



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr M Herber**

Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

e-mail: info@houghtonregis-tc.gov.uk

7th October 2025

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To: All Town Councillors

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to the Meeting of the Houghton Regis Town Council to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on Monday 13th October 2025 at 7.00pm.

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

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

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

**THIS MEETING MAY BE
RECORDED¹**

AGENDA

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

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

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

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

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.

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.

4. MINUTES

Pages 7 - 10

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2025.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2025.

5. COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pages 11 - 56

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

Corporate Services Committee	9th June 2025 Minute number 13236 – Investment Report To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Councils Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investments Arrangements Policy Minute number 13240 – Late Payments and Bad Debt Policy To recommend to Town Council the adoption of Community Services Manager Town Council's Late Payment and Bad Debts Policy Minute number 13241 – Complaints Procedure To recommend to Town Council, the adoption of the Councils Complaints Procedure Minute number 13242 – Safeguarding Policy To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Council's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
Community Services Committee	None
Environment & Leisure Committee	28 th April 2025
Planning Committee	2 nd & 23 rd June, 14 th July, 4 th & 26 th August and 15 th September 2025
Staffing Committee	None
Town Partnership Committee	29 th April 2025

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

New Cemetery Sub-Committee None

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

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

- 1. Minute number 13236 – Investment Report**
- 2. Minute number 13240 – Late Payments and Bad Debt Policy**
- 3. Minute number 13241 – Complaints Procedure**
- 4. Minute number 13242 – Safeguarding Policy**

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A verbal report will be provided.

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

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

8. INTERNAL CONTROLS POLICY

Pages 57 - 61

The Council is required, by regulation 6.1 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, to review each financial year the effectiveness of its system of financial control.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. Therefore, members will find attached the Town Councils Internal Controls Policy, for review and approving.

Recommendation: **To review and approve the Town Councils Internal Controls Policy.**

9. UKSPF FUNDING

At the Environment and Leisure Committee meeting on 28th July 2025, Members were advised that, while they had been informed of all UKSPF monies being received, some costs had been paid in the current financial year which had not been budgeted for. The funds had gone into general reserves at the end of the previous financial year and Members were, therefore, asked to consider the £23,097 expenditure to be taken from general reserves. Members of Environment and Leisure Committee made the following resolution:

To recommend to Town Council that the sum of £23,097 Cost Centre 293 UKSPF, be drawn from general reserves.

Recommendation: To approve the sum of £23,097 Cost Centre 293 UKSPF, be drawn from general reserves.

10. COUNCILLOR MEMBERSHIP ON HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members are advised that the Houghton Regis Liberal Democrat Group have requested that Cllr Taylor replaces Cllr Farrell on the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee. This change is being sought in order to facilitate the possibility that Cllr. Farrell might substitute for any of the other four CBC councillors for the town, all of whom are already members of the committee.

Recommendation: To substitute Cllr Farrell with Cllr Taylor on the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2025/26.

11. CBC CONSULTATION: DEFINING THE HIGH STREET AREAS FOR HIGH STREET RENTAL AUCTIONS (HSRAS)

Page 62

CBC are seeking views as part of the process to define the area where High Street Rental Auction (HSRA) powers may be applied.

Consultation opened: 1 September 2025

Consultation closes: 23 November 2025

[Consultation: Defining the High Street Areas for High Street Rental Auctions \(HSRAs\) | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

Central Bedfordshire Council has launched a consultation to define high street areas for rental auction powers. Central Bedfordshire Council is inviting town / parish councils, residents, businesses and community groups to share their views on proposed high street areas where new powers could tackle long-term vacant properties.

CBC is considering the use of new powers introduced through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, which allow local authorities to auction leases for commercial properties that have been vacant for over a year. These High Street Rental Auctions (HSRAs) are intended to help bring empty units back into use in designated areas.

Before any decisions are made, the CBC must identify specific high street locations where these powers could apply. We are now inviting views to help ensure our approach reflects local priorities and needs.

CBC is seeking views to help define the 'high street area' boundaries and the consultation is focused solely on the proposed areas within town centres that could benefit from these powers based on:

- high levels of vacancy
- economic importance to the wider town
- potential for regeneration and business growth
- designation as town centres in the Council's Local Plan

Members will find attached the proposed high street area for Houghton Regis which encompasses High Street, Bedford Square and Kings Street.

Members feedback on the proposed boundary is invited.

12. ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 state that all Category 2 authorities must publish the Annual Governance Accountability Return (AGAR) and the notice of completion of audit before the close of play on 30th September.

However, the Council's appointed external auditor, Mazars, has been unable to complete the audit by this date. As such HRTC is unable to publish the audited AGAR and completion notice by 30th September in line with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

A notice has been placed (1st October 2025) on the Council's website and within the Office Noticeboard explaining that HRTC has been unable to publish the audited AGAR and completion notice by 30th September in line with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as the council are awaiting the audit report from the external auditor.

The Council will publish the audited AGAR and completion notice as soon as these documents become available from Mazars.

Recommendation: To record disappointment that the AGAR for 2024/25 has not been returned by Mazars as the external auditor by 30th September 2025 and to note that a notice advising of this has been placed on the council website and noticeboard.

13. MEMORIAL HALL

Members are advised that the freehold ownership of the Houghton Regis Memorial Hall is held by the Town Council; the footprint of the title number BD215262 doesn't include the 18m of driveway. To ensure there aren't any future disputes of ownership, Members are asked to approve the first registration of this small parcel of land, which is expected to be within the town council's ownership.

Recommendation: To approve the first registration of the land between the title number BD215262 and the edge of Drury Lane.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Dunstable Market Charter

Recommendation: 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.

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 29th September 2025 7.00pm.

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

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Ian Haynes Head of Environmental & Community Services
Debbie Marsh Head of Corporate Services
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 2

Apologies: Councillor: W Henderson
A Slough
D Taylor

13343 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Henderson, Councillor A Slough and Councillor D Taylor.

13344 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13345 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

13346 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 16th June 2025.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13347 PUBLIC SESSION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A TOWN CENTRE COMMUNITY VENUE

Town council was asked to consider in more detail the report presented under agenda item 9 which set out considerations for the establishment of a town centre community venue. It was envisaged that this venue would provide a vibrant hub for residents, local stakeholders and service providers, would support enhanced youth and community work and provide space for a larger more inclusive council chamber. This subsequent report was presented in private session due to the commercial sensitivities that were involved.

To facilitate community and stakeholder input, this agenda item had been included to encourage public participation on this matter. The following points were highlighted:

- The HRTC Corporate Plan supported improved services in the town centre and the stronger development of a 'sense of place'. To view the Corporate Plan, please follow this link [Council Plans](#). Consultation feedback on the Corporate Plan was supportive of the creation of modern, vibrant community spaces.
- The CPC Action Plan supports strategic work with CBC and the development of a plan to support improved council offices and community centres. To view the CPC Action Plan, please follow this link [Council Strategies](#).
- By HRTC utilising additional investment income, the establishment of a town centre community venue could be delivered at no additional cost to the taxpayer.

Members of the public and local stakeholders were invited to feed in their thoughts on the establishment of a town centre community focused venue for residents, local stakeholders and service providers, which would support significantly enhanced youth and community work and provide space for a larger more inclusive council chamber.

Members of the town council are respectfully requested to listen to the views expressed and to consider them under Agenda item 9.

A member of the public spoke of his own work towards delivering a community centre in Thorn. The importance of having more than one community facility across the town was emphasised, highlighting that such provision would be well utilised. It was noted that investment in Thorn would help to encourage further investment in the area. Also stated was that residents often assumed community facilities were already the responsibility of the Town Council, and welcomed the positive progress being made in areas such as Bidwell West and Thorn.

13348 PARKSIDE AND TITHE FARM RECREATIONS GROUNDS

Members were asked to consider pursuing the transfer of these open space areas from CBC to HRTC under freehold ownership.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To approve a formal approach to CBC to seek the freehold transfer of Parkside and Tithe Farm recreations grounds.**
 - 2. To use 190-4059, Central Services, Other Professional Fees to cover associated legal fees.**

13349 MAINTENANCE OF SPECIFIED AREAS OF OPEN SPACE

Members were asked to consider securing the maintenance of planted roundabouts to enable the council to promote the Houghton Regis identity (sense of place) and offer sponsorship options to local businesses, secure the maintenance of grass cutting at East End, secure the maintenance and community involvement in the Woodside Orchard.

