

Members are advised that the Town Councils planning committee will consider the final draft of the Town Councils Neighbourhood Plan at the meeting to be held on the 12th December 2022. It is anticipated, so long as further amendments are not required, that a copy of the plan will be circulated to all other members of the town council on the 13th December, for their consideration.

The Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (HRNPSG) are anticipating that this final version of the plan, subject to further public consultation in January 2023. The need to have an additional consultation is in part due to the responses received from the statutory consultation that took place in August 2021 and also due to the inclusion of governments national First Homes Policy Guidance. All Neighbourhood Plans now need this guidance to be included within one of the policies. It is proposed that a light touch public consultation is all that is required.

The HRNPSG are hopeful that by meeting the January consultation milestone, the referendum on the Plan could be included at the May elections. This would depend on whether this expectation would accord with Central Bedfordshire Councils timetable for their statutory public consultation on the plan.

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

- Recommendation:**
- 1. To adopt of the final version of Houghton Regis Town Councils Draft Neighbourhood Plan.**
 - 2. To allow minor changes to the text to be made up until the plan is presented for public consultation.**
 - 3. To note that the plan will be subject to a 6 week, light touch, public consultation period starting early 2023.**

13. KEY PARTNER GRANT HOUGHTON REGIS MEMORIAL HALL

Pages 117 - 120

Members are advised that the Community Services Committee on 24th October was unable to confirm the release of Key Partner Grant Funding to the Memorial Hall as the meeting was not quorate for the particular application. Members will find attached the Renewal Form from the Memorial Hall which confirms that they are remain operating in accordance with their original application for Key Partner Status.

- Recommendation:** **To approve the release of funding for the Houghton Regis Memorial Hall under the Key Partner Status for 2022/23.**

14. JOINT WORKING GROUP

Pages 121 - 125

To enable members to consider the option of setting up a joint working group with Bedfordshire Police and the CBC Community Safety Team.

- Recommendation:** **To extend the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference for the Combating Crime Working Group to include:**
To consider short, medium and long term issues around community safety including crime, anti-social

behaviour and fear of crime. Such issues may include community liaison, community support, and additional community safety resources.

To work with partners to improve community safety and reduce fear of crime

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

meeting held on

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

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

Public: 10

Apologies: Councillors: R Morgan

12078 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Morgan.

12079 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Agenda item 14; A member of the public asked whether the council would consider speaking with the younger members of the community regarding climate change and implementable strategies.

Agenda item 19; Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space requested an official stance from the Town Council on the proposed development of Windsor Drive. It was requested that the recommendations set out in the agenda were supported by councillors endorsing the status of Windsor Drive Community Open Space as the green community space as it is at the present time.

12080 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Carroll advised members that he was a supporter of the Friends of Windsor Drive group.

12081 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2022.

A clerical error was highlighted on the minutes, with an amendment requested under the Chair of Community Services Committee to read: *On being put to the vote Cllr Wattingham was elected as Chair of Community Services Committee.*

Resolved: To approve the minutes as amended of the meeting held on 18th May 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12082 COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MINUTES

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

Corporate Services Committee	28 th February 2022
Community Services Committee	None to present
Environment & Leisure Committee	14 th February and 14 th March 2022
Planning Committee	16 th May 2022
Town Partnership Committee	None to present

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

Office Provisions Sub Committee	None to present
Proposed New Cemetery Working Group	None to present

Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above.

12083 TOWN MAYOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Cllr Farrell advised members that she had attended:

Headway Jubilee Event
 Bidwell West Event
 All Saints Church Jubilee Service
 Friends of Windsor Drive Jubilee Event
 Hub Café Jubilee Party
 Houghton Regis Primary School Jubilee Fayre
 Memorial Hall 65th Party
 All Saints Church
 Luton Borough Council Mayoral Investiture
 Harpenden Civic Service
 And was looking forward to this Saturday

Members were advised the deputy mayor had attended:

Lord Lieutenant Thanksgiving Service
 Mayor of Dunstable Jubilee Coffee Morning

12084 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS & ON TRAINING SESSIONS ATTENDED

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

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she had been unable to attend the meeting at CHEWS due to a diary conflict.

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she had not yet attended a meeting of SORTED.

Cllr Thorne advised members that Dial-a-Ride were to hold their AGM next week and Citizens Advice were to hold their AGM in September.

Cllr Jones advised members that he had attended a meeting of BATPC where new premises had been agreed subject to finalising the tenancy agreement.

Members were also advised that NALC and LGA had been working on a new Code of Conduct, NALC had subsequently withdrawn their version, the LGA version had been presented to Corporate Services Committee for preliminary consideration.

12085 YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Members received a report providing brief outline of the year end accounting process. Members were invited to raise any queries relating to the process.

Members received this report for information.

12086 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021/2022 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2021/2022

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Members were presented with the completed Annual Internal Audit Report and supporting paperwork as part of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Members were advised that the internal auditor completed the year end internal audit on 10th May 2022.

Members highlighted the new Auditor had been more thorough some improvements to be implemented had been highlighted.

Resolved: **To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/2022 and to approve the actions detailed in the annotated Observations report as attached.**

12087 DATES FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS FOR 2021/2022

Members were requested to approve the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights in relation to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Members were advised of the following:

1. Date of announcement: 24th June 2022
2. Date of commencement: 27th June 2022
3. End date: 5th August 2022

Members were advised that an issue of the date of announcement coinciding with the date of commencement had arisen, observed by the new Auditor, it had also been recommended that the dates be recommended to Town Council for approval.

Resolved: To approve the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights in relation to the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2022 as follows:

1. **Date of announcement: 24th June 2022**
2. **Date of commencement: 27th June 2022**
3. **End date: 5th August 2022**

**12088 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021/2022
SECTION 1 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, a draft completed version of Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return, for the year ended 31st March 2022 was attached for consideration, approval and signature.

Members highlighted the unfortunate nature of having to state no on row M of the Annual Internal Audit Report, as it was believed the opportunity to inspect the accounts had been offered correctly.

Resolved: To approve and sign Section 1 Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022.

**12089 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021/2022
SECTION 2 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.3, Section 2 Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return and the supporting Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022 was received for consideration, approval and signature subject to external audit.

Resolved: To approve and sign Section 2 Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022 subject to external audit.

12090 REVIEW OF EARMARKED RESERVE MOVEMENTS 2022/23

Members received a schedule of earmarked reserves for 2022/23 with predicted movements to and from reserves during the course of the financial year.

Members received this report for information as ear marked reserve movements were to be confirmed at year end.

Members acknowledged the expediency of receiving a mid-year report on the status of Earmarked reserves.

Members highlighted an income of £1,197,400 and expenditure of £1,102,933 amounting to a surplus of £94,467 with a net transfer of £36,000 to EMR.

A motion was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by: Cllr Kennedy to read:

To Move £50,000 from General Reserves to EMR Reserves for play area refurbishment.

Members voted on the proposed motion, which was carried.

Resolved: To move £50,000 from General Reserves to EMR Reserves for Play Area Refurbishment.

12091 POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AT WINDSOR DRIVE

To seek Councils position on possible future development on land at Windsor Drive.

Members agreed to vote on the recommendations individually:

Officer recommendation 1 which read: *To continue to offer support to the Friends of Windsor Drive Group in terms of engaging in democratic processes;*

Proposed by: D Jones seconded by: Cllr Kennedy
Carried

A recorded vote was requested on officer recommendation 2 which read:
To oppose any future development on Windsor Drive unless very special circumstances are shown in accordance with draft Neighbourhood Plan Policy 12.

Proposed by: D Jones seconded by: S Goodchild

Members in favour Cllrs: S Goodchild, Y Farrell, S Thorne, D Jones, E Cooper
Members against Cllrs: A Slough, C Slough, M Kennedy, T McMahon, P Burgess, C Copleston, J Carroll.
Members abstained: K Wattingham

Recommendation 2 was not carried.

A new motion was proposed to read: *Houghton Regis Town Council supports the national planning policy framework and its commitment to brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites in particular in the case of Windsor Drive.*

Proposed by: M Kennedy seconded by: C Slough
A recorded vote was requested:

Members in favour Cllrs: P Burgess, T McMahon, J Carroll, M Kennedy, C Slough, A Slough, C Copleston

Members against: 0

Members abstained: E Cooper, Y Farrell, S Goodchild, D Jones, K Wattingham, S Thorne

The amended recommendation 2 was carried, accordingly became the substantive motion.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To continue to offer support to the Friends of Windsor Drive Group in terms of engaging in democratic processes;**
 - 2. Houghton Regis Town Council supports the national planning policy framework and its commitment to brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites in particular in the case of Windsor Drive.**

12092 CLIMATE CHANGE

Members were invited to consider steps to help to address climate change.

Members highlighted concerns regarding the additional administrative pressure for staff if a Cost of Living Crisis was declared, the Town Centre project agreed and the work involved with Climate Change project was agreed as all three were large projects to undertake.

It was suggested to members that a public consultation process be carried out to gauge public support for a Green Task Force, and the findings be presented to the October Town Council meeting.

Members discussed the length of wait time on ordering electric vehicles, concerns were raised that delayed consideration could prove a delay to any positive action the Town Council may wish to take.

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

To report back to Town Council on 3rd of October on community and youth engagement, staff and financial resources as necessary, and the committee functions and terms of reference necessary to support a green taskforce and to consider declaring a climate emergency at that time.

The officer recommendation read:

To report back on the level of community support and if sufficient to consider the staff and resource necessary:

The amendment was proposed by: Cllr A Slough, seconded by: Cllr McMahon

Members voted in favour of the amended recommendation 3, accordingly this became the substantive motion.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To take suitable steps to ensure the current work of the council follows a sustainable ethos. This could cover facilities and services, purchases, and working practices;**
 - 2. To engage with the community to seek to assess the level of community support to set up a Green Task Force whose remit would include investigating the funding sources available to assist in the development and delivery of a Green Action Plan;**
 - 3. To report back to Town Council on 3rd October on community and youth engagement, staff and financial resources as necessary, and the committee functions and terms of reference necessary to support a green taskforce and to consider declaring a climate emergency at that time.**

12093 DUNSTABLE MARKET CHARTER

Members were provided information in regard to Dunstable Town Council's Market Charter and associated implications for Houghton Regis Town Council when holding events with stalls.

Members discussed the confusion over the existence of the Market Charter as it had been established pre the abolition of Dunstable Borough Council in 1972.

It was requested that a letter be sent to Central Bedfordshire Council Monitoring Officer requesting that stalls held at Houghton Regis Town Council events would not apply to the stalls held at Houghton Regis Town Council events and request a copy of the Charter.

Questions were raised by members as to whether other towns were being charged under the Dunstable Market Charter.

12094 BEDFORD SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Members were requested to consider the current and future use of Bedford Square Community Centre.

Constitution. It was highlighted that several points of the Equality Act had been breached by preventing Houghton Regis residents access to the Community Centre. Members agreed that unavailability of the Community Centre was a huge loss to the community.

Resolved: To contact the CBC Monitoring Officer for advice on how to take the following points forward:

- 1. BSCC has long been an underused asset within HRTC. It has however always held the scope to be a central and integral part of the towns community. For it to achieve this potential it required the proactive administrative and community support. HRTC would urge CBC to engage with its local communities to support community health and development;**
- 2. The partial use of the centre by the college is a significant loss to a number of local groups who have struggled with the loss of an affordable and central facility. HRTC would urge CBC to take necessary steps to ensure that other local venues under its control are affordable and available for such groups;**
- 3. HRTC would urge CBC to take a more proactive role in managing, promoting and supporting previous users of this centre to encourage their growth and development;**
- 4. HRTC would urge CBC to review the booking process to ensure it is robust and clear;**
- 5. HRTC would urge CBC to review existing venues in Houghton Regis to ensure that they are fit for purpose and to explore funding opportunities to improve their accessibility and overall offer.**

12095 COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Members discussed at length how best to support the Houghton Regis community if a Cost of Living Crisis was declared, with support through Family Centres and Schools and the Locality Team suggested.

An amendment to the recommendations was proposed to read: To contact local support organisations to explore opportunities (including the local foodbank, local primary schools / school family workers, organisations supporting vulnerable adults, faith groups, Houghton Regis to provide a monthly donation of up to £500 per month for a 12 month period to be taken from general reserves.

Proposed by: Cllr Kennedy, seconded by: Cllr Jones
Members voted in favour of the amended recommendation.

The Officer recommendations read:

- 1. To contact Andrew Selous MP to press for national help and support to those most in need*
- 2. To contact local support organisations to explore opportunities (including the local foodbank, local primary schools / school family workers, organisations supporting vulnerable adults, faith groups, the Houghton Regis Locality team, Houghton Regis Childre*
- 3. To look to provide a weekly donation to the local foodbank up to a value to be confirmed by Members.*

Resolved: To contact local support organisations to explore opportunities (including the local foodbank, local primary schools / school family workers, organisations supporting vulnerable adults, faith groups, up to £500 per month for a 12 month period to be taken from general reserves.

12096 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

Members were requested to consider the Houghton Regis Town Centre Action Plan.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the Houghton Regis Town Centre Action Plan**
- 2. To refer the Plan to the Partnership Committee for consideration**
- 3. To request that CBC review and update the 2008 Town Centre Masterplan**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.32pm

Dated this 3rd day of October 2022

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 29th September 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: P Burgess
J Carroll
Y Farrell
S Goodchild
D Jones
T McMahon
R Morgan
A Slough
C Slough
S Thorne

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

Public: 6

Apologies: Councillors: E Cooper
C Copleston
M S Kennedy
K Wattingham

12178 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors: E Cooper, C Copleston, M Kennedy and K Wattingham.

12179 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public stated that there were monetary implications which had not been explored and suggested that further money should be spent either on Grendall Lane or to explore other avenues. Would there be further investigation into additional funding?

It was advised that the continuation of investigation in to Grendall Lane had been presented twice to the New Cemetery Sub-Committee and rejected on both occasions. The resolutions made by the New Cemetery Sub-Committee meeting was to continue to explore opportunities.

A member of public asked whether the council had explored all financial avenues, including those with Central Bedfordshire Council for cemetery funding.

It was advised that different parcels of land had been investigated for their suitability in environmental and planning terms, however the environmental report that had been received had presented difficulties for the construction of a cemetery on that land.

A member of the public asked whether the council had intended to ask Central Bedfordshire Council for funding to aid the construction of a new cemetery?

It was advised that development within the growth area had received planning permission, if there were to be an uplift in development value from the granting of permission to when the houses were built, there was a mechanism for Central Bedfordshire Council to seek additional s106 funding, however neither of the s106 s included specific funding for new cemetery provision.

It was asked whether HRTC would approach Central Bedfordshire Council for funding as there are pockets of new homes being built in the area.

It was advised that as projects progress, funding streams were sought as and when necessary, as projects determine.

A member of public asked whether Grendall Lane was the only parcel of land under consideration.

It was advised that the resolution had included an approach to Central Bedfordshire Council to see whether the original sites offered were still available.

It was advised that Central Bedfordshire Council had a separate funding pot which did not include s106 money.

12180 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None

12181 MOTION AS SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BURGESS AND COUNCILLOR CARROLL

Members were requested to discuss the resolutions made on 18th July 2022 by the Houghton Regis Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee, based on the following:

The Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee at the meeting held on the 18th July 2022, overstepped its remit regarding financial matters that should be considered only by Full Town Council, and that the resolutions were the outcome of a breach of Standing Orders 13b and 15.

1. Background

The resolutions from the meeting of 18th July 2022 (Minute Number NC148) received were:

1. To recognise the significant works that are likely to be required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time that these works are financially inhibitive for the council and as such further investigations into this site will cease;
2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council, as landowner, of this position;
3. To continue to search for alternative sites and to present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the council.

2. The related Committee Functions of the Sub-Committee as set out on page 11, of the Town Councils Committee Functions & Terms of Reference document, were:

Section 2

To consider and determine matters surrounding the development of a new cemetery for Houghton Regis, including but not restricted to:

- Environmental matters
- Policy matters
- Visual impact matters
- Design matters
- Public consultation matters
- Future operation and management of the cemetery

Section 4

To report and to make such recommendations to Town Council as appropriate.

