



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr M Herber**
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

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14th April 2026

To: Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Cllrs: **A Slough (Chair)**, P Burgess, Y Farrell, W Henderson, T McMahon, C Rollins, D Taylor

(Copies to other Councillors for information)

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **Environment & Leisure Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street, on **Tuesday 21st April 2026 at 7.00 pm.**

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

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

***THIS MEETING MAY
BE RECORDED ****

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

Agenda

- 1. APOLOGIES AND 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.

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

Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.

No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.

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

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 5 - 7

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2026.

Recommendation: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 12th January 2026, and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

5. COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Page 8

Members will find attached a work plan for the municipal year 2025/26.

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

This report is provided for information purposes only.

6. HOUGHTON HALL PARK

A verbal update will be provided to Members on the day-to-day operations of Houghton Hall Park management.

This report is provided for information purposes only.

7. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Pages 9 - 15

Members will find attached the income and expenditure report, with appropriate commentary, for the Environment & Leisure Services Committee.

This report is provided for information purposes only.

8. TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE

A verbal update will be provided to Members on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

This report is provided for information purposes only.

9. REVIEW OF OPEN SPACES AND SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Pages 16 - 20

To review the use, function and accessibility of open spaces across Houghton Regis; identify opportunities for improvement aligned to the Houghton Regis Town Council Corporate Plan.

- Recommendation:**
- 1) Approve the findings of the open spaces and outdoor sports review as set out in this report.
 - 2) Endorse the progression of a prioritised action plan to improve the quality, accessibility and functionality of existing open spaces, timescale subject to available resources.
 - 3) Agree that further feasibility work is undertaken with partners in respect of:
 - additional outdoor sports provision (tennis, outdoor gym, cricket and netball); and
 - the potential delivery of a second all-weather pitch at Thorn Park.
 - 4) Request that officers explore external funding and partnership opportunities to support delivery, and report back with costed options.

10. ANNUAL REVIEW OF LAND AND ASSETS

Pages 21 - 25

To present the annual review of the Council's land and building assets, including condition, insurance and planned maintenance arrangements, and to provide assurance regarding asset management.

- Recommendation:** To endorse the continued management of the Council's land and building assets in accordance with good asset management practice, current insurance valuations and planned maintenance information.

11. PLAY AREA TENDER

To approve that officers secure the S106 commuted sum of £97,000 from CB/21/03369/FULL - Hand Post Field north of Thorn Road, Houghton Regis, and invite

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Environment & Leisure Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
12th January 2026 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors: A Slough Chairman
P Burgess
Y Farrell
T McMahon
C Rollins
D Taylor

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: W Henderson

Also present: J Carroll

13484 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Henderson.

13485 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13486 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13487 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2025.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 20th October 2025, and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13488 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were provided with a work plan for the 2025/26 municipal year.

The work plan 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 were informed that all items on the work plan were due to be discussed, except the annual review of land assets, which had been postponed until April.

13489 HOUGHTON HALL PARK

Members were informed that Houghton Regis Town Council (HRTC) had reached its first anniversary of operational management of Houghton Hall Park (HHP) and feedback so far had been positive. The main items of note were:

- A community gardener had been recruited.
- The proposed work to the formal garden and kitchen garden would be presented to the HHP board.
- The borehole had been drilled, and a water analysis had deemed the water fit to drink. Electric works for the pump were due to take place.
- There were plans to promote volunteering numbers at HHP; to assist this, the section of the Houghton Regis promotional film relating to HHP volunteers would be released.
- Improvements were continuing, and all income from HHP would be reinvested in the site.
- A 'lessons learnt' report was due to be produced.

13490 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

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

The Head of Environmental and Community Services went through the main points of note. The report was much as anticipated, with the highest costs being utilities and items outside HRTC's control.

In response to a query from Members regarding sustainability at the Thorn Park pavilion, the Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed that works would be carried out on other older assets as a priority, with works to the Thorn Park pavilion dependent on available funding.

