



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Councillor J W Carroll**
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

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9th May 2024

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

To: All Town Councillors

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to the Annual Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held in the Council Offices, Peel Street on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7pm.

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. ELECTION OF THE TOWN MAYOR

The following process is suggested:

- The retiring Town Mayor to invite nominations for a Town Mayor to hold office until the Annual Meeting in 2025.
- Members to elect a Town Mayor for 2024-25.
- The newly elected Mayor will receive the Chain of Office from the retiring Town Mayor, make and sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and make an acceptance speech.
- A vote of thanks will be proposed to the retiring Town Mayor and he/she will receive the Past Mayor's badge.
- The retiring Town Mayor is invited to reply.
- The Town Mayor is invited to make his/her Announcements.

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.

The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.

2. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

The following process is suggested:

- The Town Mayor to invite nominations for a Deputy Town Mayor to hold office until the Annual Meeting in 2025.
- Members to elect a Deputy Town Mayor for 2024-25.
- The newly elected Deputy Town Mayor will make and sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and receive the Chain of Office from the Town Mayor

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

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

5. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

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

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

6. MINUTES

Pages 10-15

To approve the minutes of the 2 meetings held on 24th April 2024.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the 2 meetings held on 24th April 2024.

7. COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pages 16-48

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

Corporate Services Committee
Community Services Committee
Environment & Leisure Committee

None to present
26th February 2024
5th February 2024

- Minute number 12690 Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces: Byelaws

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minute number 12692 Complying with Biodiversity • Minute number 12695 Purchase of Land off Cemetery Road – Members are reminded that this was considered and agreed by Town Council on 18th March
Planning Committee	19 th February, 11 th March and 2 nd April 2024
Town Partnership Committee	23 rd January 2024

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

New Cemetery Sub-Committee None to present

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

- **Minute number 12690 Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces: Byelaws**
- **Minute number 12692 Complying with Biodiversity**

8. COUNCIL CALENDAR FOR 2024-25

Pages 49-57

The draft Council Calendar, including meeting dates, member briefing dates, and council and civic event dates, for 2024/25 was presented at the Town Council meeting held on the 18th March 2024. At this meeting Members noted the draft Council Calendar, made some suggested alterations and recommended its approval at the Annual Meeting of Town Council.

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

Recommendation: **To approve the Council Calendar for 2024/25.**

9. COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

Pages 58-78

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

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

The approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on 18th March 2024, as detailed under Minute 12756, Strategic Policies 2024/25. A copy of these approved Minutes can be found here:

[MINUTES 18/03/24](#)

Members are reminded that at the meeting held on the 18th March 2024, members discussed an alternative group setting in order to monitor and review the Council's events and community activities, should the councils Events Working Group be disbanded.

At the Community Services Committee meeting held on the 8th April 2024 members were provided with Committee Functions and Terms of Reference in order to create a Community Engagement Sub-Committee in place of the Events Working Group. Members were supportive of the creation of this new sub-committee. However, the membership of this sub-committee should have read 5 councillors, as per minute number 12403 (Town Council 20th March 2023) and not 7. Members are requested to have consideration of this when discussing agenda item 10. Members are also advised that the quorum for this sub-committee shall be changed to three and not four.

Recommendation: To approve the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference as presented for 2024/25.

10. COMMITTEE, SUB-COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Members are requested to:

1. Nominate and approve membership on the Town Council's Committees, Sub Committees, Working and other Groups (Standing Order 6d);
2. To appoint Chairs of Standing Committees accordingly Groups (Standing Order 6dv).²

It is hoped to share a draft membership list ahead of the meeting.

The following summarises the committee structure and associated membership:

Standing Committees

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

Joint Committees

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

Complaints Sub-Committee ³	3 members
Complaints Appeal Sub-Committee ²	3 members
Personnel Sub-Committee ⁴	5 members
Disciplinary, Grievance & Appeals Sub-Committee ²	3 members
Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee	5 members
Community Engagement Sub Committee	5 members

Working Groups

Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group	5 members
Combating Crime Working Group	5 members

² Chairs for Sub Committee's and Working Group's will be agreed at the first meeting following the AGM after apologies have been received

³ To be appointed as required

⁴ To be appointed from Town Council

Steering Groups

Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan

5 members

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

11. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Pages 79-80

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

Members will find attached the list of outside organisations to which the Council is invited to appoint representatives for 2024/25 along with Cllrs who have expressed an interest in being appointed as the Council representative.

Reporting Mechanisms

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

- Recommendation:**
- 1. To appoint the councillor representatives for the listed outside organisations for 2024/25 as attached;**
 - 2. To note the reporting back mechanism as set out.**

12. STANDING ORDERS

Pages 81-106

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

Standing Orders are 'the written rules of a local council. they are used to confirm a council's internal organisational and administrative procedures, procurement and procedural matters for meetings'.⁵

- Recommendation:** **To approve Standing Orders as presented.**

13. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Pages 107-123

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

Financial Regulations are 'the "standing orders" of a local council that regulate and control its financial affairs and accounting procedures'.⁶

⁵ Local Councils Explained, NALC

⁶ Local Councils Explained, NALC

The attached Financial Regulations were reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on the 18th March 2024.

Members may recall being previously advised that NALC were intending to release amended model Financial Regulations. These were received on 7th May 2024. Officer consideration will be given to the revised model Regulations and a report will be presented in due course.

Recommendation: To approve Financial Regulations as presented.

14. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Pages 124-129

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

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

A revised and more detailed Scheme of Delegation was reviewed at the Town Council meeting held on 18th March 2024 and was recommended for approval subject to amendments.

Recommendation: To approve the Scheme of Delegation as presented.

15. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

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

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

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

16. BANKING & SIGNING ARRANGEMENTS

At the Town Council meeting held on the 17th May 2023 the banking arrangements for the council's bank accounts were approved as follows (minute number 12437).

Banking Arrangements

To approve the bank mandate be set up as follows:

- 2 signatories from Group A (councillors) and 1 signatory from Group B (officers);
- Group A to comprise current serving councillors
- Group B to comprise Clerk & RFO and Head of Service

To remove all other signatories.

To accord with banking requirements the following resolution was also passed:

-
- if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the “Add or Remove Authorised Signatories” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's “About your business” section
 - if we change the Signing Rules in the “Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's “About your business” section
 - and the current mandate will continue as amended.

Signing Arrangements

Councillor Jones and Councillor Herber were nominated as the 2 members to receive, check and authorise the payment of invoices.

Members are advised that the following signatories are now authorised on the banks mandate:

Group A (councillors)

J Carroll

E Costello

Y Farrell

W Henderson

M Herber

D Jones

T McMahon

A Slough

C Slough

Group B (officers)

Town Clerk

Head of Corporate Services

Head of Environmental & Community Services

Head of Democratic Services

Financial Regulation 5.1 states:

The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

Recommendation: Bank Mandate

To approve the bank mandate be set up as follows:

- **2 signatories from Group A (councillors) and 1 signatory from Group B (officers);**
- **Group A to comprise current serving councillors**
- **Group B to comprise Clerk & RFO and Heads of Service**

To accord with banking requirements the following resolution is also passed:

- **if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the “Add or Remove Authorised Signatories” section on the “About your request” page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate**

accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section

- if we change the Signing Rules in the "Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section
- and the current mandate will continue as amended.

Signing Arrangements

For Councillor Jones and Councillor Herber as the 2 members to receive, check and authorise the payment of invoices.

17. RESOLUTION FROM ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE ON 29TH APRIL 2024 RE GROUNDS MACHINERY RENEWAL

Pages 130-139

For background Members will find attached the report with supporting papers and draft Minutes from the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 29th April 2024.

The resolution from the Committee reads (Minute 12798):

To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2024/25 and recommend to Council on the 15th May '24 the planned renewal/replacement funding through a hire purchase scheme. Additional funding is being sought to support additional machinery to enable the grounds team to expand their services into the growth area.

Hire purchase agreement/loan supported by Internal Auditor.

Recommendation: 1. **To approve the Resolution from Environment & Leisure Committee (Minute 12798), as follows:**

To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2024/25 and recommend to Council on the 15th May '24 the planned renewal/replacement funding through a hire purchase scheme. Additional funding is being sought to support additional machinery to enable the grounds team to expand their services into the growth area.

Hire purchase agreement/loan supported by Internal Auditor.

2. **To delegate authority to the Head of Environmental & Community Services to finalise the details of the equipment**
3. **To delegate authority to the Mayor to sign the finalised Hire Purchase in due course.**

18. TOWN BRANDING SCHEME UPDATE

Page 140

Following feedback from Members on the development of a town branding scheme at the January Town Council meeting, further work has been undertaken. Members are invited to consider the attached revised branding mock up.

Recommendation: To agree on the final branding mock-up, which encourages a sense of place and community.

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HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24th April 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: J Carroll Town Mayor
P Burgess
E Cooper
E Costello
Y Farrell
M Herber
D Jones
T McMahon
C Rollins
A Slough
C Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Ian Haynes Head of Environmental & Community Services

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington

12787 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington.

12788 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

12789 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2024. Minor amendments were requested and agreed.

The minutes were amended to remove the final 'resolved' as this item did not go into private session.

Resolved: To approve the minutes as amended of the meeting held on 18th March 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12790 MOTION RE RED HOUSE

The following Motion had been received from Cllr Burgess:

This Council notes and shares the widespread public disappointment that Central Bedfordshire Council is neglecting The Red House. Further to the very positive viewing of the Red House organised by the Houghton Regis Heritage Society on Thursday, 4th April 2024, with many invited Councillors from Central Bedfordshire and Houghton Regis Town Councils attending. Therefore, I request a recorded vote of Houghton Regis Town Council to agree or disagree on the following points:

1. That Houghton Regis Town Council fully supports the attached Houghton Regis Heritage Society Proposal for The Red House.
2. The Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to work in partnership with the Houghton Regis Heritage Society to secure the Red House for genuine public use.
3. That Houghton Regis Town Council agrees in principle to buy, rent or lease The Red House from Central Bedfordshire Council.
4. That the Houghton Regis Town Council calls on the Town Clerk, as the proper officer, to provide a written update to all Houghton Regis Town Council members, as soon as practically possible, on the progress on our request that the council consider transferring some Houghton Regis-based community assets to the council. We would like to understand what discussions have taken place and with whom on which assets.
5. Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to create a new subcommittee to work with Central Bedfordshire Council to devolve services and assets from Central Bedfordshire Council. We ask that this subcommittee report directly to Houghton Regis Town Council as a standing item at each council meeting.

Members were invited to consider the above Motion.

The Chair read the motion to the meeting and a representative from the HRHS confirmed that they had circulated the proposal to councillors. It was confirmed that HRHS were not asking HRTC to buy, rent or lease and this suggestion had come via the Motion.

It was highlighted that the proposal did not include any financial figures and Cllr Burgess responded and suggested it was the use of the building that was the priority rather than finance. It was suggested that the proposal be amended to say that CBC would be approached to seek further information.

It was suggested to consider each element of the motion one point at a time.

1. Houghton Regis was very fortunate to have The Red House, which was iconic, centrally located and part of the town's history. The ideas put forward in the HRHS proposal were exciting; however, it needed to be established how these ideas would be delivered. HRHS advised they anticipated The Red House being run by a separate trust, following a similar model to the Memorial Hall. A joint board of trustees would be appointed, and charitable status would be sought. Funding would be essential to progress with the proposal and would require a business case to be put forward in support of this.

2. Support for this item was expressed.

Members were reminded that a resolution had already been made at the January meeting to begin to explore with CBC a transfer of assets (Minute 12675) and to report back. It was felt that this motion was to the detriment of what had previously been agreed.

Members voted on whether to approach the motion en bloc or as individual points. Members voted en bloc.

Cllr Henderson proposed an amendment to remove points 1, 3 and 5 and refer only to points 2 and 4. Seconded by Cllr A Slough.

Cllr A Slough sought further clarification regarding point 4 and queried whether it would replace the previous recommendation in January. The Town Clerk informed Members that this would not replace the prior resolution; however, work had already commenced in line with that resolution.

Members voted against the motion to include only points 2 and 4

Cllr A Slough proposed an amendment to remove points 1, 3, 4 and 5 and keep point 2
Seconded by Cllr Henderson.

In favour: Cllrs Henderson, C Slough, A Slough, Jones, Herber, Taylor, Farrell and Costello

This became the substantive motion:

The Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to work in partnership with the Houghton Regis Heritage Society to secure the Red House for genuine public use.

Cllr A Slough proposed the substantive motion. Cllr C Slough seconded.

A Recorded Vote was requested:

Those in Favour: Cllrs Burgess, Cooper, Costello, Farrell, Herber, Jones, McMahon, Rollins, A Slough, C Slough

Those against: None

Abstentions: Cllr Carroll

The Motion was carried:

The Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to work in partnership with the Houghton Regis Heritage Society to secure the Red House for genuine public use.

12791 UKSPF DRAFT GRANT FUNDING DEED

Members were provided with the draft UKSPF Grant Funding Deed for review and consideration.

