



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr Tracey K McMahon** Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans** Email: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

8th March 2021

To: Members of the Corporate Services Committee

Cllrs: D Jones (Chairman), C Copleston, M Kennedy, S Thorne, K Wattingham and Vacancies x 2.

(Copies to other Councillors for information)

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **Corporate Services Committee** to be held virtually on **Monday 15th March 2021 at 7.00pm.**

This meeting is being held virtually via Microsoft Teams. If members of the public would like to attend, please click on the meeting link below and follow the online instructions:

[MEETING LINK¹](#)

[MEETING GUIDANCE](#)

To assist in the smooth running of the meeting please refer and adhere to the Council's Virtual Meeting Guidance. To view the Virtual Meeting Guidance please click on the link above.

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

**THIS MEETING MAY BE
RECORDED²**

Agenda

- 1. APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**
- 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.

¹ If you require a meeting link emailed to you, please contact the Head of Democratic Services at louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk

² 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.

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. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

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

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

4. OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS

The Corporate Services Committee previously agreed to staff working from home until 7th May due to restrictions on movement and work arising from Covid.

Since this decision was made staff have continued to work from home providing email and telephone services to facilitate the work of the council. However, the council's reception has largely remained closed. There was a period when national restrictions enabled reception to be opened. This was secured through staff working on a rota basis and remained in place until restrictions were re-imposed.

The recent road map suggested by the government sets out a plan for the easing of restrictions from 12th April until 21st June, providing that certain conditions are met. Staff are currently reviewing services to ensure that services are resumed in a safe way as soon as possible in accordance with national guidance.

Members are requested to consider the working arrangements during this transition period in particular in relation to the opening of Reception. To provide a face to face service to residents during this transition period and to continue to ensure staff safety, it is suggested that the following be considered:

12th April to 17th May – reception open 9am-5pm Monday, Wednesday, Friday with 2 staff members on a rota system

17th May to beginning of January 2022 – reception open 5 days 9am-5pm with 3 staff members on a rota system

Staff have been consulted on this possibility and are welcoming of the council being a considerate employer. As members are aware staff work under a flexi-time scheme, to accommodate this with this rota, staff will link in with others they are scheduled to work alongside to ensure that the office is open 9am to 5pm. Staff are also aware that they will be required to provide cover during periods of annual leave.

Recommendation: In accordance with government guidance to seek to re-open Reception as follows:
12th April to 17th May – reception open 9am-5pm Monday, Wednesday, Friday with 2 staff members on a rota system
17th May to beginning of January 2022 – reception open 5 days 9am-5pm with 3 staff members on a rota system

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Staffing matter

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.

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