13491 BIODIVERSITY POLICY

The biodiversity policy has been created to comply with legislation. For the policy to be considered effective, it required the whole Council to support it through the town council's committee structure.

Members were informed that, in addition to meeting a legal obligation, the policy would benefit the community and would allow HRTC to participate in the Local Council Award Scheme run by NALC.

Resolved: To endorse and request that the Council adopt the Biodiversity Policy.

13492 TOWN PLANTING STRATEGY

Members were provided with the updated objectives for the town planting strategy.

HRTC had adopted the grass cutting at the East End Common and around the Chequers roundabout; bulb planting would be extended to include these areas.

Three objectives were complete, and two were ongoing.

Members were also requested to review the maintenance of the trees outside All Saints Church. It was proposed that the trees in front of the Church undergo staggered pollarding rather than simultaneous pollarding of all the trees. It was suggested that this would be more aesthetically appealing while maintaining views of the church. Members were supportive of this proposal. Members requested a copy of the work plan, for information, as this would allow them to keep residents updated. The Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed the work plan would be provided.

Resolved: To discuss and agree on the updates to the named objectives.

13493 TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE

Members received a verbal update on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Following the completion of the Section 278 agreement, the bond for the highway programme had been agreed, and legal particulars were now awaited.

The Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed he would contact Members as soon as additional information became available.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.41 pm

Dated this 21st day of April 2026

Chairman



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Environment & Leisure Committee Workplan 2025/26

The following Workplan indicates anticipated specific reports in addition to regular/standard reports¹:

Committee date	Report Heading	Completed/deferred/removed
28th July 2025	Vice Chair	Completed
	Committee Functions & Terms of Reference	Completed
	Asset transfers in Thorn / Bidwell	Completed
	HRTC Pavilions PMS Budget (Corp Plan 77)	Completed
	Grounds Workshop lease	Completed
	Staff (E&L) Forecast	Completed
20th October 2025	Budget Requests inc staff salaries	Completed
	Update on annual external Play Area inspections	Completed
	E&L Fees & Charges inc HHP	Completed
12th January 2026	Town planting strategy (Corp Plan 25, 27, 28, 53, 54, 55)	Completed
21st April 2026	Review of open spaces and sport and recreational facilities (Corp Plan 79, 80, 82)	
	Annual Review of Land and Assets Inc. Buildings	

¹ Include: Draft Minutes, Income & Expenditure Report, Minutes from Sub Committees, Working groups and HHP Board, Committee Workplan

13/04/2026

Houghton Regis Town Council Current Year

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<u>Environment and Leisure</u>					
<u>201 Village Green Rec Gd</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	2,262	2,869	607		
Village Green Rec Gd :- Income	2,262	2,869	607		
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	2,265	2,500	235		235
Village Green Rec Gd :- Indirect Expenditure	2,265	2,500	235	0	235
Net Income over Expenditure	(3)	369	372		
<u>202 Village Green Pavilion</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	802	150	(652)		
Village Green Pavilion :- Income	802	150	(652)		
4011 RATES	2,545	2,800	255		255
4012 WATER RATES	4,880	1,500	(3,380)		(3,380)
4014 ELECTRICITY	1,733	1,500	(233)		(233)
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	995	2,000	1,005		1,005
4038 MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	761	943	182		182
Village Green Pavilion :- Indirect Expenditure	10,914	8,743	(2,171)	0	(2,171)
Net Income over Expenditure	(10,112)	(8,593)	1,519		
<u>211 Parkside Rec Gd</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	1,899	3,000	1,101		
Parkside Rec Gd :- Income	1,899	3,000	1,101		
4013 RENT	50	50	0		0
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	1,467	1,500	33		33
Parkside Rec Gd :- Indirect Expenditure	1,517	1,550	33	0	33
Net Income over Expenditure	382	1,450	1,068		
<u>212 Parkside Pavilion</u>					
4012 WATER RATES	117	300	183		183
4014 ELECTRICITY	657	600	(57)		(57)
4015 GAS	446	150	(296)		(296)
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	1,335	1,000	(335)		(335)
Parkside Pavilion :- Indirect Expenditure	2,556	2,050	(506)	0	(506)
Net Expenditure	(2,556)	(2,050)	506		