It was felt that the deed placed all responsibility on HRTC and it was suggested that HRTC could seek advice from its solicitors, especially in relation to items 7, 8 and 9.

Members were advised that the deed was a standard template provided to all recipients. The HRTC application was quite straightforward and there was limited risk regarding the capital project. The cultural element related to the enhanced programme of established events, with the most significant risk being in relation to the cultural film. CBC were already a month behind, so a delay by referring to solicitors would potentially impact on the delivery.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To delegate authority to the Head of Environmental & Community Services to finalise the detail of the UKSPF Grant Funding Deed with CBC;**
 - 2. To delegate authority to the Mayor to sign the finalised UKSPF Grant Funding Deed in due course.**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8pm

Dated this 15th day of May 2024

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24th April 2024 at 8.00pm

Present: Councillors: J Carroll
P Burgess
E Cooper
E Costello
Y Farrell
M Herber
D Jones
T McMahon
C Rollins
A Slough
C Slough
Town Mayor

Officers: Clare Evans
Ian Haynes
Town Clerk
Head of Environmental &
Community Services

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington

12792 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington.

12793 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

12794 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

- **Honorary Freeman Nominations**

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.

12795 HONORARY FREEMAN NOMINATIONS

Under the Local Government Act 1972 s249(5) members considered nominations for Honorary Freeman of the Town of Houghton Regis.

Resolved: To award to the title of Honorary Freeman of the Town to the person nominated subject their acceptance.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Dated this 15th day of May 2024

Chairman

DRAFT

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
26th February at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: Y Farrell Chairman
P Burgess
W Henderson (Sub)
T McMahon
C Rollins
A Slough

Officers: Ian Haynes Head of Environmental &
Community Services
Tara Earnshaw Community Development Officer
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington

Also present: Councillor: J Carroll

12709 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Billington. Cllr Henderson substituted.

12710 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12711 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

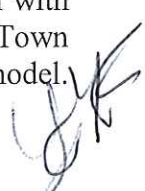
12712 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7th November and 13th November 2023.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 7th November and 13th November 2023 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12713 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

The current Youth Support Services contract with Groundwork was awarded for five years in September 2019 and was due to end in 2024. The new contract was currently out for tender and Central Bedfordshire Council was looking for an organisation with experience, who could work in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council, Town Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector through a prime provider model.



Conversations had been held with suppliers who were interested in tendering for the contract. One organisation had pulled out of the process; however, another submission was expected and the possibility remained of further tenders being submitted.

Members were informed the operation would need to be on a lean delivery model and the value would be across all Central Bedfordshire.

Officers were seeking the authority to talk and engage with possible providers to discuss whether a consortium approach could work. The prime provider would take the lead on tendering and would officially be awarded the contract if they were successful.

Resolved: To delegate authority to the Head of Environment and Community Services to openly discuss and engage with possible Central Bedfordshire Council – Youth Support Services Contract tenderers.

12714 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICES

Members were provided with an update on youth services in Houghton Regis.

It was confirmed that the Youth Investment Fund project was progressing well with the Sandringham hub being used for Tuesday evenings and the Baptist Church for Thursday evenings.

Discussions had been held with Luton Town Football Club about their Kick programme for young people. If this went ahead, volunteers would be needed and training given as LTFC would limit cover to a 1:10 ratio.

Planning was going ahead for 6 weekly sessions, with a coach, of skateboarding, BMXing and scooters leading up to the Skate Jam event.

The Youth Council was also growing and now had 14 members. The Youth Café continued to be popular with 15-20 people attending most Mondays.

Family Fun Days were being planned for Easter and the summer.

Over 100 people had signed up to the Later Living Group and continued to meet at the All Saints site.

The Community Link project had received funding from the National Lottery to help with the cost of living. Houghton Regis Town Council had been working in partnership with them, organising the preparation of packs for distribution within the community.

Members questioned how many people were attending the Sandringham hub. The figure was estimated at eight people, but this was a new project and figures were anticipated to grow. Approximately 28 young people were thought to attend in total across the Sandringham and Baptist Church sites; however, there were plans for continued promotion of these youth clubs. Central Bedfordshire Council had also agreed to offer support through schools and leaflets would be forwarded to them for this purpose.

12715 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN



Events Working Group	5 th October '23, 26th October '23 and 30th November '23.
Combating Crime Working Group	18th October '23 and 15th November '23

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

12716 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING TENDER

Members were informed that the current Christmas lighting contract had ended. Based on current spending, a new 5-year contract would exceed the threshold of £30,000 stipulated by financial regulations. As a result, it would be necessary for Houghton Regis Town Council to use both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender to advertise contract opportunities.

Houghton Regis were relatively unique in that the council owned its own lights and, therefore, the contract would be for the storage, testing, installation and removal of the lights only.

With the Town Council's share of the UKSPF, a sum of £10,000 was expected which would contribute towards the town's Christmas lights.

Members were asked to endorse the advertisement for the tender.

Resolved: To endorse the advertisement of the Houghton Regis Town Council Christmas Lighting Tender on both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender platforms.

12717 BEDFORD SQUARE PUBLIC TOILETS CLEANING TENDER

Members were informed that the current public toilet cleaning contract would end on 31st August 2024. Based on current spending, a new 2-year contract would exceed the threshold of £30,00 stipulated by financial regulations. As a result, it would be necessary for Houghton Regis Town Council to use both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender to advertise contract opportunities.

Members were advised that if the contract was not renewed, the ownership would revert to CBC.

At present, Houghton Regis was not liable for the fixtures or fittings; however, it would be necessary to request that Central Bedfordshire Council improve the upkeep and maintenance of the toilets. There was also a need for more of an 'attendant' role to provide increased supervision and report defects.

Resolved: To endorse the advertisement of the Houghton Regis Town Council Bedford Square Toilets Cleaning Tender on both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender platforms.

12718 HERITAGE HORIZONS

There had been a change in approach regarding the delivery of UKSPF cultural projects. A film was planned, using the help and support of children, to look at the history of Houghton Regis, with a possible outdoor premiere to follow.

The Head of Community and Environmental Services had attended an introductory event at the University of Bedfordshire, which had been organised by the Cultural and Community Engagement Team. They had successfully applied to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and could support 12 practitioners to deliver heritage commissions in Bedford, Central Bedfordshire and Luton. Participants would receive capacity-building and network development support to enable them to realise applicable step-changes in their practice. The Heritage Horizons project would be delivered across three commissioning tiers;

- Exchange (£2,000-4,000)
- Develop (£5,000-9,000)
- Transform (£10,000-15,000)

Discussions could be held to establish whether Heritage Horizon projects would fit within one of these tiers.

Heritage Horizons would provide an opportunity for conversations between various creatives who would support the delivery of a professional film highlighting the history of Houghton Regis.

It is believed that a submission would be beneficial in the delivery of the UKSPF Cultural projects.

It was suggested that consideration was given to involving the Heritage Society of Houghton Regis which was involved in similar areas.

Resolved: To consider and endorse that a suitable application be made to the Heritage Horizons Fund to deliver a heritage commission to enhance the history of Houghton Regis.

12719 SMALL PROJECT GRANTS

Members were advised that the following Small Project Grant has been awarded under delegated authority:

- Community Link Project - £200.00

12720 RENEWAL OF SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

Members were invited to consider the Service Level Agreement with Bedfordshire Police to deliver high-visibility policing in Houghton Regis under Operation Hana for 2024/25.

The current contract runs until 31st March 2024.

Members were advised that the officer hourly rates have increased. This was taken into account during the budget-setting process.

Members requested copies of the draft SLA from the Community Services Manager



Members felt that Operation Hana was working and that it was highly beneficial to hold regular discussions with the police about local issues.

Resolved: To agree to the Service Level Agreement with Bedfordshire Police to deliver high visibility policing in Houghton Regis under Operation Hana for 2024/25 and for this to be signed by the Chair of the Community Services Committee.

12721 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

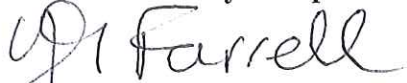
Members were provided with the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for the Community Services Committee to date.

The main point to note was an overspend on the Christmas Lights of £1,285 which needed to be recorded against 399/4804 which had available funds.

The only other item was the civic regalia which would also see an overspend. This was due to repairs carried out to the chain of office as a result of damage incurred over several years. It was suggested that damages should be reported and repaired as they happened.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.48pm

Dated this 8th day of April 2024


Chairman

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Environment & Leisure Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
5th February 2024 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillors: A Slough Chairman
P Burgess
E Cooper
Y Farrell
W Henderson
D Jones (Sub)
T McMahan

Officers: Ian Haynes Head of Environmental &
Community Services
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: E Costello

Also present: J Carroll

12686 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Costello. Cllr Jones substituted.

12687 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12688 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12689 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2023.

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure
Committee meeting held on 18th September 2023 and for these to
be signed by the Chairman.**

**12690 PLEASURE GROUNDS, PUBLIC WALKS AND OPEN SPACES:
BYELAWS**

AS

Members were informed that certain assets adopted or purchased by Houghton Regis since 1989 did not appear on the schedule of assets; therefore, these were not covered by the Town Council's byelaws.

The last review took place 35 years ago, and it was recommended that a review of the schedule and byelaws occur when changes in administration occur and new assets are adopted. This would provide an opportunity to make necessary amendments, thereby keeping the information current.

The HM Government model byelaws have been revised to align with national legislation. It was suggested that Houghton Regis should look to put an amended version of these before Full Council.

Resolved: To consider and Recommend to Council the revocation of the September 1989 byelaws and the replacement with an adapted version of the "HM Governments model byelaws" to be presented to Council for adoption and submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

12691 HOUGHTON REGIS IN BLOOM INITIATIVE

Members agreed that participation in the Anglia in Bloom campaign would be beneficial on several levels: it would encourage community involvement, contribute to the Town Council's environmental and sustainability-friendly commitment, and reflect the values within the Corporate Plan.

It was embedded within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund initiative, which was currently awaiting approval from Central Bedfordshire Council; however, the initiative would progress irrespective of approval for the funding.

Resolved: To endorse the creation of the Houghton Regis in Bloom and the inaugural entry of the town into the regional Anglia in Bloom campaign in 2024.

12692 COMPLYING WITH BIODIVERSITY DUTY

Houghton Regis benefitted from a variety of open spaces, parks and gardens, which provided numerous benefits to the residents of the area. The Town Council was committed to meeting and improving biodiversity objectives in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (subsequently bolstered by the Environment Act of 2021). A review of these acts had been carried out and a biodiversity statement produced for recommendation to Council.

Members suggested that it might be beneficial to set specific goals and have a means of measuring the progress for each. It was proposed that occasional reviews of the objectives should be held to reflect on what had been achieved and what future goals needed to be set.

Resolved: To consider and Recommend the endorsement of the Houghton Regis Town Council Biodiversity Statement to the Council.

12693 PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Members were informed that play areas within Houghton Regis would be ranked and updated in order of need. The smaller play area in Parkside was deemed the most needed improvement, followed by Tithe Farm.

Members were provided with a breakdown of £169,000 S106 contributions: £75,000 was obliged to be spent at the Tithe Farm; £94,000 was available to be spent at Parkside Lower, but a small amount from this some would be contributed towards getting the skate park fenced.

It was suggested that an appropriate sum be allocated in the next budget to consider the annual figure for renewals and ongoing care. As most play areas in Houghton Regis were fenced and safe surfaces in place, it would be possible to focus on replacing equipment as needed. An annual update would include any sites taken on by the Town Council.

Resolved: To endorse the play area improvement programme per the attached Gantt chart and approve the applications to secure S106 monies available for play areas locally.

12694 TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE

Members were provided with the latest financial report, which gave a breakdown of the project. Funding had been secured from a number of sources, and it was hoped that a portion of this could be used for the old pavilion and provide a little contingency.

An application was required to move the car park entrance; this was made in October, and a response was awaiting. Section 278 needed to be approved by Central Bedfordshire Council before the site could be used, irrespective of whether the car park had been completed. It was confirmed that the car park would have a height barrier but would not be gated, as EV charging points would be in situ.

It was uncertain when UKPN would complete the outstanding works, and this caused some delays. It was raised whether the Town Council could indemnify itself against future costs arising directly from delays in works.

Resolved: To formally instruct and award T&B Contractors to complete the remaining outstanding works at Tithe Farm Recreation Ground, i.e. the car parks and lighting, for a total value of £309,116.86.

12695 PURCHASE OF LAND OFF CEMETERY ROAD

Houghton Regis Town Council had been approached with an offer to buy a parcel of land currently owned by the charity Sustrans. The land, which was close to Orchard Close, formed part of a larger green space owned by the Town Council and contained part of the National Cycle Network. Members were informed that the cycle path would remain under the remit of Central Bedfordshire Council. At the same time, the maintenance of grass and hedges would become the responsibility of the Town Council.

Members agreed that the acquisition would be a positive step as it would provide a buffer against the industrial units close to the site and enable Houghton Regis to improve sightlines in the area.

Resolved: To consider and Recommend the purchase of Title Deed BD230229 to the Council on 18th March for a maximum value of £4,500.

12696 VILLAGE GREEN – CIRCUS AND FAIR VISITS 2025

Members agreed that the proposed deposit of £500 would be a suitable incentive for organisers to remove posters once the events had finished. This would also limit the damage to public assets.

The proposed dates for fair and circus visits were considered and determined as follows:

- *Tom Smith's Fun Fair – The Village Green – 7th-21st May*
Members felt that two weeks was an unacceptably long period for the village green to be used. It was suggested that the organisers be contacted to reduce the time to 5 days.
- *Tom Smith's Fun Fair – Parkside Recreation Ground – 22nd-29th July*
It was questioned how popular this event had proven on prior occasions; however, no objections were raised to the event going ahead.
- *Tom Smith's Fun Fair – 2nd-9th September*
The proposed dates clashed with the Houghton Rocks event, and the site would be unavailable.
- *John Lawsons Circus – The Village Green – 14th-23rd October*
Members were happy for the circus event to go ahead as usual.
- *Gumbles Amusements Ltd – The Village Green – 4th-6th May*
Members refused this request as the event fell outside the usual parameters for events and would be held over the May Bank Holiday.

Members felt it would be beneficial to review their approach to circus and fun fair events, considering the suitability of the location and timescale involved. There should be a recovery period between events to limit damage to public areas. Additionally, a time limit should be placed on events, and event organisers should be asked to review their timescales for pulling on and pulling off. Defined parameters could then inform future decisions. At present, no limits exist, which has damaged public areas and undermined the biodiversity aims of the Town Council.

**Resolved: To approve introducing a £500 deposit to cover flyposting and reinstatement per event.
To determine the fair and circus visit dates on The Village Green and Parkside Recreation Ground.**

12697 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AT BIDWELL WEST (FORMERLY KNOWN AS HRN2)

Members were informed that a request had been received from Houghton Regis Community Development Charity regarding the maintenance of the site at Bidwell West. The site was close to the storage pond, which Houghton Regis Town Council will soon maintain.

The charity wished to lease the site for community use and was looking to install a temporary building on the site and potentially a community garden.

Members were advised that the Town Council would adopt grass-cutting responsibilities from the date of transfer for 12 months in order to facilitate community use. It was not anticipated that these duties would be time-intensive and that the costs involved would be negligible.

Members agreed that the benefits to the community would outweigh the cost involved in this temporary arrangement.

Resolved: To determine whether a temporary arrangement for the cutting of amenity grass is undertaken free of charge for a maximum of 12 months from the transfer date to help facilitate community use.

12698 TERRA CROFT LEISURE GARDENS UPDATE

Members were informed that the waiting list for allotments had gone down. The site was doing well, and the next inspections for plots left in November were due to take place on 13th February.

Significant storm damage had been done to structures on the site, and allotment holders were advised of the need to weigh structures down.

It was felt that the expectations of potential allotment holders needed to be managed as they were often unaware of the time required to maintain the plots. In addition, holders were only required to cultivate once a year; however, there was potential to cultivate throughout the year.

12699 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with the Income and Expenditure Report for information purposes.

It was noted that the capital expenditure on Tithe Farm distorted the budget for this committee; therefore, a clearer picture was likely to emerge in the coming year.

Income streams were significantly less due to the Section 106 contributions. The request for the release of these had been submitted but had not yet reflected on the income over-expenditure. It was also noted that the deferred income had not yet been transferred.

12700 ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE FEES 2024/25

Members were advised of a proposed 3% fee increase to be applied for 2024/25. This would apply to cricket fees, bowls fees and land hire for fun fairs and circuses. There would be no increase on allotments and the football pitch fees would be reviewed separately, thereby avoiding a mid-season increase. The fee for use of the Village Green for residents and community groups would remain at £6.00.

Members agreed with the proposed rise but felt that figures should be rounded down for simplification.

It was confirmed that VAT did not apply to sport-related events; however, VAT would continue to be added to events at Moore Crescent that were not sport-related.

Resolved: To set fees under the control of the Environment & Leisure Committee for 2024/2025 at a 3% increase on 2023/24 on highlighted fees

12701 ADULT OUTDOOR GYM FOR PARKSIDE RECREATION GROUND LOCATION

Members were asked to consider the proposed site of the adult outdoor gym. It was agreed that the proposed site was well placed, sufficiently distant from the children's play area and close to parking facilities.

Resolved: To agree to the location of the adult outdoor gym for Parkside Recreation Ground as shown.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Dated this 29th day of April 2024

Chairman



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Planning Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
19th February 2024 at 7.00pm

Present:	Councillors:	C Slough E Billington J Carroll E Cooper M Herber D Jones	Chairman
	Officers:	Louise Senior Amanda Samuels	Head of Democratic Services Administration Officer
Also present:		William Yardley Jon Dingle Martin Hughes	Head of Development, Cinch Planning Consultant, Jon Dingle Ltd Director, Polity

12702 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

12703 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members were provided with an update regarding the conversion of the former Morrisons site (Minute number 12579, 16th October 2023) and to present proposals for a second building to the south of the site.

Members were informed that the strip-out of the existing building had been completed and fitting-out was now in progress. External works and signage would soon commence, with the completion scheduled for 1st May 2024.

The new proposal was for an additional building on the south side. The approved original plan details would be retained, but additional landscaping would be incorporated along the southern edge of the site. The proposed building would be complimentary in appearance to the existing one, although slightly taller, with windows facing into the car park.

Mr Dingle, the planning consultant, informed Members that there would be sufficient parking (spaces for 7 cars, 7 vans and 2 disabled spaces) for the proposed new development and that the team were confident of being able to demonstrate this. Peak hours were anticipated to be 09.00-10.00am, in which time 8-10 vehicles would be expected.

The change of use scheme was not restricted in its hours of operation; however, a condition of the planning permission granted by Central Bedfordshire Council was that activity could not be audible outside of the site at any time. It was stated that the additional building would act as a sound barrier, providing additional protection to residents.

CR/S

In reply to a question regarding the size of the additional development, Mr Dingle confirmed that the existing building was just over 1,000 sq m and the proposed additional building would be just under 3,000 sq m, with ground, 1st and 2nd floors.

The main concern raised at the public consultation was the level of traffic likely to result from the site. Mr Dingle responded, saying a lot of data had been collected around storage facilities and they were confident that there would be a low level of traffic and the parking would prove sufficient.

12704 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12705 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on the 8th January 2024 and 29th January 2024.

Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 8th January 2024 and 29th January 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12706 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/23/03976/ADV Advertisement: 2 no illuminated fascia signs & 2 no
 (click for more illuminated box projecting signs
 details) Tithe Farm Post Office, 8 Hillborough Crescent, Houghton
 Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5NS
 Mr Cebrail Cicek

Comments: Members expressed their disappointment that their objections raised at the 8th January meeting (Minute 12661, CB/23/03975/FULL) had been overruled and the planning application regarding this site had been approved. There were plans to reinstall a ramp for wheelchair users; however, there were no plans for reinstalling an automatic door and concerns regarding disability access continued to be raised.

Members felt the signage proposed on this application was disproportionate and did not reflect the community value of The Post Office; however, there were no sufficient grounds for objection.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objections to this application but requested consideration be given to the signage reflect equally the two business purposes of the unit.

CRS

[CB/24/00057/FULL](#)
(click for more
details)

Removal and relocation of fence. Change of use of amenity land to residential garden land.
44 Bidwell Hill, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5EP
Mrs Iryna Suska

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council raised an objection to this application on the grounds of:

- It was a designated area of amenity land and, as such, should be protected.
- The estate had been designed with consideration to space and open views, and the proposed fence would be to the detriment of public amenity aesthetics.
- The property was on a bend and a fence would hinder visibility for road users.

[CB/23/03551/RM](#)
(click for more
details)

Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/22/04525/VOC (Outline Application for residential development for up to 100 dwellings with all matters reserved, except access.) Full details of reserved matters for 77 dwellings including appearance, landscaping, scale and layout pursuant to outline consent CB/22/04525/VOC.

Comments: An application had been presented to the Committee on 27th November 2023 (Minute 12610)

Houghton Regis Town Council raised objections to this application on the grounds that their concerns had not been addressed. These were:

- The proximity of the children's playground to water.
- The Police had refused to withdraw their objections (ref: CC-DOCO-Bedfordshire Police 2/2/24) highlighting 'excessive permeability created by the PROW (Public Right of Way)' which would threaten the safety of the properties.
- The distribution and size of the dwellings was considered unsuitable. Reports from an internal consultation (ref: 2530650) had stated that the layout had been predetermined without consideration of the actual site.
- The consultation was dated 25th January while the letter from the development manager was dated 28th January. This suggested there had been insufficient time for the issues raised to be addressed.

[CB/TRE/24/00026](#)
(click for more
details)

Works to a trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (SB/TPO/77/00006):
Fell the Ash tree (T5), Sycamore tree (T6), Ash tree (T7) and Yew, Western Red, Cedar trees (G1), to the ground
Bidwell Gospel Trust

CRLS

Comments: The trees under consideration would be removed to create a space for recreational use. The trees had been declared healthy and Members objected to their removal and commented that this was in conflict to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised an objection to this application due to there being insufficient grounds for the felling of protected, established, healthy trees.

Noted:

[CB/24/00233/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Installation of lighting to existing carpark.
Tithe Farm Recreation Ground, Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis
Houghton Regis Town Council

[CB/24/00164/NMA](#)
(click for more details)

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-meter 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 sought: 1. Additional Louvres on East and North Elevations As a result of MEP co-ordination. 2. Locating VRF condensers outside the plant room within the service area As a result of MEP co-ordination. Couldn't fit all the equipment within the plant room. 3. Substation and Bin store increase in building footprint This is as a result of UKPS design requirement. Please see attached e-mail. 4. Omitting the feature brickwork to the rear elevation of the substation building Removed due to the climbing risk onto the substation roof. 5. Widening of the gates to the service yard area as per UKPS requirement Omitting planters and extending the tarmac to the planter area. Please note that the outline of the planter will be marked in white line This is inline with the gate width requirement for UKPS vehicular movement.
Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5PX
Central Bedfordshire Council

[CB/24/00212/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge Of Conditions 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11 against planning application CB/23/01185/FULL (Conversion and extension of double garage into a single storey two-bedroom detached dwelling, with off-street parking and rear private garden.)
4 Townsend Terrace, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5BB

CRS

- [CB/24/00183/DOC](#)
(click for more details) Discharge of conditions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 against planning application CB-22-04024-LB (Listed Building: Conversion of a listed barn into a detached dwelling including removal of dilapidated single-storey side addition.) Condition 2 Report from Albion Archaeology, 3 SWH drawings Timber frame alterations, Condition 4 Materials, Condition 5 Materials list, Condition 6 MHA drawings submitted. Red Cow Farm Cottage, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JP
- [CB/24/00278/DOC](#)
(click for more details) Discharge of Conditions 7 and 11 against planning permission 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
- [CB/24/00285/DOC](#)
(click for more details) Discharge of Condition 18 against planning permission ref. CB/21/05552/RM (Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT Mixed Development, supported by an Environmental Statement, which was submitted to the council during the application's determination process. Reserved Matters sought for Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for 100 homes and retail units (Use Class E)) Land To The North And East Of Houghton Regis, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis
- [CB/24/00346/DOC](#)
(click for more details) Discharge of Condition 1 against planning permission ref. CB/23/01706/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);) Reserved matters for Parcel 1 and 2 - AMP3 for 236 dwellings, access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale Parcels 1 & 2, Houghton Regis North 1, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis, LU5 5GX
- [CB/24/00318/GPDE](#)
(click for more details) Prior Notification of Householder Extension: Single storey rear extension, 4.50 m beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling, maximum height of 3.40 m & 3.00 m to the eaves. 14 Gressingham Meadow, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6GF

CRLS

- [CB/23/02966/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Link extension and conversion of garage into a granny annexe.
72 Tennyson Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5UG
- [CB/23/04042/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Garage conversion (part retrospective)
49 Millers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FH
- [CB/23/03042/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Change of use from residential dwelling to a children's carehome (c2 class)
49 Millers Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FH
- [CB/23/03312/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Single storey side and rear extension and front porch
78 Tithe Farm Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5JB
- [CB/23/03975/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Subdivision of existing Post Office (Class E) into a Post Office & Barber Shop (Class E) with new shop frontage.
Tithe Farm Post Office, 8 Hillborough Crescent, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5NS

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

- [CB/23/01847/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Change of use of amenity land to garden land and creation of a new boundary line with a new 1.95m fence
29 Constable Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5ST
- [CB/23/02974/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Erection of an end-of-terrace two storey 2 bedroom house.
1 The Link, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5HQ
- [CB/23/02672/FULL](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Conversion of outbuilding to provide ancillary annexe accommodation
Whitehill Farm, Sewell Lane, Sewell, Dunstable, LU6 1RP
- [CB/23/02673/LB](#) [\(click for more details\)](#) Listed Building: Conversion of the outbuilding to provide ancillary annexe accommodation
Whitehill Farm, Sewell Lane, Sewell, Dunstable, LU6 1RP

12707 STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING

CRS

Members were provided with a notification of application for street naming and the developer had requested that the Town Council propose a street name for the development.