It was highlighted that concerns had been raised by the consultant over likely difficulties in developing the site at Grendall Lane, based on this information the Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee had agreed to cease the investigation on this site and to continue to search for alternative sites.

It was clarified that although the New Cemetery Sub-Committee did not have a budget for day to day expenditure, the sub-committee did have an EMR which had been used to draw funds, as agreed by resolution, for the investigative works necessary.

3. Standing Orders

13 Rules of debates at meetings

- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.

15 Previous resolutions

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

4. Considerations

Members were requested to consider the motion that:

The sub-committee overstepped its remit within the Committee Functions and Terms of Reference as set out in section 2, and whether the process under which the resolution was reached was in breach of Standing Orders 13b and 15.

The Houghton Regis Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee reported to Houghton Regis Town Council.

It was suggested that the Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee overstepped its remit.

The Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee had no budget and had no authorisation under its Terms of Reference to consider financial matters. Only the Full Town Council was able to consider these.

At the meeting held on the 18th July 2022, a resolution was agreed to cease the investigative work at Grendall Lane site due to works being financially inhibitive. As this decision related to financial considerations for future works, the committee should have had this decision referred to the full Town Council. It was thus, fair to make the case that the Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee had overstepped its remit.

At the meeting held on 18th July, the above-mentioned recommendations were proposed. At this point, the proposal had no second, and so deemed to have failed. An alternative was proposed, which also failed. Committee Members then reverted to the original proposal, which under Standing Order 13b should not have been allowed to be brought back to the table as an alternative option, as it had fallen foul of the six-month rule Standing Order 15, and this should have been advised to the committee.

It was highlighted that Standing Order 15 referred to resolutions which had been agreed, Standing Order 15 does not apply to proposals during debates.

Members were advised that at the last Proposed New Cemetery Meeting it had been suggested that the council approach Central Bedfordshire Council again regarding the land adjacent to Frogmore Road and to continue the search for suitable cemetery sites.

Members raised concerns that money had been spent on investigations for cemetery suitability of Grendall Lane and although the Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee had agreed to cease works due to the preliminary findings and potential site development costings, it was felt that additional funds should be outlaid to complete the investigations.

Members were advised that significant advice had been received from Cemetery Development Services based on data compiled over the monitoring period which had been based on the wetter season.

Members were reminded that the meeting was to determine whether the Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee had overstepped its remit. Members were advised that if it was agreed that it had overstepped its remit, the council would then be agreeing that the sub-committee had overstepped its remit from the outset.

Considering the information above, we submit the following motion:

The Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee resolutions made at the meeting held on 18th July 2022, should be made null and void, due to it being deemed to have overstepped its remit regarding financial matters that should be considered only by Full Town Council, and that the resolutions were the outcome of a breach of Standing Orders 13b and 15.

The motion was Proposed by: Cllr Carroll, seconded by: Cllr Burgess

Members in favour: 5

Members against: 5

Abstentions: 0

The chair used her casting vote to vote against the motion, accordingly the motion was not carried.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.07pm

Dated this 19th day of December 2022.

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3rd October 2022 at 7.00pm

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

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

Public: 4

Apologies: Councillors: C Copleston
M S Kennedy

12182 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Copleston and Kennedy.

12183 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space requested confirmation of support from the Town Council regarding the halt on development of Windsor Drive and whether that support would continue if the decision to develop Windsor Drive was reversed at a future date.

It was confirmed that the Town Council view on the development of Windsor Drive had not changed.

Concerns were raised regarding cemetery and it was requested whether there was a commitment to continue to keep a cemetery in the town?

It was advised that there is no risk or threat to the existing cemetery, the Town Council, through the Cemetery Sub-Committee, has made a commitment to continue to look for a suitable site.

A member of the public asked if the site at Grendall Lane had been completely ruled out?

It was confirmed that this site had been ruled out.

12184 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12185 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2022.

Members highlighted some inaccuracies within the minutes, it was agreed for the minutes of 20th June 2022 to be represented at the next Town Council meeting scheduled for 19th December 2022.

12186 COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP MINUTES

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

Corporate Services Committee	None to present. Members received the draft minutes of Corporate Services Committee held on 30 th May 2022. At this meeting the following policy was considered, and it was requested that this be brought forward to Town Council: <i>Minute Number: 12047 Code of Conduct</i> <i>To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Code of Conduct as based on the template provided by the Local Government Association</i>
Community Services Committee	7 th February and 4 th July 2022 Members were referred to: <i>Minute 12119 Town Centre Toilet Appointment of Contractor</i> <i>To request that Town Council authorise the use of General Reserves up to £2000 to fund this contract in 2022/23.</i>
Environment & Leisure Committee	13 th June 2022.
Planning Committee	6 th and 27 th June, 18 th July, 8 th and 30 th August 2022.
Town Partnership Committee	None to present.

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

Office Provisions Sub Committee	None to present.
Proposed New Cemetery Working Group	19 th July 2021 and 18 th July 2022.

Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows;
To approve the use of General Reserves up to £2000 to fund the town centre toilet cleaning contract in 2022/23.
To approve the adoption of the Town Councils Code of Conduct as based on the template provided by the Local Government Association subject to the alteration discussed.

12187 TOWN MAYOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Members were advised that the Town Mayor had attended over 30 events in and around the local area. Highlights had included Central Bedfordshire Council Awards Ceremony, Inspiring Music Event, Houghton Regis Town Council Carnival, Mayor of Linslade Charity Dinner, Skate Park Event, Open Air Cinema and University of Bedfordshire Civic Degree Ceremony.

The Deputy Mayor advised members she had attended Hospice at Home Event, Luton and Dunstable Bingo and 1st and 3rd Scouts and the Lord Lieutenant Thanksgiving meal.

12188 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 Jones advised members he had attended BATCP, it was advised that there were four town or parish councils who were not members of the BATPC. The AGM arrangements had been confirmed as Henlow Park Pavilion on Thursday 20th October 2022. Speakers in attendance would be Charlotte Eisenheart NALC's Members Services Manager and Tamsin Ellway from Environmental Agency, Flood Resilience Advisor. The move to the new offices has been delayed by legal formalities and a draft lease was awaited.

Also attended was a meeting of the Houghton Regis North Stakeholder Group. It had been advised that Linnere had no intentions of funding links within Tithe Farm Recreation Ground, however, they would focus on links within their own land.

Allotment availability in HRN1 had also been queried at the meeting, as had access to the Farmstead and Lidl from Parkside. It had been confirmed that all planning applications had been agreed apart from infill sites.

There had been criticism of Central Bedfordshire Council of its failure to provide the proposed new primary school for the new residents of Houghton Regis.

Cllr Thorne advised members that she had attended Citizens Advice AGM, the speaker in attendance discussed the foodbank for which various proposals had been considered to ensure people get the support they need.

Cllr Burgess advised members that she had attended Lime Tree Academy and had been impressed with the improvements that had been made to the school.

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she had also attended the Lime Tree Academy s open day and advised members feedback had been very positive.

Cllr Goodchild also attended the Citizens Advice AGM, the speaker in attendance focussed on the foodbank, Members were advised there had been a significant number of people who had utilised the foodbank.

Cllr Farrell advised members that the Memorial Hall was still thriving and had been undergoing improvements and was currently in good repair. The accounts had been approved and members were advised of the date of the Memorial Hall AGM as 4th October 2022.

Cllr Goodchild advised members that she had been in collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council to try to improve voucher distribution in Houghton Regis for access to the foodbank, which would enable residents from Houghton Regis to utilise this commodity to its fullest.

12189 COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE FOR FRIENDS OF WINDSOR DRIVE COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE (FOWDCOS)

Members were advised that the FoWDCOS invited the council to nominate a councillor representative to be part of the Friends Group. The Friends Group had advised:

for the following reasons:

1. A councillor would, hopefully bring knowledge and experience of Council policy, process and procedures which may help the FoWDCOS understand the best approach and protocols we should observe and follow to support our aims and objectives;
2. A councillor could advise on local updates and related matters which may have a bearing on the aims and objectives of the FoWDCOS;
3. A councillor could, via opportunities such as the Council AGM, formally report back to and update the Council on their interaction with the FoWDCOS, keeping them abreast of our work towards achieving our ai

The Group had advised that they meet almost weekly, they do however appreciate that this was likely to be too frequent for a councillor given their other commitments and suggested that monthly or 6 weekly attendance would be suitable.

Cllr A Slough volunteered to represent Houghton Regis Town Council and support FoWDCOS.

Nominated by: Cllr Carroll seconded by: S Goodchild

Members voted in favour of Cllr A Slough to act as the representative on the Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space group and attend meetings.

Resolved: To nominate Cllr A Slough to act as the representative on the Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space.

12190 AUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021/22

Members received the Covering Letter and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for consideration.

Members noted that the external auditor had raised the following matter under Section 3 of the Return

ting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

It came to our attention that the Council had not met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 in publishing the 2020/21 AGAR exactly one day before the period of 30 working days to inspect the accounts. This was reported by the Internal Auditor. The Council correctly answered no to the relevant assertion in the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement an

It was advised that no matters were raised in the covering letter as minor scope for improvement.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To approve and accept the Annual Return including the external certificate;**
 - 2. To note the comment in Section 3 of the AGAR and to ensure that the publishing requirements as set out in the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 continue to be met in subsequent years.**

12191 EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is responsible for appointing external auditors to all applicable opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is less than £6.5 million.

The next 5-year appointing period runs from 2022-23 until 2026-27 and SAAA have undertaken a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each County area from 1st April 2022.

Members were advised that there was an option for smaller authorities to opt-out of the next round of 5-year audit appointments.

However, all authorities require an appointed external auditor. If the council did decide to opt out, the council would be required to appoint its own external auditor.

Members were advised that opting out was a significant decision. Detailed information on what it meant to opt out and how to opt out could be found at www.saaa.co.uk

Key implications were:

- an opted-out authority regardless of size (including exempt authorities) must appoint an appropriate external auditor;
- the appointed auditor must be a registered auditor as defined by the Companies Act and a member of Institute of Chartered Accountants (England and Wales).

an opted-out authority must convene an appropriate independent auditor panel which meets the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (LAAA). Detailed guidance on auditor panels could be found in Schedule 4 of the LAAA Act and from CIPFA;

an opted-out authority would need to develop its own specification for its external audit contract, would need to negotiate the price for this work on an individual basis and would need to manage the contract, including any disputes, and any independence issues that may arise;

an opted-out authority must ensure full compliance with the relevant requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act and supporting Regulations;

any opted-out authority that does not successfully appoint an appropriate external auditor in the correct manner and notify SAAA who their external auditor is by 30th November 2022 would have an external auditor appointed for it by the Secretary of State through SAAA. This would result in additional costs of £300 which would have to be met by the authority.

Members discussed the implications of opting out, and agreed to remain in the central external auditor appointment arrangements.

Resolved: Not to opt out of the central external auditor appointment arrangements.

12192 CLIMATE CHANGE

Members considered steps to help to address climate change.

Members were advised that public feedback to support this initiative had been positive and several members of the Youth Council were keen to support this work.

Members were advised this this initiative fitted in with the Town Council Vision, however, concerns were raised regarding the current economic climate as it seemed to be more costly to be environmentally accountable.

Members were advised that strategies could be included in the officers draft budget which would then be circulated before Christmas ready for the finalised budget in January.

It was suggested, rather than declare a climate emergency, to financially prepare for it by including finance and resources in the budgetary process for 2023/2024 in order for the newly elected council in 2023 to make the decision whether to proceed with this strategy.

Members were encouraged to join the Climate Emergency Network through NALC which provided resources and ideas to support the Climate Emergency.

It was suggested that there would likely be future funding available to support climate emergency initiatives.

It was clarified that to declare a climate emergency, it would allow the council to state their position as significantly concerned, and would look to shape and minimise the impact on climate, this would be worked in conjunction with finances and the council policies in place.

Members were advised that within the report, it was highlighted there was a lack of staff resources and capacity to support the implementation of a green taskforce and the administrative support that would be required.

Members were advised that a joint meeting had been arranged for Houghton Regis Town Council, Leighton Linlade Town Council, Dunstable Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council to discuss matters and strategies surrounding the climate emergency.

Members discussed cost free options that the council could undertake however, it was highlighted that despite some actions or activities being cost free, staff time would still be required to implement any suggested ideas.

An amendment was proposed by Cllr A Slough to read: *To declare a climate emergency.*
Seconded by: Cllr McMahon
The officer recommendation read: *To consider declaring a climate emergency.*

Members voted in favour of the amended recommendation; accordingly this became the substantive motion.

Members voted in favour of the substantive motion.

Resolved: To declare a climate emergency.

12193 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

Members were advised that in October 2021 consideration was given to the desirability of seeking an early community governance review. The council agreed to make representations to CBC to seek an early parish boundary review in particular in relation to the parish boundary with Chalton.

Members were updated that Chalton Parish Council had recommended no change at this current time.

CBC have advised:

the Central Bedfordshire (Electoral Changes) Order 2021 does not come into effect until May 2023 and therefore it is unlikely that any support from the Local Government Boundary Committee for England (LGBCE) would be given for a period of time;

the LGBCE review did not include any potential development of the land east of Houghton Regis as the forecast electorate was for only 5 years ahead and whilst that situation might have now changed any extension of the parish boundary would conflict with the revised warding arrangements that would come into force in May.

Accordingly, CBC were unable to carry out an early CGR, however CBC resolved to carry out a CGR of the whole of the council area in 2023/24 and it may be at that time could be considered

Members received this report for information.

Members were reminded that it was agreed (Town Council 21st March 2022) to make an application to the CBC Rural Match Funding - Integrated Programme 2022/23 and 2023/24 for improved town entrance features.

The application was assessed and CBC decided it could be progressed with further assessment required to determine deliverability, potential improvements and affordability.

The following feedback was provided:

Bedford Road In view of the ongoing development in the area, this may be difficult to pick a suitable location at this time, especially as existing signage and speed limits are changing / under review. CBC have suggested that this town entrance feature is put on hold until the development effecting Bedford Road is complete, and there is a clearer picture over where best to site a gateway.

Houghton Regis Town Council called for the signage to be placed on the roundabout on Northern bypass

Sundon Road CBC have suggested that the gateway signage would be well placed, from an aesthetic view point, on Sundon Road near its junction with School Road. However, this location is after the entrance to one of the new residential developments (Waterslade Way). CBC are seeking confirmation from HRTC as to whether this would be acceptable. Although this suggestion was made by CBC, it was highlighted to members that the resolution in March 2022 did not include a feature in this location. Members had requested that an approach be made to Linmere to discuss options. This approach was duly made. Although receptive to the concept of a gateway feature, it has not been possible to progress this further.

Houghton Regis Town Council want the signage on the parish boundary, on the B5790, on the roundabout.

Park Road North CBC have suggested that the village gateway is moved further south to incorporate Moore Crescent. There was also the potential to extend the 30mph speed limit to start at the location of the new gateway (this would require consultation). There is also a sign by the petrol station which requires replacing.

Houghton Road (B5120) Due to the location, and no clear divide in residential zones on Dunstable and Houghton Regis border, CBC have suggested that the existing sign on a post was the most suitable solution here. CBC have recommended that this remains as is.

Houghton Regis Town Council agree the position however, the existing sign needs replacement / improvement. Houghton Regis Town Council would like one on the other side of the road too, suggested to be placed at the junction with Douglas Crescent.

Members were reminded that the scheme required a 50% funding contribution from HRTC. At the Council meeting in March 2022, it was agreed to fund any works out of General Reserves.

Resolved: To formulate a response CBC based on the above comments.

Members were invited to consider if and how the Council may like to mark the reign of HM Queen Elizabeth II. Members received a report and should members desire to see a memorial feature, it would be helpful to have some ideas so that it can be incorporated as part of the budget setting process. Ideas and thoughts were welcomed.

Members discussed several ideas for memorialising and honouring the 70 year reign of Queen Elizabeth II. It was agreed that very careful consideration was required to ensure that whatever style and type of memorialisation is right for the town.

