

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 7th December 2015 at 7.00pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Crane, Brookman, Farrell, Winsler, Small, Whiting, Bumbieris, Chicken, Benneyworth, Hudson, Wood and Colloff and District Cllrs Hewer & Podger

Also present: approx. 20 members of the public re: allotments

Police Report: No police present as quiet month in Hungerford with little to report. The only crimes the police can inform of are shoplifting from the Arcade and a theft from a car on North View Street.

- 1. Apologies for absence.** Cllrs Wilson
- 2. Declarations of interest and dispensations.** Cllr Crane has an allotment, District Cllr Hewer and Cllr Benneyworth sit on Western Area Planning, Cllrs Small and Farrell are on the Triangle Field Management Committee.
- 3. Approval of Minutes of the meetings of the Full Council on 2nd November 2015.** Cllr Small proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Brookman, 5 abstentions, rest in favour.
- 4. Mayor's report -** Mayor's report was circulated. CHAIN event was a highlight. Mayor attended a NWD partners meeting Hungerford is being branded as the 'Heart of North Wessex Downs'.
- 5. District Councillor's Reports.** Cllr Hewer congratulated HTC on the Christmas Lights. He invited the Mayor to attend the Children's Centre (budget's meeting) on Wednesday 9th December am with Andrea King.
Marina Development – New application only attracted one objection. It will be approved by delegated powers no committee. Cllr Podger would like WBC new leader to be invited to Hungerford Full Council.
Primary School application received unanimous approval with a condition that the traffic arrangement around the school will be reviewed – A meeting for which will take place beginning of January.
Pedestrian crossing in Bridge Street will be going ahead next year as the land ownership has been resolved. Dedication of a bench in the Wharf to David Holtby will take place on Tuesday 22nd December at 10.30am. The ceremony will be led by MP. Refreshments will be in John O'Gaunt pub afterwards.
- 6. Haha' report.** Marsh lane – Cllr Crane and Haha has been in discussion with Mark Norgate. He has an option on HUN01. Mark Norgate wants to put pressure on WBC to accept this site for development and is threatening to close the allotments. Can WBC confirm whether allotments remaining on HUN011 will prejudice chance of planning permission? Other evidence shows sites have been cleared ahead of planning although Speen might be an example of one that has not.
Action Cllr Hewer will ask WBC planners for advice and Cllr Podger will obtain the policy wording for HTC. Ted advised time is critical as notice will have to be given in the next 6 weeks if needed. The lease can't be extended to October as the Option expires in the summer. P Harries argued we should have 12 months' notice. **Action:** Cllr Small will check the length of notice. HTC need to consider alternative allotment sites.

7. **Rugby pitch floodlights and licence proposal – Rob Cox.** Rugby Club is growing. Current floodlights are not sufficient and using a small area has damaged the pitch and impacts on training during winter times. 7 years ago planning permission was obtained but didn't proceed due to other commitments. RFU (grant available from July 16-June 17) will give 50% of the funding including VAT towards floodlights and HRC would raise the rest.

RFU require HRC to have security of tenure of pitch 3 where the lights are to be used. HRC has a 14 year secure lease which would need to be modified. Pitch 3 would then be sufficient for Hungerford Seniors matches and would be used 3 times a week. There are 4 small masts in place currently and HRC is looking for 3 new masts with 2 halogen lights per mast. Cost is budgeted at £80K (including £10k for 3 phase + £10k contingent). Could be as low as £63k. RFU would submit the planning application and do works.

Cllr Farrell proposed support in principle of the floodlights, seconded by Cllr Chicken. HTC would like to see pre application plans, one abstention, rest in favour.

8. **Adoption of Defibrillators by HTC – Defer as Richard Scofield not present.**

9. **Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report)**

R&A – Cllr Benneyworth. HAHA attended and the lease was discussed. Budget was considered and community centre name agreed as 'Croft Field Activity Centre', Vault grave work is o/s. Cllr Crane is to look at requested War Memorial inscriptions. Containers at Triangle Field badly need cladding.

H&T – Cllr Brookman. Bridge Street pedestrian crossing is going ahead. Charnham Street crossing lighting is of concern. Footpath improvements by JOG School are planned and he will attend the site meeting. Newtown speed issue – A site meeting with Glynn has been requested through District Councillors.

E&P – Cllr Farrell. 14-19 Eddington is now being dealt with by David Cooper and he advised it is likely to be 1 year before appeal is heard and the main problem is the levels. Cllr Farrell is happy the Marina development is going forward.

T&E - Cllr Crane. New town guide will be issued in January.