It was highlighted that residents had expressed both curiosity and concern regarding the Woodside Orchard, some recalled its original planting and voiced disappointment over how it had been managed. However, there was confidence in the grounds team's knowledge and commitment to implementing the recommendations.

The number of roundabouts potentially involved was queried. It was noted that some would fall under the Highways Agency's responsibility, leaving approximately three to potentially manage.

- Resolved:**
- To enable the council to promote the Houghton Regis identity (sense of place), support Anglia in Bloom and offer sponsorship options to local businesses, to approve a formal approach to CBC to secure:**
- the maintenance of planted roundabouts**
 - grass cutting at East End**
 - the maintenance and community involvement in the Woodside Orchard**

13350 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Town Centre Community Venue**

- 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.**

13351 TOWN CENTRE COMMUNITY VENUE

Members were requested to consider options for the development of a town centre community venue as supported by the HRTC Corporate Plan and the CPC Action Plan.

This report was presented in private session due to commercial and legal sensitivities and to enable open discussions between members.

Members considered proposals relating to the establishment of a town centre community venue in Houghton Regis. The discussion included considerations on the importance of providing accessible facilities locally, potential lease arrangements, and the need for flexibility in negotiations. It was acknowledged that officers should progress the work, with members providing advice where appropriate.

Members were fully supportive points highlighted within the report, with unanimous agreement on each recommendation.

Resolved: To support the suggested way forward in the agenda report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.37 pm

Dated this 13th day of October 2025

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Corporate Services Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

9th June 2025 7.00pm.

Present:	Councillors:	D Jones	Chairman
		E Billington	
		J Carroll	
		E Cooper	(Substitute)
		M Herber	
		C Slough	(Substitute)
	Officers:	Debbie Marsh	Head of Corporate Services
		Amanda Samuels	Administration Officer
	Public:	1	
Apologies:	Councillors:	E Costello	
		W Henderson	
		C Rollins	

11 / 68

13225 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Costello (Cllr Cooper substituted), Cllr Henderson (Cllr C Slough substituted) and Cllr Rollins.

13226 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13227 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

13228 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Members were invited to elect a Vice-Chair for the Corporate Services Committee for 2025-2026

Nominee:	W Henderson	Proposed by:	C Slough
		Seconded by:	E Billington

There were no other nominations.

On being put to the vote, Cllr Henderson became the Vice-Chair of Corporate Services for the municipal year of 2025/2026.

13229 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 3rd March 2025.

QJS

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13230 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Personnel Sub-Committee: 3rd February 2025.

Town Council had agreed to the establishment of a Staffing Committee that would exercise overall consideration of all staffing matters including the functions of the Personnel Sub-Committee.

Due to the above, Members were requested and agreed to receive the minutes of the final meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee as a governance and administrative record.

Resolved: To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting of the 3rd February 2025.

13231 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

These arrangements 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.

For information Members were provided with the extract from the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference which related to this committee.

13232 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members received a workplan for the municipal year 2025/26.

The workplan provided a structured approach to the committee's business throughout 2025/26, ensuring all statutory requirements and governance obligations were met in a timely manner.

Members highlighted that meeting minutes from the other standing committees would still be in draft form when budgets came to be considered. This concern was noted and the Head of Corporate Services responded that councillors would be requested to accept the recommendations contained within the draft minutes.

Members were happy to approve the workplan with the minor amendment of 2nd March 2025 being replaced with 2nd March 2026.

Resolved: To review and approve the Corporate Services Committee Workplan for 2025/26, which outlines anticipated specific reports for the municipal year.

QST.

13233 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with the income and expenditure report for the Corporate Services Committee up to the end of the 2024/2025 financial year.

Members also received the income and expenditure report, for Corporate Services Committee to date (28th May 2025).

The Head of Corporate Services reported to Members that following scrutiny of the Personnel/Staff Costs for this committee, an error had been identified. In order to rectify this error, Members were requested to vire £30k to cover the shortfall in the Community Services Personnel/Staff Costs budget for financial year 2025-2026. A staff member's salary had been included in the Corporate Services budget rather than Community Services.

It was noted that the cost of investments realised had not been included in the schedule and would need to be taken into consideration.

Members raised the following points:

2024 / 2025

- *190-4015 Gas: Why did HRTC appear to be £400 in credit for the year.*
The Head of Corporate Services confirmed that they would investigate this further.
- *190-4026 Computer Costs: The figure was 148% of budget – why was there such an overspend?*
The Head of Corporate Services would investigate and email Members to clarify the reason for this figure.

2025 / 2026

- *190-4015: Gas: The budget had been reduced from the previous year and there was a Charge of £536 which was 73% of the budget. Would the funds be sufficient?*
The Head of Corporate Services would check this figure and ensure it related to the Town Council offices only.
- The percentage spend on expenses suggested Houghton Regis Town Council had spent 100.4% of the rates; however, this represented the full charge at year end with only half having been paid thus far.
- Insurance was paid at start of the council year. The Head of Corporate Services advised Members this budget was likely to go slightly over as Bidwell West had not been included in the Policy Schedule renewal as provided by Zurich.

Resolved: To approve the virement of £30k from budget code 192/4001 (Corporate Services Personnel/Staff Costs to 392/4001 (Community Services Personnel/Staff Costs)

13234 BANK AND CASH RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS

Members were requested to receive the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for February, March and April 2025.

Members highlighted a small discrepancy in the March statement and the Head of Corporate Services confirmed they would discuss this with the Finance Officer. Members were happy to approve the reconciliation statements with this amendment.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the monthly bank and cash reconciliation statements for February, March and April 2025;**
- 2. For these along with the original bank statements to be signed by the Chair of Corporate Services Committee and the Council's RFO.**

13235 LIST OF PAYMENTS

Members were provided with a list of payments for the period February, March and April 2025 (inclusive).

13236 INVESTMENT REPORT

This report was provided in accordance with the approved Committee Functions, Financial Regulation 12 and Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements.

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

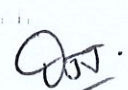
To receive quarterly reports on investments containing a forecast of capital expenditure, investment opportunities and a recommendation for further investment including where length and amount.

Members considered the report, as provided, and agreed to approve the investment of the Bidwell West s106 monies in the Town Councils CCLA Deposit Fund.

- 1) To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Banking Arrangements, Investment Strategy & Investment Arrangements Policy;**
- 2) To approve the investment of the Bidwell West s106 commuted sum and Houghton Quarry maintenance funds in the CCLA Deposit Fund.**

13237 VAT RETURN

In accordance with Financial Regulation 13.6 - The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.



Members were provided with, a copy of the VAT Returns for quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 for financial year 2024/2025.

13238 RENEWAL OF DIRECT DEBIT, STANDING ORDER, BACS AND CHAPS PAYMENTS

Members were advised, under Financial Regulations 7.9 & 7.10, the approval of the use of Direct Debit, Standing Order, BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council every year.

Members received a list of Direct Debits and Standing Orders.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the use of BACS method of payment.**
- 2. To approve the use of Direct Debit, Standing Order and CHAPS method of payment.**

13239 PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

In accordance with the committees Terms of Reference and Financial Regulation 12, for information Members were provided with an annual report of the council's loans.

13240 LATE PAYMENTS AND BAD DEBTS POLICY

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

Member were provided with a track change document to reflect the changes and additions to this policy.

It was noted that Beds FA now dealt with all football bookings.

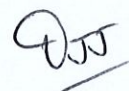
Resolved: **To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Late Payments and Bad Debts Policy**

13241 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Town Councils Complaints Procedure was last reviewed in September 2020. Apart from a minor amendment, this policy remained fit for purpose.

Members were provided with a copy of the Complaints Procedure.

Resolved: **To recommend to Town Council, the adoption of the Town Councils Complaints Procedure**



13242 SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Members were provided with a copy of the Town Council Draft Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. Members had been advised that this was a wholly rewritten Policy.

At the Community Services meeting on 24th February 2025, Members resolved (Minute number 13121) that the approval of the Town Council Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy be made by the Corporate Services Committee along with a recommendation to Town Council to adopt the policy.

The Town Council's Safeguarding leads were the Head of Environment and Community Services and the Community Services Manager. Members questioned how training would be delivered, especially with regard to volunteers and councillors. It was also queried how the monitoring process would be accomplished. It was confirmed that the Safeguarding leads would provide further information once the policy had been adopted by Town Council.

