

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 1st December 2014 at 7.00pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Benneyworth, Wilson, Crane, Brookman, Thompson, Leach, Farrell, Bumbieris, Small.
Also present: Neale Marney, Doris Colloff, Janette Kersey, Anthony Stansfeld, Jan Giggins, Ted Angell, Susan Hofgartner, Julie Lloyd, District Cllr James Podger, Police -Lee Bremner, John Garvey, Geoff Adams

Police Report: A man was arrested and charged with drugs and unlicensed activity following an illegal rave on 20-21st September. There has been criminal damage at Sapphire Furnishings. Otherwise it has been a very quiet month. The Police were congratulated on dealing with heightened security for the Remembrance Parade. A rolling road closure will be in place for the Extravaganza.

Public Forum: Concern was voiced over future storage of containers, from Hungerford Theatre Co., at Triangle Field and the issue of planning permission for the units in an AONB and transparency with this process. Planning permission will be sort by the Theatre Co. It was confirmed planning permission can be sought without owner's permission. Cllr Thompson declared a non-pecuniary interest and advised the discussions on this topic have been minuted at the R&A meeting and are totally open. Containers have to be moved from their existing locations because the license has expired and the owners have sold the site recently. Mrs Giggins disagrees HTC have been transparent.

Janette Kersey from CHAIN advised they were promised a minibus would be put in place for Lindley Lodge/Redwood House however it didn't happen. CHAIN office is now struggling to cope to include the demand from the new location. Janette will get some figures to HTC on the usage of their service. They have not got enough volunteers. New guidelines give rigid criteria for allowance of transport. Janette would like WBC to keep their word and provide a minibus service. Gary Poulson (volunteer bureau) mentioned cutting the handy bus from 2016. This is a life line and reassurance is needed that this will not happen. Cllr Brookman advised some residents can't use the H1 bus as it is not kneeling however the no. 3 is and goes past Redwood, 6 days a week every 2 hours. At present it is a hail and ride. He attended a site meeting with Matthew Metcalf (WBC) and the manager of Redwood House, who was keen to see a bus stop installed. He is waiting to hear about funding. District Cllr Podger is meeting with Mark Edwards on Friday and will speak to Matthew Metcalf and enquire into cuts. The planning application put in by Sovereign had a condition that a minibus should be supplied. Mrs Giggins commented the reason no minibus was provided was because WBC didn't want to draw attention to the distance Redwood was from town. Geoff will put in the Adviser a request for more volunteer drivers.

Anthony Stansfeld (AS) (Thames Valley Police Commissioner) covers an area including 22 constituencies. It is the largest non-metro police force in area with 4200 officers. The Chief Executive announced he is leaving today. Figures show household burglaries at a 40 year low. Thames Valley has seen biggest reduction in crime over last 2 years in England and Wales. Front line policing hasn't been cut. Further £45 billion cut to come and need to rationalise property. Hungerford station is not used well and will close in the next 3 years and be relocated in the middle of town. Possible locations include the fire/rescue or co-op buildings. The police station will not be closed down without maintaining a police presence in Hungerford.

Cllr Thompson advised HTC are looking at a land assembly to improve the station area and it would be good to see the police building on sale earlier. AS advised they would view plan for station favourably. A large amount of presence of officers in Hungerford is from other areas.

1. **Apologies for absence.** Cllrs Harding, Hudson, Podger and District Cllr P Hewer
2. **Declarations of interest.** Cllr Thompson – non pecuniary interest – item 9
3. **Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting on 3rd November 2014.** Cllr Crane proposed minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour
4. **Mayor's Report** (after item 10) – was circulated
5. **District Councillor's Reports.** District Cllr James Podger (JP) met with Gordon Lundie, WBC, to discuss station regeneration project. Sovereign have concerns re access and egress. JP met with Alex Drysdale and HTC outside Lady of Lourdes church. It was agreed to implement double yellow lines. A Law contacted JP as HTC wish to progress the Croft Field lease. The pedestrian crossing at Bridge Street and buses to Redwood are to be brought to Mark Edwards (WBC) attention – any other issues let him know. JP didn't need to put in members bid for the Resource centre. WBC have funded the lifting equipment. District Cllr Hewer will put in a members bid for the Croft Field, in addition to paying half the agreed expenses for Croft Field. 'Vision for Newbury' is sponsored by WBC. Could WBC support Hungerford for their vision? PH has issue with spending money when don't own site. GL is supporting idea. JP and press left meeting.
6. **Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report)**

R&A – Cllr Benneyworth. Still looking for home for mower (hopefully hurdle house). Spetic tank now back filled.

E&P – Cllr M Wilson. 3 applications from JOG school all supported. Bow House application for coffee shop – no objection. Change of use to Estate Agent in High Street – no objections. Application for a new house at the back on 11 Prospect Road – supported but emergency access a concern.

T&E – Cllr Crane is meeting with Janet Duffield. Town Guide is being published and will be delivered in the New Year. Cllr Leach and Cllr Crane attended Town Team Hungerford meeting – they are reprinting 3 leaflets. HTC to look at helping with costs.

F&GP – Cllr Colin Bumbieris. Eoin Walsh made presentation as Community Centre short of funding. HTC support £4,500 annually for 3 years has finished. HTC wish to continue to fund but need plan. Pension change in regulations. 'As good employer' it was decided HTC will offer pensions to the 3 employees not in the scheme from next financial year. Precept increase was proposed at £4 per household.