10. **Finance - Cllr Bumbieris.**

(a) **Propose authorisation of cheque run payments (circulated).** Cllr Bumbieris proposed the cheque run, seconded by Cllr Crane, Cllrs Brookman and Farrell declared an interest, rest in favour.

(b) **Propose year to date accounts.** £14K better off than budgeted. Differences are due to R&A (Croft Field expenditure) and H&T (contractors not yet paid). Cllr Bumbieris proposed the year to date accounts, seconded by Cllr Crane, 2 abstentions, rest in favour.

(c) **Proposed cuts. Salt bins** - WBC are passing responsibility and cost to HTC. Money has been put aside for this. **Chestnut Care Home** – HTC express regret at closure. **Buses** – No 90 at risk of being withdrawn and No 3 at being cut. HTC argue an agreement is already in place with WBC to protect the H1 which is subsidised by £3,500. **CCTV** - £26k per annum has been requested by WBC to continue the CCTV. With support of Thatcham and Newbury HTC could retain the service but could not afford to have it monitored. HTC are looking at companies for alternative quotes. The Police Commissioner confirmed the police do not financially support CCTV. What benefit do we get from cameras? Cameras can point the wrong way, Is it a deterrent?

Action: Cllrs Whiting, Farrell and Hudson will arrange a meeting on CCTV.

The office is taking on extra work, such as managing the Croft Field Activity Centre. Cllr Crane proposed a clerical assistant is sought with salary of £6.5K junior rate for 16 hours a week, seconded by Cllr Brookman, all in favour. **Action:** Clerk to advertise.

Precept will go up due to F&GP budget increase to salaries, professional fees and Civic expenses. R&A – minimal increase as £5k car park repairs will be funded by S106. H&T – Energy costs will be taken off budget as money is ear marked and there is not much of increase allocated for Xmas lights. However, salt bins are a new cost. The Bus subsidy runs to 2018/19. Tree donations have been assumed at £4k. The Annual summary includes T&E budget of £2,500. CCTV costs have been included but are NOT in any way

agreed. The total budget is £270k and without CCTV costs reduces to £254k. The WBC grant figure is provisional. Precept increase is 7% without CCTV and 19% with CCTV.

(d) Consider budget and precept as recommended by F&GP. WBC will probably increase their council tax by 1.9%. HTC is not capped. Formal budget will be discussed in January Full Council. **(note: Carol service will collect on behalf of Y&CC)**

(e) Ratify decision to register for VAT and opt to tax on Croft Field Centre. Cllr Crane proposed HTC register for VAT, then opt to tax on Croft Field Centre, as recommended by F&GP. All in favour.

(f) Consider use of Power of General Competence. Defer to next meeting.

11. Propose response to Draft DPD Consultation (discussed after item 6). Cllr Hudson has drafted a response. WBC proposed 100 houses to South of town. We need to respond before Christmas where we have discrepancies. HTC support pepper potting which has less impact of AONB and on traffic, using Rail Station / Smitham Bridge site and 4 sites on A4. HTC argues against WBC that the following statements are true: -

- Smitham Bridge site has as no flooding/highways concerns
- Garden Centre is deliverable
- Rail Station can be used for housing not just employment. Permission has been given to St Johns for flats.
- Transport assessment is poor and doesn't give proof that south is better (106 to 108 is very close).
- HTC option has far less impact on High Street
- 47% of HTC will be on brownfield
- It is National policy that for major development special justification is needed to build on AONB and there is not one.

Cllr Hudson requests support of the District Councillors. The Mayor wants this taken to higher level and the station employment restriction removed. Charnham Park is under used, and 6 flats have been given permission to be built on station area. D Croft is drafting response for early next week.

Qu; Has anyone done study on viability of industrial units? Properties are being let at lower rate.

It will be 18 months before WBC do a study. Hungerford is trying to boost inward investment; Oakes site been gone for 10 years now. What is more welcoming than houses?

Are District Councillors going to support HTC and residents in their consultation response?

District Cllr Podger confirmed no they would not as it is flawed. District Councillors were asked to read the HTC draft response first.

12. Christmas Lights – Feedback. Successful switch on. Only small amount of lights not working. Roger Ballard was lined up to do minor electrical works. Need to back up for future.

13. Town & Manor Lease – Determine and report position. Not ready to sign. Mayor's concern is war memorial. Cllr Small is looking at Hungerford Town Football Club lease.

14. Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals – all councillors.
JAC meeting report – Cllr Wood will report at R&A

Meeting closed at 9.05pm