8 new dwellings and 1 Barn conversion – 9 new addresses:
Red Cow Farm Cottage, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, LU5 6JP

Suggestions from Members were:

- Red Cow Croft
- Red Cow Meadow
- Red Cow Close

Resolved: **To consider street name suggestions for Red Cow Farm Cottage, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis and advise Central Bedfordshire Council accordingly.**

**12708 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 8.10pm

Dated this 11th day of March 2024

Chairman



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

11th March 2024 at 7.00pm

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

Officers: Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington
M Herber

12741 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Billington and Cllr Herber.

12742 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12743 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12744 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 19th February 2024.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12745 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

[CB/24/00404/FULL](#) Conversion of garage with new front entrance
[\(click for more details\)](#) 70 St Michaels Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5DN
Ms Ema Milut

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

ORLS

[CB/24/00401/LB](#)
(click for more details)

Listed Building: Replacement of thatched roof
The Crown, East End, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LB
Stonegate Group

Comments: It was agreed that the proposed work was necessary; however, as this was a listed building, Members emphasised the need to observe the heritage of the property.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objections to this application.

[CB/24/00577/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Garage conversion to a living room
1 Pantheon Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6GW
Mr & Mrs Chaudhry

Comments: Members noted that garage area appeared large enough to contain two cars. The removal of 2 parking spaces from a 4-bedroomed property could lead to a breach of parking standards.

Members felt that further enquiry was needed to establish the number of bedrooms at the property.

[CB/23/03925/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Single storey front extensions
29, 31 and 33 Constable Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5ST
Applicant details: Redacted

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

Noted:

[CB/24/00520/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 against planning permission ref CB/21/00280/OUT (Erection of four chalet style bungalows)
Land North of Highfield House, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JP

[CB/24/00435/LDCP](#)
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Proposed internal works comprising the installation of a mezzanine within the building.
Land at Thorn Turn, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, LU6 1RT

This is for the installation of a mezzanine floor in an Amazon distribution centre. Members felt that this was likely to result in increased traffic and it was questioned if parking would be problematic.

CRS

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

[CB/23/04016/VOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Variation of condition number 2 of planning permission CB/11/00777/VOC (Variation of condition 11 of application (SB/TP/90/00395) to extend opening hours from 7.00am to 6.00am.) Variation sought to allow the petrol station to be used 24 hours daily.
Esso Houghton Green Service Station, 7 The Green,
Houghton Regis, LU5 5LB

12746 STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING

Members were provided with details of an application for street naming for:

Parcels 3 & 4 of Phase 3 Linnere, Houghton Regis

Members agreed that as the names were from a previously approved list there were no comments to be made to Central Bedfordshire Council.

**12747 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 7.18pm

Dated this 2nd day of April 2024

CRL Slough

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**Planning Committee****Minutes of the meeting held on****2nd April 2024 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	C Slough J Carroll E Cooper M Herber D Jones	Chairman
	Officers:	Louise Senior	Head of Democratic Services
Apologies:		E Billington D Taylor	
	Public:	0	

12763 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington and members were advised that Councillor Taylor was unable to sit on any committee until she had had the opportunity to sign her declaration of acceptance of office.

12764 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12765 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12766 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th March 2024.

Resolved To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12767 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/24/00259/FULL Erection of cast iron period compliant front entrance gate
(click for more with railings (retrospective)
details) 23 Sundon Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LL
Miss Nula Pearson

CB/24/00259

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

- The erected cast iron front entrance gate is outside of the applicant's land boundary
- The property is in a conservation area
- Not visually in keeping with the Grade II listed status of the building

Houghton Regis Town Council request that the gate is removed / repositioned to within the applicant's property boundary.

[CB/24/00782/RM](#)
(click for more details)

Following Outline Application CB/21/00280/OUT Erection of 4 chalet style bungalows. Approval sought for Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale, and the discharge of conditions 2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9. Highfield House, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JP

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council raised objections to this application on the grounds of the lack of fundamental information regarding access.

[CB/23/04039/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Proposed loft conversion with a rear dormer and Juliet balcony
17 Holyrood Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5FW
Mr Syed Abbas

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

[CB/24/00590/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Change of use from Class B8 Storage and Distribution and B2 General Industrial Use to a flexible use of the building for Class B8 Storage and Distribution, B2 General Industrial use, and Class E (sub-paragraph g (ii) research and development (iii) light industrial) Use.
Unit 7, Nimbus Park Houghton Hall Park, Porz Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5XR
St James's Place Unit Trust Group Ltd.

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objections to this application, subject to completion of noise survey and suitable conditions over future use.

[CB/24/00593/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Change of use from B2 General Industrial Use to a flexible use of the building for Class B8 Storage and Distribution, B2 General Industrial use, and Class E (sub-paragraph g (ii) research and development (iii) light industrial) Use.
Unit 3, Nimbus Park Houghton Hall Park, Porz Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5WZ
St James's Place Unit Trust Group Ltd.

CHLS

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objections to this application subject to completion of noise survey and suitable conditions over future use.

[CB/24/00344/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Erection of an end of terrace two storey new dwelling, attached to host dwelling. Demolition of a lean to and a brick garage for access and associated works.
72 Cemetery Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5DE
Mr Ervin Gjoshi

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

- **Proposed application does not meet the minimum size of 70 m2**
- **Overdevelopment**

[CB/24/00677/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Construction of 10 industrial units (Use Class B2) with associated parking, access, landscaping, ancillary infrastructure and upgrading of public rights of way.
Land Between Arenson Centre and Foster Avenue, Arenson Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable
Option Two Developments Ltd

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

- **This parcel of land is designated as open space in the Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan and as such it was felt that this should be taken into consideration and given serious weight.**

Noted:

[CB/24/00654/LDCP](#)
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Use of a dwelling as a children's home for a maximum of two children, with up to three carers, two sleeping/ awaking overnight working on a rota basis (C2)
129 Bromley Gardens, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5RJ

Comments: Members queried whether change of use should be classified as LDCP.

[CB/24/00669/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 17 against planning permission CB/21/01883/FULL (Erection of 57 dwellings including access from Bedford Road and full landscaping details).
Land at Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, LU5 6JS

CRHS

[CB/24/00817/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Condition 9 against planning permission ref. CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations. All development, works and operations to be in accordance with the Development Parameters Schedule and Plans.)
Houghton Regis North Site 1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis, Sundon Road, Houghton Regis

[CB/24/00757/NMA](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Non-material amendment to planning permission CB/21/05552/RM (Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT Mixed Development, supported by an Environmental Statement, which was submitted to the council during the application's determination process. Reserved Matters sought for Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for 100 homes and retail units (Use Class E)). Amendment sought to change of roof tiles.
Parcels 1 and 2 of Phase 2 of Houghton Regis North Site 1 HRN1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis

[CB/24/00731/PASP](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Prior Approval of the Installation or replacement of other Solar Photovoltaics Equipment Roof Mounted only :
Installation of 300 x PV solar panels.
Lister House, Blackburn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5BQ

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

12768 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL - PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE NO WAITING AND NO LOADING AT ANY TIME ON THORN ROAD AND GRENDALL LANE, HOUGHTON REGIS

Members will find attached the public notice issued by Central Bedfordshire Council in relation to the proposed introduction of:
No Waiting and No Loading At Any Time on the following length of road in Houghton Regis:-

1. Grendall Lane, both sides, from the junction with Thorn Road, extending in a south-easterly direction for approximately 215 metres.
2. Thorn Road, south side, from the junction with Grendall Lane, extending in a north- easterly direction for approximately 108 metres
3. Thorn Road, south side, from the junction with Grendall Lane, extending in a westerly direction for approximately 264 metres to the junction of Watling Street roundabout.
4. Thorn Road, north side, from the junction with Watling Street roundabout, extending in a north-easterly direction for approximately 390 metres.

Resolved: To confirm to Central Bedfordshire Council support for the proposed introduction of No Waiting and no Loading at any time on Thorn Road and Grendall Lane, Houghton Regis

**12769 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 22nd day of April 2024

Chairman

CRS

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET
ON 23rd January 2024**

Present: Town Cllrs: **C Slough (Vice-Chair), J Carroll, Y Farrell and D Jones**

CBC Cllrs: **T McMahon (Chair), C Alderman, S Goodchild and P Hamill**

CBC Officers: Anna Bosworth, Head of Investment, Employment & Skills (virtual)
Beverley Gaynor, Place Programme Manager (virtual)
Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager (virtual)
Fiona Steeley, Senior Community Engagement Officer (virtual)
Tobin Stephenson, Head of Services, MANOP (virtual)

HRTC Officers: Clare Evans, Town Clerk
Amanda Samuels, Administration Officer

Co-opted members: D Gibbons
J Anderson
C Reagan

1007 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

1008 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

**1009 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR
DISPENSATIONS**

None.

1010 MINUTES

Members were requested to:

Approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2023

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2023
and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

*In order to provide context for Agenda Items 5 & 6, it was agreed to bring forward Agenda
Item 10*



1011 BUSINESS SUPPORT SCHEMES

Representatives from CBC presented an update on schemes to support local businesses including new schemes under the UKSPF programme.

CBC had been allocated £4.6 million to deliver the missions from this fund. The breakdown was as follows:

Communities and Place - £1.98m

- Improvements to town centres and high streets
- Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects and the Community Grant Scheme had been launched
- Reduce the cost of living, energy efficiency, fuel poverty, climate change
- Funding to support relevant feasibility studies

Supporting Local Business - £2.06m

- Business innovation
- Business start-up
- Export grants
- Local business decarbonisation

People and Skills - £0.4333m

The programme was due to end in March 2025.

1012 CBC UPDATE REPORT

Members were provided with the CBC report for information and the following items were highlighted:

Community Safety

- Largest volume of cases related to noise pollution
- The CCTV report gathered data but was not a reflection of police response
- The Leisure Centre was seeing a positive trend in attendance and swimming instructors had been recruited
- The new community and leisure centre was progressing

Active Lifestyles Scheme

- The Falls Prevention programme was a part of this and was an important programme for older members of the community and online services continued to be provided.
- The library had been the venue for a number of service activities, including council events, a baby sensory centre and coffee mornings
- Houghton Hall was in consultation regarding the installation of play equipment for older children

Business, Investment, Employment & Skills

- Houghton Regis has seen an increase in commercial property enquiries
- The town centre vacancy rates remained stable.



Social Care Health & Housing

- CBC were working through an evaluation with Beds RCC regarding Time2Connect but, in the meantime, attendance continued to grow
- Drop-in sessions were being held at the library
- CBC had just embarked on a national NHS survey being delivered to adults aged 18 and over who use adult social care.

Environmental Services

- Large fly tip clearances had taken place in 5 areas
- Grass cutting commenced in March
- In the period 1 Nov – end Dec there had been 28 instances of abandoned vehicles

Communications, Insight & engagement

- The monthly town & parish council bulletin was sent out every month
- On-line topic sessions continued
- Warm spaces were being provided. CBC had been working with 23 community venues and providing financial contribution to help with energy and food. A directory of venues had been updated
- There was still money available for the Ward Cllr Grant Scheme and applications needed to be submitted by early March for processing
- A list of live consultations was provided

In response to the report, Members raised the following points:

- Hillborough Crescent had no penalty notices despite constant parking problems in the area
- Would Time2Connect funding be extended beyond March 2024?
- It was queried why CCTV had been put in place on Windsor Drive. The Camera from Johnson Court has been moved but not to the requested spot. Both issues would be followed up with the relevant person.
- The figures in the NEET report were queried. Sarah Hughes confirmed she would speak with a colleague to gather further detail.
- Skills programmes appeared to be numeracy based rather than on literacy. CBC confirmed that the Government-funded programmed was focussed on numeracy; however, literacy options were offered by CBC as part of their services and were available to those aged 19+. A Skills for All consultation looking at joining up with children's services and colleges would be starting soon.

1013 HRTC UPDATE REPORT**Corporate Services**

- Adoption and approval of the Corporate Plan. A consultation would take place in late February/early March
- Possible asset transfer update – HRTC agreed to make preliminary approach to CBC

Environment & Leisure

- Parkside Recreation Ground – installation of exercise equipment in Spring
- Tithe Farm Sports Project – work outstanding relates to UKPN, chasing CBC highways to sign off Section 278 agreement

- Grendall Lane Proposed Cemetery - ground water levels are being monitored until Autumn 2024)
- Public Realm Improvements
- Continuing with the Town Ranger Scheme
- Houghton Brook – completing winter works from Village Green past Windsor Drive
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Applications submitted
- UK Rural Prosperity Fund – Application not successful

Community services

- Youth services – application with Department of Levelling Up to extend delivery into Houghton Hall ward
- Events

Planning

- NHP – A response had been sent to the Inspector. It was hoped that the NHP Referendum would take place Spring / Summer 2024.

1014 CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF THE TOWNSEND DAY CENTRE FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Tobin Stephenson, Head of Service – MANOP (Meeting the Accommodation Needs of Older People), Social Care, Health and Housing updated Members on the CBC consultation regarding the future of the Townsend Day Centre.