H&T – Cllr Rob Brookman. The construction management plan for Fairfields is on the WBC website. The contractor suggested access route to include Park St and Fairfield Road. This is not suitable and Paul Goddard has agreed to changeto access via Priory Road from the South. HTC are waiting for data on serious accidents at Newtown. HTC responded to Network Rail and copied to all on the consultation response. A request was received for the taxi rank to also be used as a loading bay. Preferred location for rank is at station but short term solution is split use; 7 to 10am as loading bay, taxi rank after 10am. The option of a rank outside the town hall was discussed but the preference is at the station.
7. **Finance – Cllr Bumbieris**
 - a) **Propose authorisation of cheque run payments.** Cllr Bumbieris proposed cheque run, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.
 - b) **Propose year to date accounts.** . An anomolie was spotted in the accounts and reason for variance needs checking so it was agreed to defer this item.
H&T are waiting for xmas lights invoice to see overall cost. HTC continued maintenance of Church Street toilets and H1 bus routes are main reasons for increase. Budget for this is higher than last year as it wasn't a full year. R&A has taken on Croft Field (repairs/maintenance etc). It will be rent free for 3 years but anticipated £4,500 exp. £3,000 inc. F&GP – salaries and pensions going up as unions have given pay rise. Gov grant has gone down and £223,987 precept is required showing a 4.41% increase (Band D £95.47 as apposed to £4.03 cheaper last year). Is a £2K Sinking fund for Croft Field required? £16k earmarked for Croft Field sufficient for now but consider for future. Also consider sinking fund for Triangle Field.
 - c) **Propose budget for next financial year 2015-2016.** CB proposed precept of £223,987, seconded by Cllr Thompson, all in favour.
 - d) **Propose agreement of contractor's terms.** Deferred – awaiting further terms.
8. **Croft Field update.** Waiting for draft lease still. **Action:** Get quotes ready to go and think about terms for management committee.

9. **Triangle Field – Purchase update; Consider and propose support for Theatre Company storage units.** (Discussed after item 3). Still waiting to hear from WBC legal team. No progress on purchase. Cllr Thompson produced architects preliminary drawings of storage units for all to look at, that have been produced since R&A. Cllr Benneyworth proposed broad support, in general of the Theatre Company locating their storage containers at the Triangle Field, subject to planning application and TFMC conditions, seconded by Cllr Small, 1 abstention, rest in favour.
10. **Town & Manor (T&M) Lease – Agree and propose terms for partial surrender.** Cllr Crane proposed to suspend standing orders, seconded by Cllr Benneyworth, all in favour, in order that Susan Hofgartner (SH) and Julie Lloyd (JL) could speak.
Susan explained the discussions had between T&M and HTC and went on to describe what the recreation ground consists of and that it was specifically for recreation use, it is on a 99yr lease and was given to in memory of lives lost in the war. The simple lease allowed HTC to lease land from T&M and this was sub-leased to the Football Club and Cricket Club. The nature of use has changed. T&M lost control of some of their land when the Football Club agreed licences with Vodafone and O2. T&M & HTC are working towards a partial surrender of the Football Club and Cricket Club land back to T&M. Rights have been considered and an agreement almost reached.

The 1951 lease is very loose and included giving up of grazing rights for 99 years of that land. In 1954 legislation came in 'Landlord & Tenant Act' which gives automatic renewal. T&M believe the lease is commercial (although arguable) and that it falls into that category. T&M trustees didn't know there would be a right of renewal when they issued the lease. T&M are asking that we put in a clause to not be in the 1954 act and T&M trustees are unable to agree the partial surrender without this as it would break terms with Charity Commission and Commoners. T&M think right and proper not to take advantage of 1954 law. T&M see partial surrender as an opportunity to address this now rather than leave for future.

Questions/response from Cllrs: Cllr Crane advised negotiation started 2 ½ years ago with the intention of parties agreeing terms. Cllr Thompson - Parties need to work together. JL is looking for a compromise. SH – looking to protect tenants with regards to access rights. Commoners and Trustees view? Trustee not likely to accept any changes if keep 1954 Act in. Income from rent of Swimming Pool House (not recreational use). Who is affected? Residents/Commoners – how are they impacted? No change – just problems for future. T&M advised it is common land and it can't be built on. Cllr Small advised Cllrs are trustees for residents. Cllr Small strongly believes HTC need to take further advice from our solicitor at a part 2. Security is critical, as custodians would not dishonour memories of war. **Action:-** Clerk to set up meeting.

11. **Christmas Lights Switch on - evening schedule and update on expenditure.** Christmas lights looking good. Cllr Thompson apologised for quality of sound – the sound checks were fine. Thanks to Ken Finlay. H&S issues need looking at and looking after children. John Willmott offered to MC next year. Eoin Walsh could help with PA system. Great turnout by town. **Grand Prize Draw.** Tickets are available at Newbury Building Society, Caviste, Martin & Magpie. **Qu. From Public:** Switch on, why on a Sunday? Traders can attend on Sunday but it clashes with Advent service. **Action:** Look at this next year. A/cs requested by J Giggins for details of christmas lights expenditure. The figures shown on the web are not net figures. **Action** – Consider further figures for website. **Action:** Meet in new year to review installation of lights.
12. **John O Gaunt Junior Council – meeting report.** JOG School council met in Town Hall last week. Lots of good ideas from students. Cllr Benneyworth to make presentation to school in new year to include ideas for development of skate park.
13. **Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals- all councillors.** Hungerford Nursery School – Cllr Benneyworth stepping down from Board of Governors. Whistle Down the Wind this weekend. Hungerford Twinning Assoc. Christmas party on 13th.

Action; Clerk to arrange Extra Part 2 to be held before E&P at 6pm on Monday and invite solicitor.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm