

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP  
COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET**

**ON 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

Present: Town Cllrs: **D Jones (Chair), T McMahon, K Wattingham, C Slough**  
CBC Cllrs: Cllr Hamill (Vice-Chair), A Ryan, Y Farrell, S Goodchild  
CBC Officers: S Hughes, Community Engagement Manager  
HRTC Officers: C Evans, Town Clerk  
L Senior, Head of Democratic Services

Co-opted  
members: D Gibbons  
J Anderson  
C Regan

Also in attendance: J Yeomans, Head of Housing Property, Housing Services CBC  
B McBrearty, Community Connections Advisor BRCC  
J McClean, Community Engagement Manager BRCC  
S Bailey, Senior Community Engagement Officer CBC  
B Gaynor, Interim Head of Place Delivery, CBC  
L Gunn, Community Connections Advisor, Time 2 Connect

Apologies: None

Members of the public: 3

**959 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Members were invited to elect a Chairman for Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2022/23 in accordance with the Terms of Reference of this committee.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference this can be a member from either authority.

Nominee	Proposed by:	Seconded by:
Cllr Jones	Cllr Wattingham	Cllr Farrell

No further nominations were received.

Accordingly, Cllr Jones was elected as Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for the municipal year of 2022/23.

**960 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

None.

**961 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

*Q.S.*

Clarification was sought from Central Bedfordshire Council:

- Whether the investment zones in Central Bedfordshire would impact Houghton Regis.
- How the purchase opportunity of the disused Morrisons site was missed by Central Bedfordshire Council, as this had since been purchased with the intended use as a storage facility within the town?
- How did Central Bedfordshire Council propose to evaluate the pressure of the new residents on the existing GP's in the town?

It was advised that there had been no progress with the Health Hub due to lack of funding, it was acknowledged that this had presented a service issue and the appointment system had been impacted.

It was advised that limited information regarding the purchase of the Morrisons owned land was available, however, it was highlighted that attempts by Central Bedfordshire Council had been made to contact the land owners, however, Morrisons had remained non-responsive.

#### 962 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

#### 963 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

**Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### 964 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Members were invited to elect a Vice Chairman for Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2022/23 in accordance with the Terms of Reference of this committee.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference this should be a member from the other authority to the Chairman.

Nominee:  
P Hamill


Proposed by:  
T McMahon

Seconded by:  
K Wattingham

No further nominations were received.

Accordingly, Cllr Hamill was elected as Vice Chairman of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for the municipal year of 2022/23.

#### 965 CONFIRMATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

 In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the Committee were required to confirm the secretariat for the Partnership Committee for 2022/23.

Members agreed for the Town Council to continue to act as the secretariat for the Partnership Committee for the municipal year of 2022/23.



**966 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION**

The Terms of Reference required the list of Co-opted Members to be reviewed annually, by the Town Joint Committee.

Members received applications for co-option from:

- David Gibbons - a co-opted member during 2021/2022
- Jo Anderson – long term resident of Houghton Regis
- Carole Regan – long term resident of Houghton Regis

Members were invited to consider whether they would like to explore the possibility of seeking to co-opt local stakeholders onto the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee. In this regard the Terms of Reference for the Committee stated:

**Co-option**

To support engagement with local stakeholders, the Town Joint Committee can co-opt members from local representative groups, as appropriate up to a maximum of 15. Each co-opted Member would be able to engage fully in all discussions but would not have any voting rights. Co-opted members could be removed from the Town Joint Committee. Decision making around removals could either be taken by the whole Town Joint committee or by joint agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair, depending on each Town Joint Committee's preference.

**Resolved: To confirm the following co-opted members of the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee for 2022-23:**

- **David Gibbons**
- **Jo Anderson**
- **Carole Regan**

**967 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members received the Terms of Reference which related to this committee.

Members requested consideration be given to dropping the quorate to two councillors from each council rather than three, as substitution allowances for Central Bedfordshire Council Ward members on this committee were limited. It was highlighted to members that this would need to be taken through General Purposes and Council to allow for changes to the constitution. Members were advised that advice would be sought and fed back to the committee.

