



# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr E Cooper**

Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

e-mail: [info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk)

18th November 2024

**To:** **Members of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee**

**Cllrs:** E Cooper, Y Farrell, T McMahon, C Rollins, A Slough

**Co-opted members:** J Batchelor, K Wattingham

**Police:** Sgt Hayley Miles

**Outside organisations:** Bidwell West, Linnere

## Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **Community Engagement Sub-Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street, on **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.00 pm.**

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](#)

**Sarah Gelsthorp**  
**Civic and Events Manager**

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

## Agenda

### 1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

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<sup>1</sup> This meeting may be filmed by the Council for subsequent broadcast online and can be viewed at <http://www.houghtonregis.org.uk/minutes>

*Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.*

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

## 2. 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.

## 3. 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.

## 4. MINUTES

Pages 4 - 7

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**Recommendation: To confirm the minutes of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

## 5. LINMERE EVENTS

A representative from Linmere will give an update regarding events being held.

**Recommendation: To note the report**

## 6. BIDWELL WEST EVENTS

A representative from the Bidwell West Community Association will give an update regarding events being held.

**Recommendation: To note the report**

## 7. CHRISTMAS 2024

A verbal update will be given regarding the progress of the Christmas Events 2024.

**Recommendation: To note the report**



**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL  
Community Engagement Sub-Committee  
Minutes of the meeting held on  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman  
E Cooper  
C Rollins  
A Slough

Co-opted Members J Batchelor

Officers: Sarah Gelsthorp Civic and Events  
Manager  
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Also Present: Cllr C Slough  
Father D Galanzino

Apologies: Councillor: Y Farrell

**CEC12 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Farrell.

**CEC13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**CEC14 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024.**

**CEC15 CO-OPTIONS**

Members queried the process of co-option applications as these had been submitted later than usual in the year. Members were informed that the process would normally take place at the first meeting; however, it had been necessary for Members to agree to co-options at the first meeting and applications could only now be reviewed.

Members were provided with copies of the co-options and were requested to consider the applications. Members agreed to accept both co-options.

**Resolved: To co-opt Ken Wattingham and Jeanette Batchelor on to the Community Engagement Sub Committee, to serve until May 2025.**

**CEC16 LINMERE EVENTS**

A representative from Linnmere was unavailable to provide an update.

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**CESC17 BIDWELL WEST EVENTS**

A representative from the Bidwell West Community was unavailable to provide an update

**CESC18 FIREWORKS EVENT**

A verbal update was given regarding the progress of the Fireworks Display 2024.

It was confirmed that a fireworks event would be taking place on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. A fireworks company had been hired, Billy Lee was confirmed for hosting duties, and sound and lighting was being investigated. Two sites were under consideration and the final venue was expected to be confirmed by early October. If the preferred venue was confirmed, food stalls and fairground rides would also be organised for the event. Members were informed that the event was expected to follow a similar pattern to previous events and would be free. Members availability to assist on the day would be requested in early October.

Members questioned whether it was possible to purchase some radios for this and similar events, as these would provide a simple and effective means of communication. The Civic and Events Manager agreed to investigate this further.

**Resolved: To note the report**

**CESC19 CHRISTMAS 2024**

A verbal update was given regarding the progress of the Christmas 2024.

A picture of the proposed replacement costume for Regis the Lion was circulated among Members. The costume would be green and gold and include a blue cape with the Houghton Regis logo on the back. Members were advised that the purchase would be funded by the UKSPF and should arrive in time for Christmas events.

The Santa Float was scheduled to take place, once again, and would incorporate visits to a number of static locations, each for approximately 30 minutes, over a two-day period. The proposed dates were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, subject to confirmation.

The Mayor's Carol Service and tree lighting had been scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> December and Santa's Grotto was scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> December; however, an event was planned by Dunstable Town Council for 14<sup>th</sup> December and, consequently, Houghton Regis Town Council had been refused a licence to hold a market. HRTC was limited to two options:

- Limit the Santa's Grotto event to four stalls
- Change the date of the Santa's Grotto event

Dunstable Town Council was scheduled to hold a committee meeting in November to discuss the Market Charter issue, but this would leave insufficient time for the HRTC Christmas events to be organised or advertised in the Town Crier. It was, therefore, necessary to decide how to proceed prior to the November meeting.

The Civic and Events Manager expressed a preference to hold both Santa's Grotto and the Mayor's Carol Service on 7<sup>th</sup> December. It was acknowledged that this would necessitate a significant number of hours involvement from volunteers, but the alternative of limiting stall numbers to four was not considered a satisfactory option.

