

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
7th November 2023 at 7.00pm

Present:	Councillors:	Y Farrell N Batchelor E Billington J Carroll T McMahon A Slough	Chair Substitute
	Officers:	Ian Haynes Amanda Samuels	Head of Environmental & Community Services Administration Officer
Also present:	Public:	8	
Apologies:	Councillor:	P Burgess A Perry	SORTED
Absent:		C Rollins	

12588 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr P Burgess, (Cllr Carroll substituted).

12589 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12590 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr McMahon declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grant for the Heritage Society as she was a trustee of the Houghton Regis Heritage Society Committee. Cllr McMahon advised she would abstain from discussions relating to this organisation.

12591 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2023

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 17th July 2023 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12592 KEY PARTNERS – ANNUAL REVIEW OF EXISTING

Representatives from the listed organisations had been invited to the meeting to present their annual review/update. Members were reminded that Key Partner status



had been awarded to these organisations for the financial years 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24. The following summarises the amount of the Key Partner award:

Dunstable & District CAB	£2,000
SORTED	£2,000
Keech Hospice Care	£2,500
South Beds Dial A Ride	£1,125.50
Houghton Regis Memorial Hall	£2,000
Full House Theatre	£1,500
Houghton Regis Heritage Society	£500

Resolved: To approve the release of funding as detailed for the financial year 2023/24

12593 KEY PARTNER - GRANT APPLICATIONS 2024-2028

Members were advised that the meeting was being held ahead of the budget-setting process to enable suitable budget provision to be made in 2024/25. It was thought that the council may face budget pressures due to the need to meet committed revenue expenses and the aspirations of the council to deliver on the emerging council plan. As such it was suggested that members might like to consider it desirable to restrict the Key Partner grant to a desirable budget level. It was suggested that the total budget attributable to Key Partner grants be capped at £15,000.

Applicants for Key Partner status were invited to attend the meeting to present their application to members and respond to queries. Members were then invited to approve Key Partner status and to determine the level of Key Partner grant.

Applicant	Amount requested
South Beds Dial a Ride	£2,500
Dunstable & District CAB	£4,000 - £5,000
Community Link Project – Singing Care Initiative	£4,000
Full House Theatre	£5,000
Heritage Society	£1,200
Houghton Regis Ladies Group	£1,000
Memorial Hall	£4,000
Keech Hospice Care	£5,000
SORTED	£2,000

It was agreed to follow the guidance and to agree that grant amounts would be halved with 10% added to this figure.

It was thought that, where possible, more detailed demographic data could provide useful information when attempting to establish the relative merits of the applications. Additionally, the growth taking place in Houghton Regis needed to be reflected in future funding; however, this was something that would be explored further once the Corporate Plan was finalised.

It was suggested that a Project Grant would be a more suitable source of funding for the Heritage Society and the Houghton Regis Ladies Group in 23/24 and it was possible to approve funding for these organisations from the project grants. An all-encompassing review of the 5-year plan could then take place after a 12-month period, once the Corporate Plan and Budget were in place.

With the Heritage Society and the Houghton Regis Ladies Group receiving a Project Grant, this would leave the Key Partner grants at a sum of £15,538.05, which would be in line with the £15,000 cap.

Amendments to the recommendation were proposed by Cllr Billington to accept the guidance that grants were awarded at 50% of the requested sum, plus 10%, and that the Heritage Society and the Houghton Regis Ladies Group application be transferred to the Project Grant scheme. A further amendment was proposed to agree to an extensive review being scheduled in a year's time to encompass all grant recipients. These proposed amendments were seconded by Cllr Carroll with the vote carried unanimously. Members voted unanimously in favour of the amended recommendations.

- Resolved:**
1. **To accept the guidance of a £15,000 cap and Key Partnership grants awarded at 50% of the requested sum plus an additional 10%.**
 2. **To approve the removal of the Heritage Society and the Houghton Regis Ladies Group from the Key Partner grant application and provide funding via the Project Grant scheme.**
 3. **To hold an extensive review encompassing all grants in 2024.**

12594 PROJECT GRANT SCHEME

Members were advised that the following applications had been received for a Project Grant.

Applicant	Total project cost	Amount requested	Brief description
Recycled Teenagers	£1,475	£800	To support social activities for elderly residents
Parkside Over 50's Club	£990	£792	To support an affordable theatre trip

Heritage Society	£2,052	£1,200	To fund the software licence fee and Public Liability Insurance
Houghton Regis Ladies Group	£1,000	£1,000	To cover hall costs and publicity

Members were advised that £3,800 remained in the budget for 2023/24 prior to the below awards.

Resolved: To approve the Project Grant applications as follows:

Recycled Teenagers - £800
Parkside over 50's Club - £792
Houghton Regis Ladies Group - £800
Heritage Society - £800 in 2024/25

12595 GRANTS

Members were advised that the following Small Projects Grant had been awarded under delegated authority:

Houghton Regis Helpers	£190.00
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Resolved: To note the End of Award Reports.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.37pm

Dated this 26th day of February 2024


Chairman