

Resolved: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2021.

**893 IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING IN HOUGHTON REGIS:
TIME 2 CONNECT**

Gina Croxford, Community Engagement Manager, and Bex McBrearty, Community Connections Adviser Community Action Bedfordshire were in attendance at the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on this project.

Members were advised that connections had been maintained with local services and organisations, that the project had been well supported by several local groups and new links with several local service providers had been formed.

Support was invited from local service providers to reach as many residents as possible as recent months had highlighted a digital divide, the option of a call back or texting had been offered to those who were unable to access the service via digital means. Face to face meetings had been held at Houghton Hall Park and had shown some positive outcomes. A venue at Houghton Hall Park, for the 'Time to Connect' project, had been investigated which would provide a cost-effective way of accessing a variety of services, however, online services would still be available for all residents.

894 PLACE DELIVERY

Sam Caldbeck, Place Programme Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council was in attendance at the meeting to update members on the Welcome Back Fund and the Levelling Up Fund.

Members were advised the Welcome Back Fund was designed to actively encourage the return of footfall within the town centre in a safe manner. The funding could be used in support of events, promoting local businesses, click and collect services and e-commerce. It could also be used for the purpose of developing action plans for the medium to long term future proofing of the high street.

Members were advised that £255,000 was available for roll out in the current financial year, of those funds £15,000 had been allocated to Houghton Regis. Suggestions from the Town Council were requested by the 28th May 2021. Members were advised that these suggestions would then be collated and become part of the Central Bedfordshire wide delivery plan if they were eligible.

Members expressed disappointment regarding the allocation of the funding with the towns of Dunstable received £59,000, Leighton Buzzard received £59,000, Biggleswade received £32,000 and the growing population of Houghton Regis received £15,000. Members requested an explanation of the reasons of the larger allocation to the other towns.

A member brought to the attention of the Central Bedfordshire Council representative, that extensive work had been completed around suggestions for improvements to Houghton Regis, and a report submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council, however, disappointment was expressed as the submission had not been acknowledged, despite several reminders, by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members queried the calculation as some towns received more funding, however, did not have a larger population, it was questioned why they had received a significantly higher funding allocation.

Members were advised by the Central Bedfordshire Council representative that he would share with the Town Clerk the proportions and how the allocations were calculated.

Members were advised that the calculation for funding allocation was based on the towns' precept and the local plan classification for the Town Centre.

Members raised concerns that previous promises of funding had not come to fruition. Members requested assurances from the Central Bedfordshire Council representative that Houghton Regis would receive the allocated funding. Members were advised that it was felt that Houghton Regis would receive the allocated funding provided the suggested activities were eligible and supported in line with funding requirements.

Members were advised that the Levelling Up Fund amalgamated several funds and had replaced the Future High Street Fund. The Levelling Up Fund was to be used for investment in local infrastructure, local investments, local transport, regeneration and cultural assets. The UK wide scheme involved inter-departmental cohesive working. Central Bedfordshire had been identified as being in category 3 with category 1 being top priority and the lowest being 3. The first bidding round concluded Friday 18th June 2021, further bidding rounds would be confirmed.

895 KINGSLAND

Cllr Tracey Stock, Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, Communities and Leisure and Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure were in attendance to update members on the Kingsland site. Members were advised that early stages of consideration had been given to the use of the Kingsland site to incorporate a leisure facility and a Health Hub, subject to DFE approval for the release of the retired school site.

Members were advised that the proposed new school had incorporated sports facilities in the design which would be available for community use. In the middle term financial plan, £250k had been allocated for the final year of the four-year plan. Further feasibility investigations would need to be completed on the Kingsland site with £75k in this year's capital programme to support this.

Members raised concerns regarding the capacity of current medical facilities to serve the growing number of new residents before the completion of the health hub.

Members were advised that residents' concerns would be fed back to the CCG.

Cllr Stock advised members that consideration would be given to the requirements of the community in relation to leisure, well-being and other local needs to be encompassed within the leisure facilities. Highlighted was the value of constant engagement with ward members, every six months, on this issue. It was suggested that Cllr Stock attend the Partnership Committee meetings going forwards.

896 HOUSING PROJECTS

Kim Hopcroft, Housing Operations Manager, Social Care, Health & Housing Directorate, was in attendance at the meeting to update members and respond to any queries or comments on All Saints View.

Members were advised that the crane had been removed, the hoarding was due to be removed and replaced with Heras fencing. Contractors remained parking off site utilising the retired Netto site and HGV's movements were flow controlled when accessing the site. Phase one consisted of 56 affordable apartments and 55 shared ownership apartments, no ground floor apartments would be completed during phase one.

