

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
5th September 2022 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: K Wattingham Chairman
P Burgess
S Goodchild
D Jones Substitute
T McMahon
A Slough

Officers: Debbie Marsh Corporate Services Manager
Tara Earnshaw Community Development Officer
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services
David Ramsay Lead Youth Worker

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillor: Y Farrell

Also Councillor: J Carroll
present:

Absent: C Copleston

12148 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Farrell, (Cllr Jones substituted).

12149 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12150 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

12151 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2022.

It was highlighted that during the last meeting, discussion was held around the consideration of Youth Services holding outreach work in Parkside. It was requested that this be included on the next Community Services Committee agenda for consideration in the next budget.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 4th July 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12152 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Events Working Group 9th June and 7th July 2022

Combating Crime Working Group 15th June and 20th July 2022

Recommendation: To receive the Minutes detailed above.

12153 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

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

Clarification was sought regarding an overspend on summer activities, it was advised that an additional coach had been booked due to the trips popularity which had affected the budget.

Clarification was sought regarding Key Partner Grants, members were reminded that once the grants for Key Partners had been agreed, they were not paid out until the next financial year.

Members requested information on whether there had been any uptake on the Bulk Waste Scheme and requested details of expenditure over the previous 4 months.

12154 REPORT FROM GROUNDWORK

Anthony Fuller, a representative from groundwork was in attendance to update members on the work completed on behalf of Houghton Regis Town Council.

Members were advised that numbers had dropped over the summer holidays as expected. Detached work had been suggested to take place in Bedford Square as safeguarding concerns had arisen, however this would require further funding from Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that attendance data had been scrutinised and young people had attended from all areas within the town with some attending from Dunstable. Outreach work in Parkside had been mentioned, however members were advised that capacity and funding had presented an issue and would need to go through Central Bedfordshire Council for support and thereby funding.

12155 HRTC COMMUNITY AND YOUTH SERVICES

Members received a report for July and August on youth and community work completed.

Members were advised that many Welcome Packs had been delivered to new residents, however a capacity issue had prevented full completion of the boxes.

It was queried whether Linmere would be included in the delivery drive, it was confirmed that Linmere would be included. However, Councillor assistance was required to aid the delivery of the Welcome Packs.

Members were advised that Dementia friendly signs had been displayed around the town. Additional stickers had been purchased for residents to use in their own homes. This objective was in support of the Town Councils vision of being a Dementia friendly town.

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of inclusion and cohesion of new residents moving into Houghton Regis. It was suggested that Housing Associations had a responsibility to approach the Town Council to offer support. It was suggested that the Community Development Officer from the Linmere development be approached for support in contacting the relevant housing associations.

Houghton Regis Later Living Social Group had been enjoying monthly coffee mornings. A trip to Southend was organised and other visits were being looked into.

Concerns were raised regarding whether the Town Council was reaching all of the older members of the community with information on this group. Officers highlighted to members that the Town Crier was delivered to each household and contained information on activities of this group, it also included information on how Houghton Helpers could assist residents where needed.

Members were advised the Pop-up Café had delivered some exciting, enhanced sessions over the summer which had been well attended, sessions had been planned until March 2023.

Councillor Burgess requested that consideration be given to installing a kitchen in Parkside Pavilion. It was advised that this suggestion would be taken to the Environment and Leisure Committee.

Resolved: To note the report.

12156 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Members were advised of a national Youth Investment Fund:

This fund was to create, expand and improve youth facilities and services. It was for large capital projects over £300,000 which were deliverable by 2025. The fund was looking for projects which were a fair way down the line. It was felt that the Tithe Farm Sports Project met the criteria and as such an Expression of Interest form was submitted for £413,000 to cover the anticipated HRTC loan for this project plus £70,000 for revenue funding to support youth development work from this base location but covering Tithe Farm and Parkside wards (the fund did not cover Houghton Hall ward).

The project had now been allocated a Relationship Manager and initial discussions had gone well. The council was being encouraged to prepare a Business / Project Plan for formal submission and consideration at the end of October. This was being worked on currently by the Town Clerk, the Community Development Officer and the Council's Bid Consultant, Castle Consultancy.

Members would be kept updated.

Members requested clarification as to whether match funding was required.

Members received this report for information.

12157 CCTV SERVICE BUNDLE RENEWAL

Members were advised that the redeployable cameras required a renewal of their data bundle and warranty as the current package expired in September 2022. A quote had been received. Packages were offered for a 2, 3, 4 and 5 year period.

The cameras were around 7 years old but were fully functioning. The service company suggested that there was currently no need to replace them. However, the council may need to consider doing so in the next 5 years or so.

As members may be aware the 3G network would cease to be operational in 2023. The renewal included the upgrade to 4G. The 4G upgrade required a return of the cameras to the head office (collection from HRTC and courier fees would be subsidised by the company). At this time the cameras would receive a health test before the kit was returned.

The Service Bundle provided the cameras data allowance, enabling the viewing of live video and downloadable recorded footage. The Bundle also included a comprehensive dedicated tech support team providing services such as additional training for new team members, remote tech support to resolve small faults and set up assistance whilst redeploying the cameras. If any of the cameras had an unexpected fault that could not be resolved remotely the camera would be collected, a full engineer assessment carried out, necessary repairs made and then it would be returned. A new replacement camera would be sent if the fault could not be fixed. This service was included for the duration of the service bundle.

For a 2 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £4948 (equating to £824 per year per camera)

For a 3 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £6834 (equating to £759 per year per camera).

For a 4 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £8448 (equating to £704 per year per camera).

For a 5 year service bundle for all 3 cameras the cost is £9492 (equating to £632 per year per camera).

The costs were payable in full and upfront. However, in the council's accounts the cost would be shown over the time span of the bundle. Members were advised that there was £2000 allocated in the 2022/23 budget to cover this annual expense.

Members were advised that the cameras were purchased as follows: 2 in 2015 and 1 in 2016. The lifespan of a camera was 7 - 10 years.

It was suggested that the 5 year service bundle be purchased as the cost per camera per year was substantially lower than the other service bundles and fit within the budgeted amount.

It was likely that the council may need to consider replacing all cameras at the end of this period.

Members were advised that there had been an error in regard to the figure presented on the proposed recommendation on the agenda. The Community Development Officer confirmed the figure of £9,492 was the correct figure, not the figure as stated.

Members discussed the merits of committing to a 5 year service contract however, they requested confirmation be obtained prior to moving any further forward in regard to weight compatibility with the new style lamp posts and whether the service bundle was transferable.

Resolved: To purchase a 5 year service bundle at a cost of £9,492 subject to suitable negotiations.

12158 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EXTENSIONS

At the previous committee meeting members considered options for extending the Christmas lights display for 2022 and onwards.

The Council's contractors came and visited the town and considered different ideas.

Members were reminded that £2,154 remained in the Capital budget for new lights in 2022/23.

Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.16pm

Dated this 7th day of November 2022

Chairman