The Head of Corporate Services requested Members' approval to present this policy to the Town Council at the next meeting on 16th June 2025. Members agreed that this should be expedited at the earliest opportunity.

Resolved: To recommend to Town Council the adoption of the Town Councils Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

13243 COUNCIL OFFICES

Members were provided with a report detailing options of works to the Town Council offices, as follows.

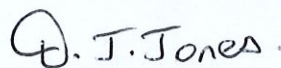
- Comprehensive remodelling
- Slight remodelling
- Relocation to Bedford Square Community Centre
- Remain the same

Following some discussion, Members were in agreement that Option 2 was considered the most viable.

Resolved: To approve the internal remodelling suggestions within Option 2 (excluding the Chamber) up to a budget of £20,000 to be taken from EMR 355, Office Provision.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.13pm

Dated this 1st day of September 2025



Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Environment & Leisure Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

28th April 2025 at 7.00pm

Present:	Councillors:	A Slough	Chairman
		P Burgess	
		J Carroll	(Substitute)
		Y Farrell	
		W Henderson	
		T McMahon	
		D Taylor	
	Officers:	Ian Haynes	Head of Environmental & Community Services
		Amanda Samuels	Administration Officer
	Public:		

Apologies: Councillors:

13171 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Rollins (Cllr Carroll substituted).

13172 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13173 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13174 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2025.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 13th January 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13175 TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE

The facility was being used, although the Section 278 for site access was still awaited. A design was yet to be approved; however, a safety audit was imminent, and this would inform the design. A new height barrier would be installed to replace the current one which was cumbersome and hindered access.

The annual maintenance had been carried forward after being delayed by the contractor. The Legend on a bench had been relocated.

13176 HOUGHTON HALL PARK

Houghton Regis Town Council had taken over management of Houghton Hall Park in December.

Work had been carried out on the website which would be updated imminently. New branding and a new copyright protected logo would also be introduced to the website and social media.

Planned works included the replacement of the entrance sign, refurbishment of the foyer and removal of the corporate branding. Central Bedfordshire Council had redecorated the Visitors Centre and resurfaced the car park and drainage works were also scheduled to take place.

Events had been well received, with future events planned. Schools were also using the facility and engagement would take place to tailor programmes according to their preferences.

The purchase order was still awaited from CBC still awaited. Members were informed that 75% of the available budget would be paid up front and would be reassessed in December.

In response to a question regarding ongoing issues at Visitors Centre, the Head of Environmental and Community Services highlighted that CBC had contracts in place and HRTC did not currently have access to the reporting platform. This would be investigated further; however, in the meantime the HRTC team would deal with smaller issues but follow the reporting process for more expensive items.

13177 UKSPF UPDATE

CBC had given approval for landscaping work to commence. Progress had been made on licence from Highways to undertake the works and work on the planters would commence in May.

Funding for improvements to events had been fully spent, and work had commenced on the heritage film. HRTC had received the full amount of funds from CBC.

13178 CORPORATE PLAN REVIEW & UPDATE

Members reviewed and updated the Corporate Plan Action Plan for the Environment & Leisure Committee. Amendments were made as follows:

Pillar

- | | |
|----|---|
| 21 | Café on the Green
Discarded. This conflicted with nearby facilities, including those at Houghton Hall Park |
| 36 | Identify and strengthen a series of key views
Discarded. The Planning Committee and the Neighbourhood Plan |

already afforded protection on these matters. Members voted for this item to be forwarded to the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Sub-Committee.

Proposed by: Cllr Carroll

Seconded by: Cllr McMahon

Members voted unanimously in favour of the proposal

- 102 Strengthen a primary cycling route across the parish
While Members agreed that this came under CBC's jurisdiction, it was discussed whether HRTC could carry out some signposting and mapping. It was felt that liaison with CBC was necessary to progress this further. Members agreed to discard this item, but to maintain the spirit of the initiative as part of pillar 101.

- 106 Improve local and regional transport links
Discarded. This did not fall within the remit of HRTC.

Resolved: To forward Pillar 36 of the Corporate Plan to the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Sub-Committee.

13179 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with a copy of the income and expenditure report, with appropriate commentary, for the Environment & Leisure Services Committee.

Members were informed that net income over expenditure showed no significant overspend.

It was highlighted that the Houghton Regis Cemetery had missed its income by 25%. The production of a brochure of the cemetery vaults was suggested as a way to highlight some of the facilities available .

Members queried the overspend on water rates and maintenance at the Village Green. The Head of Environmental and Community Services informed Members that the Houghton Hall Park Kitchen Garden was fed from the Village Green and accounted for the majority of the spend.

Maintenance costs at Parkside had gone overbudget and the opportunity had been taken to increase the amount of maintenance carried out, offsetting costs against the income. Works carried out on the roof at Moore Crescent had also caused an overspend.

Beds FA were being charged for electricity at Tithe Farm and would arrange their own supplier on the anniversary of the current contract.

A plan for preventative maintenance had been completed which would be presented to Members. It was suggested that maintenance for all assets be grouped together.

In response to a request from Members, the Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed that should maintenance costs be brought under one budget, it would still be possible to provide a breakdown detailing any overspends.

Regarding water usage by Houghton Hall Park, Members were informed that approximately 95% of the cost could be attributed to Houghton Hall Park. Members suggested that in addition to exploring water harvesting measures, it would also be possible to explore the possibility of a bore hole. It was confirmed by the Head of Environmental and Community Services that further investigation would be made.

13180 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Houghton Chalk Pit

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.

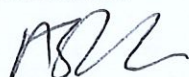
13181 HOUGHTON CHALK PIT

- Resolved:**
- Approve that the Chair of Environment and Leisure signs the lease once it is finalised.
 - To authorise the Head of Environment and Community Services to undertake the required due diligence and appoint a legal representative to review the attached draft lease.
 - Approve the receipt of circa £1,000,000 commuted sum for managing and maintaining Houghton Chalk Pit.
 - Approve developing a suitable Management Plan that meets the requirements of Natural England.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.24pm.

Dated this 28th day of July 2025

Chairman



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

2nd June 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: M Herber Chairman
E Billington
E Cooper
Y Farrell
D Jones
C Slough
D Taylor

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

Other: John Dingle

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillors: 0

13204 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

13205 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13206 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13207 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Members were invited to elect a Vice-Chair for Planning Committee for 2025/2026.

Nominee: D Jones Proposed by: D Taylor
Seconded by: C Slough

There were no other nominations.

On being put to the vote, Cllr Jones became the Vice-Chair of Planning for the municipal year of 2025/2026.

13208 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 12th May 2025.

WHE

Town Council (HRTC) until it was established whether the land behind Midway Cottage and The Cottage would be developed.

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed they would raise this matter with the Planning Officer, Peter Vosper, at Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC).

Noted:

CB/25/01324/DOC
(click for more details)

Discharge of Conditions 22 and 23 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)

Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire

CB/25/01572/PAD
M (click for more details)

Prior Notification of proposed demolition: Partial demolition of Unit 11
Unit 11, Humphrys Road, Dunstable, LU5 4TP

CB/25/01548/LDCP
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Single storey rear extension and fenestration additions
90 Grove Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5PF

CB/25/01651/DOC
(click for more details)

Discharge of Conditions 17 and 18 against planning permission CB/24/00059/FULL (demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide new employment floorspace for a flexible range of uses (within Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and/or B8) with ancillary offices, together with the rationalisation of accesses and provision of yard area, parking, landscaping, and all other associated works)
Unit 1, Humphrys Road, Dunstable, LU5 4TP

there would be additional landscaping. The footprint of the proposed building had not been raised as an issue by the Planning Officer.

In answer to questions from Members regarding the public consultation process, Mr Dingle confirmed that contact details had been made public and a virtual session offered, with no objections being raised by local residents.

Members were happy to lift their previous objections to this application on the basis of the proposed measures to limit noise pollution.

Resolved: To consider whether the proposed noise control condition adequately addresses the Town Council's objection regarding overnight noise pollution from 24/7 operations, and whether the objection should be maintained or withdrawn.

13211 CB/24/03164/FULL - PROPOSED DATA CENTRE ADJACENT TO LINMERE FARMSTEAD

HRTC had been made aware of a significant planning application that had not been included in the original consultee list, despite its proximity to the parish boundary.

