

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Community Engagement Sub-Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors:	E Cooper Y Farrell T McMahon A Slough	Chairman
		Emma Farrier Amy Garrod Anita Miller Potter	Land Improvement Holdings, Linnere Development Bidwell West Community Association Bidwell West Events Committee
	Officers:	Sarah Gelsthorp Amanda Samuels	Civic and Events Officer Administration Officer
Apologies:	Councillor:	C Rollins	

**CECSC1 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR**

Nominee:	Cllr Farrell	Proposed by:	Cllr Cooper
		Seconded by:	Cllr McMahon

There were no other nominations.

On being put to the vote, Cllr Farrell became the Chair of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee for the municipal year of 2024/2025.

**CECSC2 ELECTION OF THE VICE CHAIR**

Nominee:	Cllr McMahon	Proposed by:	Cllr Farrell
		Seconded by:	Cllr Slough

There were no other nominations.

On being put to the vote, Cllr McMahon became the Vice-Chair of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee for the municipal year of 2024/2025.

**CECSC3 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr C Rollins.

**CECSC4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.



## CEC5 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

In accordance with Standing Order 4, j.v., the council was required to review its delegation arrangements to committees and subcommittees.

These arrangements were set out in the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference. This document set out the system of delegation to the Committees, Sub Committees and Working Groups of the Council. This was presented to the Town Council at the Annual Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

The Community Engagement Sub Committee reported to the Community Services Committee and supported the strategic development of Town Council events as follows:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Carnival                 | Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2024     |
| • Summer Fun Activities    | July-August 2024                        |
| • Houghton Rocks           | Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 |
| • Inaugural Reception      | This year to be in September 2024       |
| • Santa Float              | TBC                                     |
| • Santa's Grotto           | Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 |
| • Easter Egg Hunt          | Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2025    |
| • Easter events            | April 2025                              |
| • Pride of Houghton Awards | May 2025                                |

The dates for the Santa Float were still to be confirmed, as were the Easter events being scheduled by the Community Services Manager. A date in May 2025 was also to be scheduled for the Pride of Houghton Awards.

The Town Council was keen to work with the wider community. Representatives from the Bidwell West Community Association, Linnere, and other local community groups would be invited to share their forthcoming events at the meetings.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

## CEC6 CO-OPTIONS

Members were requested to discuss inviting co-options to the Sub Committee.

It was agreed that Co-options would be welcomed on to the committee, and representatives from Linnere, Bidwell West, and the wider community would be welcome to apply for co-option. It was also suggested that reaching out to schools and local businesses was worth consideration; the Civic & Events Manager agreed to investigate these avenues.

It was explained that the process was for people to be invited to apply for co-option and would then go to the Community Engagement Sub-Committee for approval. If the application was successful, the candidate would be invited to attend future meetings.



**Resolved: To invite co-options from residents to the Sub Committee to serve until May 2025.**

**CESC7 LINMERE EVENTS**

A representative from the Linnere gave an update regarding events being held. These included:

- Park Play – a two-hour free play session held every Saturday at 10.00am.
- Two self-guided walking tours to be launched at the end of the month: one for older children, taking in the local architecture and nature using an app; the other would be a Tiny Acorns Walk for younger children. A flier was used to navigate the walk which featured small rubbing plaques with nature images on them. Both walks ended at the café.
- An Odds vs Evens Sports Day would be held at Linnere Park on 6<sup>th</sup> July. House numbers were used to allot people to teams.
- Vojo's Play Bus would make a return. This was a soft play bus offering two hours of free play which was ticketed for thirty-minute slots.
- A pumpkin carving event was planned for October

Any assistance promoting these events would be appreciated. The Civic & Event Manager confirmed that Houghton Regis Town Council would be happy to include events on their social media.