12196 CHRISTMAS RECEPTION OPENING

The following Christmas reception opening hours were suggested:

Friday 23 rd December 2022	Open 9am to 1pm
Monday 26 th December 2022	Closed
Tuesday 27 th December 2022	Closed
*Wednesday 28 th December 2022	Closed
*Thursday 29 th December 2022	Closed
*Friday 30 th December 2022	Closed
Monday 2 nd January 2023	Closed
Tuesday 3 rd January 2023	Normal reception hours resume

** During these times, the Council could be contacted on: 01582 708540 or by email info@houghtonregis.org.uk*

Telephone services would remain, the grounds staff would check the play areas and pavilions on 28th December and 30th 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.

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

Friday 23rd December 2022	Open 9am to 1pm
Monday 26th December 2022	Closed
Tuesday 27th December 2022	Closed
Wednesday 28th December 2022	Closed
Thursday 29th December 2022	Closed
Friday 30th December 2022	Closed
Monday 2nd January 2023	Closed
Tuesday 3rd January 2023	Normal reception hours resume

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.56pm

Dated this 19th day of December 2022

Chairman

Minutes of the meeting held on

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman
E Cooper
S Goodchild
M S Kennedy
K Wattingham

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: J Carroll

Also present: Councillor: T McMahon Virtual - part meeting

Absent: Councillor: C Copleston

12038 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Carroll.

12039 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12040 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12041 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Members were invited to elect a Vice Chair for Corporate Services Committee for 2022/2023.

Nominee: Cllr Kennedy Nominated by: Cllr Jones
Seconded by: Cllr Wattingham

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor Kennedy was duly appointed as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Services Committee for the municipal year 2022 - 2023.

12042 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2022.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12043 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Personnel Sub-Committee: 17th January 2022.

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting of the 17th January 2022.

12044 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

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

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

Members received this report for information.

12045 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Corporate Services Manager arrived at 7.06pm and clerked the remainder of the meeting. The Clerk retired from the meeting.

Members received the Income & Expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee.

Members received this report for information.

12046 RENEWAL OF DIRECT DEBIT, STANDING ORDER AND BACS PAYMENTS

Members were advised, under Financial Regulation 6.8, the approval of the use of Direct Debit, Standing Order and BACS would be renewed by resolution every year.

Members received a list of Direct Debits and Standing Orders.

Members were informed that the town council used BACs payment for staff salaries only.

Members requested clarification on why Techies was paid via Standing Order rather than Direct Debit. The Corporate Services Manager confirmed an email response would be sent to members.

- Resolved:**
- 1) **To approve the use of BACS method of payment.**
 - 2) **To approve the use of Direct Debit and Standing Order method of payment.**

12047 CODE OF CONDUCT

By law all councils were required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

Members were advised that the Town Council's Code of Conduct was last reviewed by this committee on the 14th December 2020.

The Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct was issued in December 2020. National Association of Local Councils recognised the benefit of a single code and withdrew their version, in its entirety.

Members received the

Members highlighted the importance of ensuring their register of interests were submitted and kept up to date.

Members compared the new document to an older version which members suggested held more weight but felt the updated version lacked empowerment.

The matter on considering formatting this and all Town Councils policies to be gender inclusive, as suggested at the Town Council meeting held on the 18th May 2022, was not discussed.

- Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Code of Conduct as based on the template provided by the Local Government Association**

12048 HRTC INSURANCE

For information and in accordance with Financial Regulation 15, members were considered fit for purpose. d been reviewed and was

The current three-year agreement expired on the 31st May 2022 but following the renewal quotation received, which was comparable to previous years, the agreement was extended to the 31st May 2024. This would mean that the long-term agreement would be for 5 years as was the length of the previous agreement.

12049 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members were requested to receive the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for February and March 2022.

Councillor Goodchild requested clarification in regard to the petty cash figure, as reported for the February period. The Chair confirmed that this was an accounting issue which had been resolved, as could be seen by the figure reported for the March period.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for February and March 2022;**
- 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the**

12050 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members received a list of payments for the period February 2022 to March 2022 (inclusive).

It was requested that consideration be given to formalising the designation of specific members to approve payments in order to avoid a conflict of interests. Councillor Kennedy suggested that he would be willing to be a designated signatory.

Members received this report for information.

12051 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, which included:

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.

Members received this report for information.

12052 INSURANCE CLAIMS

Members were advised that there had been one insurance claim from the 1st March 2022 to date.

Members received this report for information.

<i>Claim number</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Repair cost</i>	<i>Date settled</i>
27221391383	Repairs to Ranger	£N/K at present	Outstanding

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.50pm
Dated this 12th day of September 2022.**

Chairman

Minutes of the meeting held on

Present: Councillors: D Jones Chairman
J Carroll
E Cooper
S Goodchild
M S Kennedy
C Slough Substitute
K Wattingham

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: C Copleston

12136 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Copleston.

12137 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12138 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12139 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Staffing matter

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

12140 STAFFING MATTER

Members discussed the current issue.

Resolved: To agree the agenda recommendation.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 6.26pm

Dated this 28th day of November 2022

Chairman

Minutes of the meeting held on

Present:	Councillors:	D Jones J Carroll S Goodchild S Thorne	Chairman Substitute
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	0	
Apologies:	Councillors:	C Copleston K Wattingham M Kennedy	
Absent:		E Cooper	

12197 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Copleston, M Kennedy and Cllr Wattingham (Cllr Thorne substituted)

12198 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12199 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Carroll advised members, in relation to agenda item 18, that he was in receipt of a Local Government Pension.

Cllr Goodchild advised members, in relation to agenda item 18, that she was in receipt of a Local Government Pension.

It was advised that agenda item 18 would not be quorate for consideration.

12200 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 30th May 2022.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 30th May 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12201 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Personnel Sub-Committee: 19th April 2022.

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting of the 19th April 2022.

12202 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members received the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for Corporate Services Committee to date. An addendum had also been received outlining concerns over 191 4005 Staff Overtime.

It was confirmed to members that feedback regarding the budget for overtime would be fed back to Events Working Group at their next meeting.

Members were advised of the Town Council re-subscription to CPRE (Countryside Protection for Rural England) after several years of non-subscription.

Members discussed the overtime budget and ways to mitigate the impact of the overtime costs.

The status of the consideration of casual contracts for staff working at events was queried, it was advised that these contracts had been put on hold for the time being.

The need for councillors to provide more support at events to mitigate the need for paid Marshalls was suggested. It was highlighted that events would still require the significant support of staff members to ensure the smooth running of each event.

Resolved:

- 1. To provide feedback to the Events Working group of the deliberations and concerns of the Corporate Services Committee on the budget strain that the Overtime budget was facing and to seek their assistance in limiting additional overtime pressures;**
- 2. To review the overtime budget at Corporate Services in February when the council would have more certainty over the scope of other codes in 191 to cover the overtime budget.**

12203 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members received the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for April, May, June and July 2022.

The amount of £10,000 in the Liquidity Manager was queried, it was highlighted that although the sum was not required to be a specific amount, a sum of money was transferred to ensure there were enough funds for any outgoing payments when the and made payments.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for April, May, June and July 2022;**
 - 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed and dated by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and**

12204 LIST OF CHEQUE PAYMENTS

Members received a list of payments for the period April to July 2022 (inclusive).

Members received this report for information.

12205 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.

Members queried the dividend yield falling and the impact this had on the councils return. The Town Clerk agreed to send the CCLA quarterly Property Fund reports to members of this committee.

Members received this report for information.

12206 PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD REPAYMENTS ANNUAL REPORT

In accordance with the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations, Members were presented with an annual report which provided detail on net value, repayments and early settlement options as they stood as of 1st April 2022.

Resolved: To note the Public Works Loan Board Repayments Annual Report.

12207 INSURANCE CLAIMS

Members were advised that there had been no insurance claims from the 1st June 2022 to 31st August 2022.

Members noted that there had been some vandalism across the parks, and requested clarification as to whether this would go through the councils insurers, it was confirmed that these would be dealt with by the insurance company.

Members received this report for information.

12208 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS, INVESTMENTS STRATEGY & INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENTS

This committee was required to review the Town Councils Banking Arrangements, Investments Strategy & Investments on an annual basis.

Following the recent internal audit, the Internal Auditor raised concerns in regard to single person authorisation for online payments. Currently one person has full access to all online payment services. The Internal Auditor raised this issue and recommended the Town Council consider introducing a dual authorisation payment method, as a high priority. Members were provided with a report.

In addition to this the Banking Arrangements, Investments Strategy & Investment Arrangements policy had been updated to include reference of investments being placed in CCLA or PSDF (Public Sector Deposit Fund) accounts. Members were advised of an amendment as highlighted in section 2.3 (iv) of the policy.

Members suggested some further amendments within the document.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To recommend to Town Council that the Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements policy be approved.**
 - 2. To support the upgrade to the Town Councils banking arrangements.**

12209 INTERNAL AUDIT PLANNING, REPORTING & REVIEW POLICY AND INTERNAL AUDIT SPECIFICATION

Historically this document had been presented annually at a full Council meeting. Moving forward, it was thought that this policy should be added to the Policy Review list in order that this Committee had sight of it, for comment, before being presented to Council. Members received a copy of the approved document. There had been no changes in legislation therefore, it was suggested that it remained suitable and fit for purpose. Members of this Committee were asked to consider the Internal Audit Planning, Reporting & Review Policy and Internal Audit Specification and make a recommendation to Town Council for approval.

- Resolved:** **To recommend to Town Council that the Internal Audit Planning, Reporting & Review Policy and Internal Audit Specification be approved.**

12210 WORKING SAFELY WITH CORONAVIRUS POLICY

Members received a draft policy on Working Safely with Coronavirus. This policy had been adapted from a version provided by the town councils HR consultant. It had been shared with all staff with an opportunity for staff to feedback with any comments and questions. Two questions were raised, both of these questions were referred to HR

for their advice and both staff members have confirmed they have received satisfactory responses. Members were requested, if agreeable, to recommend that this policy be presented to Town Council at the meeting to be held on the 3rd October 2022, for adoption, to allow staff to have suitable guidance in time for the Autumn/Winter season. For information, staff had also received an up-to-date risk assessment.

Members requested some amendments to be made within the policy.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Working Safely with Coronavirus Policy.

12211 MENOPAUSE POLICY

Members of this committee were requested to consider supporting the introduction of a new policy which sets out how the Town Council could support employees who were undergoing the menopause.

Members requested some amendments to be made within the policy.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Menopause Policy.

12212 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 21st September 2021.

Members received a copy of the approved document. There had been no changes in legislation therefore, 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.

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

12213 LATE PAYMENTS & BAD DEBTS POLICY

Members of this Committee were required to annually review the Town Councils Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy and make a recommendation to Town Council for its approval.

There had been no amendments made to this policy and therefore was considered suitable and fit for purpose.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council that the Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy be approved.

12214 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME: STATEMENT OF LOCAL DISCRETIONS

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

Councillor J Carroll and Councillor S Goodchild declared an interest in this item as both were in receipt of a Local Government Pension.

This item was deferred to the next meeting for consideration.

12215 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

12216 STAFFING MATTER

Members received a report that in part was presented to the Personnel Sub-Committee at the meeting held on the 11th July 2022. Members were being requested to support the next steps as detailed in the report.

Resolved: To support the next steps as set out.

12217 ONGOING STAFFING MATTER

Members received a report relating to this item.

Resolved: To agree the recommendation set out in the report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.17pm

Dated this 28th day of November 2022

Chairman

**Minutes of the meeting held on
5th September 2022 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: K Wattingham Chairman
P Burgess
S Goodchild
D Jones Substitute
T McMahon
A Slough

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Tara Earnshaw Community Development Officer
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services
David Ramsay Lead Youth Worker

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillor: Y Farrell

Also Councillor: J Carroll
present:

Absent: C Copleston

12148 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Farrell, (Cllr Jones substituted).

12149 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12150 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12151 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2022.

It was highlighted that during the last meeting, discussion was held around the consideration of Youth Services holding outreach work in Parkside. It was requested that this be included on the next Community Services Committee agenda for consideration in the next budget.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 4th July 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12152 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Events Working Group 9th June and 7th July 2022

Combating Crime Working Group 15th June and 20th July 2022

Recommendation: To receive the Minutes detailed above.

12153 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

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

Clarification was sought regarding an overspend on summer activities, it was advised that an additional coach had been booked due to the trips popularity which had affected the budget.

Clarification was sought regarding Key Partner Grants, members were reminded that once the grants for Key Partners had been agreed, they were not paid out until the next financial year.

Members requested information on whether there had been any uptake on the Bulk Waste Scheme and requested details of expenditure over the previous 4 months.

12154 REPORT FROM GROUNDWORK

Anthony Fuller, a representative from groundwork was in attendance to update members on the work completed on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council.

Members were advised that numbers had dropped over the summer holidays as expected. Detached work had been suggested to take place in Bedford Square as safeguarding concerns had arisen, however this would require further funding from Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that attendance data had been scrutinised and young people had attended from all areas within the town with some attending from Dunstable. Outreach work in Parkside had been mentioned, however members were advised that capacity and funding had presented an issue and would need to go through Central Bedfordshire Council for support and thereby funding.

12155 HRTC COMMUNITY AND YOUTH SERVICES

Members received a report for July and August on youth and community work completed.

Members were advised that many Welcome Packs had been delivered to new residents, however a capacity issue had prevented full completion of the boxes.

It was queried whether Linmere would be included in the delivery drive, it was confirmed that Linmere would be included. However, Councillor assistance was required to aid the delivery of the Welcome Packs.

Members were advised that Dementia friendly signs had been displayed around the town. Additional stickers had been purchased for residents to use in their own homes. This objective was in support of the Town Councils vision of being a Dementia friendly town.

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of inclusion and cohesion of new residents moving into Houghton Regis. It was suggested that Housing Associations had a responsibility to approach the Town Council to offer support. It was suggested that the Community Development Officer from the Linmere development be approached for support in contacting the relevant housing associations.

Houghton Regis Later Living Social Group had been enjoying monthly coffee mornings. A trip to Southend was organised and other visits were being looked into.

Concerns were raised regarding whether the Town Council was reaching all of the older members of the community with information on this group. Officers highlighted to members that the Town Crier was delivered to each household and contained information on activities of this group, it also included information on how Houghton Helpers could assist residents where needed.

Members were advised the Pop-up Café had delivered some exciting, enhanced sessions over the summer which had been well attended, sessions had been planned until March 2023.

Councillor Burgess requested that consideration be given to installing a kitchen in Parkside Pavilion. It was advised that this suggestion would be taken to the Environment and Leisure Committee.

Resolved: To note the report.

12156 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Members were advised of a national Youth Investment Fund:

This fund was to create, expand and improve youth facilities and services. It was for large capital projects over £300,000 which were deliverable by 2025. The fund was looking for projects which were a fair way down the line. It was felt that the Tithe Farm Sports Project met the criteria and as such an Expression of Interest form was submitted for £413,000 to cover the anticipated HRTC loan for this project plus £70,000 for revenue funding to support youth development work from this base location but covering Tithe Farm and Parkside wards (the fund did not cover Houghton Hall ward).

The project had now been allocated a Relationship Manager and initial discussions had gone well. The council was being encouraged to prepare a Business / Project Plan for formal submission and consideration at the end of October. This was being worked on currently by the Town Clerk, the Community Development Officer and the

Members would be kept updated.

Members requested clarification as to whether match funding was required.

Members received this report for information.

12157 CCTV SERVICE BUNDLE RENEWAL

Members were advised that the redeployable cameras required a renewal of their data bundle and warranty as the current package expired in September 2022. A quote had been received. Packages were offered for a 2, 3, 4 and 5 year period.

The cameras were around 7 years old but were fully functioning. The service company suggested that there was currently no need to replace them. However, the council may need to consider doing so in the next 5 years or so.

As members may be aware the 3G network would cease to be operational in 2023. The renewal included the upgrade to 4G. The 4G upgrade required a return of the cameras to the head office (collection from HRTC and courier fees would be subsidised by the company). At this time the cameras would receive a health test before the kit was returned.

The Service Bundle provided the cameras data allowance, enabling the viewing of live video and downloadable recorded footage. The Bundle also included a comprehensive dedicated tech support team providing services such as additional training for new team members, remote tech support to resolve small faults and set up assistance whilst redeploying the cameras. If any of the cameras had an unexpected fault that could not be resolved remotely the camera would be collected, a full engineer assessment carried out, necessary repairs made and then it would be returned. A new replacement camera would be sent if the fault could not be fixed. This service was included for the duration of the service bundle.

