

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
26th February at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: Y Farrell Chairman
P Burgess
W Henderson (Sub)
T McMahon
C Rollins
A Slough

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington

Also present: Councillor: J Carroll

12709 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Billington. Cllr Henderson substituted.

12710 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

12711 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

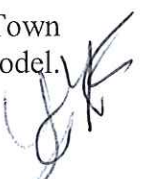
12712 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7th November and 13th November 2023.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 7th November and 13th November 2023 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

12713 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

The current Youth Support Services contract with Groundwork was awarded for five years in September 2019 and was due to end in 2024. The new contract was currently out for tender and Central Bedfordshire Council was looking for an organisation with experience, who could work in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council, Town Councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector through a prime provider model.



Conversations had been held with suppliers who were interested in tendering for the contract. One organisation had pulled out of the process; however, another submission was expected and the possibility remained of further tenders being submitted.

Members were informed the operation would need to be on a lean delivery model and the value would be across all Central Bedfordshire.

Officers were seeking the authority to talk and engage with possible providers to discuss whether a consortium approach could work. The prime provider would take the lead on tendering and would officially be awarded the contract if they were successful.

Resolved: To delegate authority to the Head of Environment and Community Services to openly discuss and engage with possible Central Bedfordshire Council – Youth Support Services Contract tenderers.

12714 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICES

Members were provided with an update on youth services in Houghton Regis.

It was confirmed that the Youth Investment Fund project was progressing well with the Sandringham hub being used for Tuesday evenings and the Baptist Church for Thursday evenings.

Discussions had been held with Luton Town Football Club about their Kick programme for young people. If this went ahead, volunteers would be needed and training given as LTFC would limit cover to a 1:10 ratio.

Planning was going ahead for 6 weekly sessions, with a coach, of skateboarding, BMXing and scooters leading up to the Skate Jam event.

The Youth Council was also growing and now had 14 members. The Youth Café continued to be popular with 15-20 people attending most Mondays.

Family Fun Days were being planned for Easter and the summer.

Over 100 people had signed up to the Later Living Group and continued to meet at the All Saints site.

The Community Link project had received funding from the National Lottery to help with the cost of living. Houghton Regis Town Council had been working in partnership with them, organising the preparation of packs for distribution within the community.

Members questioned how many people were attending the Sandringham hub. The figure was estimated at eight people, but this was a new project and figures were anticipated to grow. Approximately 28 young people were thought to attend in total across the Sandringham and Baptist Church sites; however, there were plans for continued promotion of these youth clubs. Central Bedfordshire Council had also agreed to offer support through schools and leaflets would be forwarded to them for this purpose.

12715 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN



Events Working Group 5 th October '23, 26th October '23 and 30th November '23.
Combating Crime Working Group 18th October '23 and 15th November '23

Resolved: To receive the Minutes detailed above and to approve the recommendations contained therein as follows;

12716 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING TENDER

Members were informed that the current Christmas lighting contract had ended. Based on current spending, a new 5-year contract would exceed the threshold of £30,000 stipulated by financial regulations. As a result, it would be necessary for Houghton Regis Town Council to use both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender to advertise contract opportunities.

Houghton Regis were relatively unique in that the council owned its own lights and, therefore, the contract would be for the storage, testing, installation and removal of the lights only.

With the Town Council's share of the UKSPF, a sum of £10,000 was expected which would contribute towards the town's Christmas lights.

Members were asked to endorse the advertisement for the tender.

Resolved: To endorse the advertisement of the Houghton Regis Town Council Christmas Lighting Tender on both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender platforms.

12717 BEDFORD SQUARE PUBLIC TOILETS CLEANING TENDER

Members were informed that the current public toilet cleaning contract would end on 31st August 2024. Based on current spending, a new 2-year contract would exceed the threshold of £30,00 stipulated by financial regulations. As a result, it would be necessary for Houghton Regis Town Council to use both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender to advertise contract opportunities.

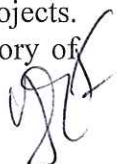
Members were advised that if the contract was not renewed, the ownership would revert to CBC.

At present, Houghton Regis was not liable for the fixtures or fittings; however, it would be necessary to request that Central Bedfordshire Council improve the upkeep and maintenance of the toilets. There was also a need for more of an 'attendant' role to provide increased supervision and report defects.

Resolved: To endorse the advertisement of the Houghton Regis Town Council Bedford Square Toilets Cleaning Tender on both the Contract Finders website and Find-a-Tender platforms.

12718 HERITAGE HORIZONS

There had been a change in approach regarding the delivery of UKSPF cultural projects. A film was planned, using the help and support of children, to look at the history of Houghton Regis, with a possible outdoor premiere to follow.



The Head of Community and Environmental Services had attended an introductory event at the University of Bedfordshire, which had been organised by the Cultural and Community Engagement Team. They had successfully applied to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and could support 12 practitioners to deliver heritage commissions in Bedford, Central Bedfordshire and Luton. Participants would receive capacity-building and network development support to enable them to realise applicable step-changes in their practice. The Heritage Horizons project would be delivered across three commissioning tiers;

- Exchange (£2,000-4,000)
- Develop (£5,000-9,000)
- Transform (£10,000-15,000)

Discussions could be held to establish whether Heritage Horizon projects would fit within one of these tiers.

Heritage Horizons would provide an opportunity for conversations between various creatives who would support the delivery of a professional film highlighting the history of Houghton Regis.

It is believed that a submission would be beneficial in the delivery of the UKSPF Cultural projects.

It was suggested that consideration was given to involving the Heritage Society of Houghton Regis which was involved in similar areas.

Resolved: To consider and endorse that a suitable application be made to the Heritage Horizons Fund to deliver a heritage commission to enhance the history of Houghton Regis.

12719 SMALL PROJECT GRANTS

Members were advised that the following Small Project Grant has been awarded under delegated authority:

- Community Link Project - £200.00

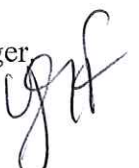
12720 RENEWAL OF SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

Members were invited to consider the Service Level Agreement with Bedfordshire Police to deliver high-visibility policing in Houghton Regis under Operation Hana for 2024/25.

The current contract runs until 31st March 2024.

Members were advised that the officer hourly rates have increased. This was taken into account during the budget-setting process.

Members requested copies of the draft SLA from the Community Services Manager



Members felt that Operation Hana was working and that it was highly beneficial to hold regular discussions with the police about local issues.

Resolved: To agree to the Service Level Agreement with Bedfordshire Police to deliver high visibility policing in Houghton Regis under Operation Hana for 2024/25 and for this to be signed by the Chair of the Community Services Committee.

12721 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

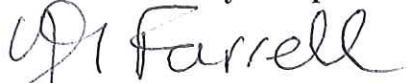
Members were provided with the income and expenditure report, highlighting significant variances, for the Community Services Committee to date.

The main point to note was an overspend on the Christmas Lights of £1,285 which needed to be recorded against 399/4804 which had available funds.

The only other item was the civic regalia which would also see an overspend. This was due to repairs carried out to the chain of office as a result of damage incurred over several years. It was suggested that damages should be reported and repaired as they happened.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.48pm

Dated this 8th day of April 2024


Chairman