*Members received this report for information.*

**968 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

It was requested that Grendall Lane Cemetery funding be placed on the workplan, the use of £2,000 of Ward Councillor Community Grant money was offered to complete the searches on the site.

*DJS.*

Members were advised of the outcome of two New Cemetery Provision Sub-Committee meetings, both of which had determined that investigations into this site were to cease.

Members discussed in depth whether this was an appropriate item to be included on the workplan as Town Council members had made the decision to cease investigations. Members were provided with background information and an overview of the report findings behind the decision of the New Cemetery Provision Sub-Committee.

Members agreed to include Cemetery provision in the workplan for future agendas to allow scope for regular updates.

It was suggested that a Central Bedfordshire Council Officer be invited to attend a future meeting to update members on the status of the Health Hub.

It was requested that regular updates on primary care were provided at the Town Partnership Committee meetings under Improving the Health and Wellbeing in Houghton Regis section of the agenda.

It was advised that the investment plan was a recent strategy and no updates were available for this meeting, further information would be sought and fed back to the Town Partnership Committee when appropriate information was available.

**969****CBC UPDATE REPORT**

Members received the CBC update report for information. It was highlighted to Members that included within the report was an update on the Bidwell Quarry / Houghton Regis Chalk Pit.

Members were advised that meetings had been held with Central Bedfordshire Council and the owners of the Houghton Regis Chalk Pit, once an agreement had been finalised, the Council would then be allowed to make arrangements for a third party to manage the site.

Members were advised the former Houghton Regis Academy site had been transferred from Department of Education to Central Bedfordshire Council and had been working with the preferred contractor on the award of the contract, further updates would be provided at the next meeting.

Members were advised that the Community Asset Grant scheme, had agreed projects for the £200,000 of available funding, it was highlighted that 45 bids had been received which had amounted to £700,000 which had involved implementing a robust scoring process which resulted in 12 successful bids.

Members raised concerns regarding the experiences of harassment of the new shopkeepers in All Saints View. Members felt that police interaction could be more proactive and support for the new shops was needed.

**970****IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS:  
TIME 2 CONNECT***QJJ.*



Jemma Mclean, Community Engagement Manager, and Bex McBrearty, Community Connections Advisor of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) were in attendance at the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

Members were introduced to Jemma McClean, Community Engagement Manager (BRCC) and Laura Gun, Community Connections Advisor who had recently joined the Time 2 Connect team. It was advised that Jemma had taken on project management, finance and reporting elements which had enabled a continuation of service provision, and Laura would be working alongside Bex.

Members were advised the drop-in sessions continued to take place at Houghton Hall Park and were well attended with around 20 people per session, café connect sessions were held on Tuesdays and 11 joint sessions had been run in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council Online Day Activities Team, run hybrid sessions had been held with a variety of activities and had proved popular. User feedback had been collated and positive responses had been received.

Members were advised that Time 2 Connect services had been promoted widely with a positive uptake of the use of the Next Door app to access local services.

#### 971 HOUSING AND ENGAGEMENT

A verbal update was provided by James Yeomans, Head of Housing Property, CBC covering the progress with new facilities at All Saints View and The Brook and provided an update on Windsor Drive.

Members were advised due to volatility in the construction market, the decision had been made to pause work on Windsor Drive for the interim, with a possibility to revisit once the market had settled.

The Brook was progressing well and it was hoped to occupy the site by November 2022.

Members were advised that further occupation of All Saints View had been paused temporarily however occupation had resumed.

~~Concerns were raised over the cease of progressing Windsor Drive, as members highlighted the need for social housing had not diminished. It was advised that the rationale was to consider the best way forward and it had been decided that completion of schemes that were already underway had proved most financially viable.~~

#### 972 TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION UPDATE

Members received the agenda report as presented to the HRTC Environment & Leisure Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> June and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

Concerns were raised over who was paying for the pedestrian access between Linnere and Tithe Farm Recreation Ground. Members were advised that the developers of Linnere were to pay for the links to the edge of their boundary, the Town Council would source the funding for the links on Tithe Farm Recreation Ground, this was expected to be funded by the Sustainable Transport Team at Central Bedfordshire Council.