For a 2 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £4948 (equating to £824 per year per camera)

For a 3 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £6834 (equating to £759 per year per camera).

For a 4 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £8448 (equating to £704 per year per camera).

For a 5 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £9492 (equating to £632 per year per camera).

The costs were payable in full and upfront. However, cost would be shown over the time span of the bundle. Members were advised that there was £2000 allocated in the 2022/23 budget to cover this annual expense.

Members were advised that the cameras were purchased as follows: 2 in 2015 and 1 in 2016. The lifespan of a camera was 7 - 10 years.

It was suggested that the 5 year service bundle be purchased as the cost per camera per year was substantially lower than the other service bundles and fit within the budgeted amount.

It was likely that the council may need to consider replacing all cameras at the end of this period.

Members were advised that there had been an error in regard to the figure presented on the proposed recommendation on the agenda. The Community Development Officer confirmed the figure of £9,492 was the correct figure, not the figure as stated.

Members discussed the merits of committing to a 5 year service contract however, they requested confirmation be obtained prior to moving any further forward in regard to weight compatibility with the new style lamp posts and whether the service bundle was transferable.

Resolved: To purchase a 5 year service bundle at a cost of £9,492 subject to suitable negotiations.

12158 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EXTENSIONS

At the previous committee meeting members considered options for extending the Christmas lights display for 2022 and onwards.

Members were reminded that £2,154 remained in the Capital budget for new lights in 2022/23.

Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.16pm

Dated this 7th day of November 2022

Chairman

**Minutes of the meeting held on
26th September 2022 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: A Slough Chairman
P Burgess
Y Farrell
D Jones Substitute
T McMahon
R Morgan
S Thorne

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: E Cooper

Also present: Councillor: J Carroll

12159 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Cooper (Cllr Jones substituted).

12160 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12161 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12162 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2022.

An amendment was made to minute number 12068 to read:

*No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor Farrell was duly appointed as **Vice-Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2022 - 2023.***

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 13th June 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12163 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Allotments Working Group

12th July 2022

Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above.

12164 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

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

It was queried why accounts information had not been received for some time, members were advised that the Corporate Services Committee had agreed two councillors would receive the accounts for approval, however, the full list of accounts would remain available with Corporate Services agendas.

12165 TITHE FARM ALL WEATHER UPDATE

Members received a report which provided an update on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Members were advised there had been a delay due to the discharging of SuDS (sustainable drainage systems) pre-commencement condition, which had now been discharged, and the highways condition was in the process of being discharged as queries raised had been responded to. Members were advised that a Relationship Manager had been appointed.

Members requested sight of the preliminary plans for the site.

Resolved: To approve the conceptional ideas for pedestrian and cycle links between Linnere and Tithe Farm Recreation Ground and for this additional work to be taken forward.

12166 ANNUAL PLAYGROUND INSPECTION

Members were provided with the outcomes of the annual play area inspection.

Members were updated on the repair progress of the recent accident site on the Village Green, it was expected that repairs would be carried out within the next few weeks, however, the play area had seen some vandalism since the area had been cordoned off.

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

12167 MEMORIAL BENCH, HOUGHTON REGIS CEMETERY

Members were requested to consider a bespoke bench for the Cemetery at the request of a local family.

Members were advised that the final design would be chosen by the family from a pre-designated selection.

Resolved: In light of the special circumstances, to permit on this occasion a bespoke bench to be installed in Houghton Regis Cemetery.

12168 BIDWELL WEST - COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION OPEN SPACE

Members were provided with detail and options around the potential future management of the Bidwell West Countryside recreation open space.

Members discussed the maintenance impact once adopted by Houghton Regis Town Council, it was suggested that it would be fairly low impacting due the natural nature of the site once initial works had been completed.

Resolved: To confirm to CBC that the Town Council would welcome the transfer of plot AA as shown on drawing 5331/OSP/ASP09.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.43pm

Dated this 14th day of November 2022.

Chairman

**Planning Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
27th September 2022 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: J Carroll
Y Farrell Substitute
D Jones
R Morgan Substitute
S Thorne

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: M S Kennedy
E Cooper
S Goodchild
C Slough

Also present: Councillor: T McMahon Virtual Attendance

12169 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Kennedy, Cllr C Slough, Cllr Cooper (Cllr Morgan substituted) and Cllr Goodchild (Cllr Farrell substituted).

12170 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12171 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12172 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 30th August 2022.

Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th August 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12173 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

- CB/22/03245/ADV Advertisement: One illuminated fascia sign and two non-illuminated fascia signs.
Units 2&3, All Saints View, High Street, Houghton Regis, LU5 5LQ
For: D Kemp
- Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**
- CB/22/03323/FULL Single storey rear extension.
3 Holyrood Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FW
For: Karol Dujczynski
- Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application.**
- CB/22/03307/LDCP Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: To access drive over verge green space.
57 Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HD
For: Mrs J Bunting
- Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objected to this application on the grounds of:**
Loss of amenity land.
However, if Central Bedfordshire Council approved this application, it was requested that Grasscrete be used to preserve a proportion of the amenity land aesthetics.
- CB/22/03176/FULL Erection of a new detached dwelling and associated parking
8 Farriers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FG
For: Mr S Reilly
- Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objected to this application on the grounds of:**
That the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of those residents adjacent to this site at 21 Millers Way.
Overdevelopment.
The close proximity of the proposed flank wall would appear overbearing to those residents at 21 Millers Way.
Houghton Regis Town Council understands that this site, when the land around it was first developed, was left vacant due to the substantial change in ground levels and was not included for development to avoid the impact on the area.
- CB/22/03352/REG3 Construction of 12 new parking spaces as a provision to replace spaces lost due to the construction of the new entrance road for the new Houghton School.
Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, Parkside Drive, LU5 5PX

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

CB/22/03510/FULL Resubmission of CB/22/02733/FULL - Single storey rear extension to 23 & 25 Arnald Way and garage conversion to 25 Arnald Way
23 and 25 Arnald Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5UN
For: Mr M Young and Mrs S Dovey

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

CB/22/03615/FULL Proposed single storey rear extension to replace conservatory 29 Sundon Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LL
For: Mr & Mrs Robson

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council had no objections to this application, however, as this proposed development was located in the conservation area the Town Council wished assurance that suitable materials would be used, that would complement and blend in with the area.

CB/22/03649/FULL Proposed single storey glass orangery extension.
100 Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5QN
For: Mr Lajthjia

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

Noted:

CB/22/03413/DOC Discharge of Condition 16 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, Houghton Regis

CB/22/03398/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/20/00626/RM (Reserved Matters: Following Outline Application CB/15/00297/OUT 'hybrid' planning application with details of main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage in detail only and layout in outline with details of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: Up to 1,850 residential (C3) dwellings (including affordable housing), 2FE Primary School (D1), employment land (Use Classes

- B1 [a-c], B2 & B8), local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and community/leisure uses (D1 & D2), layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms, natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthwork's. Reserved matters sought relating to matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the construction of 109 no. dwellings)). Amendment sought: Change to affordable housing plan to facilitate a like-for-like switch of tenures of Plots 59 & 60
Parcel 1, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis
- CB/22/03518/DOC Discharge of Conditions 9 & 11 against planning permission CB/18/04471/FULL: 48 new residential units.
Oakwell Park, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JH
- CB/22/03504/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/21/00382/FULL (Construction of 9 residential dwellings and all ancillary works). Changing the facing brick type. The previously approved brick type is not available
The Orchard, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JJ
- CB/22/03643/GPDE Prior Notification of Householder Extension: Single storey rear extension, 4.50m beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling, maximum height of 3.00m & 2.85m to the eaves.
89 Hillborough Crescent, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5NY

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

12174 DRAFT ON-STREET PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Members were informed that Central Bedfordshire Council had begun a six-week consultation on their Draft On-street Parking Management Strategy. The consultation began on Friday 12th August 2022, with the deadline for comments being 10am on Monday 26th September 2022.

The On-street Parking Management Strategy was one of the strategy documents that would form part of Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) for Central Bedfordshire. The

Local Transport Plan set out the overarching strategy for managing transport in Central Bedfordshire. It identified local transport priorities and set out a framework for directing future investment. The On-street Parking Management Strategy was the first of a suite of sub-documents of LTP4 that would be developed to replace the Car Parking Strategy (2011) and the Interim Parking Management Strategy (2018). Members were reminded information had already been provided and that this item was deferred from the last meeting of this committee.

Members were advised that contact had been made with Central Bedfordshire Council in regard to a request for a slight extension for receipt of comments.

Members were advised that an extension had been issued and the consultation was due to end on 3rd October 2022.

Members welcomed the consultation element of the Street Parking Management Strategy and felt it was appropriate for Houghton Regis Town Council to be included as part of the strategy.

12175 **A00335 PLAITERS WAY, DISABLED BAY PARKING CONSULTATION**

Members were advised that Central Bedfordshire Council were proposing to introduce and remove disabled parking bays on Plaiters Way, Houghton Regis.

Members received the public notice and plan.

Members were informed that an extension to the date for comments to be received had been requested.

Members felt that no comments regarding the Disabled Bay parking consultation were necessary.

12176 **BEECHWOODS SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION ZONE OF INFLUENCE**

Members were provided with a link for the most up to date information in regard to Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Zone of Influence.

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/44/planning/1144/important_information_regarding_current_and_proposed_residential_proposals_in_southern_central_bedsfordshire

Members received this report for information.

12177 **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 7.46pm

Dated this 10th day of October 2022.

Chairman

**Planning Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
10th October 2022 at 7.00pm**

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

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

Apologies: M Kennedy

Also Councillors: T McMahan
present:

12218 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor M Kennedy.

12219 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12220 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12221 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 27th September 2022.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 27th September 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12222 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/22/03745/FULL Single storey front extension
26 Longbrooke, Houghton Regis, LU5 5QX
For: Mr McCarthy

Comments: The Town Council made no objections.

CB/22/03703/FULL Proposed two storey side and single storey front extension.
21 Grangeway, Houghton Regis, LU5 5PR
For: Mr M Walcott

Comments: The Town Council made no objections.

CB/22/03854/ADV Advertisement: 1No. front building mounted sign, 1No.
rear illuminated building mounted sign and 1No. free
standing illuminated entrance sign.
Unit 1, Foster Avenue, Dunstable, LU5 5TA
For: Siemens Healthineers UK

Comments: The Town Council made no objections.

CB/22/02941/FULL Proposed Front porch
24 Drury Lane, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5ED
For: Mrs M Illiso

Comments: The Town Council made no objections.

CB/22/03223/FULL Part single storey and part two storey rear extension (part
retrospective)
5 Dell Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HT
*Members were advised that amendments to this
application had been received in respect of Revised
Proposal/ Description*

Comments: The Town Council made no objections.

The following applications were noted:

CB/22/03852/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission
CB/20/04715/FULL (Demolition of existing building and
construction of a two storey manufacturing facility (Use
Class B2) and associated works). Amendment sought to the
site layout
Unit 1, Foster Avenue, Dunstable, LU5 5TA

CB/22/03857/DOC Discharge of Condition 11 against planning permission
CB/20/04715/FULL (Demolition of existing building and
construction of a two storey manufacturing facility (Use
Class B2) and associated works).
Unit 1, Foster Avenue, Dunstable, LU5 5TA

- CB/22/03787/DOC Discharge of Condition 15 against planning permission CB/15/00297/OUT (Outline 'hybrid' planning application with details of main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage in detail only and layout in outline with details of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: Up to 1,850 residential (C3) dwellings (including affordable housing), 2FE Primary School (D1), employment land (Use Classes B1 [a-c], B2 & B8), local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and community/leisure uses (D1/D2), layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms, natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthworks)
1 Airedale Gardens, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6TN
- CB/22/03788/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 is omission of chimneys on plots 22, 23, 11, 12, 39, 40 and 146. Parcels 5a and 5b, Bidwell West, Houghton Regis, LU5 6JQ
- CB/22/03793/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/21/04839/DOC (Discharge of Conditions 1 and 2 against planning permission CB/21/02108/RM: Reserved Matters: following Outline Application 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, A4, A5; B1,B2, B8; C1, C2, D1 and D2; 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; All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans): All matters reserved, Erection of 154 dwelling units, with access and parking, landscaping and associated works. The Outline Application was EIA Development and was accompanied by an Environmental Statement) - Brick type changed from Ibstock Bexhill Red to Ibstock Reigate Medium for Plots: 259, 260 and 261
Dunstable Northern Bypass, Chalton, Houghton Regis, LU5 6JJ

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

**12223 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN
UPDATE/PROGRESS**

Woodside Link No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link No substantive update to report.

All Saints View No substantive update to report.

Linmere 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 7.25pm.

Dated this 31st day of October 2022

Chairman

**Planning Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
31st October 2022 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: M S Kennedy Chairman
J Carroll
S Goodchild
D Jones
R Morgan Substitute
S Thorne
C Slough

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillor: E Cooper

Also present: Councillor: T McMahan

12224 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

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

12225 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12226 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12227 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th October 2022.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2022
and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

12228 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/22/03853/FULL Erection of a single storey glass orangery extension
La Bella Calabria, 100 Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis,
LU5 5QN
For: Mr O Lajthjia

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

CB/22/03782/FULL Retrospective planning permission for change of use from amenity land to a residential, gravel parking area to the rear 2 Farriers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FG
For: Mr R Machado

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

**Impairment of visual amenity of the area
Detrimental impact on the highway from surface material as proposed i.e. gravel parking**

CB/22/03639/FULL Proposed part single storey extension and changes to the main house entrance
14 Northview Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5AH
For: Mr & Mrs Wolak

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

CB/22/04077/FULL Single storey side extension, and garage conversion.
165 Conway Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5SD
For: Mr J Cummings

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

Noted:

CB/22/03902/NMA Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/21/05575/REG3 (Development of a new leisure centre, incorporating landscaping and parking provisions. Demolition of the existing building and the construction of a new facility to include an eight-lane 25 metre community swimming pool, dedicated learner pool, confidence pool, fitness suite, exercise studio and two squash courts. Building to include a café, community space, creche, children's outdoor play zone and an outdoor fitness trail and public area). Amendment to west elevation window and east elevation external fire door.
Land currently known as Houghton Regis Academy Kingsland Campus Parkside Drive Houghton Regis LU5 5PX

CB/22/03984/DOC Discharge of Condition 34 against Planning Permission CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8

(offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans)

Houghton Regis North1 , Sundon Road, Houghton Regis, LU5 5GX

CB/22/03965/DOC Discharge of Conditions 3,10,18 against planning permission CB/21/3860/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. Condition 3 - materials. Condition 10 - EV charging strategy. Condition 18 - landscaping.
Tithe Farm Recreation Ground, Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, LU5 5JF

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

CB/21/00441/FULL Erection of 7 no. dwellings with associated works
Land to the south of The Bungalow, Bedford Road, Bidwell

CB/22/01234/FULL Construction and relocation of fence to abut pathway
67 Grangeway, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5PR

Withdrawals:

CB/22/03307/LDCP Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: To access drive
over verge green space.
57 Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HD

12229 CB/22/01953 DECKED CAR PARK TO THE NORTH OF PORZ AVENUE, HOUGHTON HALL PARK

Further to the objection from Houghton Regis Town Council to the above application, Central Bedfordshire Council were moving towards issuing a decision on the above application.

Attached, for members consideration, were the relevant sections of the Case Officer Report and the advised conditions to address the concerns raised.

The Case Officer requested members review this document and the reasoning behind the decision and confirm if the advised conditions would be sufficient in dealing with the Town Council

The application had been considered in consultation with the Central Bedfordshire conditions.

Members discussed this matter at length and agreed that although the Town Council, in principle, was not opposed to this development, it was agreed that their objection of the proposed development having a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area still remained.

and how the report indicated that the vans would project only a small amount above the significant tree coverage, directly to the north of the car park, this however did not satisfy the Town Councils objections.

Members agreed for Cllr Carroll to attend the DMC to speak on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council on this application.