A consultation would run from 8th January 2024 to 1st April 2024.

Mr Stephenson reported that the site was no longer considered fit for purpose. CBC had agreed to invest £1.25 million as part of the new HR leisure centre to meet the needs of people with additional needs with a view to consulting on this as alternative provision for Townsend Centre. This would provide increased opportunity for service users to use leisure centre facilities including the swimming facilities, gym and café.

Members questioned the suitability of the proposed location and whether the funds could have instead been used for the refurbishment of the Parkside Day Centre. It was suggested that the Parkside Day Centre offered more suitable premises, especially for adults with disabilities who may need a quieter space.

Members strongly believed that something bespoke was required for those with SEND needs, which would more readily provided consistent surroundings. It was felt access to the leisure centre facilities would be provided for all members of the public, of all abilities, and this proposal offered nothing of significance in addition to adults with disabilities. It was suggested that, perhaps, a more bespoke area should have been included as part of the leisure centre planning from the outset.

Members also questioned why community space had been reduced at All Saints View with a similar proposal for the leisure centre. It was felt that this was a cost-cutting exercise.

Mr Stephenson responded that space was not being taken away but that a community asset was being added. It had been designed in collaboration with various departments, with the



sensory experience very much in mind. Regarding the vacated land, the value of this would not outstrip that of the Kingsland site investment.

Members returned to the fact that facilities for the disabled should already be available and questioned what the significant additions were. Mr Stephenson highlighted that there were several significant additions that included an extra room, a sensory room, a wet-side changing space and a hoist.

There was still some dispute as to the benefits of the proposal; however, it was felt that this matter needed to be called to a halt in order to cover the remainder of the agenda. Mr Stephenson reiterated that he was happy to discuss the proposal further outside of the meeting.

1015 UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE REVIEW

Members were advised that an informal meeting was arranged by CBC between the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Clerks of the 5 Partnership Committees across Central Bedfordshire in December 2023.

Mrs Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, CBC, provided an update.

In early December, Executive Members for community liaison, including joint and partnership committees, had met to discuss how committees could work going forward and increase collaboration between the two tiers of councils. This was an evolution of the joint committees, encouraging more integration and co-operation and looking at what actions could be put in place to implement this. One of the short-term initiatives was to put the Executive Forward Plan on the Agenda, which provided the opportunity for councillors to see upcoming significant events.

It was highlighted that working collaboratively would be beneficial to all, as shared information was a powerful asset. Members generally agreed but felt that transparency was required as part of the process. Suggestions to further this included getting abstracts of minutes from other meetings to gather salient points. Sarah Hughes suggested that a further option would be for each of the joint committees to produce their own workplan and these could be brought under one report.

1016 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

Members were provided with the CBC Forward Plan of Key Decisions from 1st February 2024 to 30th January 2025. This would be included on future Partnership agendas to enable Members to consider items listed.

Including this item on future agendas would enable the Committee to see the key decisions CBC had to make and identify forthcoming items of interest. It would also provide an opportunity for discussion prior to consultation.



1017 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

It had been requested that potential co-option onto this committee remain as a Standing Agenda item.

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

Co-option

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

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

1018 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 were able to use this process to forward items for CBC's 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 for CBC's attention.

Although the following items had been identified in the discussions during the course of the meeting, they were not considered to be matters needing to be put forward to the Executive:

- Proposed move of Townsend Day Centre to the leisure centre – consultation to be responded to by Members
- More detailed information on NEET statistics and work to reduce numbers of young people identified as NEET

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.30pm

Dated this 23rd day of April 2024

Chairman



Calendar of Meetings, Briefings and Events 2024 / 2025

<i>Colour Key</i>	Bank Holiday	No Scheduled meeting	Civic and Events Officer event	Community Development Officer Event
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Date	Month		Day	Committee meeting	Event	Venue	Time	Lead Officer
6th	May	2024	Monday	Bank holiday Early May				
7th	May	2024	Tuesday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
13th	May	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
13th	May	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
15th	May	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
15th	May	2024	Wednesday	Town Council (AGM)		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
20th	May	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
21st	May	2024	Tuesday	Member Open Session		Virtual meeting via Teams	6pm	Town Clerk
27th	May	2024	Monday	Spring Bank Holiday				

3rd	June	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
3rd	June	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7.00pm	Head of Democratic Services
6th	June	2024	Thursday		D-Day 80th		Evening	Civic and Events Manager
10th	June	2024	Monday	Corporate Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Corporate Services
17th	June	2024	Monday	Town Council		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
19th	June	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
24th	June	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
25th	June	2024	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Civic and Events Manager
8th	July	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
8th	July	2024	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
13th	July	2024	Saturday		Carnival		All Day	Civic and Events Manager
15th	July	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
17th	July	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
22nd	July	2024	Monday		Skate Jam		Daytime	Community Services Manager
22nd	July	2024	Monday	Community Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Environmental & Community Services Community Services Manager

23rd	July	2024	Tuesday		Outdoor Cinema		Daytime	Community Services Manager
29th	July	2024	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Environmental and Community Services
30th	July	2024	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
5th	August	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
12th	August	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
19th	August	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
21st	August	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
26th	August	2024	Monday	Bank holiday Summer				
27th	August	2024	Tuesday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
2nd	September	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
7th	September	2024	Saturday		Houghton Rocks	Parkside Recreation Ground	All Day	Civic and Events Manager
9th	September	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
9th	September	2024	Monday	Corporate Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Corporate Services
10th	September	2024	Tuesday	Member Open Session		Virtual meeting via Teams	6pm	Town Clerk
16th	September	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services

17th	September	2024	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Civic and Events Manager
18th	September	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
23rd	September	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
30th	September	2024	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Environmental and Community Services
7th	October	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
7th	October	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
14th	October	2024	Monday	Town Council		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
16th	October	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
21st	October	2024	Monday	Community Services (Grants)		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Environmental and Community Services
22nd	October	2024	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
28th	October	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
2nd	November	2024	Saturday		Fireworks		afternoon/ evening	Civic and Events Manager
4th	November	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
4th	November	2024	Monday	Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk

10th	November	2024	Sunday		Remembrance Sunday		Morning	
11th	November	2024	Monday		Armistice Day		Morning	Civic and Events Manager
11th	November	2024	Monday	Community Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
18th	November	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
19th	November	2024	Tuesday	Member Open Session		Virtual meeting via Teams	6pm	Town Clerk
20th	November	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
25th	November	2024	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
26th	November	2024	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Civic and Events Manager
2nd	December	2024	Monday	Corporate Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Corporate Services
7th	December	2024	Saturday		Christmas Carol Service		afternoon/evening	Civic and Events Manager
TBC	December	2024			Santa Float			Civic and Events Manager
9th	December	2024	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
9th	December	2024	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services

14th	December	2024	Saturday		Santa's Grotto		All Day	Civic and Events Manager
16th	December	2024	Monday	Town Council		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
17th	December	2024	Tuesday	Member Open Session		Virtual meeting via Teams	6pm	Town Clerk
18th	December	2024	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
23rd	December	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
25th	December	2024	Wednesday	Bank Holiday Christmas Day				
26th	December	2024	Thursday	Bank Holiday Boxing Day				
30th	December	2024	Monday	XXXXXXXXXX				
1st	January	2025	Wednesday	Bank Holiday New Year's Day				
6th	January	2025	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
6th	January	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
13th	January	2025	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Environmental and Community Services
15th	January	2025	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
20th	January	2025	Monday	Town Council		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
27th	January	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services

28th	January	2025	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
3rd	February	2025	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
3rd	February	2025	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
4th	February	2025	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Civic and Events Manager
10th	February	2025	Monday	Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
17th	February	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
19th	February	2025	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
24th	February	2025	Monday	Community Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Environmental and Community Services
25th	February	2025	Tuesday	Member Open Session		Virtual meeting via Teams	6pm	Town Clerk
3rd	March	2025	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
3rd	March	2025	Monday	Corporate Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Corporate Services
10th	March	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
17th	March	2025	Monday	Town Council		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
19th	March	2025	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager

24th	March	2025	Monday	Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
25th	March	2025	Tuesday	Community Engagement Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Civic and Events Manager
31st	March	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
7th	April	2025	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
7th	April	2025	Monday	Community Services		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
12th	April	2025	Saturday		Easter Egg Hunt		Half Day	Civic and Events Manager
14th	April	2025	Monday	Annual Towns Meeting		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
15th	April	2025	Tuesday	Member Open Session		Virtual meeting via Teams	6pm	Town Clerk
16th	April	2025	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
18th	April	2025	Friday	Bank Holiday Good Friday				
21st	April	2025	Monday	Bank Holiday Easter Monday				
22nd	April	2025	Tuesday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
28th	April	2025	Monday	Environment & Leisure		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
29th	April	2025	Tuesday	Town Partnership		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk

5th	May	2025	Monday	Bank holiday Early May				
12th	May	2025	Monday	Leaders Briefing		Virtual meeting via Teams	11am	Town Clerk
12th	May	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
14th	May	2025	Wednesday	Town Council (AGM)		Council Chamber	7pm	Town Clerk
19th	May	2025	Monday	Personnel Sub-Committee		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services
21st	May	2025	Wednesday	Combating Crime Working Group		Hybrid meeting	11am	Community Services Manager
26th	May	2025	Monday	Spring Bank Holiday				
2nd	June	2025	Monday	Planning		Council Chamber	7pm	Head of Democratic Services



Houghton Regis Town Council

Committee Functions & Terms of Reference

Date of Approval:	Town Council 20 th May 2015
Date of Review:	18 th May 2016; 24 th May 2017 (amendments to HRNPSG approved 9 th October 2017); 3 rd July 2018; 15 th May 2019; 5 th May 2021, 18 th May 2022, 17 th May 2023; 15 th May 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 Meetings of Houghton Regis Town Council are to be conducted in accordance with the approved Standing Orders of Houghton Regis Town Council.

1.2 Legislation requires certain statutory functions of Houghton Regis Town Council to be discharged by the council itself. Houghton Regis Town Council cannot delegate responsibility to a committee or sub-committee for:

1. levying or issuing a precept,
2. borrowing money,
3. approving the council's annual accounts,
4. considering an auditor's report made in the public interest,
5. confirming (by resolution) that it has the statutory criteria to exercise the power of general competence or
6. adopting or revising the council's code of conduct.

1.3 The days and times of meetings will be set as far as possible on the following basis:

Town Council & Standing Committees – Mondays or ~~the next working day following a Bank Holiday~~ Tuesdays, at 7pm

Annual General Meeting (AGM) - Wednesdays

Partnership – Tuesdays at 7pm

Sub Committees – Mondays, or the next available working day following a Bank Holiday, at ~~6pm~~ 7pm

Working groups – Monday to Thursday to start no earlier than 9.30am and to conclude no later than 6.30pm

Inhouse Member training, open sessions, briefings – Mondays or Tuesdays at 6pm

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

3. Functions & Terms of Reference

Town Council

Terms of Reference

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

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

At other meetings of the Council:

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

Corporate Services as to any policy matters arising from them.

- To receive reports from committees and recommendations made therein.
- To receive the Town Mayors announcements.
- To consider and approve any short or long-term borrowing requirements including interest rates and borrowing period;
- To approve a 4-year rolling programme of policy review
- To receive conclusions drawn at any meeting of the Complaints and Complaints Appeals Sub-Committees.
- Monitor and review risk management issues (this line has been added as it now comes under Town Council, following a recommendation from the IA).

Functions

- The Town Council consists of all councillors.
- The quorum shall be one third of all councilors (five)
- In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
- In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
- If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.
- In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.

Corporate Services Committee

Terms of Reference

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

- received by the Clerk
- Reviewing policies of the Council as required by the Policy Document Review Schedule
 - To oversee and manage the financial obligations of the Council, including:
 - To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where, length and amount
 - To receive bank and cash reconciliation statements.
 - To receive an annual report (based on the previous financial year) on loans taken out, repayments made and outstanding liability
 - To confirm the use of direct debits, standing orders, BACS, CHAPS
 - Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
 - To recommend to Council the writing off of irrecoverable amounts.
 - To assemble and submit to the Town Council estimates of income and expenditure for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Committee no later than 30th November each year.
 - To monitor periodically the income and expenditure of the Committee.
 - To consider and determine any proposed expenditure or reduction in income for which no provision has been made in the approved budget.
 - To set the level of charges for facilities in respect of all the services of this Committee.
 - To exercise overall responsibility for staffing issues, excluding the appointment of the Town Clerk, who shall be appointed by the Town Council
 - To determine staff conditions of service including salary scales, working hours, employee assessments and evaluations etc
 - To determine all matters relating to staff including staffing resources and structures
 - To consider, determine and approve staff and Member training requirements

Functions

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

Environment & Leisure Committee

Terms of Reference

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

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

Functions

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

Community Services Committee

Terms of Reference

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

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

Functions

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

Planning Committee

Terms of Reference

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

which no provision has been made in the approved budget.