Continued over page

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<u>221 Tithe Farm Rec Grd</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	0	2,115	2,115		
Tithe Farm Rec Grd :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>2,115</u>	<u>2,115</u>		
4013 RENT	5	5	0		0
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	1,000	1,000		1,000
Tithe Farm Rec Grd :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>5</u>	<u>1,005</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(5)</u>	<u>1,110</u>	<u>1,115</u>		
<u>222 Tithe Farm Store</u>					
4012 WATER RATES	2,190	200	(1,990)		(1,990)
4014 ELECTRICITY	(3,730)	800	4,530		4,530
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	829	1,000	171		171
Tithe Farm Store :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>(710)</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>2,710</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,710</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>710</u>	<u>(2,000)</u>	<u>(2,710)</u>		
<u>231 Orchard Close Rec Grd</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	2,462	1,800	(662)		
Orchard Close Rec Grd :- Income	<u>2,462</u>	<u>1,800</u>	<u>(662)</u>		
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	997	1,000	3		3
Orchard Close Rec Grd :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>997</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>1,465</u>	<u>800</u>	<u>(665)</u>		
<u>232 Orchard Close Pavilion</u>					
4012 WATER RATES	(933)	500	1,433		1,433
4014 ELECTRICITY	452	800	348		348
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	893	1,000	107		107
Orchard Close Pavilion :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>412</u>	<u>2,300</u>	<u>1,888</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,888</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(412)</u>	<u>(2,300)</u>	<u>(1,888)</u>		
<u>241 Moore Crescent Rec Grd</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	683	2,115	1,433		
Moore Crescent Rec Grd :- Income	<u>683</u>	<u>2,115</u>	<u>1,433</u>		
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	420	1,100	680		680
Moore Crescent Rec Grd :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>420</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>680</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>680</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>263</u>	<u>1,015</u>	<u>753</u>		

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<u>242 Moore Crescent Pavilion</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	1,380	200	(1,180)		
Moore Crescent Pavilion :- Income	1,380	200	(1,180)		
4011 RATES	4,192	4,700	508		508
4012 WATER RATES	1,978	2,700	722		722
4014 ELECTRICITY	2,116	2,200	84		84
4015 GAS	2,620	1,400	(1,220)		(1,220)
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,516	2,000	(516)		(516)
4038 MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	481	1,000	519		519
Moore Crescent Pavilion :- Indirect Expenditure	13,903	14,000	97	0	97
Net Income over Expenditure	(12,523)	(13,800)	(1,277)		
<u>243 Moore Crescent Bowling Gn</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	6,489	6,489	0		
Moore Crescent Bowling Gn :- Income	6,489	6,489	0		
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	5,957	6,000	43		43
Moore Crescent Bowling Gn :- Indirect Expenditure	5,957	6,000	43	0	43
Net Income over Expenditure	532	489	(43)		
<u>261 Thorn Park</u>					
1077 Grant income CBC Section 106	3,154,957	0	(3,154,957)		
1082 INC-LETTINGS	481	2,215	1,734		
Thorn Park :- Income	3,155,438	2,215	(3,153,223)		
4001 STAFF SALARIES	42,231	0	(42,231)		(42,231)
4002 EMPLOYERS N.I	5,124	0	(5,124)		(5,124)
4003 EMPLOYERS SUPERANN.	11,172	0	(11,172)		(11,172)
4006 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	287	0	(287)		(287)
4017 HEALTH & SAFETY	1,425	0	(1,425)		(1,425)
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,401	0	(2,401)	2,105	(4,506)
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	181,556	1,100	(180,456)	3,194	(183,650)
4039 HORTICULTURAL SUPPLIES	1,456	0	(1,456)	121	(1,576)
4042 Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	8,010	0	(8,010)	277	(8,287)
4217 HHP Project Contribution	11	0	(11)		(11)
Thorn Park :- Indirect Expenditure	253,673	1,100	(252,573)	5,697	(258,270)
Net Income over Expenditure	2,901,765	1,115	(2,900,650)		