Members voted in favour of objecting to this application. A recorded vote was requested:

Members in favour of objecting: Cllrs J Carroll, C Slough, S Goodchild, R Morgan and M Kennedy .

Members against objecting: Cllrs S Thorne and D Jones.

Resolved: To confirm to Central Bedfordshire Council the Town Council response to the proposed conditions on this application

12230 EXPERIMENTAL WAITING RESTRICTIONS ON PARK AVENUE, HOUGHTON REGIS - A00353

Members were informed that Central Bedfordshire Council proposed to introduce experimental waiting restrictions on Park Avenue, Houghton Regis and received a copy of the notice and plan.

Members were reminded that comments should be received by Central Bedfordshire Council by the 9th November 2022.

The Town Council had no objections to this application.

Resolved: To consider the Town Councils response to the proposed experimental waiting restrictions on Park Avenue, Houghton Regis

12231 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SITES/LOCAL PLAN UPDATE/PROGRESS

Woodside Link No substantive update to report.

A5 M1 Link No substantive update to report.

All Saints View No substantive update to report.

Linmere 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 7.50pm

Dated this 21st day of November 2022

Chairman

**Planning Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
21st November 2022 at 7.00pm**

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

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: M S Kennedy

Also present: Councillor: T McMahon Virtual Attendance

12249 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Kennedy.

12250 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12251 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12252 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 31st October 2022.

**Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2022
and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

12253 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/22/04024/LB Listed Building: Conversion of a listed barn into a detached dwelling including removal of dilapidated single-storey side addition.
Red Cow Farm Cottage, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis,
LU5 6JP
For: J&D 2012 Ltd

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objected to this application for the following reason:

- 1) Loss of trees that would otherwise compliment the setting of a Listed Building. The Town Council wishes to lend its support to the Ecology Officers findings and report.**

CB/22/03938/FULL Demolition of existing barn and garage, provision of a garage to the existing Listed building, conversion of Listed barn into a dwelling and construction of eight new dwellings with associated garages and new access road.
Red Cow Farm Cottage, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JP
For: J&D 2012 Ltd

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

- 1) Overdevelopment.**
- 2) The proposed layout does not compliment the setting of Red Cow Farm Cottage**
- 3) Proposed loss of the hedgerow to allow access to Plot 1. The ongoing infill developments along Bedford Road have already had an impact to the character of Bidwell, any further loss cannot be supported.**
- 4) Concern of highway safety for vehicles accessing and exiting plot 1.**
- 5) Concern of pedestrian safety when crossing the access road to plot 1 due to reduced visibility.**
- 6) Concerns over the loss of mature trees and the associated loss of their ecological benefit on the site. The Town Council wishes to lend its support to the Ecology Officers findings and report.**
- 7) Loss of trees that would otherwise compliment the setting of Listed Buildings.**

CB/22/03724/RM Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/15/00297/OUT (Outline 'hybrid' planning application with details of main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage in detail only and layout in outline with details of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: Up to 1,850 residential (C3) dwellings (including affordable housing), 2FE Primary School (D1), employment land (Use Classes B1 [a-c], B2 & B8), local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and community/leisure uses (D1 & D2), layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms, natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthworks). Reserved Matters for approval of public art works.
Land West of Bidwell, Houghton Regis North Site 2, Houghton Regis
For: Isaac Mercer Ltd

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

CB/22/04218/LB Listed Building: Erection of illuminated and non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building.
The Crown, East End, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LB
For: Stonegate Group

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

CB/TRE/22/00606 Works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders 04/1980 and 01/2014: Fell Ash Tree (T5) and Horse Chestnut monolith (T12). Works to Lime tree (T6), Beech tree (T7), Lime tree (T8), Sycamore (T9) and Horse Chestnut (T10). These trees fall in Part of G1, G2 and G3 and listed as T4 of TPO 4/1980. Works to Beech (T1) and Sycamore (T4), these trees are listed as T5 and T7 in TPO 01/2014.
Land North of Tennyson Avenue Between 97 And 119, Tennyson Avenue, Houghton Regis

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council objected to this application as it was felt the documents were incomplete due to the lack of a replanting scheme and no reasons given, for these works, other than duty of care.

Noted:

CB/22/04152/DOC Discharge of Condition 17 against planning permission CB/20/01537/FULL: Erection of a mixed use Local Centre - Drainage Maintenance Report.
Land west of Bidwell, Houghton Regis LU5 6JQQ

CB/22/04289/LDCP Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Proposed rear loft conversion and dormer extension
Woodstock, Queen Street, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5BT

CB/22/04254/DOC Discharge of Conditions 7,8,10 and 16 against planning permission CB/22/0545/FULL Development of a single industrial warehouse unit for E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 use with ancillary offices, car parking, service areas and soft landscaping - Cond 7 Electric Vehicle Charge Management Plan, Cond 8 Landscape Maintenance Scheme, Cond 10 Arboricultural Method Statement and Cond 16 Surface Water Drainage Works
Unit 15 Humphrys Road, Dunstable, LU5 4TP

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

CB/22/01876/FULL Replacement front garden wall, 2.1m in height and part trellis on wall.
The Gables, East End, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LA

Members expressed their disappointment at CB/22/01876/FULL having been granted as this was not in keeping with the aesthetics of the area. Members also requested that this item be placed on the agenda for the meeting to be held on the 30th January 2023 in order that the Town Council could be satisfied that a landscaping scheme to include all hard and soft landscaping and a scheme for landscape maintenance for a period of five years following the implementation of the landscaping scheme had been received by the Planning Authority, as per Condition 2 of the Decision Notice.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

12254 CONSULTATION DRAFT PARKING STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Members were informed that an eight-week consultation on the Parking Standards for New Developments Supplementary Planning Document began on Tuesday 8th November 2022, with the deadline for comments being 10am on Thursday 5th January 2023.

Members were in support of this strategy.

Members requested that contact be made with the Strategic Transport Team at Central Bedfordshire Council to ascertain whether current outline planning applications, which have already been granted permission, would need to comply with this strategy when submitting their Reserved Matters applications.

Resolved: To support Central Bedfordshire Councils draft Parking Standards for New Developments Supplementary Planning Document consultation

12255 PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON PARKSIDE DRIVE, HOUGHTON REGIS A00357 & A00357C

Members were advised that Central Bedfordshire Council proposed to construct four sets of road humps on Parkside Drive and to install a raised zebra crossing on Parkside Drive and a raised crossing to the access road to Kingsland Skills and Enterprise Centre. These proposals were part of a wider scheme to reduce traffic speeds and create a safer environment for all road users.

Members requested it be noted that they were in favour of the proposed measures.

Resolved: To support the various proposed traffic calming measures on Parkside Drive

12256 NOTICE OF APPEAL DECISION 4 TOWNSEND TERRACE

For information Members received a notice of an appeal decision at 4 Townsend Terrace, Houghton Regis.

Members were advised that the applicant had addressed issues raised by the Planning Officer, however, the application was now refused on the grounds of the Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation - Zone of Influence.

12257 NOTICE OF APPEAL DECISION LAND OFF BOSCOMBE ROAD-PORZ AVENUE

For information members received a notice of an appeal decision at Land off Boscombe Road Porz Avenue, Houghton Regis.

Members received this report for information and noted the content.

12258 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 8.03pm

Dated this 12th day of December 2022.

Chairman

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET
ON 26th April 2022**

Present: Town Cllrs: D Jones (Chair), T McMahon, K Wattingham, M Kennedy
 CBC Cllrs: Cllr Hamill (Vice-Chair), Y Farrell, S Goodchild
 Co-opted D Gibbons
 member:

 CBC S Hughes, Community Engagement Manager
 Officers:
 HRTC C Evans, Town Clerk
 Officers: L Senior, Head of Democratic Services

Also in attendance: HRTC Cllr E Cooper
 CBC Cllr T Stock, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing, Communities
 and Leisure
 G Croxford, Community Engagement Manager, BRCC
 B McBrearty, Community Connections Advisor, BRCC
 I Berry, Assistant Director Assets, CBC
 J Dickinson, Head of Leisure, CBC
 Representative, Land Improvement Holdings

Apologies: CBC Cllr A Ryan
 J Yeomans, Head of Housing Property, Housing Services, CBC

Members of the public: 5

945 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from CBC Cllr A Ryan and J Yeomans, Head of Housing Property, Housing Service, CBC.

946 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

An update was requested on where Central Bedfordshire Council was with the land assessments and investigations on Windsor Drive.

Representatives of CBC were asked:

What impact had there been on the recent Decorum Council temporary halt on any Development in the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Zone of Influence upon CBC planning applications?

What were the timescales to have the new strategy in place?

What impact would this have on the CBC planning and timescales for Windsor Drive?

A member of the Recycled Teenagers Group, raised concerns over the equipment that had been in storage at the centre, which was now unavailable to the group. A survey had been completed and alternative venues had been offered, however, these were deemed unsuitable.

947 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr McMahon declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 as a former member of Craft and Coffee who had equipment stored in the library.

Cllr Wattingham declared an interest in the Memorial Hall as this had been mentioned as one of the unsuitable venues suggested for the Recycled Teenagers.

Cllr Farrell declared an interest in the Memorial Hall as this had been mentioned as one of the unsuitable venues suggested for the Recycled Teenagers.

948 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2022.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

949 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 Time 2 Connect continued to grow in Houghton Regis, it was open 5 days per week in the Cedar Room in Houghton Hall Park.

The weekly Café Connect was run on Tuesday afternoons enabling people to meet in a relaxed environment. A live sing-a-long session had been offered, with the intention of offering further sessions.

Members were advised a new directory of local services had been created for the wider community which could be viewed on the Time2Connect website:

<https://time2connect.org.uk/>

Members were advised that funding was due to end in 2023, however, they were confident that the budget would allow a continuation for a further few months.

Members expressed their preference for this service to continue for as long as possible.

950 LINMERE THE FARMSTEAD

A representative from Land Improvement Holdings was in attendance at the meeting and advised members that the Farmstead was open, the hall was operational and the one of the units had been let out to a local business, with confirmed bookings for other local groups.

It was queried why the planned footpath, leading from the old part of the town to the new part, had not materialised. It was advised that this would be looked into and fed back.

951 HOUSING AND ENGAGEMENT

Members were advised there were no updates on site investigations on Windsor Drive, however, information would be sought and fed back.

Members were advised of the following:

the Red House site had been decommissioned;

the Brook was almost complete with final snagging to be completed;

Ward member visits were being arranged to The Brook, members acknowledged previous arrangements for visits had been made and subsequently cancelled due to covid site safety issues.

Members requested information on the retail outlets planned for All Saints View.

Members were advised that the 2nd phase of All Saints View would affect the residents of Clarkes Way. The Town Council would be advised of the timings of the new phase of the development.

It was requested that feasibility be looked at regarding the pavement barriers during phase 2 of the development, as the current placement had adversely affected wheelchair users by forcing the use of an alternative, much further, route. A secondary barrier was suggested to create a protected walkway.

952 CBC UPDATE REPORT

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

Community Safety

Safer Communities and Partnerships Team

The Safer Neighbourhood Team had held various community events and Officers had conducted a walkabout around Parkside.

An action day had been held with high visibility patrols around the area.

Parking Enforcement

486 visits were conducted between 15th September and 31st December 2021 which resulted in 15 PCN s issued.

Leisure, Libraries and Countryside

The Have Your Say consultation and the statutory Planning consultation had been combined into a Statement of Community Involvement which also provided a response to the consultation comments.

2nd May a submission would be made to Planning at CBC.

May - 10th June: 2nd statutory Planning consultation

10th June DMC papers published

Chalk Pit

Work continued around the management plan and to resolve ongoing issues regarding the license.

Houghton Hall Park

A large number of events for families and individuals had been planned
Work on the Parks for People project had been completed with a final evaluation report pending.

Waste Collections

Garden waste collections resumed on 28th February 2022
New dog bins had been installed at Park Road North and Parkside Drive

Tree Planting Project

This financial year the Tree Planting Project had supported over 30 projects, 17,000 trees, and over a 1km of hedgerow

ECO Schools

The Sustainability Team worked with schools across the area, including Thornhill Primary School, to support the Eco-Schools Green Flag award process.

953 BEDFORD SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Iain Berry, Assistant Director Assets was in attendance at the meeting to provide an update on the consultation results on the future use of Bedford Square Community Centre.

Members were advised of the consideration of the executive report on 8th February. It was acknowledged that residents and users of Bedford Square were unhappy with the service received and inability to book rooms, and feedback was received that residents had felt the community use of the centre was being eradicated.

It was confirmed to members that a commitment had been made to meet with Houghton Regis Town Council and the college to engage and discuss feedback.

Concerns were raised that a CBC Scrutiny Committee s decision had been ignored resulting in the loss of community use of the Bedford Square Community Centre.

Members were reminded that at the Annual Towns meeting, it had been requested that Houghton Regis Town Council submit an official complaint through Central Bedfordshire Council s complaints procedures regarding the handling of the community centre, and if necessary, requested this be escalated to the Ombudsman.

Members requested that Central Bedfordshire Council gave consideration to reversing the decision of use of Bedford Square Community Centre.

954 TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION UPDATE

Members received the agenda report as presented to the HRTC Environment & Leisure Committee on 15th November 2021.

Members were advised:

Planning

Planning permission has been secured.

Pavilion tender

The pavilion tender process has been concluded and a contractor had been appointed.

Project funding

CBC have advised that a substantial amount of additional s106 funding would be made available to this project, increasing this provision from £223,020 to £485,311.

955 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

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

Cllr Hamill advised members that he worked with CBC Cllrs and had been looking at parking schemes, Tithes Farm Road was due to be resurfaced and Drury Lane was to be resurfaced with new drainage, dates were not confirmed.

Co-opted member Mr Gibbons updated members that there had been replacement lighting agreed for under the canopies in Bedford Square.

Cllr Goodchild advised members that the Corporate Parenting Panel met on 17th February 2022, regarding Looked After Children, they received an update on Children's Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Health Passport. After a visit from Mark Riddell MBE to Central Bedfordshire Council, a suggested approach was to become a champions model, Cllr Goodchild has offered her time to support this.

A further meeting was held in April, at which the main point of focus was supporting young people in education.

Cllr Goodchild further advised members the Social Care Health and Housing met in February. The main points of discussion were the NHS vaccination programme, Primary care and proposals for an integrated care system.

Cllr Farrell acknowledged the positive work of the Community Safety Team who had been working with partners tackling crimes in the town and highlighted the encouraging impact this had had in the area.

Cllr McMahon requested that it be considered that the Town Council members work collaboratively with Central Bedfordshire Council members and share information and feedback from residents, enabling the deliverance of accurate information to residents.

956 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

Members expressed disappointment in the lack of attention to Houghton Regis in comparison to Dunstable regarding funding for road surfaces and pot-holes, it was suggested that there seemed to be a financial focus on certain towns.

Members were directed to the Highways Area Teams to address issues and receive feedback.

It was requested that Central Bedfordshire Council give consideration to providing updates on school places as to date the new school building in Bidwell West had yet to start.

957 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

Members were reminded of the possibility of seeking to co-opt local stakeholders onto the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee. In this regard the Terms of Reference for the Committee state:

Co-option

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

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

For 2021/22 Mr David Gibbons had been a co-opted member of the committee.

Members were advised that a review of co-opted members would take place at the next Town Partnership Committee meeting.

958 ITEMS REQUESTING ATTENTION BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Members had been advised of the CBC process to determine further consideration, at CBC committee level, of items and issues.

Members of this committee we
attention via the CBC Joint Committee Chair or CBC Joint Committee Vice Chair.

As such members were requested to identify and confirm if there are any requested items
n.

It was confirmed that this item would remain on future Town Partnership Committee
agendas.

It was clarified that it would be the Ward member, in the role of either Chair or Vice-Chair of this committee, to feed items through to CBC.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.00pm

Dated this 19th day of July 2022

Chairman

Houghton Regis Town Council
New Office Provisions Sub-Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
21st February 2022 at 6.00pm

Present: Cllrs: A Slough Chairman
D Jones
T McMahon
S Thorne

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

Public: 0

Also present: Cllr: Yvonne Farrell

NOP47 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Nominee: Cllr A Slough Nominated by: Cllr McMahon
Seconded by: Cllr Thorne

On being put to the vote Cllr A Slough was duly elected as Chair of New Office Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2021 2022.