Red House Court residents were the priority client group, once they were residing in the new building, Red House Court would be demolished.

Members were advised that members of the public were unable to view inside the building due to Health and Safety constraints as it was a live building site, however, members of the public would be able to view virtually via the production of a new website landing page with CGI effects. Social media was being utilised and 6,600 people had signed up to email alerts.

The digital application process would begin in June 2021 and would consist of a digital application form with phase one completion targeted for October 2021 with 111 apartments occupied. Phase two would consist of 57 new apartments with a completion target of May 2023.

Concerns were raised regarding the ratio of car park spaces to the number of apartments within All Saints View.

Members were advised that the expectation of usage covered the available spaces and additional work was being completed on sustainable transport plan.

Tony Keaveney was in attendance to answer members questions on Windsor Drive.

Members were advised that a budget of £20m had been set, the next stage would be engagement with designers and community feedback. This was planned for the summer of 2021.

897 TITHE FARM SPORTS PROVISION

Members received a report as presented to the HRTC Environment & Leisure Committee on 22nd February 2021. It was highlighted that recommendation 3 was not approved as HRTC members requested further consideration of the pavilion design.

Members acknowledged that this was a positive project and suggested promoting this as an exciting and viable project.

Members were advised that a letter with details of the project would be circulated to residents in approximately six weeks.

898 INFORMAL INFORMATION SHARING

Members were previously advised of an informal group comprising Houghton Regis Ward Councillors, 2 CBC Executive Councillors and the Chair and the Clerk Houghton Regis Town Council. This group had met a few times over the last 6 months or so. Some useful discussions had been had and ideas had been discussed for potential strategic projects in Houghton Regis. Members of the group were very aware that this is an informal, non-decision making group with no authority or remit other than to bring ideas forward.

To support the work of the group, members were requested to endorse the membership of this group and its basic remit. At the Partnership meeting on 26th January 2021 members expressed concerns over the membership of this group. Through discussions with the Chair and Vice Chair the following revised membership and remit was put forward:

Chair of Houghton Regis Partnership Committee
Vice-Chair of Houghton Regis Partnership Committee
1 other Member from each Council
2 CBC Executive Members
Clerk of Houghton Regis Town Council
An officer representative from Central Bedfordshire Council (if felt appropriate)

Remit

To discuss project ideas for Houghton Regis and for these to be put forward for further consideration.

Members were advised that this group, despite not having a dedicated budget, would be able to monitor ongoing projects. This group would give Houghton Regis a voice, matters would be discussed and items raised to improve quality of life for residents in Houghton Regis.

It was queried which Central Bedfordshire Council members would be included in this group. It was suggested that a fluid approach be considered whereby different members would be invited in relation to the specific topic of discussion.

Members agreed to review memberships after the Houghton Regis Town Council's AGM.

Resolved: **To support and endorse the informal information sharing group:**
Membership

Chair of Houghton Regis Partnership Committee

Vice-Chair of Houghton Regis Partnership Committee

1 other Member from each Council

2 CBC Executive Members

Clerk of Houghton Regis Town Council

An officer representative from Central Bedfordshire Council

Remit

To discuss project ideas for Houghton Regis and for these to be put forward for further consideration.

899 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TOWN PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Members of the Town Partnership Committee were invited to provide a verbal report on matters of relevance to Houghton Regis arising in particular from the Committee/s on which they serve.

Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

900 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were invited to consider the Partnership Committee workplan.

It was requested by the Community Engagement Manager that an additional item be added to the workplan; the process of Central Bedfordshire Council receiving feedback from joint committees.

Members received an update on housing provision and allocation. Members were advised that at the Adult Social Care meeting members received a briefing on provision and allocations of housing and it was requested this be included on the July agenda.

901 CBC UPDATE REPORT

Members received the CBC update report for information.

Members expressed disappointment that Parking Enforcement Officers had visited 264 times, however only 4 parking penalties had been issued. Members were advised that this would be looked into and an update would be provided to members.

Resolved: **To note the report.**

902 PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-OPTION

It had been requested that potential co-option onto this committee remain on the agenda as a Standing Agenda item.

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 state:

Co-option

1. 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 will be able to engage fully in all discussions but will not have any voting rights. Co-opted members can be removed from the Town Joint Committee. Decision making around removals can 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.

The list of Co-opted Members should be reviewed annually, by the Town Joint Committee

903 HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR 2021-22

Members were advised that the following meeting dates for 2021/22:

20th July 2021
19th October 2021
25th January 2022
26th April 2022

Thanks went to the Town Clerk for the preparation of this agenda and to Central Bedfordshire Council officers for attending the meeting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.31pm

Dated this 20th day of July 2021

Chairman