

# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: J Carroll  
P Burgess  
E Cooper  
E Costello  
Y Farrell  
M Herber  
D Jones  
T McMahon  
C Rollins  
A Slough  
C Slough

Town Mayor

W Henderson  
D Taylor *gc*

Officers: Clare Evans  
Ian Haynes

Town Clerk  
Head of Environmental &  
Community Services

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington

### 12787 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington.

### 12788 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

### 12789 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

### MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Minor amendments were requested and agreed.

The minutes were amended to remove the final 'resolved' as this item did not go into private session.

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes as amended of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

### 12790 MOTION RE RED HOUSE

*gc*

The following Motion had been received from Cllr Burgess:

This Council notes and shares the widespread public disappointment that Central Bedfordshire Council is neglecting The Red House. Further to the very positive viewing of the Red House organised by the Houghton Regis Heritage Society on Thursday, 4th April 2024, with many invited Councillors from Central Bedfordshire and Houghton Regis Town Councils attending. Therefore, I request a recorded vote of Houghton Regis Town Council to agree or disagree on the following points:

1. That Houghton Regis Town Council fully supports the attached Houghton Regis Heritage Society Proposal for The Red House.
2. The Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to work in partnership with the Houghton Regis Heritage Society to secure the Red House for genuine public use.
3. That Houghton Regis Town Council agrees in principle to buy, rent or lease The Red House from Central Bedfordshire Council.
4. That the Houghton Regis Town Council calls on the Town Clerk, as the proper officer, to provide a written update to all Houghton Regis Town Council members, as soon as practically possible, on the progress on our request that the council consider transferring some Houghton Regis-based community assets to the council. We would like to understand what discussions have taken place and with whom on which assets.
5. Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to create a new subcommittee to work with Central Bedfordshire Council to devolve services and assets from Central Bedfordshire Council. We ask that this subcommittee report directly to Houghton Regis Town Council as a standing item at each council meeting.

Members were invited to consider the above Motion.

The Chair read the motion to the meeting and a representative from the HRHS confirmed that they had circulated the proposal to councillors. It was confirmed that HRHS were not asking HRTC to buy, rent or lease and this suggestion had come via the Motion.

It was highlighted that the proposal did not include any financial figures and Cllr Burgess responded and suggested it was the use of the building that was the priority rather than finance. It was suggested that the proposal be amended to say that CBC would be approached to seek further information.

It was suggested to consider each element of the motion one point at a time.

1. Houghton Regis was very fortunate to have The Red House, which was iconic, centrally located and part of the town's history. The ideas put forward in the HRHS proposal were exciting; however, it needed to be established how these ideas would be delivered. HRHS advised they anticipated The Red House being run by a separate trust, following a similar model to the Memorial Hall. A joint board of trustees would be appointed, and charitable status would be sought. Funding would be essential to progress with the proposal and would require a business case to be put forward in support of this.



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Members were provided with the draft UKSPF Grant Funding Deed for review and consideration.

It was felt that the deed placed all responsibility on HRTC and it was suggested that HRTC could seek advice from its solicitors, especially in relation to items 7, 8 and 9.

Members were advised that the deed was a standard template provided to all recipients. The HRTC application was quite straightforward and there was limited risk regarding the capital project. The cultural element related to the enhanced programme of established events, with the most significant risk being in relation to the cultural film. CBC were already a month behind, so a delay by referring to solicitors would potentially impact on the delivery.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To delegate authority to the Head of Environmental & Community Services to finalise the detail of the UKSPF Grant Funding Deed with CBC;**
  - 2. To delegate authority to the Mayor to sign the finalised UKSPF Grant Funding Deed in due course.**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8pm**

**Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of May 2024**

**Chairman**



2. Support for this item was expressed.

Members were reminded that a resolution had already been made at the January meeting to begin to explore with CBC a transfer of assets (Minute 12675) and to report back. It was felt that this motion was to the detriment of what had previously been agreed.

Members voted on whether to approach the motion en bloc or as individual points. Members voted en bloc.

Cllr Henderson proposed an amendment to remove points 1, 3 and 5 and refer only to points 2 and 4. Seconded by Cllr A Slough.

Cllr A Slough sought further clarification regarding point 4 and queried whether it would replace the previous recommendation in January. The Town Clerk informed Members that this would not replace the prior resolution; however, work had already commenced in line with that resolution.

Members voted against the motion to include only points 2 and 4

Cllr A Slough proposed an amendment to remove points 1, 3, 4 and 5 and keep point 2  
Seconded by Cllr Henderson.

In favour: Cllrs Henderson, C Slough, A Slough, Jones, Herber, Taylor, Farrell and Costello

This became the substantive motion:

*The Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to work in partnership with the Houghton Regis Heritage Society to secure the Red House for genuine public use.*

Cllr A Slough proposed the substantive motion. Cllr C Slough seconded.

A Recorded Vote was requested:

Those in Favour: Cllrs Burgess, Cooper, Costello, Farrell, Herber, Jones, McMahon, Rollins, A Slough, C Slough, Henderson, Taylor

Those against: None

Abstentions: Cllr Carroll



The Motion was carried:

**The Houghton Regis Town Council agrees to work in partnership with the Houghton Regis Heritage Society to secure the Red House for genuine public use.**

12791 UKSPF DRAFT GRANT FUNDING DEED



# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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P Burgess  
E Cooper  
E Costello  
Y Farrell  
M Herber  
D Jones  
T McMahon  
C Rollins  
A Slough  
C Slough

Town Mayor

W Henderson  
D Taylor *EC*

Officers: Clare Evans  
Ian Haynes

Town Clerk  
Head of Environmental &  
Community Services

Apologies: Councillors: E Billington

### 12792 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Billington.

### 12793 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

### 12794 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

### EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

- Honorary Freeman Nominations

**Resolved:** In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

### 12795 HONORARY FREEMAN NOMINATIONS

*EC*

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Under the Local Government Act 1972 s249(5) members considered nominations for Honorary Freeman of the Town of Houghton Regis.

**Resolved:** To award to the title of Honorary Freeman of the Town to the person nominated subject their acceptance.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm**

**Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of May 2024**

**Chairman**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Cooper', is written over the printed name 'Chairman'.