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

Delegated Powers to Officers – Planning

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

Functions

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

[Community Engagement Sub Committee \(reporting to Community Services Committee\)](#)

Functions

- To consider any matters referred to it by the Council or other Committees.
- To consider and submit to the Community Services Committee the scope, nature and form of the Council's community activities and council events (Programme of Events) for the following council year no later than 30th November each year.
- To assemble and submit to the Community Services Committee estimates of income and expenditure for each financial year in respect of all the services of this Sub Committee no later than 30th November each year.
- To monitor periodically the income and expenditure relevant to the Sub Committee.
- To consider and refer to the Community Services Committee any proposed expenditure or reduction in income for which no provision has been made in the approved budget.
- To recommend the level of charges for facilities in respect of all the services of this Sub Committee to the Community Services Committee.
- To monitor and review the Council's events.
- To monitor and review the Council's community activities.
- To advise Environment & Leisure Committee of events using land / buildings.
- To monitor and review each event and activity to ensure all areas of the town are covered by the annual programme of events.
- Delegate all operational decision-making and activities to the Head of Environmental and Community Services, Civic & Events Manager and Community Services Manager to take decisions on the arrangements for council events. The Community Engagement Sub Committee is to take a strategic view, and actings as a criteria friend to ensure the Council's activities and Events get better.
- To support and promote town wide events and activities to promote the town.
- To report to the Community Services Committee on the outcome of its deliberations.

Terms of Reference

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

Co-option

- To support engagement with local stakeholders the sub committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate, up to a maximum of 5. 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 sub committee by joint agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually.

Houghton Regis Town Partnership

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

Complaints Sub-Committee (reporting to Town Council)

Terms of Reference

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

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

Functions

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

Complaints Appeals Sub-Committee (reporting to Town Council)

Terms of Reference

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

Functions

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

Personnel Sub-Committee (Reporting to Corporate Services Committee)

Terms of Reference

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

Functions

- The Personnel Sub-Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Personnel Sub-Committee shall consist of 5 Councillors.
- Membership of the Sub Committee shall be drawn from Town Council
- The quorum shall be three members.

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

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

Terms of Reference

- Delegated powers to hear and action, as appropriate, employee disciplinary, grievance and appeal matters where these are beyond the authority delegated to the Clerk in the Scheme of Delegation;

- To consider and recommend to Town Council any disciplinary, grievance or appeal relating to the Clerk

Functions

- The Disciplinary, Grievance and Appeals Sub-Committee shall consist of 3 Councillors.
- Membership of the Sub Committee shall be drawn from Corporate Services Committee.
- The quorum shall be three members.

Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee (reporting to Town Council)

Terms of Reference

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

Functions

- The Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee shall consist of 5 members. The quorum shall be half of its members (three).

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

Terms of Reference

- ~~• To set an annual programme of events and to request suitable funding from the Community Services Committee no later than October in each financial year~~
- ~~• To consider all aspects relating to planning and hosting of council events, including health and safety requirements~~

- ~~• To monitor and review each council event.~~
- ~~• Delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk and the Civic & Events Officer to take decisions on the arrangements for council events.~~
- ~~• To report to the Community Services Committee on the outcome of its deliberations.~~

Functions

- ~~• The Events Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.~~
- ~~• The Events Working Group shall consist of 5 members. As the Working Group has no delegated authority to take decisions there is no quorum of members required.~~

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

Terms of Reference

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

Functions

- The Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group shall consist of 5 councillors. The quorum shall be three members.
- The Pride of Houghton Awards Working Group shall not comprise of any co-opted members or members of the Events Working Group.

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

Terms of Reference

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

- To report its decisions to Community Services Committee

Functions

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

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (reporting to Planning Committee)

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

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

Allotment Working Group

Terms of Reference

- ~~1. To consider all matters relating to the provision and management of allotments in Houghton Regis including:~~
 - ~~• New site specification~~
 - ~~• Allotment associations~~
 - ~~• Allotment tenancies~~
 - ~~• Management~~
 - ~~• Fees and charges~~

Functions

- ~~1. The Allotment Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.~~
- ~~2. The Allotment Working Group shall consist of five Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (three)~~

APPENDIX A

Houghton Regis Town Partnership Committee ¹

Purpose

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

Objectives

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

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

11. Promote resilience by encouraging communities to do more for themselves and champion local solutions.
12. Consider the ways in which proposals and initiatives can help to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations.

Membership

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

Who must be elected representatives of the wards.

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

Meetings and Quorum

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

Chairman and Vice Chairman

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

Secretariat

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

Decision making arrangements

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

Co-option

1. To support engagement with local stakeholders the Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be removed from the Committee by joint agreement of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
2. The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually.

Governance

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

APPENDIX B

Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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

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

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

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



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

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www.houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

Representatives on Outside Organisations 2024/2025

All Saints View Stakeholder Group		No longer require a representative
Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils	Cllrs x 3 Cllrs: D Jones C Slough M Herber	Date: October 2024 Frequency: Annual Time: evening Venue: TBC Notes: 3 cllrs are invited to attend the BATPC AGM (usually in October). At present Cllr Jones is also on the Board of the BATPC. He will remain on the Board until October.
Bedfordshire Bus Users	Cllr x 1 Cllr T McMahon	The next meeting will be held at Borough Hall in Bedford on 11th July at 14.00. Subsequent meetings will be quarterly after that, at venues to be agreed. Meetings have recently tended to be in the afternoons, although this will be generally agreed when dates for future meetings are set.
Chews Foundation	Cllr x 1 Cllr J Carroll	The next two meetings are Tuesday 4th June and Tuesday 3rd December 2024. Both meetings start at 10am and are held in Chew's House, 77 High Street North, Dunstable.
Citizens Advice	Cllr x 1 Cllr E Cooper	Meetings take place on a Thursday. Board meeting dates are May 2nd, August 1st and November 7th all between 2pm and 4pm. AGM is on 5th September starting at 6:30pm.
Hospice at Home Volunteers	Cllr x 1 Cllr D Jones	Meeting dates and times TBC.

Houghton Hall Park Project Board	Cllrs x 2 Cllrs: D Jones D Taylor	Frequency: Quarterly Time: 10am-12pm Venue: Microsoft Teams or HHP Visitors Centre Notes:
Houghton Hall Park MAG	Cllr x 1 Cllr J Carroll	The Management Board for Houghton Hall Park - The Council and the Town Council are entitled to nominate three members each to the Board ('Board Members'), one of whom must be a member of that Party's governing body. For the Management Advisory Group (MAG) - The Board should endeavour to ensure there are at least six Group Members, being two from each Party, one from the local Friends Group and one or more from other interested parties Meeting dates and times TBC.
Houghton Regis North Stakeholder Group	Cllr x 1 Cllr D Jones	
Memorial Hall Committee	Cllrs x 2 Cllrs: J Carroll E Costello	Meetings are held on Tuesdays at 7pm unless a special meeting is called which are held every other Month. The AGM is held in October.
SORTED	Cllrs x 1	Meeting dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th May • 9th July • 17th September • 29th October (AGM) • 12th November No longer require a representative to sit as a Trustee as have recruited some new Trustees. There is an AGM later in the year, a council member would be welcome to attend.
South Beds Dial-a-Ride	Cllrs x 1 Cllr M Herber	Our next meeting is on the 17 th April. Will advise when future dates are agreed. Usually our meetings are held on a Wednesday afternoon.
Friends of Windsor Drive Community Open Space	Cllrs x 1 Cllr A Slough	Meeting dates and location remain as third Wednesday of every month, Venue: alternating venues in Houghton Regis Notes: A full agenda is supplied before every meeting.



Houghton Regis Town Council

Standing Orders

Date of Approval:	Town Council 22 nd June 2015
Date of Review:	18 th May 2016; 18 th July 2017; 3 rd July 2018; 8 th October 2018 (following advice from NALC); 15 th May 2019; 18 th May 2022; 17 th May 2023; 15 th May 2024

Based on NALC Model Standing Orders 2018 (Revised 2020) and updated April 2022 (Update to Model Standing Order 18 only).

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Appendix A – Procedure for Recording Meetings

PREFACE

This is a set of Standing orders based on the model set of Standing orders produced by NALC (April 2018), revised 2020 and updated April 2022. Standing Orders that are in **bold type** contain legal and statutory requirements and are to be adopted without changing them or their meaning. Standing Orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but do not contain statutory requirements therefore they may be adopted or amended to suit a council's needs.

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

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights.

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

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

Notes:

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

STANDING ORDERS

1. MEETINGS

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

Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**

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

written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.

See Appendix A for the Procedure for Recording Meetings

- m A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- p The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 4(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council.
- s Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**
- t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:**
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;**
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present (virtually or in person) and the names of councillors who are absent, with or without apologies;**
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with**

- voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.
- u A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- v No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**
See standing order 6d(vii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.
- w If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- x A meeting shall not normally exceed a period of 2.5 hours unless by agreement of those Members present.

2 PROPER OFFICER

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
 - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such a manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email) and**

- **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them);**

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

- ii. subject to standing order 11, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under the freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with and subject to the council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(See also standing order 20);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of Planning Committee if an extension of time is not agreed by the Planning Department;
- xvi. manage access to information about the council via the publication

scheme; and

xvii. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

See also standing order 20.

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

3 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

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

4 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**

b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council decides.**

c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 6pm.**

d **In addition to the annual meeting of the council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the council decides.**

e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council.**

f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.**

g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the council.**

h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-**

elected as a member of the council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

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

5 DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is not adhered to, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or

improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

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

6 COMMITTEES & SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**

- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**

- c **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**

- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:

- i. shall determine their terms of reference;
- ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full council;
- iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
- iv. shall, subject to standing orders 6(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
- v. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
- vi. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman and vice chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
- vii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which shall be no less than three;
- viii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- ix. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;

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

7 PRESENCE OF NON-MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

8 WORKING GROUPS

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

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

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

10 QUESTIONS

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

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

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

typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

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

12 MOTIONS NOT REQUIRING WRITTEN NOTICE

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

xvii. to close a meeting.

13 RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

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

- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.

- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.

- p During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.

- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.

- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

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




14 RULES OF DEBATE – RESOLUTIONS

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

15 PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

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


16 DRAFT MINUTES

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

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for

accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

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

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

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of “Governance and Accountability for Local Council’s – a Practitioners’ Guide”.
- b All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council’s financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each member a list of all receipts and payments.
- d The Responsible Financial Officer shall provide to each Standing Committee meeting a statement to summarise:
 - i. the committees’ income and expenditure for the year to date;

- ii the committee's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
 - iii the balances held which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- e As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the full council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

- f The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to each councillor at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18 FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.

- b The council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below £30,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

- c Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

- d** A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(g) is subject to the “light touch” arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).
- e Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the council’s specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the council’s written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- f Neither the council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- g** Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC’s procurement guidance contains further details.

19 ESTIMATES / PRECEPTS

- a. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January. Once the Estimates have been accepted they

shall be known as the Budget.

- b. Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than 30th October.

20 EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

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

21 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 31.

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

22 HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance,

capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

- b The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- c In accordance with standing order 21(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 22(a).
- d Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in above shall be provided only to the Clerk.
- e The Clerk shall conduct an appraisal of all Council employees and shall keep a written record of it. The Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of Corporate Services Committee or in their absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Council shall conduct an appraisal of the Clerk and shall keep a written record of it. Significant outcomes of the appraisals shall be reported to the Corporate Services Committee.
- f Any grievance shall be handled in accordance with the Council's approved Grievance policy.
- g Any disciplinary matter shall be handled in accordance with the Council's approved Disciplinary policy.
- h Any staff sickness shall be handled in accordance with the Council's approved Sickness Management policy.

23 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

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

24 CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS

- a. Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.
- b. A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such

appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

- c. This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

25 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 1(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 25(d) and (f), dispensations requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the council, or committee or a sub-

committee for which the dispensation is required.

h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 25(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following apply:

i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or

ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or

iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

26 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

a Code of conduct complaints will be received, investigated and decided upon by the District or Unitary Council (Central Bedfordshire Council).

b Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 21 above, report this to the council.

c Where the notification in standing order 26(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 26(e).

d The council may:

i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is a legal requirement ;

ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;

e Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

27 RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

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

28 COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS

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

29 RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

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

30 RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 31.

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

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

See also standing order 21

- a. The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d. **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial**

action taken.

- e. **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f. **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

32 STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 11.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

33. VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE

- a A councillor who attends, virtually, a meeting of the council, or as an appointed member of a committee or sub-committee, may not take part in any discussion (unless specifically agreed to by the Chair) and has no right to vote.
- b Virtual attendance, by virtue of not being physically present, may render a meeting inquorate, see standing order 1w. Therefore, any councillor who intends to attend a meeting, virtually, must inform the Chair of their intention, prior to the meeting taking place, in order to avoid the meeting being inquorate.
- c An appointed member of a committee or sub-committee, who is unable to attend a meeting in person, in the first instance shall seek a substitute.