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<u>262 Thorn Park Pavilion</u>					
4012 WATER RATES	0	400	400		400
4014 ELECTRICITY	2,614	400	(2,214)		(2,214)
4015 GAS	133	1,000	867		867
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	353	1,000	647		647
4038 MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	155	500	345	1,002	(657)
Thorn Park Pavilion :- Indirect Expenditure	3,256	3,300	44	1,002	(958)
Net Expenditure	(3,256)	(3,300)	(44)		
<u>263 Houghton Hall Park</u>					
1091 Income Miscellaneous	136,185	136,185	0		
Houghton Hall Park :- Income	136,185	136,185	0		
4001 STAFF SALARIES	50,622	50,622	0		0
4002 EMPLOYERS N.I	6,399	6,399	0		0
4003 EMPLOYERS SUPERANN.	13,708	13,708	0		0
4005 STAFF OVERTIME	1,422	1,422	(0)		(0)
4006 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	3,038	3,038	0		0
4017 HEALTH & SAFETY	185	780	595		595
4020 MISC. ESTABLISH.COST	128	128	(0)		(0)
4022 POSTAGE	50	50	0		0
4024 SUBSCRIPTIONS	291	291	0		0
4034 WEBSITE COSTS	700	700	0		0
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	5,217	409	(4,808)		(4,808)
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	5,087	5,087	0		0
4039 HORTICULTURAL SUPPLIES	6,686	6,714	28		28
4042 Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	1,733	1,733	(0)		(0)
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	16,760	16,760	0		0
4217 HHP Project Contribution	29,000	29,000	0	2,104	(2,104)
4222 COMMUNITY EVENTS	29,011	29,011	0		0
4992 Trs from Earmarked Reserve	(4,982)	0	4,982		4,982
Houghton Hall Park :- Indirect Expenditure	165,056	165,852	796	2,104	(1,307)
Net Income over Expenditure	(28,871)	(29,667)	(796)		
<u>271 Houghton Regis Cemetery</u>					
1084 Income Burial Fees	15,097	20,000	4,903		
Houghton Regis Cemetery :- Income	15,097	20,000	4,903		
4011 RATES	1,459	1,200	(259)		(259)
4012 WATER RATES	120	300	180		180

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
4020 MISC. ESTABLISH.COST	712	0	(712)		(712)
Houghton Regis Cemetery :- Indirect Expenditure	2,291	1,500	(791)	0	(791)
Net Income over Expenditure	12,806	18,500	5,694		
<u>273 Allotments</u>					
1082 INC-LETTINGS	3,825	3,700	(125)		
Allotments :- Income	3,825	3,700	(125)		
4012 WATER RATES	2,385	700	(1,685)		(1,685)
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	159	1,000	841		841
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	2,544	1,700	(844)	0	(844)
Net Income over Expenditure	1,281	2,000	719		
<u>281 Public Open Spaces</u>					
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	500	500		500
4992 Trs from Earmarked Reserve	0	(7,163)	(7,163)		(7,163)
Public Open Spaces :- Indirect Expenditure	0	(6,663)	(6,663)	0	(6,663)
Net Expenditure	0	6,663	6,663		
<u>282 Play Areas (all)</u>					
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	655	2,000	1,345		1,345
4042 Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	5,748	12,000	6,253	1,515	4,738
Play Areas (all) :- Indirect Expenditure	6,403	14,000	7,598	1,515	6,083
Net Expenditure	(6,403)	(14,000)	(7,598)		
<u>283 Street Furniture</u>					
1091 Income Miscellaneous	640	0	(640)		
Street Furniture :- Income	640	0	(640)		
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	11,778	1,000	(10,778)	18	(10,797)
Street Furniture :- Indirect Expenditure	11,778	1,000	(10,778)	18	(10,797)
Net Income over Expenditure	(11,138)	(1,000)	10,138		
<u>291 Outside Services</u>					
1091 Income Miscellaneous	1,662	3,800	2,138		
Outside Services :- Income	1,662	3,800	2,138		