Full planning permission was being sought for the erection of a 100MW data centre comprising the following:

- Data centre building (approx. 22,000m² footprint)
- 43 x 2.5MW diesel standby generators
- Ancillary plant and substation
- Associated hard and soft landscaping
- Fencing, lighting, and internal access roads

The development was proposed on land directly adjacent to the Linnere residential area and within close proximity to Houghton Regis parish boundary.

With Linnere's growing residential population, the scale and industrial nature of the development raised potential concerns in terms of:

- Noise and vibration from generator operation
- Air quality and emissions
- Visual impact and design integration
- Light pollution
- Increased vehicle movements and associated transport implications

Members stressed the necessity of receiving sufficient information in a timely manner when considering proposed developments of this scale. HRTC had not received sufficient notification to lodge an objection to this application.

Consultation Memo 2697215 from the Senior Sustainability Officer stated that the Scheme was not policy compliant. Consultation Memo 2691935 from the Archaeological Officer stated that no development should take place until a written scheme of archaeological resource management (WSARM) had been submitted.



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

23rd June 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: M Herber Chairman
E Billington
E Cooper
Y Farrell
D Jones
C Slough
D Taylor

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

Public: 3

Apologies: Councillors: 0

24 / 68

13261 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

13262 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A letter had been received from a member of the public regarding planning application CB/25/01554/REG3. Members agreed that this should be read out under the relevant agenda item when a presentation would also be made by the Headmaster of the Academy of Central Bedfordshire (ACB).

13263 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13264 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd June 2025.

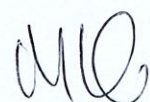
Members enquired if there had been an update on minute 13209. The Head of Democratic Services advised that a response was still awaited.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13265 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/25/01554/REG3 Demolition of the former leisure centre. Creation of a new car
(click for more details) park. Change of use of building to a pre-school and access to



adult skills area. Alterations to windows, doors and wall treatments following demolition.
Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, Parkside Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5PX
Central Bedfordshire Council

The Headmaster of ACB stated that the old leisure centre had been an invaluable resource for vulnerable pupils who would be negatively impacted by the loss of facilities and the proposed solution of transporting them to other sites.

ACB had been in dialogue with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and had requested that the old school gym be maintained. The Surveyors report had stated this proposal would mean a reduction in the cost of demolition.

The additional parking facility proposed at this site was felt to be unnecessary as sufficient parking was available elsewhere, e.g. areas around the school and the new leisure centre.

HRTC was encouraged to submit a letter rejecting the proposal and requesting that it be redesigned and reconsidered.

There had been no process of consultation to air concerns.

A letter from Bruce Hallam of the Houghton Regis Badminton Club was read out.

The letter questioned the justification for the demolition of the site. Access to Houghton School – the proposed alternative facility - was unable to provide the level of access required by the local community.

It was urged that the demolition should be paused and a transparent public review held to establish how this decision had been reached.

Members were in agreement with the points raised:

- Sufficient parking was available in the surrounding area, including the campus and the new leisure centre.
- There was no clear rationale for the demolition of the building or for why the gym hall could not be used. There had been no satisfactory response to concerns or questions.
- A lack of consultation.
- Demolition of the site, with no alternative facility, meant that the needs of vulnerable children would fail to be met.
- Sports hall provision did not match previous provision levels and failed to meet the CBC Leisure Strategy.
- The proposal for increased parking provided no benefit to the community of Houghton Regis.

Members were advised that Cllr Alderman had been attempting to engage with Cllr Steven Watkins prior to the demolition of the building but had not been successful as yet.

It was requested that a suitable objection was composed.

Members noted the following items from the decision document for the original leisure centre application in 2022:

- 1.8 Leisure Strategy
this stated that the sports hall within the existing leisure centre would be replaced with a new sports hall; and that a Community Use Agreements would be sought to secure community access for any new sports halls within schools.
- 1.13
This outlined what the CUA was expected to cover.

Members felt that these objectives had not been achieved.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised strong objections to the application.

Comments: Houghton Regis Town Council wishes to formally raise strong objections to the proposed demolition of the former leisure centre and associated plans for redevelopment. This objection is made on the grounds outlined below, reflecting both public and councillor concerns.

The leisure centre has, over many years, been a vital community resource. It has not only served recreational needs but has provided a critical support mechanism for students with learning disabilities and those at risk of exclusion. The removal of this facility would have a tangible and detrimental impact on the educational experience and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable young people in our town.

It is disappointing that the only stated benefit of demolishing the leisure centre is the provision of additional parking spaces. The application documentation itself admits that there is no associated improvement to site safety. The suggestion that parking is a driving factor appears to be unfounded when considering that the newly constructed car park is not currently being used to full capacity during the day. In addition, there is already substantial parking provision across the wider campus site.

It has been suggested by residents and councillors alike that a more suitable and cost-effective alternative would be to retain the old sports hall, which could be repurposed as needed. This would not only preserve an important facility but also reduce



overall project costs. Documents previously presented to Central Bedfordshire Council indicate that this approach has merit and deserves further exploration.

There is significant concern that no meaningful or official public consultation has taken place regarding the proposed demolition. Members of the community feel that they have not had the opportunity to engage with or influence this decision-making process. In a project of this scale and with such lasting implications, this is unacceptable.

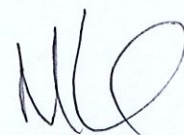
Further concerns have been raised in relation to the lack of alignment between this proposal and Central Bedfordshire Council's own Leisure Strategy. The current plans do not appear to deliver the strategic objectives as outlined in that document. Councillors have also queried the logic behind demolishing part of the existing structure – particularly the section which is most frequently used – whilst leaving less functional parts of the building intact.

The application also references a change of use to accommodate a preschool; however, it is unclear whether this is necessary given that such a provision is already in situ. This raises further questions about the purpose and coherence of the development proposals.

In summary, we object to this application on the following grounds:

1. Lack of meaningful public consultation – Local residents and councillors were not properly consulted prior to submission of the proposals.
2. Loss of vital community facility – The demolition of the leisure centre would negatively affect students with additional educational needs and broader community access.
3. Questionable justification for increased parking – Current car parks are underused, and alternative solutions have not been fully explored.
4. Inconsistency with CBC's own leisure strategy – The application does not appear to align with the aims set out in the leisure strategy.
5. Unclear benefits to the town – The wider community does not stand to benefit from the proposed changes, and the justification provided lacks substance.
6. Concerns about the proposed change of use – There is confusion over the requirement for a preschool use in a building that is already accommodating such services.

Houghton Regis Town Council urges Central Bedfordshire Council to revisit this application in full, properly consult with the local community, and work to deliver a proposal that reflects the genuine needs and values of Houghton Regis.



CB/25/01273/FULL
(click for more details)

Improvement works to the roof including new roof. Removal of old plant equipment installation of new plant equipment. New condensers to elevations.
Unit 17, Humphrys Road, Woodside Industrial Estate, Dunstable, LU5 4TB

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

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13266 CB/25/00370/FULL 65 – 67 CEMETERY ROAD – APPEAL NOTICE

Members were advised that the committee considered this application at the meeting held on 10th March 2025.

The Town Council submitted the following objections/comments:

Members felt this application constituted overdevelopment. Members also supported the report from the Tree and Landscape Officer objecting to the removal of trees, most notably those outside of the boundary.

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

- Overdevelopment
- The removal of trees outside of the boundary

Members were asked to consider whether:

1. The Town Council wishes to maintain its previous objection and submit representations to the Planning Inspectorate reaffirming the grounds of objection; or
2. The Town Council wishes to modify or add to its previous comments; or
3. The Town Council has no further comments to make on this matter.

Members agreed that no further comments would be made on this matter.

Resolved:

To consider the appeal notification and determine what action, if any, the Town Council wishes to take in response to the planning appeal.



13267 CB/24/00677/FULL LAND BETWEEN ARENSEN CENTRE AND FOSTER AVENUE, ARENSEN WAY – APPEAL NOTICE

Members were advised that the committee considered this application at the meeting held on 2nd April 2024.

Members highlighted that this application was also later represented at the meeting on 9th December 2024 (Minute 13061).

The Town Council submitted the following objections/comments:

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

Houghton Regis Town Council raised an objection to this application on the grounds that this parcel of land is designated as a Local Green Space in the recently approved referendum and adopted Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan (NHP).

Policy GSR3 of the NHP, Local Green Spaces, states that inappropriate development within the Local Green Spaces will not be supported except in very special circumstances.

The Town Council is not aware of the existence of any “very special circumstances” in this case.