Members questioned the likely outcome if the event went ahead on 14<sup>th</sup> December. Members were advised that the Town Clerk had investigated this and that HRTC could incur penalties for proceeding with the event. The Sub-Committee was questioned what the implications of ignoring any incurred penalties were likely to be. The Civic and Events Manager informed Members that the Town Clerk was currently seeking further advice from NALC, but that the penalty could be as much as 10% of an organisation's annual turnover.

Members were not in favour of changing the Santa's Grotto date as this would involve long hours and could affect the recruitment of volunteers. It was felt that the refusal by Dunstable Town Council to issue a licence should be challenged as the issue had continued over many years without a satisfactory resolution. While understanding the frustration of the Sub-Committee, the Civic and Events Manager expressed unwillingness to proceed in full knowledge of the regulations and the risk of repercussions impacting Houghton Regis residents. It was also felt that proceeding with the event on 14<sup>th</sup> December might prove detrimental to the discussions scheduled by Dunstable Town Council for November.

One suggested option was to hold Santa's Grotto on 7<sup>th</sup> and reschedule the Mayor's Carol Service event to 8<sup>th</sup> December. Father Galanzino was able to confirm that All Saints Church would be available on this date if there was consensus to move the carol service from Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>. Members thanked Father Galanzino for his assistance while acknowledging that events would then be concentrated at the start of the month.

Members had three potential options:

- Hold both Santa's Grotto and the Mayor's Carol Service on 7<sup>th</sup> December
- Hold Santa's Grotto on 7<sup>th</sup> December and the Mayor's Carol Service on 8<sup>th</sup> December
- Proceed as planned with the Mayor's Carol Service on 7<sup>th</sup> December and Santa's Grotto on 14<sup>th</sup> December

Members agreed that holding both events over 7-8<sup>th</sup> December was a possible alternative; however, Members remained unhappy at the impact the licence refusal was likely to have in terms of additional work and potential expense. The Civic and Events Manager highlighted that all arrangements were in place for 7<sup>th</sup> December and providers would have to be contacted for an event being moved to 8<sup>th</sup> December; therefore, the preference would be to hold both events on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

Members felt the matter required broader discussion and noted that a Town Council meeting was scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> October. It was questioned whether the issue could be included on the meeting agenda and, if so, whether would this allow for sufficient time to make event arrangements. The deadline for the Town Crier would be missed but the event date could be marked as 'to be announced'.

Members expressed a preference for the Santa's Grotto to proceed on 14<sup>th</sup> December and for the Market Charter to be discussed at Town Council. It was confirmed that all

feedback from Members would be shared with the Town Clerk and the Head of Environmental and Community Services.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

**CESC20 REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER**

Members were provided with a report from the Community Services Manager regarding the summer schedule of activities.

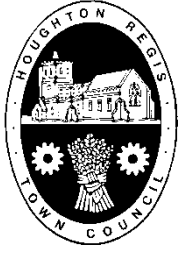
**Resolved: To note the report**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.12 pm**

**Dated this day of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Chairman**

DRAFT



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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 10

<b>Date:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Houghton Regis Town Council Community Services Update</b>
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	<b>To provide Members with an update on recent community work.</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Tara Earnshaw, Community Services Manager</b>

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### 1. RECOMMENDATION

To note the report

### 2. BACKGROUND

Houghton Regis Town Council delivers a variety of community initiatives, including Town Centre Initiatives, Summer and Easter Family Fun Days and trips, promoting the delivery of the Welcome Pack to residents moving into the new development, and partnering with various groups and organisations.

This report sets out the work delivered and plans for future initiatives.

### 3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

#### **Welcome Pack**

An additional 400 packs have been assembled and locations for delivery have been identified. It is hoped that they will be delivered by the end of November.

#### **Town Centre Initiatives**

Staff are in the process of planning crafty November activities for Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November. We are planning to have crafty activities for children and wreath making for adults.

### 4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

None



## **5. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN**

### **1 Town and Community: To unify all areas of the parish as one community and foster civic pride in our town**

- 1.1 Improve integration between existing and new communities.
- 1.4 Develop an annual programme of community events across the Parish.

### **3 Quality of Life: To enhance the quality of life of our residents**

- 3.3 Improve access to services and support through the provision of a network of Parish-wide community hubs.
- 3.4 Improve existing and develop new opportunities for young people across the parish.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

**Corporate Implications** - There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendations.

**Legal Implications** - There are no legal implications.

**Financial Implications**—Some funding opportunities will naturally end during the new financial year. Therefore, during the 2025/26 budget-setting process, consideration must be given to whether these activities will continue.

**Risk Implications** - There are no risk implications.

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

These projects/issues do not discriminate.

**Climate Change Implications** - There are no climate change implications.

**Press Contact** - Deliveries of these projects will continue to be communicated to the press.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This report summarises the ongoing projects being delivered and plans for future initiatives provided by the Community Services Manager.