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

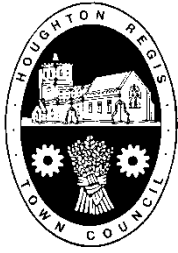
	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
4006 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	1,476	1,500	24	24	0
4008 TRAINING/COURSES	1,753	3,000	1,247		1,247
4011 RATES	16,342	12,553	(3,789)		(3,789)
4012 WATER RATES	617	800	183		183
4013 RENT	10,468	15,500	5,032		5,032
4014 ELECTRICITY	3,261	2,500	(761)		(761)
4015 GAS	131	200	69		69
4017 HEALTH & SAFETY	504	1,000	496	269	228
4018 REFUSE DISPOSAL	28,688	28,000	(688)		(688)
4020 MISC. ESTABLISH.COST	542	600	58		58
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	1,203	1,400	197		197
4038 MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	727	850	123		123
4039 HORTICULTURAL SUPPLIES	7,113	7,500	387	3,245	(2,857)
4040 Tree maintenance	5,617	6,000	383	458	(76)
4042 Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	10,702	10,000	(702)	338	(1,040)
4044 VEHICLE FUEL	13,910	12,500	(1,410)		(1,410)
4045 VEHICLE TAX & INSURANCE	1,730	1,200	(530)		(530)
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	14	2,200	2,186		2,186
Outside Services :- Indirect Expenditure	104,797	107,303	2,506	4,333	(1,828)
Net Income over Expenditure	(103,135)	(103,503)	(368)		
<u>292 E&L Staff Costs</u>					
4001 STAFF SALARIES	265,128	283,795	18,667		18,667
4002 EMPLOYERS N.I	33,137	34,055	918		918
4003 EMPLOYERS SUPERANN.	71,472	76,057	4,585		4,585
4005 STAFF OVERTIME	1,386	2,000	614		614
E&L Staff Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	371,124	395,907	24,783	0	24,783
Net Expenditure	(371,124)	(395,907)	(24,783)		
<u>293 UKSPF</u>					
4039 HORTICULTURAL SUPPLIES	19,322	0	(19,322)		(19,322)
4059 OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEES	2,917	0	(2,917)		(2,917)
4222 COMMUNITY EVENTS	260	0	(260)		(260)
UKSPF :- Indirect Expenditure	22,499	0	(22,499)	0	(22,499)
Net Expenditure	(22,499)	0	22,499		
<u>299 E&L Capital & Projects</u>					
1074 External Grant	51,627	0	(51,627)		
E&L Capital & Projects :- Income	51,627	0	(51,627)		

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 13/04/2026

Month No: 12

7. Income and Expenditure Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
4053 Loan payments- Moore Cres. Pav	24,069	24,069	0		0
4066 Loan payments - Tithe Farm Pav	35,280	32,792	(2,488)		(2,488)
4851 CAP-Machinery Renewals	15,912	20,000	4,088		4,088
4856 CAP - Street Furniture	0	1,000	1,000		1,000
4858 CAP - PLAY AREAS & EQPT	0	15,000	15,000		15,000
4871 CAP - Pavilion Renovations	1,981	50,000	48,019	48,019	0
E&L Capital & Projects :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>77,242</u>	<u>142,861</u>	<u>65,619</u>	<u>48,019</u>	<u>17,600</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(25,615)</u>	<u>(142,861)</u>	<u>(117,246)</u>		
Environment and Leisure :- Income	3,380,450	184,638	(3,195,812)		
Expenditure	1,058,897	870,108	(188,789)	62,688	(251,478)
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>2,321,553</u>	<u>(685,470)</u>	<u>(3,007,023)</u>		
Grand Totals:- Income	3,380,450	184,638	(3,195,812)		
Expenditure	1,058,897	870,108	(188,789)	62,688	(251,478)
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>2,321,553</u>	<u>(685,470)</u>	<u>(3,007,023)</u>		
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>2,321,553</u>	<u>(685,470)</u>	<u>(3,007,023)</u>		



ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 9.

