

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
2nd November 2020 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: K Wattingham Chairman
J Carroll
C Copleston
Y Farrell
S Goodchild
M Kennedy Substitute
T McMahon

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk
Tara Earnshaw Community Development Officer

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillors: A Slough

11382 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Slough (Cllr Kennedy substituted)

11383 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public asked:

- Clarification on the arrangements for Remembrance Services
- The allocated budget for the firework display

It was advised that the council was waiting on further guidance for Remembrance Services.

It was advised that the estimated budget for the firework display was £8,000 - £9,000.

11384 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

11385 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2020.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 1st September 2020 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

11386 REPORT FROM GROUNDWORK

A representative from Groundwork was in attendance to update members on the work completed on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that work had continued with virtual sessions. The hope was that Youth Clubs would return during November; they are now awaiting advice on how the services Groundwork offer could move forward. Alternative venue locations to Bedford Square would be looked into as Bedford Square had not been confirmed in the short term.

Members were assured that all the services Groundwork offer were in compliance with Government guidelines. Their online support services were still available to young people.

11387 COMMUNITY & YOUTH SERVICES

Members were provided with an update on work undertaken by the Community Development Officer September to October 2020.

Members wanted to pass on their thanks and commend the Youth Council on the awards that they had won.

Members provided feedback on the residents' welcome packs that had been distributed by councillors on behalf of the Town Council and the appreciation that had been received on delivery.

11388 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Events Working Group	27 th August and 1 st October 2020
Combating Crime Working Group	19 th August and 16 th September 2020.

Members are specifically referred to the following;
CC1092 Op Hana contract 2021/2022

Cllr Kennedy joined the meeting (7.21pm)

**Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows;
To continue Operation Hana on the same format in 2021/2022 subject to budget provision being made available.**

11389 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

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

Members raised concerns regarding the timing of the Town Guide as this was greatly reliant on the sale of advertising space within the guide. With the knowledge of local businesses suffering financial constraints due to the difficulties faced during 2020, concerns were raised about affordability due to the financial implications of Covid-19.

Members agreed to defer further discussion of the Town Guide until a later date with consideration being given to the possibility of subsidising advertising costs.

Members were advised that some invoices were delayed in being issued to the Town Council for payment.

Cllr Carroll joined the meeting (7.31pm)

11390 DRAFT BUDGET 2021/22

Members received the officer draft budget for 2021/22 along with explanatory notes for the Community Services Committee.

The draft budget reflected on ongoing budgetary commitments along with anticipated budgetary commitments arising from the Council Vision 2020/24.

As members were aware the council revised its budget for 2020/21 in July 2020 to reflect on the implications of Covid-19. At the time of revising the budget members requested that the budget for 2021/22 be set on the original budget figures as these were reflective of a 'normal' council year. However, due to software limitations, the draft budget included the revised budget amounts for 2020/21. However, the budget explanatory notes provided members with the original budget figures for 2020/21 as requested. The draft budget for 2021/22 assumed normal delivery of services during the year, i.e. it assumed that Covid would not affect the services of the council during 2021/22.

Members were advised that an adjustment of £1,000 for the removal of event evaluation which would be revisited when Houghton Regis Town Council events were back to running at their planned schedules.

Members were advised of a further adjustment of £1,000 for the removal of the grant funding for the Churches Carol Service, as this funding would be provided from the Event budget provision.

Members discussed the option of a Town Ranger. Members suggested that it would be preferable for this work to be completed in-house rather than outsourced. Members were advised that the most cost-effective way of delivering this service initially was to buy in this service at £20 per hour from Dunstable Town Council.

Members requested that this be left in the budget, but to give further consideration to how this project could be moved forward and be delivered effectively.

11391 VISION

Members received an extract from the approved Vision 2020/2024 as it related to the work of this committee. Additional comments were included as staff had put forward some suggestions and ideas. Members comments were invited.

Members discussed the provision and positioning of an electronic noticeboard; it was suggested that this be placed within HRTC recreational space to increase public visibility.

Members commended the councils use of social media pages and feedback was requested on social media traffic on HRTC social media pages.

Members requested a review of the Town Crier at a future meeting

11392 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- Waste Disposal Service Level Agreement

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.

11393 WASTE DISPOSAL SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Members were advised that at Combating Crime Working group on 21st October consideration was given to a draft Service Level Agreement for the subsidisation of bulky waste collection between Houghton Regis Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council. Members received a variation of this around 12 months ago. Although very little had changed, as time has passed it was being represented to remind members of the content and obligations of each party. Members received the draft SLA which included some minor amendments. Combating Crime Working Group resolved to recommend to Community Services Committee that the document be signed.

Resolved: That the bulk waste disposal Service Level Agreement between Houghton Regis Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council be signed by the Chair of Community Services Committee.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20.19pm

Dated this 8th day of February 2020

Chairman