Members were asked to consider whether:

1. The Town Council wishes to maintain its previous objection and submit representations to the Planning Inspectorate reaffirming the grounds of objection; or
2. The Town Council wishes to modify or add to its previous comments; or
3. The Town Council has no further comments to make on this matter.

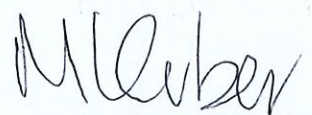
Members agreed that no further comments would be made on this matter.

Resolved: **To consider the appeal notification and determine what action, if any, the Town Council wishes to take in response to the planning appeal.**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.33pm

Dated this 4th day of August 2025

Chairman



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

14th July 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: M Herber Chairman
E Billington
E Cooper
Y Farrell
D Jones
C Slough
D Taylor

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

Public: 63 (56 virtual)

Apologies: Councillors: 0

30 / 68

13268 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

13269 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Members of the public were in attendance to discuss planning application CB/25/01901/FULL. Members agreed that this item should be brought forward and discussed as the first item under Planning Matters.

13270 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Cooper declared a personal interest, advising members that her daughter lives adjacent to the proposed site and overlooks the development area.

13271 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd June 2025.

It was requested that, for the sake of completeness, the wording 'Members agreed that no further comments would be made on this matter' be added to Minute 13267.

Members agreed the minutes subject to the aforementioned amendment.

Resolved: To agree the amended Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13272 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Planning application CB/25/01901/FULL was brought forward for discussion with members of the public.

CB/25/02000/SECM
(click for more details)

Modification of Section 106 Agreement attached to planning permission: CB/19/04220/OUT, CB/22/04525/VOC and CB/23/03551/RM. Modification requested, Viability concerns as detailed within the attached Viability Assessment.
Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ

Comments: Members noted that consultation memo 2742979 regarding affordable housing had stated that the viability assessment was required to be sent for independent review at the cost of the applicant; however, neither the assessment nor the review appeared on the website.

The applicant had requested a reduction in the SANG contribution relating to the Beechwood conservation area. The provision of the SANG site to support the development was a legal requirement.

HRTC raised an objection to this application on the grounds of insufficient information being available.

CB/25/01901/FULL
(click for more details)

Erection of 5 commercial units (Class E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) with associated access from Bedford Road, car parking, service yards, drainage and landscaping.
Land rear of Cresswell Edge and Seaton Crescent, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis

Houghton Regis Town Council objected in the strongest terms to planning application CB/25/01901/FULL, on the following grounds:

Conflict with Adopted Plans

The site is not designated for employment use in the Central Bedfordshire Council Local Plan, Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan or the Houghton Regis North Framework Plan. The proposal is therefore contrary to planning policy, particularly Policy BE1, which restricts employment development to defined zones such as Thorn Turn and Junction 11a. Approval would set a precedent that undermines these plans.

Residential Amenity and Quality of Life

The proposed development would result in significant harm to nearby residential properties, including those on Cresswell Edge, Seaton Crescent, and Alnwick Grove. It was noted that the units would be positioned very much closer to residential properties than those at the Thorn Road location at the western edge of Bidwell West, which had caused considerable disgruntlement, and that they would be built to approximately the same height,

making them much more overbearing. Concerns raised include increased levels of noise, light pollution, visual intrusion, and a loss of privacy. Several residents, including those working from home or with specific health or educational needs in the household, expressed that the impact of this development would be considerable and disruptive.

Traffic and Highway Safety

The scheme proposes 233 car parking spaces, additional motorcycle and HGV parking, and could generate upwards of 700 vehicle movements. Bedford Road already accommodates multiple access points and is not suited to a further increase in volume, particularly involving HGVs. Residents highlighted the dangers posed to children walking to school and to the wider pedestrian and cycling community.

Ecological and Environmental Impact

The site currently functions as a green buffer and supports a range of local wildlife. Concerns were raised about the loss of habitat and the undermining of wildlife corridors created during the construction of the A5. One resident has been monitoring the site since 2017 and believes the ecological report provided with the application does not reflect the full picture.

Public Right of Way

The proposal includes the diversion of a Public Right of Way through an industrial estate, which contradicts Policy GSR5. This change would significantly diminish the amenity of the route and deter pedestrian use.

Lack of Demonstrable Employment Need

It was noted that the Baytree development in Dunstable has already met and exceeded employment land provision targets. In addition, there are vacant industrial units within the surrounding area, calling into question the need for further development of this nature.

Impact on Property and Future Investment

Residents expressed concern about the impact on property values, future mortgage viability, and the effect of the development on the perception of the area. One resident, having moved from Borehamwood, stated they were explicitly told the land would remain as green open space at the time of purchase.

Community Sentiment and Engagement

Over 1,000 signatures have been collected via a petition opposing the application. Residents feel the application has not been transparent, with certain roads such as Alnwick Grove omitted from the plans. Many feel misled and strongly oppose the

NE

introduction of industrial use within what was marketed as a family-oriented development.

Public Transport and Accessibility

Public transport links in this part of Houghton Regis are minimal, raising further concerns around the sustainability of the proposed development and the increased reliance on car and HGV travel.

General Overdevelopment and Unsuitable Use

Residents and community representatives stressed that this proposal represents overdevelopment and would fundamentally change the character of this part of Bidwell West. It was emphasised that the site was always intended to function as a green buffer between residential properties and the major road infrastructure to the west and north of the site.

Conclusion

Members of the community, supported by representatives of the Bidwell West Community Association, strongly object to Planning Application CB/25/01901/FULL. It is considered inappropriate in both scale and use, inconsistent with local planning policy, and likely to result in lasting harm to the amenity, safety, and wellbeing of residents.

It was requested that the Town Council reflect the strength of local opposition in its own representation to Central Bedfordshire Council and continue to support the community in resisting this application.

CB/25/01728/RM

(click for more details)

Reserved Matters: following Outline Application

CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (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.) Reserved matters sought for appearance only to bandstand Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire.

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

An application on the delegated authority list was referred to members for discussion, as it was determined that further discussion was warranted.

CB/25/01963/FULL
(click for more details)

Erection of single storey timber frame rear extension to create a storage area and a covered sitting area, with new door, and steel corrugated roofing
8 Ashington Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6RQ

Objection – Ashington Way (Retrospective Planning Application)

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

Proximity to boundary: Structure is built very close to the boundary of No. 10 Ashington Way, raising concerns about overbearing impact and loss of amenity.

Negative visual impact: The structure is clearly visible from the road and appears to be faced in plywood. It is unsightly and out of keeping with the surrounding residential area.

Poor design and materials: Non-standard construction with a proposal for a faux brick fascia, which does little to improve its current appearance.

Inappropriate use: The stated use as a 'multimedia wall' may indicate a more intensive, non-typical domestic use. The overall design and appearance of the structure are not in keeping with the character of the surrounding residential properties.

Retrospective nature: The building is already completed, preventing proper consultation and setting an unhelpful precedent.

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.58 pm

ML

Dated this 4th day of August 2025

Chairman

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Alker

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

4th August 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: M Herber Chairman
E Billington
E Cooper
Y Farrell
D Jones
C Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillors: D Taylor

13302 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Taylor.

13303 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13304 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13305 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th July 2025.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13306 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

CB/25/01738/LB
(click for more
details)

Listed Building: roof structure repairs, replacement lead flashing, pointing with lime mortar and stabilisation of timber props. Removal of the side conservatory, windows and doors to be refurbished and glazing upgraded, ground floor replaced with limecrete, chimney hearth repairs with matching brick and lime mortar, defective guttering replaced and installation of a new kitchen and bathroom
Vane Cottage, Park Road North, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LD

Comments: Members noted that the owner had previously applied to demolish the cottage and that the latest application presented a significant improvement.

It was also noted that an inspection of all areas had not been possible when carrying out the Historic Building survey.

Members were happy to approve the application but wished to highlight that the application included plans to replace the current conservatory with a garden room. No plans for the garden room were available and Members wished to raise this omission as a point of concern.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

CB/25/02246/FULL
(click for more
details)

Demolition of existing residential dwelling and redevelopment of land to create 25 affordable homes with parking and all ancillary works.