Date: 21st April 2026

Title: Review of Open Spaces, Access and Outdoor Sports Provision in Houghton Regis

Purpose of the Report: To review the use, function and accessibility of open spaces across Houghton Regis; identify opportunities for improvement aligned to the Houghton Regis Town Council Corporate Plan.

Contact Officer: Ian Haynes

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Approve the findings of the open spaces and outdoor sports review as set out in this report.**
- 2) Endorse the progression of a prioritised action plan to improve the quality, accessibility and functionality of existing open spaces, timescale subject to available resources.**
- 3) Agree that further feasibility work is undertaken with partners in respect of:**
 - additional outdoor sports provision (tennis, outdoor gym, cricket and netball); and**
 - the potential delivery of a second all-weather pitch at Thorn Park.**
- 4) Request that officers explore external funding and partnership opportunities to support delivery, and report back with costed options.**

2. BACKGROUND

Houghton Regis Town Council manages and supports a range of parks, recreation grounds and informal open spaces that contribute significantly to residents' quality of

life. Population growth arising from existing and planned developments places increasing demands on these spaces, both in terms of capacity and diversity of use.

The Council's Corporate Plan places strong emphasis on maintaining and enhancing sporting provision, encouraging healthier lifestyles, and improving environmental quality. This report responds to those priorities by reviewing current provision, identifying gaps, and highlighting opportunities to improve access and participation across the parish.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Existing Open Spaces – Use and Function

Open spaces within Houghton Regis fulfil a variety of roles, including:

- formal sports and recreation.
- informal play and social interaction.
- biodiversity, landscape and visual amenities; and
- walking, cycling and active travel routes.
-

Some sites function primarily as neighbourhood green spaces, while others serve a wider catchment for organised sport. Usage levels and patterns vary significantly depending on location, facilities provided and accessibility.

3.2 Accessibility and Connectivity

Key considerations identified include:

- pedestrian and cycle access from surrounding neighbourhoods;
- inclusivity for residents with limited mobility.
- signage, lighting and perceived safety; and
- links between open spaces and wider green infrastructure.

There is an opportunity to improve access to several sites through relatively low-cost measures such as path upgrades, improved entrances, and clearer wayfinding.

3.3 Quality and Condition

While many facilities are well used, disparities exist in:

- the quality of pitches and ancillary facilities.
- availability of seating, shade and social space; and
- resilience of surfaces during periods of high rainfall.

Targeted investment could help maximise the value of existing assets and extend their usable seasons.

3.4 Opportunities for Additional Sports and Activities

Initial review indicates potential demand for a broader range of outdoor sporting opportunities, including:

- **Tennis and Netball:** Provision of marked courts or multi-use games areas could increase casual participation and youth engagement.
- **Athletics:** While a full athletics track will not be feasible, elements such as sprint straights, training areas or marked running loops could be explored in partnership with schools or clubs.
- **Outdoor Gym Equipment:** Low-maintenance equipment located in accessible parks could support health and wellbeing objectives for a wide age range.
- **Cricket:** Opportunities may exist to enhance or reconfigure existing grass areas to support junior or informal cricket, subject to space and maintenance considerations.

Further demand analysis and stakeholder engagement would be required before progressing to detailed design or costings.

3.5 Thorn Park – All-Weather Pitch Provision

Thorn Park plays a significant role in local sports provision, with existing pitches experiencing high levels of use. Preliminary considerations suggest that a second all-weather pitch could:

- increase capacity for training and match play.
- improve resilience to weather disruption; and
- support partnership working with clubs, schools and neighbouring authorities.