NOP48 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

NOP49 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NOP50 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NOP51 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2021.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2021.

NOP52 FUTURE OFFICE PROVISION

As members were aware this Sub-Committee last met in February 2021 when it was agreed not to meet for a further 12 months, this was largely due to uncertainties in relation to the required office provision arising from changes in working practices instigated

largely by Covid-19.

In relation to office requirements some variables had been reduced:

The Council had agreed hybrid working arrangements for staff. A rota had been put in place with 3 members of staff to be in the office each day. Other members of staff may attend the office if their role required it or they needed to for personal reasons.

The government had not legislated for remote council meetings. At present all Council, committee and sub-committee meetings had to be held in person.

The council would be considering a continuance of hybrid council meetings to enable non-members and residents to attend remotely at its meeting in March. It was highlighted that there continued to be calls for legislation to change to enable virtual and hybrid meetings to take place for members of the Council, committee or sub-committees.

The following points were put forward for discussion:

Office / Home Working

The space required for office working had considerably reduced. It was suggested that 5/6 desk spaces at least be provided plus the usual circulation space and supporting facilities.

Members suggested with staff working in a hybrid capacity, it put the onus in the hands of staff, and what suited the needs of new style of working.

Council Chamber

At present the provision of a council chamber or the external use of a room was crucial to the operation of the council. The space requirements for the Chamber could be substantially reduced if meetings of full council were held off site and only committee and sub-committee meetings held in the Chamber.

Members suggested a reconfiguration of the furniture in the Chamber, with a suggestion of lighter, more movable tables that could create a smaller area for councillors, creating the capacity not to have councillors backs to members of the public.

Bedford Square Community Centre

Members may recall that this was a second option for consideration. With the current arrangements in place in this centre it was suggested that this was no longer feasible and should be disregarded as an option.

Members were advised that this facility was contractually in use during term time and as such should be dis-counted as an option.

Current Town Council Offices

Due to the recent works on the offices, in particular the replacement floor, it was considered that the current offices were suitable to continue to use in the short term at least.

Members acknowledged that with the flooring works that had been completed and the installation of a new boiler, this had given a new lease of life to the building. It was

highlighted that the current building benefitted from being a freehold property, as such, there would be a reluctance to switch to a leasehold property.

Summary

The most viable option going forwards was to look to redevelop on the current site or to continue to upkeep the current building. It was possible to reduce the size requirements of a new building due to hybrid working which would make the project more affordable.

Members acknowledged that the current building's suitability could continue with some interior layout changes, it was also acknowledged that with the predicted growth in the town, it may be more prudent to wait to see what new developments in the town bring forward as alternative options.

It was agreed that thought would be given to internal alterations to provide a more user friendly Chamber once the March Town Council meeting had been held.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.33pm

Dated this 27th Day of June 2022.

Chairman

Houghton Regis Town Council
New Cemetery Sub-Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
18th July 2022 at 6.00pm

Present:	Cllrs:	S Thorne J Carroll Y Farrell D Jones A Slough	Chairman Substitute
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
Apologies:	Cllrs:	M Kennedy R Morgan	
Also present:	Cllrs:	S Goodchild T McMahan	

NC141 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Members were invited to elect a Chairman for the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for 2022/23.

Nomination:	S Thorne	Nominated by:	J Carroll
		Seconded by:	D Jones

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor Thorne was duly appointed as Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2022 - 2023.

NC142 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Members were invited to elect a Vice-Chairman for the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for 2022/23.

Nomination:	J Carroll	Nominated by:	S Thorne
		Seconded by:	D Jones

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor Carroll was duly appointed as Vice-Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2022 - 2023.

NC143 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Kennedy and Cllr Morgan (Cllr Jones substituted for Cllr Morgan).

NC144 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NC145 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NC146 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2021.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2021.

NC147 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received the Terms of Reference which related to this committee.

Members received this report for information.

NC148 GRENDALL LANE - UPDATE

Mr Darryl Kelly, CDS, was in attendance at the meeting to present his findings to members and to respond to any queries made.

Members received data evidencing the interim results of the 12-month groundwater monitoring and a report from CDS explaining the data and its implications.

Members were advised of different options available to enable the land to be used as a cemetery in response to the results of the groundwater monitoring:

- De-watering
- Land raising
- Retaining walls over the site
- Alternative land

Members were advised de-watering, the artificial lowering of the water table, could prove costly and would remain subject to planning approval, without any guarantee of permission being granted. Consent would be needed to discharge the water away from the site, several levels of water treatments would be necessary to remove the water from the site due to the water being deemed as contaminated. A Permit would be required for each of the water treatments. The potential cost of this process could be £1 1.5m.

Members were advised that land raising would need to use soil that was guaranteed to be clean and contamination free in line with CL:AIRE protocols. Members were advised that soil could be obtained via several avenues, the most cost effective of which would be from developers needing to remove soil from their construction site. It was also suggested that the CL:AIRE website had donor sites which offered soil, otherwise clean soil would need to be bought in. Members were advised CL:AIRE clean soil could be moved without a permit. It was suggested that this option would also cost around £1m to deliver and may be less favourable in planning terms.

Members were advised that using retaining walls would limit the use of parts of the land as the site could not be used in its entirety. The land would be cut in and benched forming burial space, this would need further topographical assessment and structural design at a cost of around £4,225 in addition to Environmental Agency fees.

Members were advised that archives could be searched for parcels of land which could be acquired, however, the cost of purchasing such land could prove cost prohibitive as development in the area was extensive, thus, the value expectation of the landowner would be at a premium, in line with developers affordability.

An alternative motion was proposed by: Cllr Slough seconded by: Cllr Carroll to read:

In the absence of alternative land availability, progress with the topographical survey and structural design work. Once completed, present the findings to Central Bedfordshire Council and the Environmental agency for their feedback.

Members in favour: 2

Members against: 2

Abstentions: 1

The casting vote was against the motion, accordingly the motion was not carried.

The officer recommendation was proposed by: Cllr Carroll seconded by: Cllr Jones

A recorded vote was requested:

Members in favour: Cllrs: J Carroll, D Jones, Y Farrell, S Thorne.

Members against: Cllrs: A Slough

Accordingly, the officer recommendations were carried.

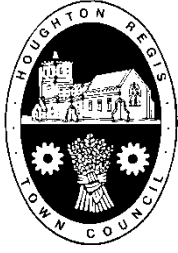
- Resolved:**
- 1. To recognise the significant works that are likely to be required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time that these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and as such further investigations into this site will cease;**
 - 2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council, as landowner, of this position;**
 - 3. To continue to search for alternative sites and to present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the council.**

Cllr Carroll informed members of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee that he resigned from this sub-committee with immediate effect.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.03pm

Dated this day of

Chairman



Date: 19th December 2022

Title: CIVILITY & RESPECT PROJECT

Purpose of the Report: To advise members of the national Civility & Respect Project.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To take the Civility & Respect pledge as follows:

By signing the Pledge, Houghton Regis Town Council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

- Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff**
- Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors**
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy**
- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise**
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens**
- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the Local Council Award Scheme**
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate**

2. BACKGROUND

Following concerns regarding the impact of bullying, harassment and intimidation on the effectiveness of parish councils, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) along with the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and One Voice Wales (OVW) set up the Civility and Respect Project in Autumn 2021.

The overarching aim of the Project is to put civility and respect at the heart of public life.

A Civility and Respect working group has identified six project workstreams encompassing training, governance, intervention, legislation, collaboration and enabling.

The working group has also produced a range of resources which are available to local councils including template policies, newsletters and podcasts.

In summer 2022 a comprehensive training programme was launched, with webinars covering topics such as personal resilience and self-protection, code of conduct, challenging people, understanding psychopathic and narcissistic behaviour. Feedback from staff who attended the training has been very positive. The training was offered to members.

NALC and the SLCC are actively encouraging local councils to take the civility and respect pledge to demonstrate commitment to improving behaviour by driving forward positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Civility and Respect pledge sets out that:

By signing the Pledge, your council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

- Has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff

- Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors

- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy

- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise

- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens

- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the Local Council Award Scheme

- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

A video regarding taking the pledge can be viewed at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ebcRIUQAGc>

More information can be found here: [Civility and Respect Project \(nalc.gov.uk\)](https://www.nalc.gov.uk)

To date 737 local councils have signed the pledge and these are mapped on the NALC website.

The following adopted policies
compliance with the pledge requirements:

Code of Conduct adopted 3rd October 2022
Standing Orders adopted 18th May 2022
Financial Regulations adopted 18th May 2022
Committee Functions & Terms of Reference adopted 18th May 2022
Officer Member Protocol adopted 4th October 2021
Equality & Diversity Policy adopted 5th October 2020
Training Statement of Intent adopted 23rd March 2020
Bullying & Harassment at Work adopted 14th December 2020 (equivalent to a
Dignity at Work policy)

4. COUNCIL VISION

Aspirations

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

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

To register the councils endorsement of the pledge on the national database
To notify CBC of the councils endorsement of the pledge through the
Partnership committee
To seek to provide training to staff and councillors on civility & respect after
the election in May 2023.

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 endorsement of the pledge and compliance will protect the
reputation of the council

Equalities Implications

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

This project / issue does not discriminate.

Climate Change Implications

Such as:

There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations

Press Contact

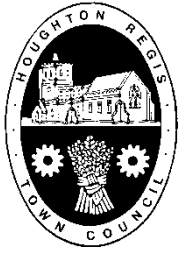
The decision relating to this agenda item should be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This is a significant piece of joint working designed to support the sector as a whole. Members are encouraged to approve the signing of the Pledge to show local support for this national project.

7. APPENDICES

None



Date:	19th December 2022
Title:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy report
Purpose of the Report:	To provide to members with information in order to update the Town Councils current Equality and Diversity Policy.
Contact Officer:	Debbie Marsh, Corporate Services Manager

1. RECOMMENDATION

To consider and adopt the Town Councils Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

2. BACKGROUND

The public sector Equality Duty came into force across Great Britain on 5th April 2011.

This meant that public bodies, which included Town and Parish Councils, had to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. The Town Council first adopted its Equality and Diversity Policy, Appendix A, on the 28th November 2011.

Although this policy is still considered suitable, members may wish to consider the attached new policy, as at Appendix B, as an opportunity to go one step further than a basic equal opportunity policy (which reflects compliance with the law) by positively encouraging a more diverse workforce.

A draft policy has been adapted from a version provided by the Town Councils HR provider.

3. INFORMATION

Equality

Equality in the workplace means equal job opportunities and fairness for employees and job applicants.

People must not be treated unfairly because of reasons protected by discrimination law ('protected characteristics').

Diversity

Diversity is the range of people employed. For example, people with different ages, religions, ethnicities, people with disabilities, and both men and women. It also means valuing those differences.

Inclusion

An inclusive workplace means everyone feels valued at work. It lets all employees feel safe to come up with different ideas, raise issues and suggestions to managers, knowing this is encouraged.

4. COUNCIL VISION

Aspirations

A2 To effectively and proactively represent our community

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

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

Staff to be provided with a copy of the policy.

Legal Implications

Adopting an Equality and Diversity Policy or Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy complies with legislation.

Prevent serious or legal issues arising, such as bullying, harassment and discrimination

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications of this report.

Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising from the recommendations

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 report does not discriminate.

Press Contact

There are no press implications.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

By law the Town Council must adopt and have in place an up to date Equality & Diversity policy.

By adopting the proposed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy shows that the Town Council is committed to employing and engaging with people who have a range of different backgrounds, experiences and ideas which could support increased creativity and in turn could lead to better problem solving and decision-making.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A Town Councils Equality & Diversity Policy

Appendix B Proposed new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



Houghton Regis Town Council

Equality and Diversity Policy

Date of Approval:	Town Council 28 th November 2011
Dates of review:	22 nd June 2015; 29 th November 2016
Dates of Re approval:	22 nd June 2015; 18 th June 2018, 5 th October 2020

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Policy**
- 3.0 Commitment to Equality and Diversity**
- 4.0 Scope of the Policy**
- 5.0 Objectives of the Policy**
- 6.0 Equality Aims**
- 7.0 Employee Responsibilities**
- 8.0 Reporting Complaints Procedures for Employees**
- 9.0 Review**

This policy applies to all members of the Town Council and is applicable to Town Councillors as volunteers.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010. The legislation covers a prescribed set of protected characteristics including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It also covers prohibited conduct including discrimination, adjustments for disabled persons, victimisation and harassment; services and public functions; premises; employment; contracts; and, advancement of equality. The latter provision specifies a public sector equality duty, which applies equally to town and parish councils.

2.0 POLICY

The Town Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. In the implementation of this policy the Town Council will:

ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction

promote diversity and equality for all staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds

promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair privilege to any individual or group

treat part time staff fairly and equally

challenge inequality and less favourable treatment wherever practicable

promote greater participation of under-represented groups of staff by encouraging positive action to address inequality

promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds in relation to all offices or meetings.

The task of promoting social inclusion, tackling discrimination and encouraging equal opportunities are key issues for Houghton Regis Town Council and the Council is committed to:

eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 advancing equality of opportunity between different groups
 fostering good relations between different groups

3.0 COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Town Council is committed to Equality and Diversity and to the vision of improving the quality of life for local people.

The Town Council aims to be:

Accessible
Accountable
Fair
Inclusive
Proactive
Professional
Responsible
Transparent

Houghton Regis Town Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity and valuing diversity in all aspects of its work:

- a. Through the delivery of our services to the community by ensuring that within reason, these services are accessible to all and that we fully recognise the diversity needs
- b. Through the way we recruit, employ and train our workforce to enable us to provide better services
- c. importance
of treating every individual with dignity and respect.

4.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy is designed to value diversity and to ensure equality of opportunity and access to services and that no one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of:

Race (i.e. colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality or citizenship).
Gender reassignment
Disability
Sex
Sexual orientation
Age
Religion or belief
Caring for others
Trade Union or political activities
Pregnancy and Maternity
Marriage and Civil Partnership

This list is not exhaustive.

5.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

5.1 To improve delivery, information and access to services we will:

Ensure all employees, contractors and users of our services are informed about our Equality and Diversity Policy
 Apply equal opportunities principles to work undertaken for the council by external contractors, other organisations in receipt of council funding and in work with our partners
 Rectify any elements of our work which have the potential for discrimination and prejudice.

5.2 To improve access and opportunity to employment and training we will:

Implement our Equality and Diversity Policy in our role as an employer
 Demonstrate our commitment in the way the Town Council

1. recruits and selects people
2. trains and develops people
3. recognises the abilities that individuals demonstrate
4. expects the highest standards of employee conduct and behaviour.

Not accept any form of unfair treatment, discrimination, bullying or harassment or removal of dignity by any of our employees or to any of our employees
 Review and develop procedures in the context of equality and diversity.

5.3 To promote equality and diversity with other partners we will:

Promote tolerance and respect between diverse groups and individuals
 Acknowledge and celebrate, wherever possible, the variety of lifestyles and cultures within the town
 Challenge all forms of discrimination within the Town Council and the wider community
 Support the development of communities and assist them in challenging discrimination, harassment, bullying and violence.

5.4 Responsibility and Liability

All members of staff remain personally responsible for ensuring that they act within the law. The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that staff perform their duties in a lawful manner and that proper training and support is provided accordingly. In certain circumstances the Town Council could be vicariously liable for actions carried out by staff purportedly in the
 may be personally liable if, whilst on Council
 business and despite guidance and training from the Council, they behave illegally in respect of the Equality Act 2010.

6.0 EQUALITY AIMS

6.1 Age

The Town Council shall not permit unlawful age discrimination.

6.2 Sexual Orientation

The Town Council shall not permit unlawful discrimination.

6.3 Disability

The Town Council will remove barriers to participation by disabled people, wherever possible. Staff who become disabled whilst working with the Council will be offered reasonable adjustments to enable them to continue working.

6.4 Race/Ethnic Origin

The Town Council will encourage participation of minority ethnic groups in its activities.

6.5 Religion

The Town Council respects people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and will give due regard to the needs and requirements of people who adhere to a range of cultural and religious beliefs. This will include staff needs in relation to dietary requirements, and requests for leave and facilities for religious observance.

