

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Community Engagement Sub-Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**24<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: Y Farrell Chair  
E Cooper  
T McMahon  
C Rollins  
C Slough

Officers: Sarah Gelsthorp Civic and Events Manager  
Amanda Samuels Administration Officer

Apologies: Councillors: 0

Other: K Wattingham  
E Farrier  
Bedfordshire Police

**CESC50 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR**

Members were invited to elect a Community Engagement Sub-Committee Chair for 25/26.

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

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 2025/2026.

**CESC51 ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR**

Members were invited to elect a Community Engagement Sub-Committee Vice-Chair for 25/26.

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

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 2025/2026.

**CESC52 CO-OPTION**

An application from Ken Wattingham to be Co-opted on to the Community Engagement Sub-Committee for 2025/2026 had been received and had been circulated to members of the sub-committee under separate cover. Members were requested to consider the co-option.

**Resolved: To Co-opt Ken Wattingham on to the Community Engagement Sub Committee for 2025/26.**

**CESC53 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from K Wattingham, E Farrier of Land Improvement Holdings Linnere Development, and Bedfordshire Police.

**CESC54 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**CESC55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**CESC56 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025. An amended version of the minutes, showing Ken Wattingham as having sent apologies, had been circulated among Members.

**Resolved: That the Minutes of the Community Engagement Sub-Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed accordingly.**

**CESC57 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 sub committees.

These arrangements are set out in the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference. This document sets 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 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

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

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| • Carnival                   | Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> July 2025      |
| • Open Air Cinema at HHP     | Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2025     |
| • Open Air Theatre at HHP    | Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025    |
| • Summer Fun Activities      | July-August 2025                         |
| • Houghton Rocks             | Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2025  |
| • Heritage Day at HHP        | Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 |
| • Halloween at HHP           | Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2025     |
| • Fireworks Display          | Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2025   |
| • Santa Float                | TBC                                      |
| • Santa's Grotto at HHP      | Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2024  |
| • Winter Warmer event at HHP | January 2026                             |

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- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| • February Half Term at HHP | 18 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2026 |
| • Easter Egg Hunt           | Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2026              |
| • Easter events             | March / April 2026                                |
| • Pride of Houghton Awards  | May 2026  |

The Town Council was keen to work with the wider community, and 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**

## **CESC58 COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The representatives from Linnere and Bidwell West were unavailable to provide an update. The representative from Linnere would provide a report after the meeting for circulation.

The representative for All Saints Church advised Members of the following events:

28<sup>th</sup> June A fundraiser for a brain injury charity was being held. This would include a talk on the All Saints rood screen.

26<sup>th</sup> July A coffee morning to raise funds for Hospices at Home. This would include a talk from a local beekeeper.

It was also hoped that All Saints Church would have stalls at the Carnival and Houghton Rocks events.

The representative for the Memorial Hall advised Members that a race night and a Halloween event were planned for October.

**Resolved: To note the report**

## **CESC59 CARNIVAL 2025**

The Civic and Events Manager updated Members on progress for the Carnival 2025, which would include the following:

- A dog show would take place, 10.00am – 2.00pm.
- Bowerbirdy would attend and have themed activities and mascots
- Stalls
- Soft archery
- Test your strength

Displays, including dance and children's entertainment, would continue until 3pm. It was anticipated that catering options would include: Greek food; burgers; Caribbean food; Ice cream; doughnuts; candy floss; coffee and slushy drinks. Jewels would also be providing tea and cake in the pavilion.

The Carnival programme had been printed and would be placed in key locations around Houghton Regis. Promotion would also be carried out via social media and email.

Volunteers for the day were still needed, especially for the afternoon. Members confirmed that they would attempt to recruit extra volunteers for the day. The Civic and Events Manager would circulate the relevant documentation and additional details in the coming week.

Members questioned whether volunteers required safeguarding training and were informed that the nature of the event meant this was not a requirement. It was also queried whether councillors should be DBS checked. Members were advised that it would be best to contact the Town Clerk who would be able to answer any queries regarding regulations on these matters.

**Resolved: To note the report**

#### **CESC60 OPEN-AIR CINEMA AND THEATRE EVENTS**

Open-Air Cinema and Open-Air Theatre Events were planned for July and August at Houghton Hall Park as follows:

- 23<sup>rd</sup> July Paddington and Dogman would be screened
- 26<sup>th</sup> August Quantum Theatre Group would present *Jemima Puddleduck* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass*

Tickets were free and available from Eventbrite: 600 for the Open-Air Cinema (per screening) and 300 for the theatre events (per show).

**Resolved: To note the report**

#### **CESC61 HOUGHTON ROCKS 2025**

The Civic and Events Manager informed Members that there was now a full complement of bands for this event. The headline act would be QE2, a Queen tribute band.

The fair rides had been organised and the bar, stalls, food outlets and cars for the car show were all progressing. Members were requested to forward details if they knew of anyone able to provide vegan food.

Toilet facilities for those with additional needs had been confirmed for this (and other) events. It was agreed that this facility would be promoted.

**Resolved: To note the report**

#### **CESC62 REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER**

Members had been provided with a report from the Community Services Manager regarding the Summer Fun Activities.

The Civic and Events Manager confirmed that the venue for one of the family fun days. needed amending and that an up-to-date list of activities would be circulated. The correct details would also appear in the Carnival brochure.

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It was confirmed that Three Star Coaches would be managing the bookings for the planned coach trip.

**Resolved:**      **To note the report**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.33 pm**

**Dated this day of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025**

**Chairman**

DRAFT