Whelans Farm, The Bungalow, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JS

Comments: Members wished to highlight the following issues:

- the Tree and Landscape Officer's comments regarding overdevelopment of the site;
- the archaeology report was not available and any decision would need to be considered in light of this document; and
- there was continued concern regarding the capacity of Bedford Road to accommodate ever-increasing traffic levels.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

Noted:

CB/25/02153/DOC
(click for more
details)

Discharge of Conditions 2, 4, 5 and 13 against planning application ref. CB/23/03775/FULL (Erection of 6 residential dwellings with associated works).

Land south of The Bungalow, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis

QJS.

CB/25/02211/DOC
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 16 against planning permission CB/15/00297/OUT (Outline 'hybrid' planning application with details of main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage in detail only and layout in outline with details of landscaping, appearance and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: Up to 1,850 residential (C3) dwellings (including affordable housing), 2FE Primary School (D1), employment land (Use Classes B1 [a-c], B2 & B8), local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and community/leisure uses (D1 & D2), layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms, natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthworks)
Parcel 1: Bedford Road, Land West of Bidwell, (Houghton Regis North Site 2) Houghton Regis

CB/25/02235/LDCP
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Conversion of integral garage into a habitable space
12 Fieldstone, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5QU

CB/25/02215/LDCP
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Conversion of the attic into habitable space, to include a dormer to the rear elevation
87 Houghton Road, Dunstable, LU5 5AB

CB/25/02332/LDCP
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Garage conversion, replace the garage door with a window and brickwork infill
3 Tennyson Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5UQ

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13307 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The following planning applications had been received for consultation and fell within delegated authority. They were recommended for approval:

CB/25/01883/FULL
(click for more details)

Erection of a single storey front extension
39 Conway Close, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5SB

QJT

CB/25/01387/FULL(click for more details)

Garage extension with works to retaining wall and driveway.
Redesign of front porch with roof extension over existing bay window.
2 Roslyn Way, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JY

13308 CB/25/01877/FULL (click for more details) PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A MICRO ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY.

Houghton Regis Town Council (HRTC) had been made aware of the application for a micro energy storage facility proposed for a site in close proximity to the parish boundary.

Members had been provided with a copy of correspondence from Charlton Parish Council to Central Bedfordshire Council highlighting concerns for the site.

The submitted plans suggested that the application was for the installation of a box, which Members were happy to agree in principle.

Members noted that the Highway Officer had reported that this was adopted highway land, which could give rise to problems for future highway schemes. The report had also noted potential issues regarding access and parking provision for maintenance purposes.

Members did not feel the application was wholly practical and were happy to support the comments made by Chalton Parish Council.

Resolved: To support the comments made by Chalton Parish Council in support of the application in principle, pending resolution of key concerns.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.29 pm

Dated this 26th day of August 2025

D.J. Jones.

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on
26th August 2025 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	D Jones E Cooper C Slough D Taylor	Chair
	Officers:	Louise Senior Amanda Samuels	Head of Democratic Services Administration Officer
	Public:	5	
Apologies:	Councillors:	E Billington Y Farrell M Herber	

13309 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllrs E Billington, Y Farrell and M Herber.

13310 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13311 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13312 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th August 2025.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th August 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13313 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

Members agreed to bring forward application CB/25/02163/FULL for discussion with attending members of the public.

CB/25/02163/FULL
(click for more
details)

Siting of a portakabin for community use
Recreation Ground off Parkside Drive and to the rear of Dolphin
Drive, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5RY

QJT.

Comments: It was noted that the proposal had been agreed in principle at the June meeting of the Town Council (Minute 13260). The location for the portacabin had been at the recommendation of the Town Clerk.

Members observed that the Corporate Plan had expressed an aspiration for the provision of a community facility within each area of the town and this facility would constitute progress toward achieving that objective.

Members suggested that Central Bedfordshire Council should be advised of the resolve from Town Council in June 2025:

To provide permission in principle for Parkside Action Group to site a cabin on Parkside recreation ground to serve as a local community space

Houghton Regis Town Council expressed support for the proposed structure and raised no objection to the application.

CB/25/02016/FULL
(click for more details)

Subdivision of the dwelling house into two self-contained units, single storey rear extension, ground floor replacement side extension, 4 roof lights to front, front porch, hip to gable, first floor side / rear extension, erection of rear dormer and associated external alterations.

44 Leafields, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5LX

Comments: Following a discussion of the proposed plans, Houghton Regis Town Council raised an objection to this application on the following grounds:

- The application failed to meet parking provision requirements.
- The number of anticipated bed spaces was not specified in the application and it was therefore impossible to determine whether space requirements would be met.
- The proposed modifications were extensive and constituted overdevelopment.
- The proposed plans were not in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.
- Neighbouring properties would be detrimentally impacted by the scale of the development.
- The plans failed to demonstrate the provision of adequate refuse storage space.

CB/25/02485/RM
(click for more details)

Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public

QJT

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) Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT. All matters reserved, erection of 161 dwelling units, with access, parking, landscaping and associated works. Outline application was EIA Development and was accompanied by an Environmental Statement Phase 3B Parcels 1 & 2, Houghton Regis North Site 1, Land on the northern edge of Houghton Regis

Comments: While Members felt that there were no grounds for objection, concern was expressed regarding comments made by the Designing Out Crime officer from Bedfordshire Police which outlined a number of factors thought to be 'potential crime and disorder generators.'

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application.

Noted:

CB/25/02332/LDCP
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Garage conversion, replace the garage door with a window and brickwork infill 3 Tennyson Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5UQ

CB/25/02431/DOC
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 19 against planning permission ref. CB/23/03987/RM (Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (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.) Reserved matters approval sought for layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access relating to Local Centre Parcel, Phase 1.) Local Centre Parcel, Linmere (HRN1), Waterslade Way and Lime Tree Drive, Houghton Regis, LU5 7AS

CB/25/02483/NMA
(click for more details)

Non-material amendment to planning permission
CB/23/03987/RM (Reserved Matters: following Outline Application CB/12/03613/OUT (Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. Development to comprise: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (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.) Reserved matters approval sought for layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access relating to Local Centre Parcel, Phase 1.) Amendments to drawings referred to in condition 1. Changes to ventilation grilles, balcony, smoke shaft and bricks on the neighbourhood centre building.
Local Centre Parcel, Linnere (HRN1) Phase 1, Waterslade Way & Lime Tree Drive, Houghton Regis, LU5 7AS

CB/25/02426/LDCP
(click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Erection of a single storey rear extension and addition of a ground floor window on the side flank wall.
90 Houghton Road, Dunstable, LU5 5AD

CB/25/02556/NMA
(click for more details)

Non-material amendment to planning permission
CB/23/03448/FULL (Revised scheme: Demolition of existing outbuildings whilst retaining the existing dwelling. Erection of 26 dwellings with access road and sewers.) Amendment sought: Minor amendment to the condition wording to tie the requirement for the licence to the commencement of relevant works, rather than to the discharge of the condition itself. Suggest that the condition be amended to state: 'No landscape works shall commence prior to the issue of a licence from Natural England.'
Red Cow Farm House, Bedford Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JP

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13314 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Members were advised that there were no planning applications which had been determined using delegated authority to report at this meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.40 pm

Dated this 15th day of September 2025

A. J. Jones.

Chairman

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

15th September 2025 at 7.00pm

Present:	Councillors:	D Jones E Billington E Cooper Y Farrell C Slough D Taylor	Chairman
	Officers:	Clare Evans Amanda Samuels	Town Clerk Administration Officer
	Public:	1	
Apologies:	Councillors:	M Herber	
Also present:		Elaine Connolly Kiera Tucker	Bellway Homes Ltd Bellway Homes Ltd

45 / 68

13335 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Herber.

13336 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13337 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13338 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 26th August 2025.

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th August 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

Members agreed to bring forward agenda item 7 to allow representatives from Bellway Homes Ltd to make their presentation.

13339 PRESENTATION FROM BELLWAY HOMES LTD – LINMERE PHASE 3B (PARCELS 1 & 2)

Elaine Connolly and Kiera Tucker from Bellway Homes made a presentation to Members regarding the Reserved Matters application for Linmere, Phase 3B, Parcels



1 and 2, comprising 161 dwellings (including the allocation of 24 affordable units agreed with CBC).

Members were provided with handouts illustrating the proposed designs and specifying the land parcels defined by the seller. The seller had delivered the infrastructure at this site and would also deliver the landscaping.

Ms Connolly informed Members that the proposed 'Industrial Chic' design complied with the requirements of the Design Code. Buildings would be capped at four storeys; materials would be selected to complement those of nearby developments; and the affordable units had been designed to meld naturally within the development. All units would be installed with air source heat pumps and EV charging points as standard.