Feasibility work is required to assess:

- site capacity and layout constraints.
- capital and lifecycle costs.
- management and booking arrangements; and
- funding opportunities, including external grants.

4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Option 1: Maintain current provision with minimal investment.

Implications: Limits ability to meet growing demand; lowest short-term cost.

Option 2: Incremental improvements to existing open spaces and facilities.

Implications: Improves quality and access; manageable cost; aligns strongly with Corporate Plan priorities.

Option 3: Comprehensive enhancement programme including new facilities and a second all-weather pitch.

Implications: Highest impact and cost; requires partnership working and external funding.

5. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

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

1.1 Improve integration between existing and new communities.

2 **Local Services and Facilities: To provide a broad range of high quality services and facilities for our residents, visitors and businesses**

2.5 Maintain and enhance sporting provision both at existing and soon-to-be-adopted sites.

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

3.1 Improve environmental quality and sustainability.

3.2 Encourage a healthier lifestyle through healthy eating, smoking & vaping cessation and improved activity levels.

4 **Management and Operations: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council as the key local service provider**

4.2 Identify external/ partnership funding sources for council projects.

4.6 To actively consider and weight the impact of new and existing initiatives and services.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- The proposals align with the Council's strategic objectives and may require involvement of other committees and partner organisations.

Legal Implications

- There are no immediate legal implications. Further feasibility work may require legal advice on land use, leases, or partnership agreements.

Crime and Disorder Implications

- Well-designed, active open spaces can contribute positively to community safety and support Corporate Plan priority 2.2.

Financial Implications

- Further work is required to develop costed options. External funding opportunities will be explored to minimise the impact on Council budgets.

Risk Implications

- Key risks include capacity for delivery, long-term maintenance liabilities and community expectations. These can be mitigated through phased implementation and partnership working.

Equalities Implications

- Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- The potential projects outlined in this report will not discriminate.

Climate Change Implications

- Enhancing local open spaces supports sustainable lifestyles. Opportunities will be taken to use durable materials, improve drainage and integrate biodiversity enhancements.

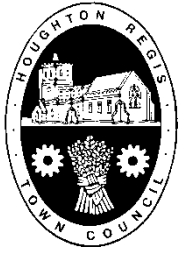
Press Contact

- Positive improvements to parks and sports provision would be suitable for promotion via the Council's website and social media channels.

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Houghton Regis's open spaces are a vital community assets. This review identifies clear opportunities to improve quality, access and diversity of use in line with the Council's Corporate Plan.

Subject to Member approval, the next steps involve detailed feasibility work, stakeholder engagement and the development of a prioritised, costed action plan.



ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 10.

Date: 21st April 2026

Title: Annual Review of Land and Assets

Purpose of the Report: To review the use, function and accessibility of open spaces across Houghton Regis; identify opportunities for improvement aligned to the Houghton Regis Town Council Corporate Plan.

Contact Officer: Ian Haynes

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

To endorse the continued management of the Council's land and building assets in accordance with good asset management practice, current insurance valuations and planned maintenance information.

2. BACKGROUND

Houghton Regis Town Council owns and manages a substantial portfolio of land and building assets, including community halls, sports pavilions, recreation grounds, open spaces, a cemetery and operational premises.

In line with good governance and asset management practice, the Council undertakes an annual review to ensure that assets are:

- Accurately recorded
- Appropriately used
- Fit for purpose
- Properly insured
- Managed in a sustainable manner

This report fulfils that requirement for the 2025/26 year.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Scope of the Review

This review covers all land and building assets owned by the Council, as recorded in the updated Asset Register dated 8 March 2026.

Vehicles, plant and operational equipment are excluded.