Concerns were raised over the coverage of any CCTV provision for Tithe Farm Pavilion and what area this would cover. This would be investigated further and fed back to the committee.

Concerns were raised that the expectation was work on the site would have started prior to November. Members were advised that there had been two pre-development planning conditions that required fulfilling which related to drainage and highways access, once both of these had been discharged, contractors would be mobilised and able to start work on the site.

### 973 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN

To enable members to consider the Houghton Regis Town Centre Action Plan.

Beverley Gaynor, Interim Head of Place Delivery, CBC was in attendance at the meeting to respond to queries around the Action Plan.

Members were advised the action plan had been developed through the Levelling Up Fund and Welcome Back Fund from Central Bedfordshire Council. However, it was felt that a partnership approach was necessary for success.

It was requested that page 58 be looked at and consideration be given to rewording as it suggested that single parent families and higher crime rates were connected.

- Resolved:**
- 1. For the Houghton Regis Partnership Committee to endorse the Houghton Regis Town Centre Action Plan**
  - 2. To request that CBC review and update the 2008 Town Centre Masterplan**

### 974 PUBLIC REALM - CBC / HRTC JOINT PROJECT UPDATE

A verbal update was provided by Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, CBC and Clare Evans, Town Clerk, HRTC, on the project to date.

Members were advised funding had been set aside by Central Bedfordshire Council for partnership working with Town and Parish Councils to enable the improvement of their Public Realm, there were two hubs, Leighton Linlade and Dunstable / Houghton Regis with funding available for the existing Grounds Team to utilise for additional equipment to undertake Public Realm improvements and to offer their expertise to surrounding Parishes.

Members were advised that capital of £50,000 had been received and had enabled the support of the introduction of a Town Ranger for three days a week, utilising a reporting app for residents to report issues they see. Feedback received from residents had been positive.

*DJJ.*



It was suggested that an agreement be sought with the tidy tip for disposal of items picked up by the Town Ranger.

Members were advised that local parishes were regularly contacted to offer support from the Town Ranger, however, the pricing structure had proved prohibitive, and the offers had ultimately been declined.

**975 ITEMS REQUESTING ATTENTION BY CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

Members were advised of the CBC process to determine further consideration, at CBC committee level, of items and issues.

Members of this committee were able to use this process to forward items for CBC's attention via the CBC Joint Committee Chair or CBC Joint Committee Vice Chair.

As such members were requested to identify and confirm if there were any requested items for CBC's attention. This item was suggested:

Dunstable Market Charter, members received a report which outlined the implications for Houghton Regis (and surrounding parishes) when holding events arising from the Dunstable Market Charter. The Town Council would request the support of CBC in confirming the validity of the Dunstable Market Charter, clarification as to what was defined by 'market' as it was considered that this would not apply to the stalls held at Houghton Regis events and requested a copy of the Charter.

It was requested that it be investigated how Houghton Regis Town Council could create their own policy or Market Charter.

**Resolved: To request that the CBC Joint Committee Chair or CBC Joint Committee Vice Chair take the following matters forward:**

- 1. Dunstable Market Charter**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.20pm**

**Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023**

*D. J. Jones*

**Chairman**

1. The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive overview of the project's objectives and scope.

2. The project is designed to address the current challenges faced by the organization and to implement a strategic solution.

3. The project will be managed through a structured process, ensuring that all tasks are completed on time and within budget.

4. The project team consists of experienced professionals who are committed to achieving the project's goals.

5. The project will be supported by a dedicated team of resources and a robust communication plan.

6. The project will be subject to regular monitoring and reporting, allowing for timely adjustments and risk mitigation.

7. The project is expected to deliver significant value to the organization and its stakeholders.

8. The project will be completed by the end of the fiscal year, with all deliverables meeting the required quality standards.

9. The project is a high-priority initiative for the organization.

10. The project is a key component of the organization's long-term strategy.

*[Signature]*  
Project Manager