Members suggested that a presentation should be made to Chalton Parish Council since part of the development would fall within their boundary. Ms Connolly confirmed that no presentation had been given as yet but efforts would be made to follow up this suggestion.

Members informed the representatives from Bellway Homes that HRTC had raised no objections in regard of their planning application (Minute 13313); however, concerns had been expressed regarding the comments of the Designing Out Crime officer. Ms Connolly confirmed that some adjustments to the design would address the points raised by the officer.

Resolved: To note the information delivered by Bellway Homes and provide feedback on the proposed development to ensure alignment with Neighbourhood Plan, planning policies, design standards, and community needs.

13340 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) The following planning applications were considered:

[CB/25/02434/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Single storey side and rear extension
Unit 3, Arianne Business Centre, Blackburn Road, Houghton
Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5DZ

Comments: An extension to this unit had previously been refused on the grounds of overdevelopment (Minute 12411). Members agreed that this application demonstrated an improvement on the previous submission; however, there was continued concern regarding the proximity to nearby residents and the potential detrimental impact from noise generated by an extended unit and parking / reversing vehicles.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application but expressed concern regarding noise levels and the potential impact on residents.

[CB/25/02182/FULL](#)
(click for more details)

Change of use from Class E to Place of Worship Class F1
23-25 Bedford Square, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5ES

Comments: Members had raised no objection to a previous application regarding the units (Minute 01323) but had felt there was insufficient information regarding the following:

- Hours of operation
- Noise impact on nearby residents
- Parking facilities
- Anticipated attendance numbers

Members had also expressed particular concern at the loss of three retail units within Bedford Square.

The new application provided additional information addressing many of the points raised. These issues were subject to further discussion, which also addressed accessibility.

Members agreed it remained difficult to assess the level of impact on residents and there were no further observations to be made.

Houghton Regis Town Council raised no objection to this application but continued to express concern at the loss of three retail units within Bedford Square.

Noted:

[CB/25/02642/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Condition 24 against planning permission ref. CB/21/03399/VOC (Variation (or removal) of condition number(s) 10,12 and 28 of planning permission CB/19/02130/FULL (Demolition of existing residential dwelling and erection of 119 dwellings including the creation of a new vehicular access, recreational open space, parking infrastructure and associated landscaping and ancillary works.) Condition 10 and 12, change of wording. Condition 28, substitute drawings) The Gates Land East of Bedford Road, Bidwell, Houghton Regis

[CB/25/02586/LDCP](#) (click for more details)

Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Erection of a rear single storey extension, and a new window
55 Leaf Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5JG

[CB/25/02660/DOC](#)
(click for more details)

Discharge of Conditions 5, 6,12 and 21 against planning permission CB/22/04525/VOC (Removal of condition 10 and Variation of conditions 13, 15 and 21 of planning permission CB/19/04220/OUT (Outline Application for Residential Development for up to 100 Dwellings with all matters reserved, except access) vary condition 13 from the requirement of 14 mainstream housing together with 9 units for care/support to 13.72% of total units suitable for the elderly and condition 21 to be amended to "The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 13060as2.15 Rev D (in so far as it relates to the means of access) Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ

[CB/25/02664/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Condition 8 against planning permission CB/23/03551/RM (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 76 dwellings including appearance, landscaping, scale and layout pursuant to outline consent CB/22/04525/VOC)
 Bury Spinney, Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6JQ

[CB/25/02679/DOC](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Discharge of Conditions 10,14,17 and 21 against planning permission CB/24/00801/FULL (Erection of a Class B8 (self-storage) building on southern boundary and associated works to car park and landscaping).
 Former Site of Morrisons, High Street, Houghton Regis

Permissions / Approvals / Consents

None received.

Refusals:

None received.

Withdrawals:

None received.

13341 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The following planning applications were received for consultation and fell within delegated authority. They were recommended for approval:

[CB/25/02451/FULL](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Erection of a single storey side and rear extension, new windows and doors, and skylight
 12 Northview Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 5AH

[CB/25/02423/FULL](#)
[\(click for more details\)](#)

Erection of a single storey side and rear extension, new windows and doors
 14 Panama Gardens, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, LU5 6SN

13342 APPEAL DECISIONS

Members were advised that the Planning Inspectorate had formally dismissed two planning appeals. This determination represented the conclusion of the appeals process for these particular applications.

Application Reference: [CB/25/00569/ADV](#)

Appeal Reference: APP/P0240/Z/25/3366837

Description: Advertisement - Installation of 1 advertising digital display screen to the rear of a new communications kiosk

Decision: Appeal Dismissed (05 September 2025)



Application Reference: CB/25/00568/FULL

Appeal Reference: APP/P0240/W/25/3366836

Description: Installation of 1 new communications kiosk with integrated defibrillator

Decision: Appeal Dismissed (05 September 2025)

Members noted the decisions.

It was requested that, for accuracy, the wording of this agenda item be amended on future agendas.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Dated this 6th day of October 2025

Chairman



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET
ON 29th April 2025**

Present: Town Cllrs: J Carroll, Y Farrell, D Jones
CBC Cllrs C Alderman (Chair), S Goodchild, T McMahon
Co-opted J Anderson, D Gibbons, T Haines, C Regan, R Turner
members:
CBC S Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, CBC
Officers:
HRTC C Evans, Town Clerk
Officers: A Samuels, Administration Officer

Also in attendance: Cllr R Goodchild, CBC

Apologies: Cllr Hamill and Cllr Slough

Members of the public: 2

1073 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Hamill and Cllr Slough.

1074 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A representative from the Houghton Regis Badminton Club emphasised the need to retain the sports hall facility for residents of Houghton Regis until a new facility was available.

A representative from Luton and Houghton Regis Basketball Club informed Members that Schools+, who managed the sports hall at Houghton School, operated as a commercial business and were not able to adapt their business model to reduce costs. Availability and affordability therefore continued to be significant barriers to access.

Be Active Beds had provided funding for four sessions until early May; however, there would be no sports hall access during the exam period, May - July. The Leisure team were aware of this and would investigate the cost of raising the exam tables and explore the possibility of scheduling a weekly session at Dunstable Leisure Centre.

A handout was distributed to Members which questioned how it could be acceptable for residents of Houghton Regis to be denied the same access and considerations as residents of neighbouring towns? The handout reiterated many of the points raised at a number of meetings over the past fourteen months.

1075 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

1076 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 28th January 2025.

One amendment was requested to Minute 1065 to alter CBC to ICB.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2025 as amended.

1077 INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW INTEGRATED CARE BOARD (ICB) PLACE TEAM

The Integrated Care Board (ICB) Place Team were in attendance to introduce the Town Partnership Committee to the team's roles and responsibilities:

K Conroy, Head of Central Bedfordshire ICB Place Team
S Daly, Senior Integrated Primary Care Manager
S Gutteridge, Head of Integrated Primary Care

The Place Team was part of the ICB operating across Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. Place Plan priorities were as follows:

- Reducing excess weight in children and adults
- Earlier diagnosis of cancer
- Positive mental health for children and young people
- Improving mental health services and support for people with learning disabilities and autistic people
- Improving access to primary care, including dentistry
- Improving out of hospital services

The team sought to establish the needs of residents while also focussing on evidence-based criteria. Integrated Neighbourhood Working looked to improve the health outcomes and experience for local residents by connecting and optimising resources.

The Primary Care Core Team looked to improve access into primary care. Over the past year Pharmacy First had been launched, which was a scheme encouraging people to use the services available at their local pharmacy. There had also been efforts to promote the NHS app which would enable residents to take a more proactive approach to their own healthcare.

Members raised a number of questions including the following:

Was it possible to share any examples of preventative interventions that had been implemented using population data for the residents of Houghton Regis, and what results had been shown?

The Team confirmed that a response would be provided at a later date.

How would the needs of a growing community be met with no additional capacity for residents to visit their local GP?

The ICB was connected with Central Beds Council and aware of the proposed growth. Work was carried out with the council to plan future healthcare provision. A more in-depth response would follow.

What were the top three priorities for HR.

Work was being undertaken with Public Health on population health management data to gather evidence-based information that would inform the plan for each of the neighbourhoods.

Members noted that while preventative health was a significant factor, this did not align with the recent loss of a local sports facility that benefited the whole community.

Was the data collected specific to Houghton Regis or to the whole of Central Bedfordshire?

