

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Community Services Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
23rd February 2026 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman
P Burgess
E Cooper
Y Farrell
A Slough
C Slough

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: D Taylor

Also present: J Carroll

13531 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Taylor.

13532 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13533 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

13534 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2025.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 10th November 2025, and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13535 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Community Engagement Sub-Committee 23rd September & 25th November 2025

Combating Crime Working Group 15th October 2025



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

13536 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were provided with the workplan for the municipal year 2025/26.

The Head of Environmental and Community Services informed Members that the main points to note were that the Central Community Hub had been removed and now sat with the Community Venue Task and Finish Group, and that the Community Conference had been deferred until Project H was up and running.

13537 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with a copy of the income and expenditure report for the Community Services Committee to date.

Generally, figures were as expected; however, some income targets would be missed, and there was an underspend on revenue to balance the budget. The appointment of the Project Manager was still outstanding, resulting in an underspend on Staff Salaries.

13538 COMMUNICATIONS COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Head of Environmental and Community Services provided Members with a verbal update on the improvements made to the town council's communications strategy following the delegation of authority at the Community Services Committee meeting on 22nd July 2024.

Members were informed that there had been slight amendments to the IT Policy and that the Accessibility Statement had been updated.

A set of house rules for social media, setting out guidelines, would be produced. A Communication Strategy would be documented to formalise core objectives and the position of HRTC.

New noticeboards had been ordered and would provide a platform for community groups and volunteers to advertise their activities.

A clear brand for HRTC Internal communications and marketing would be introduced.

Members would be provided with updates on these items when details were finalised.

13539 SMALL CAPITAL GRANTS UPDATE

Members were advised that the following Small Project Grants had been awarded under delegated authority.

- Houghton Regis Helpers - £200



13540 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICES

The Head of Environmental and Community Services informed Members that attendance figures for youth engagement and detached youth work were not yet available.

There was some disappointment with the attendance figures for Tuesday night activities at Houghton Hall Park, and consideration would be given to the future format. Thursday evenings at the 3G pitch at Tithe Farm were exceptionally popular with over forty attendees.

Members suggested working with other groups to improve the activities provided and the attendance figures. There was also a wish to see some form of provision being established at Parkside.

13541 REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Members had been asked to request that the Community Engagement Sub-Committee consider ways to increase community engagement and partnership working. It had been suggested that consideration should be given to following the format of the Community Safety Sub-Committee.

The Head of Environmental and Community Services stated that the meetings were not working as well as hoped and had not increased community engagement. By moving to a daytime meeting, it was hoped that:

- Representatives from the library would attend meetings
- There would be greater community engagement
- Both the Events Manager and the Youth and Community Manager would clerk the meeting jointly rather than alternating
- Co-optee numbers would potentially improve

Members expressed concern that scheduling another sub-committee during the day might potentially exclude some councillors/political groups. It was felt that expense should not be an overriding factor in decision-making and that suitable consideration should be given to increased diversity. Members were generally supportive of adopting a combination of evening and daytime meetings.

Members agreed that the CESC should review its format at the meeting on 24th March 2026.

Resolved: To consider and request that the Community Engagement Sub-Committee review its current format.



The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.52 pm

Dated this 27th day of April 2026

Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end, positioned to the right of the word "Chairman".