3.2 Overview of Building Assets

The Council's principal buildings include:

- Houghton Regis Memorial Hall
- Town Council Offices, Peel Street
- Moore Crescent Sports Pavilion
- Old Tithe Farm Pavilion
- New Tithe Farm Sports Pavilion
- Parkside Pavilion
- Village Green Pavilion
- Orchard Close Pavilion (building owned; land leasehold)
- Unit 22–23 Westbury Close (leased; insured by the Council)

These buildings support a wide range of community, sporting and operational activities across the parish.

3.3 Condition and Suitability

Based on officer knowledge, operational use and recent capital investment:

- All buildings remain fit for purpose
- No building has been identified as surplus
- Recent major capital investment, particularly at Tithe Farm, has strengthened the overall condition of the estate

Routine maintenance is undertaken through existing arrangements.

3.4 Land Holdings

The Council owns/has responsibility for extensive community land assets, including:

- Recreation grounds at Moore Crescent and Orchard Close
- Village Green
- Cemetery and closed churchyards
- Public open spaces, wildlife sites and green corridors

These assets are primarily held for community benefit and are recorded at nominal values in accordance with local authority accounting practice.

The Council lease two large public parks, including:

- Recreation grounds at Tithe Farm, Parkside,

3.5 Insurance Reinstatement Valuations

An independent Reinstatement Cost Assessment for Insurance Purposes was undertaken in January 2024 by Chartered Surveyors in accordance with RICS guidance.

The assessment confirmed a total declared building reinstatement value of £7,183,956, assuring that Council buildings are appropriately insured against current rebuilding costs.

Differences between accounting values in the asset register and insurance valuations are expected and reflect different purposes and methodologies.

3.6 Planned Maintenance and Asset Sustainability

The Council has commissioned a 10-Year Planned Maintenance Schedule (PMS) for its sports pavilion buildings, prepared in January 2025 by independent building surveyors.

The PMS:

- Identifies foreseeable like-for-like maintenance requirements for key pavilion buildings
- Provides an indicative 10-year maintenance cost profile
- Supports proactive asset management and medium-term financial planning

The total projected planned maintenance requirement across the assessed sports pavilions over the 10 years is approximately £786,846 (excluding VAT), equating to an average annual provision of around £78,685. The Council has reviewed and prioritised potential future expenditure.

The assessment excludes enhancements, mechanical and electrical services, vandalism, unplanned failures and future statutory upgrades, which are managed separately.

4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Option 1 (Recommended): Note the Annual Review and take no further action.

Option 2: Request a more detailed condition or asset management plan for non-pavilion buildings, with associated cost and resource implications.

5. HRTC CORPORATE PLAN

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

1.1 Improve integration between existing and new communities.

2 Local Services and Facilities: To provide a broad range of high-quality services and facilities for our residents, visitors and businesses

2.5 Maintain and enhance sporting provision both at existing and soon-to-be-adopted sites.

4 Management and Operations: To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town Council as the key local service provider

4.2 Identify external/ partnership funding sources for council projects.

4.6 To actively consider and weigh the impact of new and existing initiatives and services.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Implications

- There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendations.

Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

Crime and Disorder Implications

- There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the recommendations.

Financial Implications

- No new or unbudgeted financial commitments arise directly from this report.

Risk Implications

The review mitigates risks associated with asset failure and service disruption by confirming:

- Fit for purpose buildings
- Adequate insurance cover
- Visibility of planned maintenance requirements

Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good

- relations in respect of nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- The review does not introduce or propose any actions that would discriminate against any protected characteristic.

Climate Change Implications

- No direct climate change implications arise. Proactive maintenance supports asset longevity and sustainable use of existing buildings.

Press Contact

- There are no press implications arising from the recommendations

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Annual Review confirms that the Council's land and building assets are properly recorded, fit for use, adequately insured and sustainably managed.

The availability of a 10-Year Planned Maintenance Schedule for sports pavilion assets provides additional assurance that future maintenance liabilities are understood and can be planned for in a structured and proportionate manner.

The next steps are to continue routine maintenance, annual insurance and asset reviews, and to utilise planned maintenance information to inform future budget cycles.