Residents of Linnere had queried whether Santa's Float would be visiting Linnere again this year. It was requested if confirmation could be provided once details of the event had been decided.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

**CESC8 BIDWELL WEST EVENTS**

A representative from the Bidwell West Community Association gave an update regarding events being held. These included:

- The sports and summer day which had been held the previous weekend. This was for all age groups and included a bouncy castle and soft play.
- A yard sale was being planned for September.
- A Spooky Trail would take place on Halloween. This was a treasure hunt with items hidden around the estate for children to find and ended with pumpkin carving at the care home.
- A Christmas market was planned for the first or second week in December.

There were also monthly clubs, as follows:

- Sunday Stroll Club – a pub was chosen by the group to walk to.
- Litter picking

An Easter Egg trail was also held with donated Easter eggs being handed out at the end of the trail.



Once again, the Civic & Events Manager confirmed that Houghton Regis Town Council would be happy to promote any events being held and requested details to be sent through.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

#### **CEC9 CARNIVAL 2024**

A verbal update was given regarding the progress of the Carnival 2024.

The Carnival was being held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July and a programme of events was scheduled to begin at 10.00am. There were two arenas: one for the dog show, plus a main arena featuring children's entertainment from Krisgar! The main event would be QE2, a Queen tribute band.

There were more than 40 stalls confirmed but enquiries for these were still being received. There were five or six food vendors confirmed, but it was hoped this number would increase. There was some uncertainty whether the vegan food option would go ahead but this was being investigated further. Refreshments would be available from the Pavilion. There were several groups taking part in the procession; however, it was suggested that invitations were extended to Linnere and Bidwell West groups to join the procession. The only stipulations for participating groups were the inclusion of two adult supervisors, along with provision of a risk assessment and a copy of Public Liability Insurance.

The matter of configuration was raised by Members who were keen to avoid too much space between the arenas and stalls. The Civic and Events Manager informed Members that the stall layout was being mapped out, and the Head of Environmental and Community Services would be consulted to discuss possible measures to prevent stallholders setting up where they wanted. The site would be marked out on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July and Members were invited to assist with this and on the day of the carnival.

Volunteers had come forward for the signposts and the Army Cadets were also providing support. It was stated that any assistance promoting the event via social media would be welcomed, as would notification of road closures. Security had been arranged to manage the road closures and a traffic management company had been hired to provide a rolling roadblock.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

#### **CEC10 HOUGHTON ROCKS 2024**

A verbal update was given regarding the progress of Houghton Rocks 2024.

This event would take place on 7<sup>th</sup> September and would feature local bands playing between 11:00am and 7.30pm at Parkside Recreation Ground. In addition, a classic car show had been organised and there would also be food stalls, a beer tent, fairground rides and stalls. Billy Lee, a Tom Jones impersonator, would host the event.

It was confirmed that all the completed contracts bar one had been received. PRS forms would be sent out to the bands, and it was hoped these would be completed electronically.

Representatives of Bidwell West noted the event date and confirmed they would avoid this date for their proposed yard sale.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

## **CESC11 REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER**

Members were provided with a report from the Community Services Manager regarding the following Summer Fun Activities.

- Skate Jam – 22<sup>nd</sup> July
- Inflatable Fun – 30<sup>th</sup> July
- Wild Science and Animal Facts – 1<sup>st</sup> August
- Laser Tag and inflatable obstacle course – 6<sup>th</sup> August
- Birds of Prey and garden games – 8<sup>th</sup> August
- Southend day trip – 15<sup>th</sup> August

There were a couple of potential changes to these activities but this would be confirmed at a later date.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> July there would be a movie afternoon featuring ‘Elemental’ and ‘Wonka’. Tickets for this event were available from Eventbrite and would be £1.00 for an advance booking or £2.00 on the day.

Most of the events were free and people could turn up on the day; however trips like the one to Southend needed to be booked and paid for, although this was subsidised.

Cllr McMahon expressed thanks to the Community Services Manager for the work that had gone into this programme of events and informed the Committee that councillor colleagues from Parkside were especially happy with the arrangements.

The report highlighted that events were being arranged and held at different locations in Houghton Regis to meet the aims of the Corporate Plan. These aims included: unifying different areas of the community, fostering civic pride and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

**Resolved: To note the report**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.52pm**

**Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2024**

**Chairman**

