

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
Environment & Leisure Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
12th January 2026 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors: A Slough Chairman
P Burgess
Y Farrell
T McMahon
C Rollins
D Taylor

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

Public: 0

Apologies: Councillors: W Henderson

Also present: J Carroll

13484 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Henderson.

13485 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

13486 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13487 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2025.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 20th October 2025, and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13488 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Members were provided with a work plan for the 2025/26 municipal year.

The work plan provided a structured approach to the committee's business throughout 2025/26, ensuring all statutory requirements and governance obligations were met in a timely manner.



Members were informed that all items on the work plan were due to be discussed, except the annual review of land assets, which had been postponed until April.

13489 HOUGHTON HALL PARK

Members were informed that Houghton Regis Town Council (HRTC) had reached its first anniversary of operational management of Houghton Hall Park (HHP) and feedback so far had been positive. The main items of note were:

- A community gardener had been recruited.
- The proposed work to the formal garden and kitchen garden would be presented to the HHP board.
- The borehole had been drilled, and a water analysis had deemed the water fit to drink. Electric works for the pump were due to take place.
- There were plans to promote volunteering numbers at HHP; to assist this, the section of the Houghton Regis promotional film relating to HHP volunteers would be released.
- Improvements were continuing, and all income from HHP would be reinvested in the site.
- A 'lessons learnt' report was due to be produced.

13490 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Members were provided with the income and expenditure report, with appropriate commentary, for the Environment & Leisure Services Committee.

The Head of Environmental and Community Services went through the main points of note. The report was much as anticipated, with the highest costs being utilities and items outside HRTC's control.

In response to a query from Members regarding sustainability at the Thorn Park pavilion, the Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed that works would be carried out on other older assets as a priority, with works to the Thorn Park pavilion dependent on available funding.

13491 BIODIVERSITY POLICY

The biodiversity policy has been created to comply with legislation. For the policy to be considered effective, it required the whole Council to support it through the town council's committee structure.

Members were informed that, in addition to meeting a legal obligation, the policy would benefit the community and would allow HRTC to participate in the Local Council Award Scheme run by NALC.

Resolved: To endorse and request that the Council adopt the Biodiversity Policy.



13492 TOWN PLANTING STRATEGY

Members were provided with the updated objectives for the town planting strategy.

HRTC had adopted the grass cutting at the East End Common and around the Chequers roundabout; bulb planting would be extended to include these areas.

Three objectives were complete, and two were ongoing.

Members were also requested to review the maintenance of the trees outside All Saints Church. It was proposed that the trees in front of the Church undergo staggered pollarding rather than simultaneous pollarding of all the trees. It was suggested that this would be more aesthetically appealing while maintaining views of the church. Members were supportive of this proposal. Members requested a copy of the work plan, for information, as this would allow them to keep residents updated. The Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed the work plan would be provided.

Resolved: To discuss and agree on the updates to the named objectives.

13493 TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE

Members received a verbal update on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Following the completion of the Section 278 agreement, the bond for the highway programme had been agreed, and legal particulars were now awaited.

The Head of Environmental and Community Services confirmed he would contact Members as soon as additional information became available.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.41 pm

Dated this 21st day of April 2026

Chairman