6.6 Equal Pay

The Council is committed to equal pay in employment. It believes its male and female employees should receive equal pay for like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. In order to achieve this, the Council will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria.

7.0 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1** Employees have a duty to co-operate with the Council to make sure that this Policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination, harassment or procedure against any employee who is found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation. Serious breaches of this Equality and Diversity Policy will be treated as potential gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. Employees should also bear in mind that they can be held personally liable for any act of unlawful discrimination or harassment. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.
- 7.2** Employees must draw the attention of their Manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or suspected cases of harassment or bullying. Employees must not victimise or retaliate against an employee who has made allegations or complaints of discrimination or harassment or who has provided information about such discrimination or harassment. Such behaviour will be treated as potential disciplinary procedure.
- 7.3** The Council will also take appropriate action against any third parties or Councillors who are found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful harassment against its employees.

8.0 REPORTING COMPLAINTS Procedures for Employees

- 8.1** All allegations of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with seriously, confidentially, and speedily. The Council will not ignore or treat lightly grievances or complaints of discrimination or harassment from employees
- 8.2** If you wish to make a complaint of discrimination grievance
procedure.
- 8.3** With cases of harassment, while the Council encourages employees who believe they are being harassed or bullied to notify the offender (by words or by conduct) that his or her behaviour is unwelcome, the Council also recognises that actual or perceived power and status disparities may make such confrontation impractical. In the event that such informal direct communication is either ineffective or impractical, or the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you should follow the procedure set out below.
- 8.4** If you wish to make a complaint of harassment, whether against a fellow employee or a third party, such as a client, customer, contractor or supplier, you should follow the following steps:
1. First of all, report the incident of harassment to your Manager. If you do not wish to speak to your Line Manager, you can instead speak to an alternative Manager or to the Town Clerk. Such reports should be made promptly so that investigation may proceed, and any action taken expeditiously.
 2. All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously. The allegation will be promptly investigated and, as part of the investigatory process, you will be interviewed and asked to provide a written witness statement setting out the details of your complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained during the investigatory process to the extent that this is practical and appropriate in the circumstances. However, in order to effectively investigate an allegation, the Council must be able to determine the scope of the investigation and the individuals who should be informed of or interviewed about the allegation. For example, the identity of the complainant and the nature of the allegations must be revealed to the alleged harasser so that he or she is able to fairly respond to the allegations. The Council reserves the right to arrange for another Manager to conduct the investigation other than the Manager with whom you raised the matter.
 3. Once the investigation has been completed, you will be informed in writing of the possible. The Council is committed to taking appropriate action with respect to all complaints of harassment which are upheld. If appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser.
 4. You will not be penalised for raising a complaint, even if it is not upheld, unless your complaint was either untrue or made in bad faith.
 5. employment, the
Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that you do not have to continue working alongside him or her if you do not wish to do so. The Council will discuss the options with you.

6. If your complaint is not upheld, arrangements will be made for you and the alleged harasser to continue or resume working and to repair working relationships.

8.5 a
complaint of harassment.

8.6 Any employee who is found to have discriminated against or harassed another employee in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action under the procedure. Such behaviour may be treated as gross misconduct and could render the employee liable to summary dismissal. In addition, Managers who had knowledge that such discrimination or harassment had occurred but who had taken no action to eliminate it will procedure.

9.0 REVIEW

Review of this policy will be carried out annually by Town Council.

This policy applies to all members of the Town Council and is applicable to Town Councillors as volunteers.



Houghton Regis Town Council

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Date of Approval:	
Dates of review:	
Dates of Re approval:	

Contents

1	Purpose	3
2	Scope	3
3	Principles	4
4	Actions.....	4
5	Types of discrimination	5
5.1	Direct discrimination	5
5.2	Indirect discrimination.....	5
5.3	Discrimination by association	5
5.4	Discrimination by perception	5
5.5	Harassment	6
5.6	Victimisation	6
6	Further guidance on unlawful discrimination.....	6
7	Responsibilities.....	8
7.1	Managers' responsibility	8
7.2	Employees' responsibility	8
8	The working environment.....	8
9	Employment policies	8
10	Reasonable adjustments for those with a disability	8
11	Gender reassignment	9

12	Recruitment and promotion	9
13	Terms and conditions of employment	11
14	Training and diversity awareness	11
15	Career development, training, and redeployment	12
16	Flexible and hybrid working.....	12
17	Retirement	12
18	References	12
19	Involvement.....	12
20	Complaints.....	12
21	Monitoring performance.....	13
22	Breach of this policy.....	13
23	Related policies and documents.....	13
24	Further information.....	13

DRAFT

1 Purpose

- 1.1 We wholeheartedly support the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the recruitment and employment of our employees, as well as ensuring that it is afforded to all job applicants, councillors, residents, volunteers, contractors and suppliers.
- 1.2 Equality, diversity, and inclusion is also referred to as ED&I throughout this policy.
- 1.3 We are opposed to all forms of unfair or unlawful discrimination. We will treat all job applicants, employees, residents, volunteers, contractors and suppliers. in the same way, regardless of any protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or philosophical belief, sex or sexual orientation).
- 1.4 We seek to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in job adverts and recruitment, induction, employment, pay and benefits, training and career development (including promotions), terms and conditions of service, and also when managing any grievance or disciplinary issues. This policy can also apply to relationships with suppliers and contractors, as well as to potential employees.
- 1.5 The responsibility for observing the law and operating this policy lies with the Town Clerk but the policy can only work effectively with the support and commitment of all colleagues.
- 1.6 We believe that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect at work, and to work without fear of discrimination, bullying or harassment. We welcome diversity amongst our staff, volunteers, and visitors, recognising that individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experience can contribute a wealth of experience to achieving our objectives.
- 1.7 We will regularly review this policy to ensure its continuing compliance with relevant employment legislation and the continuing success of its implementation by:
 - ensuring there are no suspected practices in breach of this policy
 - ensuring that selection for promotion, training, work allocation etc. is carried out in a non-discriminatory manner
 - promoting a harmonious working environment and eliminating discrimination and This policy is not contractual but indicates the way we wish to address diversity in the workplace.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees. It covers all aspects of employment including job adverts, recruitment, induction, pay and benefits, terms and conditions of service, training and development, promotion, change management, grievance and disciplinary issues and ending employment.
- 2.2 It also applies to the way we manage relationships with councillors, volunteers, residents, suppliers and contractors as well as to potential employees.

3 Principles

- 3.1 All employees have a responsibility to apply good equality, diverse and inclusivity practices across our business. All employees, irrespective of their job or seniority, should familiarise themselves with this policy, and be aware of their responsibility and role in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion and in not discriminating unfairly or harassing colleagues, job applicants or ex-employees, nor encouraging others to do so or tolerating such behaviour.
- 3.2 Employees are also encouraged to challenge any unacceptable behaviour should they either witness or experience it directly. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken against any employee found guilty of unfair discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation.
- 3.3 Employees should be aware that not only are we, as the employer, liable for any cases of discrimination or harassment that occur, but individuals may also be held personally liable for their own acts and behaviour.
- 3.4 Managers are responsible for ensuring that all individuals within their team/department receive fair treatment throughout the course of their employment.
- 3.5 We will also obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as consultants, sub-contractors or agencies that they will also comply with this policy in their dealings with us and our employees.
- 3.6 We fully accept our responsibilities under current legislation, but we aim to go beyond this by:
- recognising that everyone has a right to their distinctive and diverse identity
 - understanding how ED&I can improve our ability to deliver better services
 - providing all employees with the necessary training and development they need to contribute to our goals
 - Ensuring we offer a supportive, open environment for all employees so that they can use their talents fully and where they are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, in an environment free from abuse or offensive behaviour, bullying or harassment or intimidation. This is regardless of any protected characteristic held, their social background or caring responsibilities they may have, or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect their opportunities in life.
- 3.7 We also recognise the benefits of helping our employees to lead a healthy work life balance, and that work life balance is unique to each individual.
- 3.8 Learning to work with people's differences, visible or not, enables us to work together effectively and helps us to recruit, retain and develop the best people; to fulfil our legal commitments; and to act responsibly in the communities of which we are a part.

4 Actions

- 4.1 The actions we will take to make this policy work include:

providing training and communications to raise awareness and understanding of diversity and equal opportunities issues, to show their impact on the business and individuals ensuring that decisions on recruitment, access to training and promotion are based on ability only

regularly reviewing our employment policies to ensure that people are treated fairly, equitably, and consistently with their skills and abilities

developing patterns of work which are consistent with the ability to maintain an appropriate work-life balance

reviewing working arrangements to ensure that they do not restrict the opportunity for employment or career progression of members of disadvantaged groups

monitoring the composition of our workforce to provide us with robust data to evaluate the effect of our policies

routinely monitoring all actions under the grievance and disciplinary procedures by gender, race, disability, age, and any other criteria we deem to be appropriate

providing employees who believe they have been treated in any way contrary to this policy with the opportunity to raise and resolve issues.

5 Types of discrimination

5.1 Direct discrimination

5.1.1 This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

5.2 Indirect discrimination

5.2.1 This is where the application of a provision (policy), criterion or practice (PCP) is discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic which an individual has, and:

it is (or would be) applied equally to others who do not have that characteristic

disadvantage to those who do not have the characteristic

it puts (or would put) the individual at that disadvantage

it cannot be shown that the PCP is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

5.3 Discrimination by association

5.3.1 This is discrimination against a person because they associate with someone who possesses a protected characteristic (e.g., discrimination against an employee who is not disabled themselves, but who has a disabled child).

5.4 Discrimination by perception

5.4.1 This is discrimination against a person because the discriminator perceives the person possesses that protected characteristic, even if the perception is incorrect.

5.5 Harassment

5.5.1 This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Harassment can be regarded as behaviour that is offensive, frightening or in any way distressing and it is the impact on the individual that is important. It may be intentional, obvious, or violent, but it can also be unintentional or subtle and insidious.

5.5.2 Forms of harassment can include, but not limited to:

- racial slurs
- personal insults
- derogatory jokes and banter
- offensive or insensitive messages (including email)
- isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion

- a
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- ty or transition

5.6 Victimization

5.6.1 Victimization occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have committed, or it is believed they may commit a "protected act". "Protected acts" include bringing legal proceedings related to discrimination against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer about their alleged discriminatory practices, etc.

6 Further guidance on unlawful discrimination

6.1 **Age** note that this covers people of all ages and age groups, perceived age. Age-related bands are still however permitted in the National Minimum Wage bands and when calculating statutory redundancy payments.

6.2 **Disability** - it is unlawful to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something

if these would enable the disabled person to access any services or the ability to be employed, trained, or promoted to the same extent as a non-disabled person. A disabled person is defined as:

long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-

substantial means neither minor nor trivial

long term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)

normal day-to-day activities include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People with progressive conditions, such as HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis, are covered from the point of diagnosis rather than from the point when the condition has some adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- 6.3 **Race** - this includes colour, nationality and ethnic origin. It is unlawful to treat a person less
- 6.4 **Religion or belief** this covers not only any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief but also the lack of any religion or belief. A philosophical or political belief is not covered unless it is similar to a religious belief.
- 6.5 **Sex** this covers both men and women. However, in the field of employment, a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) can be lawful if a person of a particular gender is specifically required for a job.
- 6.6 **Sexual orientation** this covers any sexual orientation, including homosexual, heterosexual and bisexual.
- 6.7 **Gender reassignment** an employee is protected from discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo a process or part of a process, are currently undergoing a process or part of a process or have undergone a process or part of a process. Furthermore, employees who choose to not undergo medical procedures when transitioning will also be protected.
- 6.8 **Part-time workers** a part-time workers are entitled to be treated on the same basis and are entitled to the same benefits, pro-rata, as their full-time colleagues.
- 6.9 **Fixed-term employees** - 'fixed-term employee' is one with a contract of employment which is due to end when a specified date is reached, a specified event does or does not happen or a specified task has been completed. It is unlawful to treat a fixed-term employee less favourably than a comparable permanent employee, unless this is objectively justifiable. The use of successive fixed term contracts for any individual is limited to four years.
- 6.10 **Equal pay** - men and women should receive equal pay for work of equal value where work is the same or rated as equivalent regardless of the hours worked.
- 6.11 **Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR)** - in very limited circumstances it will be lawful to treat people differently if it is a genuine occupational requirement that the job holder must possess a particular protected characteristic. When deciding if this applies, we will consider the nature of the work and the context in which it is carried out.

7 Responsibilities

7.1 Managers' responsibility

7.1.1 The Heads of Services have overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this policy.

7.1.2 As employers, we are liable for the actions of our employees and workers and therefore all our managers and supervisors are responsible for the successful implementation of this policy within their own departments and should take steps to ensure that people working for them understand and follow this policy.

7.2 Employees' responsibility

7.2.1 All our employees are required to comply with this policy, together with our associated policies.

7.2.2 Any employee who witnesses behaviour or decisions that seem to be contrary to this policy should challenge these or raise the issue with their Manager, the Town Clerk or the Corporate Services Manager.

8 The working environment

8.1 We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our working environment does not prevent people from taking up positions for which they are suitably qualified. This may include physical adaptations or more flexible ways of working, including home working (where appropriate and practical).

9 Employment policies

9.1 Our employment policies and procedures will be continually reviewed to ensure compliance with this policy, to reflect current best practice and to remove barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged social groups in seeking employment with us and working for us.

10 Reasonable adjustments for those with a disability

10.1 All employers have a duty to consider and make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a disabled person. These may include:

- making adjustments to premises

- re-

- transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their ability

- relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office or location

- giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation

- providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee

- supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees.

10.2 We will consider and make any other reasonable adjustment to the employment arrangements or our premises if these substantially disadvantage a disabled employee or a disabled applicant. However, a number of factors will be taken into account in deciding if it is reasonable to make any changes. These include:

- the extent to which an alteration will improve the situation for the disabled employee or applicant
- how easy it is to make the change
- the cost of the measure, both financially and in terms of the disruption it will cause our resources
- any financial or other help that may be available.

10.3 If an employee has a disability, or becomes disabled during the course of their employment, and feels that any such adjustments are appropriate, they should discuss this with their manager in the first instance.

11 Gender reassignment

11.1.1

incongruence, gender diversity or gender dysphoria, meaning they do not align to the sex they were assigned at birth. It includes someone who:

- intends to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment
- identifies that their gender is not the one assigned at birth. This is both someone who is planning, or has had medical interventions, as well as someone who does not plan or has not had medical interventions
- is non-binary, meaning they do not solely consider themselves to be male or female. They may or may not have had medical interventions to align their body with their non-binary gender identity.

11.1.2 We will support employees who inform us of their intention to transition by working with them to create their own personal transition plan. We are mindful that for someone who is transitioning, there will be many practical steps that will need considering to help them through it. We also respect that our discussions with the employee are best when they are led by the employee themselves. We support their personal choices in how they wish to manage their transition within the workplace and both the employee, and their line manager will jointly agree the support measures and practical actions that may be needed.

12 Recruitment and promotion

12.1 Our recruitment and promotion process must result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job, whether this on a full-time, part-time, casual, temporary, seasonal or contract basis. Our focus is on the skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude, and potential of individuals to do their jobs.

