

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HOUGHTON REGIS PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PEEL STREET
ON 26th November 2025**

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| Present: | Town Cllrs: | D Jones, M Herber, C Slough, D Taylor |
| | CBC Cllrs | Y Farrell (substitute), S Goodchild, P Hamill, T McMahon |
| | CBC | Mrs Hughes, Community Engagement Manager (virtual) |
| | Officers: | Gary Powell, CBC Service Director for Highways |
| | HRTC | C Evans, Town Clerk |
| | Officers: | |
| | Co-opted members: | D Gibbons, T Haines, C Regan, R Turner |

Also in attendance:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Apologies: | Cllr Alderman and Co-Optee J Anderson |
| Members of the public: | 2 |

1113 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Alderman (Cllr Farrell substituted) and Co-Optee J Anderson.

1114 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The member of the public present had some specific points they wished to raise in relation to highways. They were invited to put their questions during the agenda item.

**1115 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR
DISPENSATIONS**

None.

1116 DRAFT HIGHWAYS CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Gary Powell, CBC Service Director for Highways, attended the meeting to update Members on the draft Highways Capital Programme for Houghton Regis and to receive their comments and feedback.

The Service Director for Highways informed Members of the schemes and works carried out in the current year, which included carriageways, footways, rights of way works.

CA

The CBC budget was not yet confirmed and as such the Capital Highways programme was based on current grant funding from government which covers specific areas such as maintenance and local transport schemes. It is usual for CBC to top up the highways fund however as details of the government's Fairer Funding scheme were still awaited, CBC was not currently in a position to confirm any additional funding which may be available. As such the CBC Highways Capital Programme was more restricted than desired.

CBC operate a data-driven approach which aimed to prolong the life of its assets and ensure the best value for money. Accident data was used to establish hazardous areas and identify the appropriate safety measures to implement. Inspectors and resident feedback also informed the process and feasibility studies were carried out to ascertain where interventions were necessary.

The Houghton Regis schemes currently included: structural maintenance schemes; rights of way; and active travel. The programme of schemes would be followed, but costs would dictate what works would proceed.

Members were requested to provide their feedback by 1st December 2025.

Gary Powell answered questions from Members:

Could HRTC submit a request for alternative work to be carried out, rather than that listed, if it was considered a higher priority?

This was possible and CBC would consider such requests. It was highlighted, however, that in order to accommodate changes the projects would need to fall under the same budget.

How could communication be improved to keep residents informed and to manage their expectations?

CBC was working to improve communication. Ideally, residents would be aware that some works on the programme might not be carried out should circumstances / priorities change. Generally, it was felt that residents needed to be better informed of proposed works and changes to proposed works.

Works were sometimes carried out several times on the same site, which did not appear to make economic sense. Why was this the case and was signage an option?

Sometimes CBC carried out emergency works that as a temporary measure or undertake preparatory works. More than one visit might be required before a permanent solution was in place. Costs meant that it was not feasible to put explanatory signage in place.

*Was CBC's equipment purchase and hire costs capital or revenue funded?
(Cllr Hamill left the meeting)*

CBC owned some of the plant which would be a capital cost while other equipment was supplied under contract. It was thought that it was more economical to invest in the long-term condition of the network rather than equipment.

A member of the public questioned what depth a pothole needed to be for action to be taken. It was also highlighted that humps in the road had been causing problems for vehicles at two sites within Houghton Regis.

CA

The member of the public left the meeting. The Service Director for Highways requested the Town Clerk to send him details of the question in order to respond directly to the member of public.

Why did reports submitted via Fix My Street sometimes come back as 'non-priority' and were then closed? The issues remained and residents did not receive updates to indicate when they would be given attention.

Even when cases were closed, there was a trail recording issues and CBC continued to monitor the situation. Costs meant there were limitations to what could realistically be achieved.

Did CBC look beyond the 3-year pipeline programme? Was there flexibility in the programme to respond to safety issues?

The current year's plan was in place, in addition to the 3-year pipeline covered by the MTFP. The programme was subject to change during the course of the year. The list of future schemes would go beyond this to indicate what was likely to need attention in future years.

Safety-based schemes were investigated and feasibility studies carried out to prioritise cases. Decisions were based on five years of data.

What S106 funds had been made available for Houghton Regis and how much was left?
It was not possible to respond with a definite amount as funding was linked to development and, while not always specific, some funds could only be used for certain projects. In addition, historic funds might be available but would require supplementary funds before works could begin.

Repairs and improvements were carried out on roads that were seemingly dug up again soon afterwards. Was there a way to diarise works and communicate more effectively to stop this happening?

The Highway Agreements Team and Street Works were responsible for co-ordinating planned works; however, emergency or developer works sometimes meant this was not always possible. External parties were required to advise CBC of proposed works and to complete these prior to any road improvements taking place. Failure to observe this process would mean that the proposed works could not be carried out for two years following road maintenance.

Could residents be informed when visits were scheduled so residents could meet with officers and discuss key concerns before a road was adopted.

(Roger Turner left the meeting)

Plans were assessed from a technical perspective and it was necessary for road designs to pass technical reviews. Roads were expected to be safe in the first instance, built to the correct specification and maintained until the point of adoption. CBC would inspect the road at this point to ascertain if it was fit to be adopted. The process was driven by the developer rather than CBC and, unfortunately, roads did not always meet the correct standard for adoption.

The Chair requested that the Town Clerk send details of the programme to Members and for Members to respond by the end of Friday 28th November 2025.

CA

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.16pm

Dated this 27th day of January 2026

Chairman

Chloe Alderman