APPENDIX A

Procedure for recording meetings

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

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

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

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



Houghton Regis Town Council

Financial Regulations

Date of Approval:	Town Council 29 th September 2014
Date of Review:	18 th May 2016; 18 th July 2017; 3 rd July 2018; 15 th May 2019; 18 th May 2022; 17 th May 2023; 15 th May 2024

Based on NALC Financial Regulations 2019

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

1. GENERAL

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

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

- 1.10. The RFO;
- acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
 - assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.12. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.13. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;

- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.14. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:
- setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax Requirement);
 - approving accounting statements;
 - approving an annual governance statement;
 - borrowing;
 - writing off bad debts;
 - declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
 - addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors,
- shall be a matter for the full council only.
- 1.15. In addition, the council must:
- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of the revenue budget provided; and
 - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its terms of reference.
- 1.16. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or ‘the regulations’ shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC) or *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales - A Practitioners’ Guide*, available from the websites of One Voice Wales (OVW) and SLCC as appropriate.

2. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate Guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, the Corporate Services Committee shall consider and verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The Corporate Services Committee chairman shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;

- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms ‘independent’ and ‘independence’ shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors’ rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING

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

4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND

- 4.1. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue code other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget codes or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').
- 4.3. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year at the Corporate Services Committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.4. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £2,500. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.5. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.6. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.7. The RFO shall regularly provide each committee with a statement of income and expenditure to date, under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of 15% of the budget.
- 4.8. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

- 5.2. On a regular basis, and not less than monthly, the RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, by two signatories, and present the schedule, together with the relevant invoices. The two signatories shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied themselves shall authorise payment. The approved schedule shall be signed (electronically or in person) ruled off and initialled by the two signatories.
- 5.3. A detailed list of all payments made shall be disclosed, to members, through the Corporate Services Committee. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.4. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.5. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, within the suppliers payment terms.
- 5.6. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
 - a) When a payment is necessary the Clerk / RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment a list of payments shall be submitted to authorised signatories for approval.;
 - b) An expenditure item relating to continuing contracts and obligations provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the authorised signatories;
 - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements shall be submitted to the authorised signatories.
- 5.7. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any Policy statement approved by council.
- 5.8. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.9. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be effected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of the Corporate Services Committee.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to the authorised signatories shall be signed by two members of council and countersigned by an authorised officer in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at the regular meeting (not less than monthly) of the authorised signatories. Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the authorised signatories.
- 6.7. Payments made by variable Direct Debit, Standing Order, BACS or CHAPS are to be signed by two members and an officer and payments are reported to the authorised signatories.
- 6.8. The approval of the use of Direct Debit, Standing Order, BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council every year.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the Clerk payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the authorised signatories as made.
- 6.10. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Clerk in a sealed dated envelope.
- 6.11. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

- 6.12. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely off site.
- 6.13. The council shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall, software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.14. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk /RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The Bank Mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.15. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under “favourites”), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.16. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written notification by the supplier and supported by authority for change signed by the Clerk.
- 6.17. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk / RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1000 unless authorised by council or committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.18. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.19. The Clerk / RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the Clerk / RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
 - a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £250 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
 - b) The RFO shall maintain as postage float of up to £800 for the purpose of postage.
 - c) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
 - d) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.2 above.

7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES

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

8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for Borrowing Approval, and subsequent arrangements for the Loan shall only be approved by full council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal Borrowing Approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible

assets) shall be subject to approval by the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

- 8.3. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.4. The Council shall ensure the approved Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy and Investment Arrangements are in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance and shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.5. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.6. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.7. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. INCOME

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the council to ensure that more

than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

10. ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

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

11. CONTRACTS

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- a. Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

- iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b. Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £30,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations².
 - c. The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)³.
 - d. When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
 - e. Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
 - f. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
 - g. Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders¹⁸ and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
 - h. When it is to enter into a contract of less than £30,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £250 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.2 above shall apply.
 - i. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

- j. Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken

² The regulations require councils to use both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender (the UK e-notification service) to advertise contract opportunities, and set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

³ Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts £213,477
- b. For public works contracts £5,336,937

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

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

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

13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT

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

14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the

location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. INSURANCE

- 15.1. Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the Clerk/RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 15.2. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.3. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

16. CHARITIES

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

Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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

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Houghton Regis Town Council

Scheme of Delegation

Date of Approval:	Town Council 18 th April 2016
Date of Review:	24 th May 2017; 3 rd July 2018; 15 th May 2019; 20 th July 2020, 12 th May 2021, 18 th May 2022, 17 th May 2023, 15 th May 2024

This Scheme of Delegation sets out how the Council delegates some of its powers and duties to Officers of the Council. These delegations are necessary for the effective day to day running of the Council and to prevent every decision having to come to a Committee/Council meeting for agreement. This Scheme of Delegation will be reviewed by Council annually alongside the review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

This scheme does not delegate to Officers any matter that is reserved by law to the Council or may not be delegated to an Officer.

The Town Clerk may delegate any powers and duties to other Officers within the Council. A delegation to a subordinate Officer shall not prevent the Town Clerk from exercising the same power or duty at the same time

The Town Clerk shall exercise these powers in accordance with:

- Approved budgets
- Council's Standing Orders & Financial Regulations
- Council's Policies
- All statutory common law and contractual requirements

The Scheme places an obligation on Officers to keep Members of the Council properly informed of any action arising under these delegations and to record decisions.

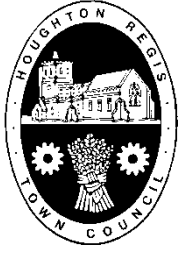
GENERAL		
1	To exercise any statute, regulation or order which confers functions or duties of the Proper Officer	Town Clerk
2	To sign, or where appropriate, have sealed on behalf of the Town Council any Orders, Deeds or Documents necessary to give effect to any of the matters contained in reports or in any resolution passed by the Town Council	Town Clerk
3	To take any proceedings or other steps as may be necessary to enforce and recover any debt owing or other obligation to the Council	Town Clerk
4	To institute and appear in legal proceedings authorised by the council	Town Clerk
5	To appear or make representations to any tribunal or public Inquiry into any matter in which the Council has an interest (in its own right or on behalf of the citizens of Houghton Regis)	Town Clerk
6	To alter the date or time of a Council, Committee, Sub-Committee, Working Group meeting but, before doing so shall consult the Mayor, Group Leaders or Committee Chairmen	Town Clerk
7	To decide arrangements for the closure of the council offices in the Christmas/New Year period, subject to consultation with the Mayor	Town Clerk
8	To deal with the day-to-day matters relating to the use and hiring of Council Buildings	Head of Democratic Services
9	To negotiate and enter into contractual arrangements for artistes/promoters in relation to events held in Houghton Regis organised by the Town Council	Civic & Events Manager
10	To act as the Council's Designated Officer for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000	Town Clerk
11.	To apply for planning consent for the carrying out of development by the Town Council.	Town Clerk
12.	To respond to consultations on planning applications/highway matters/rights of way matters/street naming and other matters subject to the comments of the Planning Committee	Head of Democratic Services
13	To respond to complaints made under the Council's complaints procedure and to make such ex-gratia payments in settlement of such complaints as are considered justified, subject to ratification by the Corporate Services Committee	Town Clerk
14	To manage, monitor and review the Council's internal control procedures	Town Clerk
15	To manage, monitor and review the Council's Corporate Risk Management Strategy	Town Clerk
16	To arrange all civic ceremonies and ancillary events in consultation with the Mayor	Civic & Events Manager
17	To maintain the Council's Standing Orders	Town Clerk
FINANCIAL		
18	To be the Responsible Financial Officer for the purposes of s151 Local Government Act 1972	Town Clerk
19	To determine the financial management and accounting procedures and extent of financial records	Town Clerk
20	To operate the Council's banking arrangements	Town Clerk
21	To pay all accounts properly incurred	Town Clerk

22	To pay all subscriptions to organisations to which Council belongs.	Town Clerk
23	To pay salaries and allowances	Town Clerk
24	To act as the Council's Administrator for the Bedfordshire Pension Fund	Town Clerk
25	To collect all income due to the Council including appropriate interest and costs	Town Clerk
26	To make all necessary arrangements for the provision of internal and external audit service for the Council	Town Clerk
27	To negotiate settlements in connection with claims made by and against the Council in consultation with the Council's Insurers where appropriate.	Town Clerk
28	To incur expenditure on revenue items with the approved estimates and budgets	Town Clerk
29	To incur expenditure on capital schemes within the Council's approved Capital Programme	Town Clerk
30	To use the Repairs & Maintenance Budgets for the maintenance, replacement or repair of existing buildings, plant, vehicles or equipment	Head of Environmental and Community Services
31	To enter into leasing and/or contract hire agreements for the acquisition of vehicles, machinery and equipment on such items as are considered appropriate	Head of Environmental and Community Services
32	To accept quotations or tenders for work, supplies or services (where tenders are required by the Council's Financial Regulations) subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost not exceeding the approved budget • The tender being the most economically advantageous to the Council according to the criteria set out in the tender documentation • All the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations being complied with 	Town Clerk
33	To carry out virements of sums between cost centres in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations	Heads of Service
34	To exercise the powers of the Council to borrow and invest	Town Clerk
35	To manage investments. Apply for and repay loans as appropriate in accordance with the Financial Regulations.	Town Clerk
36	To authorise action for the recovery of debts	Town Clerk
37	To write-off debts up to £1000 where the sum is considered irrecoverable.	Town Clerk
38	To maintain a Register of Assets and Inventory of Equipment	Town Clerk
39	To determine the Council's insurance requirements on behalf of the Council	Town Clerk
40	To make all necessary arrangements for the Council's insurances.	Town Clerk
41	To enter into contracts for the purchase and supply of goods and services for the use in their respective services within estimates	Town Clerk
42	To prepare a draft budget for consideration by the Council	Town Clerk
43	To prepare the final accounts for each financial year	Town Clerk

44	To pay full compensation for loss where the Council is likely to be legally liable to pay compensation, where sued	Town Clerk
45	To pay any proved out of pocket expenses of complaints where complaint is upheld	Town Clerk
46	To provide banking facilities for the Mayor's Charity Fund and to pay the Mayor's Annual Allowance as may be determined from time to time	Town Clerk
47	To maintain the Council's Financial Regulations	Town Clerk
EMPLOYMENT		
48	To exercise the functions of the Council's Head of Paid Service under S4 Local Government & Housing Act 1989	Town Clerk
49	To manage the Council staff in accordance with the Council's Policies, Procedures and Budget	Town Clerk
50	To appoint posts including apprentices	Town Clerk
51	To appoint temporary employees as and when required within the budget estimates	Town Clerk
52	To prepare job description and person specifications, placing of advertisements and short-listing	Town Clerk
53	To approve individual salary grading within any job evaluation grading structure approved by Council	Town Clerk
54	To manage staff performance	Town Clerk
55	To control discipline and performance, including power of suspension and dismissal	Town Clerk
56	To exercise Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures in accordance with the Council's Procedures	Town Clerk
57	To determine approved duties for payment of travel, subsistence and car allowances to Officers where they represent the Council	Town Clerk
58	To approve/refuse applications for re-grading, remove any bars in salary scales and to authorise salary increments and accelerated increments.	Town Clerk
59	To approve the payment of overtime	Town Clerk
60	To agree minor variations to the conditions of employment	Town Clerk
61	To implement and monitor arrangements for annual leave, flexi-time, sickness absence, flexible/hybrid working, maternity and paternity leave in accordance with the Council's Policies	Town Clerk
62	To authorise training in line with Council's Policies	Town Clerk
63	To authorise the provision of branded clothing & PPE	Town Clerk
64	To approve the payment of claims from employees for compensation for loss or damage to personal property	Town Clerk
65	To negotiate and agree settlements on behalf of the Council in relation to any proceedings in the Employment Tribunal	Town Clerk
66	To agree to premature retirement on the grounds of duly certified ill health	Town Clerk
67	To terminate employment during probation and to review salary on completion of probationary periods.	Town Clerk
68	To commission legal and professional advice on staffing matters	Town Clerk
69	To represent the Council at any conference, meeting, or inquiry to which the Council is invited unless the Council has indicated	Town Clerk