-
- 12.2 Our recruitment procedures are kept under review and are developed as necessary so that we can continue to encourage applications from, and the employment of people from a range of backgrounds.
- 12.3 We aim to ensure that our recruitment practices are free from unlawful discriminatory criteria. Questions relating to a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or philosophical belief, sex or sexual orientation), but also current or future family responsibilities, or unrelated criminal convictions will not form part of our selection process.
- 12.4 Job descriptions will properly reflect the responsibilities of the jobholder and person specifications will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.
- 12.5 All adverts will be carefully worded to ensure that no intent of either direct or indirect discrimination is interpreted nor is there indication of stereotyping of roles. They will normally and inclusion". When advertising a position which has traditionally been done by one sex, adverts should specify they are open to both sexes.
- 12.6 We will ensure that our job adverts encourage applications from all suitably qualified and experienced people, through either internal and/or external advertising.
- 12.7 We will provide full and fair consideration for all job applicants, based on merit and ability. All managers involved in recruitment will be trained appropriately.
- 12.8 Selection criteria and procedures are intended to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted, and treated based on their individual relevant merit, ability, and suitability for the post. Membership of an under-represented group will not influence the appointment. Shortlisting and interviewing will normally be carried out by more than one person, to minimise the risk of conscious or unconscious bias.
- 12.9 The selection process will be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels and will be fair and non-discriminatory. Interviews will be undertaken with an unbiased approach towards candidates and only questions which relate to the job, and which are non-discriminatory will be asked. Questions about marriage plans; family intentions; religious or political commitments; caring responsibilities intention to join our pension scheme or to opt out; or about any other issues which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination should not be asked.
- 12.10 Procedures for testing or assessment will be reviewed so as not to disadvantage any applicant and will be specifically related to the job and measure an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the job.

-
- 12.11 We will ensure that other opportunities such as work experience and apprenticeships that we may offer, are open to people from a wide range of backgrounds and we will work to create good education/industrial links to encourage a broad range of applicants.

13 Terms and conditions of employment

- 13.1 We will ensure that all our employment policies associated with terms and conditions of employment, are formulated, and applied in such a way as to remove/minimise any discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic or indeed any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job.

13.2 These will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no discrimination.

13.3 Employees will not be subjected to any detriment if they wish to join our pension scheme, nor will they be offered any inducement not to do so.

14 Training and diversity awareness

14.1 We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in terms of access to training to increase potential.

14.2 All employees are encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their manager on a regular basis. Opportunities for promotion and training will be communicated and made available to everyone on a fair and equal basis.

14.3 The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that part-time workers, shift or remote workers or those returning to work following a break are able to benefit from training.

14.4 It is our policy not to unfairly discriminate in the provision of training. No age limits apply for entry to training or development schemes - these are open to all employees.

14.5 We will ensure that this aim is implemented through:

- continuous review and updating of training courses and literature
- ensuring training materials are free from bias and do not discriminate, e.g., by showing minority groups or disabled people in lower skilled roles only
- ensuring promotion and transfer criteria are justifiable
- ensuring assessment criteria is transparent and unbiased
- ensuring staff conducting appraisal interviews are aware of their obligations to carry these out fairly and consistently in line with this policy.

14.6 Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to perform their jobs effectively.

14.7 Induction training will be tailored to individual needs but will in all cases include awareness of our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy and how it applies to individuals. We will then continue to take specific steps to raise awareness of ED&I throughout employment and within the business.

15 Career development, training, and redeployment

15.1 We will take all appropriate steps to ensure that all employees receive fair consideration of their training and development needs and promotion opportunities to enable them to develop their full potential within our employment.

15.2 Any employees whose circumstances change whilst employed by us (for example, who become disabled, who take family leave, or who face new caring responsibilities) will be given full support to maintain or return to a job appropriate to their experience and abilities.

16 Flexible and hybrid working

16.1 We will consider any requests for flexible and hybrid working in a way which aims to balance the needs of the individual and business.

17 Retirement

17.1 We have no fixed retirement age and anyone who wishes to work beyond State Pension Age may choose to do so.

18 References

18.1 We will not discriminate against individuals who have left our organisation, either by failing to provide references that are based on accurate, factual information or by failing to provide a reference when we would normally do so.

19 Involvement

19.1 We encourage the participation of all employees to ensure that, wherever possible, our employment practices recognise and meet their needs and will involve our staff in determining what can be done to make sure they develop and use their abilities at work.

20 Complaints

20.1 Harassment, discrimination, and bullying will not be tolerated. We recognise that making a complaint can be embarrassing and stressful. Sometimes the complainant simply wants the conduct or behaviour to stop and sometimes they want stronger action to be taken and therefore to take account of this we offer various routes of action.

20.2 When dealing with general disciplinary matters, care is to be taken that employees or workers who have, are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic, are not dismissed or disciplined for performance or behaviour which could be overlooked or condoned in other employees or workers.

20.3 Employees who believe they have either been discriminated against or have witnessed discrimination, should bring this to our attention as soon as possible, either informally or formally in accordance with our grievance procedure or bullying and harassment policy and procedure. An employee who, in good faith, brings a complaint of discrimination must not be victimised or less favourably treated as a result. (However, false allegations that are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.)

21 Monitoring performance

21.1 We will monitor our progress towards diversity by:
monitoring applicants for jobs, training and development, grievances, disciplinary hearings, dismissals and other reasons for leaving

22 Breach of this policy

22.1 Any employee who feels they have been treated in a manner contrary to this policy should raise this either formally through the grievance procedure, or informally with a senior manager.

22.2 Any breaches of this policy by employees will be fully investigated and may lead to disciplinary action.

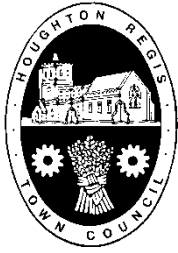
23 Related policies and documents

Bullying and harassment policy
Flexible working policy

The above list is not exhaustive.

24 Further information

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Corporate Services Manager.
Policy owner.



Date:	19th December 2022
Title:	Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy report
Purpose of the Report:	To provide members with information in order to support a review of the Town Councils Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy.
Contact Officer:	Debbie Marsh, Corporate Services Manager

1. RECOMMENDATION

To review and approve the Town Councils Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy

2. BACKGROUND

Members were advised, at the Town Council meeting held on the 9th October 2017, that by section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 amended by section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 provides that a relevant authority (including a parish / town council) may admit to be honorary freeman or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.

Members were requested to consider the desirability of adopting an Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy to enable the council to bestow this honour on persons of distinction or on persons who have rendered eminent services within the town.

Following this request members approved the adoption of an Honorary Freeman and Freewoman policy (minute number 9146).

3. INFORMATION

Members are advised that the purpose of this policy was to guide the council through the awarding of this title.

At the meeting held on the 9th October 2017 the following specific points were considered and agreed:

To limit the number of awards which can be made in any given year;
To restrict the number of people who can hold such a title at any one time;
To impose a date by which nominations have to be submitted.

4. COUNCIL VISION

Aspirations

- A2 To effectively and proactively represent our community
- A3 To positively **promote** the town

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendations.

Legal Implications

Power to confer the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, s249

Financial Implications

Budget provision for the purchase of a suitable scroll in honour of the title.

Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising from the recommendations

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 report does not discriminate.

Press Contact

There are no press implications.

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

There have been no amendments to legislation therefore it is considered this policy remains fit for purpose and as such can be re adopted as is.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A Town Councils Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy



Houghton Regis Town Council

Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Policy

Date of Approval:	9 th October 2017
Date of Review:	19 th December 2022

Contents

- 1. Policy Statement**
- 2. Qualification**
- 3. Legislation**
- 4. Nomination Criteria**
- 5. Nomination Procedure**
- 6. Entitlements**
- 7. Limitation on Holders of Award**
- 8. Review**

1. Policy Statement

From time to time, members of the community demonstrate outstanding commitment and contribution to the wellbeing of the town and it is recognised that their efforts should be acknowledged.

The Council will do this, in circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, by of the town of Houghton Regis.

This honour will be awarded on rare and exceptional occasions.

2. Qualification

The nominee may have given extensive and eminent service to the town of Houghton Regis and its local community in a largely voluntary capacity. For example, service to the Town Council (councilors or officers), service to the town of Houghton Regis or service to other organizations, voluntary and community groups.

contribution can be seen to stand above the contributions made by most other people.

3. Legislation

The Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 allows all local councils to exercise powers persons of

Section 249(8) of the 1972 Act as amended provides that the administration of an honorary freeman or honorary freewoman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full Council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no fewer than two-thirds of the Members of the Council.

The regulations also state that the Clerk of the Council must make the Notice of the Meeting to show that

Section 249(9) of the 1972 Act (as amended) provides that a local council may spend a reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person on whom it has conferred the title of honorary freeman or freewoman.

4. Nomination Criteria

The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting the honour of Honorary Freeman (or Honorary Freewoman) of the town:

1. Preference will be given to a person who performs in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude the honour being awarded to a person whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected from their occupation.
2. Nominees need not necessarily be residents of Houghton Regis.
3. The award will not be restricted to town councillors or town council staff.
4. Any nominated town councillor should have retired from the post unless there are special circumstances.
5. The contribution to the wellbeing of the community must involve one or more of the following factors:-
 - a) A significant allocation of the person's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their wellbeing.
 - b) The promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal contribution has been made.
 - c) The contribution must be outstanding in that it can be seen to stand above the contributions of most other persons.
 - d) Someone who has excelled in a specific role or work area that brings respect to the town and acts as a role model within the community of Houghton Regis.
 - e) Someone who champions Houghton Regis and is a credit to the town.

5. Nomination Procedure

1. knowledge.
2. Any resident or elector of the town may make a nomination but it must be sponsored by a town councillor.
3. Nominations must be made in writing to the town clerk by 31st August each year.
4. There must be evidence based by outlining the voluntary service provided by the
the honour.
5. On receipt of a nomination, the nomination will be circulated to all councillors for confidential consideration.
- 6.
7. If councillors are in agreement that the nominee should be made an Honorary Freeman (or Freewoman) of the town, the nominee will be invited to accept the honour.
8. If agreed, the nomination will then be put before Council at a specially convened meeting (usually before 30th September) and a formal vote taken, again in confidence.
9. No fewer than two-thirds of the town councillors must agree the nomination.
10. The decisions of the Council on all nominations (whether affirmative or negative) are final.

6. Entitlements

Any person declared an Honorary Freeman (or Honorary Freewoman) of the town

The award shall be made at a small ceremony which may take place at a Council meeting or other suitable event.

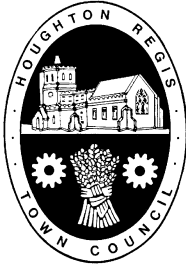
A scroll will be presented to the recipient.

7. Limitation on Holders of Award

At any one time, up to four persons, unless otherwise decided by the Council, may

8. Review

Review of this policy will be carried out every 4 years by Town Council unless circumstances dictate otherwise.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Tel: 01582 708540

Fax: 01582 861102

KEY PARTNER ANNUAL FUNDING FORM

Total Period April 2020 – March 2024

2022-2023

Name of Organisation

Houghton Regis Memorial Hall Fund

Contact Details

Name

David Hill

Position

Vice Chairman

Address

Data removed

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

vicechairman@houghtonregismemorialhall.com

Website Address:

www.houghtonregismemorialhall.com

Renewal Information

Are the details supplied in your original application to become a Key Partner still valid and correct?

Yes

If no please update:

Please outline the work your organisation has undertaken in the last 12 months?

We have achieved a great deal in the last 12 months in refurbishing our hall to a high standard and increasing our facilities for the local community.

Clearly local people have realised that our hall has a lot to offer, we have had an increase in bookings this year, mainly children’s parties and other celebrations. We have also started to have commercial bookings, it’s a market that we would like to encourage.

We have provided space for many local groups to meet on a regular basis. Two additional groups have recently joined us, The Recycled Teenagers and Spirit Martial Arts.

Approximately how many people accessed your organisations services over the last 12 months:

	Total number 500 Regular + 900 private Hire
	Number of Houghton Regis residents 900 +

How have you used the funding awarded from the Town Council over the last 12 months?

The Key Partner Grant has helped in the refurbishment of the hall, we look for best value and good quality work from the Traders we use.

Do you anticipate any changes within your organisation over the next 12 months that will impact on the work your organisations carries on in the community or on the services your organisation offers?

Our number one priority is to maintain the building in good order for the local community to use. We will keep up with the repairs needed with the aid of grants and our own funds.

Please confirm your award amount: £__2000

Is the amount awarded still required?

Yes

If no please advise the lower amount required:

Payment Details

Account title

Data removed

Account number

Bank / building society name
and address

Please note cheques will be made payable to the name of the organisation and sent to the contact as detailed unless otherwise advised.

Declaration

Please sign this form to confirm that:

- **The information supplied is full and correct to the best of your knowledge;**

Signed

.....

Name

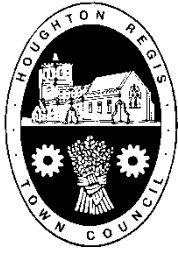
...David Hill

Position

Vice Chairman

Date

.....



Date: 19th December 2022

Title: JOINT WORKING GROUP

Purpose of the Report: To enable members to consider the option of setting up a joint working group with Bedfordshire Police.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To extend the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference for the Combating Crime Working Group to include:

To consider short, medium and long term issues around community safety including crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. Such issues may include community liaison, community support, and additional community safety resources.

To work with partners to improve community safety and reduce fear of crime

2. BACKGROUND

Following on from the tragic events which took place on 12th / 13th November in Houghton Regis it was suggested that a joint working group between HRTC and Bedfordshire Police and CBC Community Safety Team be established to consider short, medium and longer term measures arising from this tragedy.

Short term issues may centre around community liaison and support with longer term issues being around seeking additional resources to support the community further.

There are many agencies and organisations who work within the town and whose remit is to support and develop our community in different ways. The council has consistently supported these agencies, from smaller measures such as promotion to larger measures such as funding and resource.

Councillors and officers of the town council have looked to support the community in different ways in the immediate aftermath of the event.

This report enables members to consider setting up a Working Group to consider issues in the medium to long term.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

There has been some informal debate over setting up such a group. The draft Committee Functions & Terms of Reference at Appendix A may help members to determine the suitability of such a group.

It has also been suggested that the remit of the Combating Crime Working Group could be extended. There is merit in considering this as this group is already established and would thus make most appropriate use of officer, member and partner time. It also has the confirmed support of Bedfordshire Police through the SLA for Operation Hana. Appendix B shows how the remit of CCWG could be extended.

4. 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
- A5 To ensure the **council** is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

Objective 3: A safe and vibrant town

- 3.1 To reduce the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and crime levels

5. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

Implications for other committees as the Working Group is set up to be a partnership group to report on its establishment to the Partnership Committee

Policy implications
Reference accordingly

Staff implications extending the remit of the established Combating Crime Working Group makes most appropriate use of officer, member and partners time

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations

Risk Implications

The long term sustainability of this work relies on strong partnership working. This is already established through the Combating Crime Working Group with Bedfordshire Police and the CBC Community Safety Team.

Capacity there are reduced capacity issues by using the existing Combating Crime Working Group

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.

Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations

Press Contact

There are no press implications arising from the recommendations

6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Community safety, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime are significant issues within Houghton Regis.

The Council has a commitment to trying to address these issues through the Vision and has consistently put considerable resource into various projects and initiatives. This work is largely completed by the Combating Crime Working Group.

To ensure a co-ordinated approach, avoiding the possibility of duplication of resource, it is suggested that the remit of the Combating Crime Working Group be extended to enable the group to consider short, medium and long term issues around community safety including crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. Such issues may include community liaison, community support, and additional community safety resources.

The Combating Crime Working Group is already supported by Bedfordshire Police and the CBC Community Safety team. As such this recommendation makes the most efficient use of officer, member and partner resource.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Community Safety Joint Working Group Functions & Terms of Reference

Appendix B: Combating Crime Working Group Functions & Terms of Reference

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

Functions

To consider short, medium and long term issues around community safety including crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. Such issues may include community liaison, community support, and additional community safety resources.

To work with partners to improve community safety and reduce fear of crime

To report its decisions to Community Services Committee

Terms of Reference

The Community Safety Joint Working Group shall function and operate in accordance
s.

The Community Safety Joint Working Group shall consist of five councillors. The quorum shall be half its members (three).

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

Functions

provision of additional policing within the parish of Houghton Regis known as Operation Hana

To receive bi-monthly written reports and monthly verbal reports from Bedfordshire Police on the work completed under Operation Hana

To consider the forthcoming months actions by Bedfordshire Police under Operation Hana

for the management of the re-deployable CCTV cameras

Strategy

To consider short, medium and long term issues around community safety including crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. Such issues may include community liaison, community support, and additional community safety resources.

To work with partners to improve community safety and reduce fear of crime

To report its decisions to Community Services Committee

Terms of Reference

The Combating Crime Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with

The Combating Crime Working Group shall consist of five councillors. The quorum shall be half its members (three).