The work with Public Health would look to provide data relating to each neighbourhood.

Members were keen to establish that data sources would be an adequate indicator of the needs of Houghton Regis. It was highlighted that, out of necessity, residents were often accessing services outside of the area, e.g. GPs; therefore, there was a risk of data being incomplete. The Place Team informed Members that a variety of service providers would be included and they would take into account where people lived; however, this would be checked and verified.

It was requested that the Place Team provide clarity on the data sources and demonstrate how all relevant information would be captured.

1078 UPDATE ON FORMAL SPORTS PROVISION IN HOUGHTON REGIS

The new leisure and community centre opened to the public on Saturday, 29th March 2025 and was operated by Everyone Active.

The representative from Houghton Regis Badminton Club circulated handouts among Members and provided an update.

CBC had stated they were unable to exert any influence on the current agreement between Houghton School and Schools+ since neither party was a CBC asset.

A number of avenues were being pursued, including:

- A petition
- Contacting the local ombudsman
- A legal review
- Crowd funding
- Holding a public meeting

The representative from Luton and Houghton Regis Basketball Club circulated handouts outlining the deficits of current sports hall provision.

A recent survey had highlighted the significant inequalities that persisted across different demographics. The Sports Minister had stressed the need for a cross-government approach and had called on local authorities to develop local plans to encourage physical activity. The current lack of sports hall provision appeared to be in contravention of Government policy.

As part of the consultation, CBC had stated they would facilitate the CUA for the Houghton Regis community to access Houstone, which had not been honoured. It was discussed whether the Town Partnership could trigger a review of the situation and if there was potential to make a legal challenge. Members remained uncertain whether the CUA had been signed.

Cllr McMahon quoted Condition 19 in the planning application submitted at the DMC which stated that 'the planning permission for the secondary school within the campus includes a condition for the CUA to be agreed prior to the occupation of the secondary school'. The Chair requested that Cllr McMahon forward this condition.

The Chair confirmed they would enquire:

- Whether the CUA had been signed? If not, what date would it be completed?
- Was it possible to provide a copy of the signed document?
- Had Condition 19 of the planning application been met? If not, could an explanation be provided for the violation of this condition?
- How could a review of the agreement be triggered?

Members suggested that if the CUA was unsigned, it would also be possible to declare the current arrangements unsatisfactory and request that the terms were renegotiated. If the agreement was signed, however, it should be investigated whether the contract between Houstone School and Schools+ worked within the CUA.

Cllr McMahon confirmed they would explore the specifications for the Levelling Up funding for the leisure centre and whether those specifications had been met.

The Chair was organising a meeting for representatives from the Houghton Regis Badminton Club, Houghton Regis Basketball Club and the Academy of Central Bedfordshire to meet with Cllr Watkins of CBC to discuss sports hall provision. The Chair would enquire whether it would be possible for the meeting to be open and allow members of the public to attend.

1079 CBC SUPPORT TO TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Cllr R Goodchild addressed Members regarding his role as unofficial deputy to the portfolio holder for Town and Parish Liaison, Cllr John Baker, and a secondary position under Cllr Steve Watkins for Town Centre Development. The objective was to help achieve the CBC Strategic Plan and would involve working closely with the Community Engagement Team and meeting with all town councils.

Cllr Goodchild would be looking at how communication could be improved between CBC and the towns and parishes and he was keen to work closely with the Joint and Partnership Committees to this end. Improved collaboration was also sought from residents.

It was intended that a parish charter would be established, setting out how all parties would work together. A working group incorporating volunteers from towns and parishes would be assembled to put the charter together.

It was agreed that a formal discussion would be included on a future Town Partnership agenda to address how best to improve the effectiveness of the Committee.

Members were informed that the first in a proposed schedule of forums had been held recently. The forums, comprising of town and parish councils, would be held regularly with set agendas on strategic matters.

1080 COMMUNITY BUILDINGS IN HOUGHTON REGIS

A verbal update was provided by the CBC Community Engagement Manager on the planned community centre in Bidwell.

The charity had received guidance on CBC's expectations of the development. A meeting had taken place to discuss the business plan, which had subsequently been submitted before the deadline. Advice had also been provided in relation to which proposals were acceptable and viable within planning terms.

A verbal update was provided by Cllr Alderman on the formal request made to CBC for a public consultation on the Bedford Square Community Centre prior to the end of the current lease to the College.

CBC's response had stated that the building was dual use and was still required for CBC to meet its statutory requirements to educate young people with SEN. Consultation had been conducted and an executive decision made that there was no rationale or purpose to revisiting the situation.

1081 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan for 2024/25 and the draft workplan for 2025/26.

It was requested that Parkside community space remained on the workplan as an ongoing issue.

It was recommended that the workplan should include an additional item to schedule a formal discussion on means of improving the Town Partnership Committee.

1082 HRTC UPDATE REPORT

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Sub-Committee was an addition to the 2025/26 calendar of meetings. The dates would be confirmed at the Town Council AGM on 14th May 2025.

1083 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

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

CA

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.

1084 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 were any requested items for CBC's attention.

Members discussed the following items:

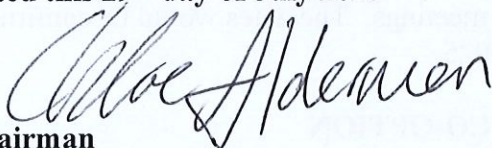
- Health
- Delivery (how and when) of the Bidwell West school
- Council communications
- Review and update of the Town Centre Management Plan

The Committee agreed that these matters were more relevant to the Committee Workplan and would be incorporated as such.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.26pm

Dated this 29th day of July 2025

Chairman





HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Internal Control Policy

Date of Adoption:	14 th October 2024
Date of Review:	October 2025
Date of Re-adoption	

1. Scope of Responsibility

Houghton Regis Town Council is a Local Authority funded largely by public money. It is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk. The Council is required, by regulation 6.1 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, to review each financial year the effectiveness of its system of financial control.

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. The Internal Control Environment

The Council

- The Council has adopted Financial Regulations which set parameters for the Council's financial operations.
- The Council has appointed a Chairman who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful, and in accordance with its Standing Orders.
- The Council meets six times per year to monitor and review its obligations, aims and objectives, and receive reports from the Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer, committees and members of the Council.
- The Council has appointed Committees who monitor progress against objectives and budgets
- The Corporate Services committee monitors financial systems and procedures, budgetary control and regularly reviews financial matters.
- The Council met in January to approve the budget and precept for the coming year.

- The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.
- Payroll is processed by an external payroll provider using payroll software and checked by the Responsible Finance Officer.
- Banking services are provided by NatWest.
- The Council uses a computerised accounting system Rialtas to complete the management accounts and financial returns for the Council.

Clerk to the Council / Responsible Financial Officer

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and manager and Responsible Financial Officer and who is responsible for the administration of the Council's finances.

The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments

All expenditure (the incurring of costs) must be authorised by the Council, or by a committee having delegated authority, or (in accordance with the Financial Regulations) by other delegated authority.

All payments from the Council's banks accounts are only to be made with dual authorisation.

All payments are reported to the Corporate Services Committee. The Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for checking the legality of each payment and that payments are within the powers of the Council.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management

The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls. The insurance cover is regularly reviewed to ensure the correct level of cover has been provided.

Internal Auditor

The Council has appointed IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd, as Independent Internal Auditor who reports to the Council on the adequacy of:

- records
- procedures
- systems of internal control
- regulations
- risk management
- governance processes

The effectiveness of internal audit is reviewed annually by the Council.

External Auditor

The Council's external auditors, as appointed by SAAA Ltd, submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

Professional Advice

Additionally, the Council seeks and receives appropriate property, legal, insurance, VAT, personnel/human resources and health & safety advice as appropriate to manage risk.

4. Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- The full Council
- The work of officers reporting to the Council and its committees
- The Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer to the Council who are responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risk.
- The Independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's system of internal control and reports to the Council.
- The Council's External Auditor who makes a final check using the Annual Return, a form completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the

Chairman, the Town Clerk and the Internal Auditor. An Audit Certificate is issued.

- The number of significant issues that are raised during the year

5. Significant Internal Control Issues

Whilst no significant internal control issues were identified during the year the Council strives at all times for the continuous improvement of the system it has adopted.

Approved by Council

Date: 14th October 2024

Minute Reference: 13011

- High Street
- Bedford Square
- King Street