	otherwise and to exercise any voting rights conferred by the corporate membership of any body	
70	To offer training to Councillors	Town Clerk
71	To exercise any functions delegated to the Town Clerk in his/her absence	Head of Corporate Services
PROPERTY		
72	To manage land and property of the Council	Head of Environmental and Community Services
73	To agree the terms of any lease, licence, conveyance or transfer	Town Clerk
74	To sell surplus materials, vehicles, plant, equipment and goods, salvage scrap and other waste	Head of Environmental and Community Services
75	To grant easements, wayleaves and licence over Council land	Town Clerk
76	To initiate legal action or proceedings against unauthorised encampments or encroachments on Council land	Town Clerk
77	To direct the custody of Council property and documents in accordance with s226 Local Government Act 1972	Town Clerk
78	To exercise responsibility for the safe custody and maintenance of the Civic Regalia	Town Clerk
79	To place architectural, quantity surveying, civil engineering and other similar specialist work with outside agencies within the appropriate fee scale and the Council's relevant estimates, standing orders and financial regulations	Town Clerk
80	To appoint the Principal Contractor and Planning Supervisors for the purposes of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations.	Town Clerk
81	To requisition off site services in respect of any construction contract approved by the Council for which they act as Architect or Contract Administrator	Town Clerk
82	To make applications for all statutory consents necessitated by any approved Council proposal or development	Head of Environmental and Community Services
83	To engage valuers or selling agents on behalf of the Council	Town Clerk
HEALTH AND SAFETY		
84	To oversee the discharge of the Council's responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974	Town Clerk
LEGAL PROCEEDINGS		
85	To take and discontinue legal proceedings in any court or at any tribunal	Town Clerk
86	To take Counsel's advice or instruct Counsel to represent the Council	Town Clerk
87	To seek injunctions and commence proceedings for the purposes of: • Enforcement in accordance with the Council's Policies	Town Clerk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovering Money due to the Council • Recovering or otherwise preserving possession of the Council's land or property • Defending the interests of the Council • Appealing against a decision affecting the interests of the Council and responding to appeals against action taken by the Council 	
88	To represent the Council at Court or any tribunal or to make arrangements for appropriate representation	Town Clerk
89	To negotiate and settle the terms of documents to give effect to a decision of the Council or any of the Committees or any officer acting under delegated powers	Town Clerk
90	To be the responsible officer for the co-ordination and operation of the legal requirements under the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act	Town Clerk
91	To serve requisitions for information	Town Clerk
92	To authorise any member of staff to swear affidavits as to matter within their knowledge in any court proceedings involving the Council	Town Clerk
93	To authorise any member of staff to appear on behalf of the Council before a Magistrate's Court	Town Clerk
RECREATION & EVENTS		
94	To grant permissions for the use of recreational open space in accordance with Council Policy and statutory requirements	Head of Environmental and Community Services
95	To organise sporting, recreational, cultural events and entertainments in accordance with approved budget provision and the Council's Financial Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic & Events Manager • Community Services Manager
96	To liaise with the Safety Advisory Group and carry out any necessary actions arising from recommendations from that body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic & Events Manager • Community Services Manager



Date: 29th April 2024

Title: Machinery Renewals Programme

Purpose of the Report: To present the anticipated machinery renewals programme for 2024/25.

Contact Officer: Ian Haynes, Head of Environmental and Community Services

1. RECOMMENDATION

To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2024/25 and recommend to Council on the 15th May '24 the planned renewal/replacement funding through a hire purchase scheme. Additional funding is being sought to support additional machinery to enable the grounds team to expand their services into the growth area.

Hire purchase agreement/loan supported by Internal Auditor.

2. BACKGROUND

On an annual basis, members receive this report to advise on anticipated spending on new or replacement machinery.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Members are advised that the new renewals programme, as attached, has been updated.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendation

Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation

Financial Implications

- Budget available—£20,000 is provided in budget 299-4851 (Env Capital & Projects -Machinery Renewals) for the payment of a hire purchase agreement of circa £100,000 for a period of 5 years.
- Agree to dispose of the following equipment.
- Trimax Snake (£7,000.00)
- Kubota F3890 KX68 BDZ (£7,500.00)
- Kubota F3890 KX68 BEJ (£7,500.00)
- Kubota F3890 LR21 HKO (£10,000.00)
- Kubota TEG Flail Deck (£1,200.00)
- Kubota TEG Flail Deck (£1,200.00)

Estimated disposal value in brackets

Risk Implications

- There are no risk implications arising from the recommendation

Equalities Implications

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

This project/issue does not discriminate.

Press Contact

There are no press implications arising from the recommendation.

5. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Purchasing of the new equipment will enable the Town Council to continue to provide well-maintained sports and recreation provision for all Town Council sports and recreation facilities.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix A Machinery renewals Programme
Appendix B Draft minutes; Environment & Leisure Committee held 29th April 2024

MACHINERY RENEWALS PROGRAMME

YEAR	Make	Model	Purpose	Cost	Life Expectancy	Date of Purchase	Forecast Date of Replacement
2021/22							
	Trimax	Snake	Grass Cutting	£19,950	10 Years	2018	2028/29
	KUBOTA	FS3890 Ride on Mower x 3	Grass Cutting	£17,000.00	10 Years	2021	2031/32
	KUBOTA	TEG1600 Flail Decks x 2	Grass Cutting	£5,603.82	10 Years	2021	2031/32
	STIHL	FS410C x 2	Strimming Grass	£1,600.00	5 Years	2021	2026/27
	KARSHER	Surface Washer 7 Nozzle Kit	Power Washer	£663.00	10 Years	2021	2031/32
	FORD	Ford Ranger	Transportation	£27,024.00	10 Years	2021	2031/32
2022/23							
	SISIS	Intermediate Rake attachment	Raking Grass	£909.50	10 Years	2022	2032/33
	DW TOMLIN	Tractor Mounted Harrow	Levelling Pitches	£4,228.75	10 Years	2022	2032/33
	KUBOTA	XL300 Spreader	Fertilizer Spreader	£1,888.00	10 Years	2022	2032/33
	SISIS	Combirake	Cricket Wicket Prep	£603.50	10 Years	2022	2032/33
	STIHL	FS410C x 2	Strimming Grass	£1,600.00	5 Years	2022	2027
	FORD	Ranger	Vehicle	£20,000	10 Years	2023	2033/34
2023/24							
	SISIS	Quadro plane	Spikes, rolls and brushes football pitches	£2,000 approx	Part ex		
	SISIS	Slitter & roller	Spikes and rolls football pitches (improved quality)	£5,000 approx	20 years	2023	2043

2024/25							
New	TBC	Flail Mower		Circa £50,000			
New	TBC	Tri-Deck Roller Mower		Circa £35,000			

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Environment & Leisure Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
29th April 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors: A Slough Chairman
P Burgess
J Carroll
E Cooper
E Costello
Y Farrell
W Henderson
T McMahon

Officers: Ian Haynes Head of Environmental & Community Services
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: 0

12796 APOLOGIES

None.

12797 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12798 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

12799 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2024.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 5th February 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12800 TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE

Members were provided with a verbal update on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project, as follows:

- A date for the transformer to be installed was still awaited from UKPN. The legal contractual date is for the end of June/beginning of July.

- The water is connected.
- A quote had been received from CBC for Section 278 highway works.

With the contractor off-site, there had been more ASB incidents, and the surrounding fence had been scaled. It was suggested that a nearby storage cupboard was providing a foothold and could be moved to deter future incidents.

12801 TERRA CROFT LEISURE GARDENS UPDATE

Members were informed that the waiting list had increased from 176 to 216. At the most recent inspection, Forty-six allotments had been rated 'green', 1 was the plot was vacant, and there had been one recent termination.

It was felt that the rules and regulations of tenancy should be reviewed and shortened. Clarity about what constituted a 'structure' was needed, especially in relation to wind protection.

Members agreed that there was merit in obtaining costings for a composting toilet, and it was suggested that an amendment be made to the resolution to include water butts in the costings.

Proposed by: Cllr Mc Mahon
Seconded: Cllr Farrell

Members voted unanimously in favour of the amendment.

Resolved: 1) To Consider reviewing the Tenancy Agreement and Rules and Regulations, ensuring that allotment holders are consulted to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

2) To instruct officers to obtain quotes for supplying and installing a suitable composting toilet and water butts for Terra Croft Leisure Gardens.

12802 GROUNDS MACHINERY RENEWAL

Members were presented with the anticipated machinery renewals programme for 2024/25. During the budget setting, it had been proposed that new equipment could be procured on hire purchase to replace the following items on the schedule:

- Trimax Snake
- Kubota ride on mower x 3
- Kubota flail decks x 2

The proposed new items were a flail mower and a tri-deck roller mower. These replacements' merits were that for the same carbon output, productivity would be significantly increased. Additionally, in some instances, expenditure on parts would be reduced.

Resolved: To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2024/25 and recommend to Council on the 15th May '24 the planned renewal/replacement funding through a hire purchase scheme. Additional funding is being sought to support additional machinery to enable the grounds team to expand their services into the growth area.

Hire purchase agreement/loan supported by Internal Auditor.

12803 'LETTERS TO HEAVEN' POST BOX

Members were asked to consider a request to install a 'Letters to Heaven' post box in Houghton Regis Cemetery.

Letters posted in the cemetery would be collected regularly and then composted. Members were generally in favour but requested that the resulting compost should be used within the cemetery or the Garden of Remembrance.

Resolved: To endorse purchasing and installing a white 'Letters To Heaven' post box within Houghton Regis Cemetery.

12804 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Central Bedfordshire Council wanted to support more town and parish councils to increase biodiversity and enhance the local environment by managing road verges for the benefit of wildlife.

Members were advised that HRTC could work with Central Bedfordshire Council to:

- Trial no-mow sites as part of [Plantlife's No Mow May campaign](#)
- Reduce the frequency of grass cutting in urban areas
- Promote wildflower growth on suitable road verges

Members were requested to suggest sites to be included in the project, for review by Central Bedfordshire Council Officers, and to voice any concerns. Suggested sites were:

- Parkside Drive along its length and the area at Park Road North
- Windsor Drive
- Trident Drive
- The Link

The project was scheduled to commence in the 2025 growing season. It was felt that residents should be advised of the proposed project and asked for feedback.

Resolved: To consider and recommend suitable sites to Central Bedfordshire Council.

12805 ANGLIA IN BLOOM ENTRIES 2024

Members were provided with a list of 2024 Anglia in Bloom campaign entries. They were informed that Anglia in Bloom plans to visit and conduct face-to-face judging on all main categories, while additional categories will be judged virtually using 8 photographic images of each site.

The 2024 Houghton Regis in Bloom entries will be;

Main Category

- 1) Large Town – Houghton Regis
- 2) Historic Parks and Gardens – Houghton Hall Park

Virtually Judged

- 3) Cemeteries – Houghton Regis Cemetery
- 4) Churchyard – All Saints Church
- 5) Public Park – The Village Green
- 6) Public Park – Parkside Recreation Ground
- 7) Public Park – Linnere Park
- 8) Nursing/Care Home – All Saints View Assisted Living
- 9) Nature Conservation Area/nature Reserve – Windsor Drive
- 10) Nature Conservation Area/nature Reserve – Dog Kennel Down
- 11) Nature Conservation Area/nature Reserve – Houghton Brook and Flood Storage Area

Three hours would be dedicated to showcasing the town, and the proposed route would include All Saints View, the Village Green, the Memorial Hall, Houghton Hall Park, Lime Avenue, and Windsor Drive. Final details need to be established, but Parkside Drive, Thornhill Primary, Linnere Park, Farmstead, and potentially Chiltern School would also form part of the route.

Resolved: To endorse the eleven 2024 Anglia in Bloom campaign entries.

12806 VILLAGE GREEN – CIRCUS AND FAIR VISITS 2024

Members were advised to consider the amended date for Tom Smith's Fun Fair, which had previously been declined at the February meeting (Minute 12696) due to a clash with the Houghton Rocks event. The amended proposal was as follows:

Tom Smith's Fun Fair – The Village Green

Pull on site 9th September 2024

Open 11th September till 15th September 2024 – 5 days of opening

Pull off-site 16th September 2024

Members voiced concerns about the parking issues arising from these events and enquired how this could best be managed. Members were informed that HRTC had no jurisdiction regarding parking and deferred to Central Bedfordshire Council in these matters. However, there were byelaws applying to the Village Green, and ensuring these were observed could be delegated to the police. It was also agreed that members of the public should be encouraged to use available car parking facilities and to put this request on the website.

Resolved: To determine the additional fair visit date on The Village Green

12807 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with the income and expenditure report highlighting significant variances for the Environment & Leisure Committee date. They were advised that everything would balance as expected if the costs for Tithe Farm—which skewed the figures somewhat—were omitted. A calculation minus the Tithe Farm costs could be produced for Members to demonstrate this.

12808 CEMETERY FEES 2024/2025 AND REVIEW OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

Members were advised that the budget for 2024/25 had been set based on fees as of 2023/24.

Members were requested to consider a zero increase in 2024/25 Cemetery Fees; however, due to a number of complaints and concerns about the charges contained within the fees, Members were asked to instruct officers to undertake a review of both the fees and the rules and regulations.

Resolved: To set Cemetery fees at zero increase under the control of the Environment & Leisure Committee for 2024/2025 and instruct officers to review the fees and the rules and regulations to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

12809 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

At the March meeting of the Town Council, Members approved allocating the objectives to standing committees to enable more detailed consideration and progression (Minute 12755).

Members were provided with the allocation of objectives for delivery by the Committee. Members were asked to prioritise a number of objectives for consideration/delivery in the next twelve months.

Members suggested the following objectives:

- To improve the signage between key sites/destinations
- To improve integration between existing and new communities
- Play equipment and an inclusive playground to be incorporated
- Sporting provision
- Community action days

These suggestions would be taken away and the methods of funding would be considered.

Resolved: Approve the Environment & Leisure Services work plan and select a number of objectives for consideration/delivery in the next twelve months.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.31pm

Dated this day of

Chairman

DRAFT

