

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Community Services Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on
3rd November 2025 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman
J Carroll (Substitute)
E Cooper
Y Farrell
A Slough
C Slough

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

Public: 1

Apologies: Councillors: P Burgess
D Taylor

13398 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Burgess (Cllr Carroll substituted) and Cllr Taylor.

13399 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Cllr Herber attended the meeting to address Members on Op Hana following the earlier distribution of their email. Cllr Herber believed that Op Hana did not represent an effective use of funds and that the budget would be more effective if it was used to purchase additional CCTV/ANPR cameras.

13400 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

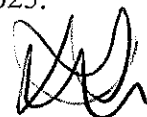
13401 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2025.

Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Community Services Committee meetings held on 21st July 2025 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

13402 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

Community Engagement Sub-Committee 24th June 2025
Combating Crime Working Group 18th June 2025, 16th July 2025, 20th
August 2025 and 17th September 2025.



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

13403 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

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

The workplan 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.

13404 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

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

The Head of Environmental and Community Services informed Members that the report was as expected. Income from sponsors had achieved its annual target and income from events was at 82.4% of its target. The public toilets figure was tracking slightly higher as this was technically out of contract and due to go out to tender.

13405 HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICES

Members were updated on the in-house youth services work. Key figures were:

Day	Activity	Sessions	Average Attendance	Individual attendees
Monday	Youth Café	7	20 - 24	40
Tuesday	Open Access and Boxing	14	5 - 12	40
Wednesday (alt)	Youth Council	3	9	12
Thursday	Open Access and Football	14	20 - 30	78

A trip to Southend had been arranged for the young people as a reward for volunteering at a number of local events and activities.

Members responded that the numbers were positive and demonstrated increased engagement by young members of the community. Members expressed their thanks and appreciation for the contribution made by the volunteers.

Members suggested that suitable protective clothing was provided for the young volunteers and were advised that this request could be addressed under the Budget Requests item.

13406 BUDGET REQUESTS 2026/27

Members were provided with the officer draft budget for 2026/27 along with budget forecast figures for financial years 2027 to 2030.

The draft budget reflected ongoing budgetary commitments along with anticipated increase in budgetary commitments arising from an increase in staff resources. The draft budgetary forecast figures had been prepared to support the objectives of the

Town Council's Corporate Plan and to meet the requirements of the Corporate Governance and Accountability Practitioners Guide.

The Head of Environmental and Community Services provided Members with the main points to note:

- The most significant saving would arise from the reduced print number of the Town Crier newsletter.
- A 4% per annum increase had been factored in across the board where possible.
- There was an increased events budget allocation for fireworks and Houghton Rocks.
- The Mayor's Christmas Appeal Fund would be transferred to Corporate Services.

Members reiterated the proposal to provide protective clothing for young people volunteering at events and activities. Members unanimously approved the recommendation.

Resolved: 1. To consider and comment on the draft budget for the financial year 2026-2027 for the Community Services Committee budget responsibilities.

2. To note the budget forecast figures for financial years 2027 to 2030.

13407 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members voted on the exclusion of the press and public:

Proposed by: Cllr A Slough Seconded by: Cllr Y Farrell

Votes in favour: 6

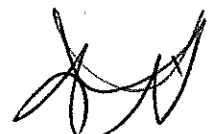
Resolved: In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item set out below on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the general interest by reason of the confidential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

13408 STAFF SALARIES

Members reviewed the Community Services staff salaries for 2026/2027. The information provided highlighted, the SCP range for each post, the hours worked and the actual salary costs, with on costs broken down for each role.

Resolved: To note the Community Services staff salaries for 2026/2027 and for the Committee Chair to sign that the information provided was a true record.

13409 OPERATION HANA FOR 2026/27



Members discussed three recommendations proposed by the Combatting Crime Working Group, which was held 15th October 2025, which were

1. Cease the Op Hana agreement after March 2026 and use the budget to fund alternative activities
2. Reduce current Op Hana expenditure by 50% and use remaining budget for additional ANPR/CCTV cameras
3. Cancel the Op Hana budget and invest all funds in ANPR/CCTV cameras according to advice from CBC and Bedfordshire Police

Members discussed and after receiving advice from the Head of Environmental and Community Services. Members proposed the following amended recommendation, which were unanimously agreed upon.

- Resolved:**
1. To request Council to considered that any underspend of cost centre 306/4059 at year end be transferred to an Earmarked reserve to be used for future Community Safety initiatives.
 2. Instruct the Head of Environmental and Community Services to review CCTV options available to the Town Council.
 3. That the Combatting Crime Working Group be changed into the Community Safety Sub-Committee, as soon as possible.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:59 pm.

Dated this 10th day of November 2025

Chairman

