

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 6th January 2014 at 7.00pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Crane, A Wilson, Holmes, Farrell, Small, Bumbieris, Benneyworth. R Thompson, M Wilson, and Hudson

Also present: Geoff Adams (The Adviser), John Garvey (Newbury News), PCSO Lee Bremner, Paul Frances, Richard and Gill Sturgess, Martyn Bright, Rod Desmeules and other members of public

Police Report: PCSO Lee Bremner reported 2 vehicles break ins on 3rd December with nothing stolen. This took place at Fairview and Prospect Road. A Defender was stolen on 17th December which was not captured on the APR camera. No news on the theft of Barclays Bank box. The Police team expressed their appreciation of the Xmas Lights. The Team will soon determine their priorities to focus on. Neighbours to the Tragedy gardens are experiencing trespass and damage by youths. The police are targeting the area regularly. They need to know when the youths are there. HTC are looking at installing CCTV in the area. 3 months ago there was another incident with cat poisoning. A bitumen additive is now contained in most antifreeze products sold in the area which repels cats rather than attracting them.

Qu: Richard & Gill Sturgess of Northview are pleased with the new development plans at Northview but concerned about the entrance/exit to their road which bottlenecks with traffic and parking. It is currently insufficient to deal with an increase in about 20 cars which are expected. Sovereign are not taking this on board? Cllr Thompson advised that the developers are aware of the problem and HTC will work closely with them. DC James Podger advised there will be S106 money available for this and suggested they email him their concerns and he will take it to the Head of Highways, M Edwards.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Podger
2. **Declarations of interest:** None
3. **Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting on 2nd December 2013** – Cllr Benneyworth proposed minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Small, 1 abstention, rest in favour.
4. **Mayor's Report was circulated** – The Mayor attended the switching on of Thatcham and Newbury's lights and also visited Chestnut Walk Home. There is no news on improvements to No.16 High St. Cllr Crane will continue to press for a start date for the works. Tourist brown signs are due to be installed Thursday week. Cllr Crane is chasing for the troughs, signs and cycle rack improvements at the station.
5. **District Councillor's Reports** – DC James Podger is impressed by the Hungerford Resource Centre and put in a members bid for the £3.5K needed for a hoist. WBC have funded this without the use of the bid. WBC are drawing up a proposal for the pedestrian crossing. DC Podger is giving up some of his land to make the pavement wide enough for this. He is now on the Governing Body of the John O Gaunt School. M Edwards has suggested WBC fund the H1bus route by £3060 per annum for the next four years which leaves a shortfall of £3420 and the route is as it stands at the moment. The SHLAA Consultation will take place on 27th January between 9am and 11am, Magistrates Room. DC Podger believes the Triangle Field although in the SHLAA is protected adequately by its lease. HTC are in agreement with Mark Cole's Parking Charges Proposals although the Chamber of Commerce would have preferred 9 hours instead of 10. WBC will look to approve the charges in March.

Standing orders were suspended. **Qu:** Is it a special arrangement that DC Podger is on the Governing Body at JOG school? DC Podger did not know and will find out. There is a need to advertise more the monthly HTC meeting dates as some residents are not aware. **Standing orders were reinstated.**

The Rate Support Grant is not being passed on by WBC. DC Podger thinks there is no grant to pass on. He will look into this following the BALC query and advise

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

R&A – Cllr Benneyworth advised the Community Centre lease agreement has gone back to WBC for amendment and we wait to hear.

E&P – Cllr M Wilson – The planning applications received recently have been mainly for extensions. A site meeting is being arranged for Cobbs. The space above the Co-op shop according to the Empty Homes Officer is not large enough for a flat but does need improvement to the exterior.

H&T – Cllr Roger Thompson – HTC have a good relationship with WBC. Improvements are being made but the slabs in the High Street remain unresolved due to legalities. There is nothing in the budget this year for Homefield Way but WBC is looking at technical solutions to bind with the concrete to fix holes in future. There was lots of positive support for the lights and Rod Desmeules was thanked. Volunteers are needed to take down the lights.

T&E and TTH– Cllr Crane – A meeting will take place tomorrow with Janet Duffield to look at inward investment.

7. Finance – c) Explanation of budget and discussion - Cllr Bumbieris -The main requirement within the H1 bus service is to provide a service to the south end of town. WBC is reducing their support of the buses (see item 5) and providing no grant for the Church St Public toilets. HTC also supports the Community Centre. WBC is not passing on the £15k grant this year to support the change in tax base. HTC put aside money for replacement of fixed assets such as benches and playground equipment but are having to reduce this. The precept last year was £178K and HTC are being asked to find an additional £45K to support the services which would otherwise be withdrawn. The annual cost of the Public toilets which HTC have to fund is £14,063. A pie chart was displayed of the Precept/Budget and how it will be spent, along with a graph of the Band D rates for the last 5 years and a breakdown of the Band D rate of £91.44.

Standing orders were suspended. Qu: Alternative toilets to the Church St are the BMW toilets which are closed at weekends and are not in the centre of town. £14K is a lot of money for toilets.

In response, the breakdown of this cost as received from WBC was read out. It was advised that pubs and cafes do not want to take on the responsibility of providing a public toilet. HTC will look at taking on the running of the toilets to try and reduce the cost. Are the toilets really cleaned twice every day? It was noted there are no baby changing facilities in the toilets. If the BMW garage was relocated it is thought the BMW toilets would have to remain open.

Cllr A Wilson queried the reliability of the donations for Christmas lights. Rod Desmeules advised he had another collection of £2600 to pay in. **Standing Orders were resumed.**

d) Propose budget & precept – Cllr Crane proposed a Precept of £212,790, (a 16.08% increase) seconded by Cllr Thompson, 2 against, rest in favour. HTC believe an increase is right to maintain services.

a) Propose authorisation of cheque run payments - Cllr Bumbieris proposed cheque run of £42,115.51, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.

b) Propose year to date accounts (carried out every month) – Cllr Bumbieris proposed the accounts which due to higher than expected income are £14k up on budget at present, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.

8. Future Housing Plans – A new SHLAA has been produced by WBC showing all possible sites for development. The Housing Needs Survey has been received in draft which shows a need of 33 houses. A consultation on the SHLAA will take place (see item 5). Development needs to grow in a controlled way. Cllr Crane is seeking a meeting with Alan Law.

9. Triangle Field – Cllr Benneyworth -£98,304 is the lowest tender received. The total costs including this tender, fees and drainage etc. is £121,640 plus VAT. The office is in the process of trying to reclaim the VAT. The funding available so far is £108,797. We are £12/13k short on funding.

Propose revised project budget - Cllr Benneyworth proposed we increase the £100k budget limit for the project to £122k and use S106 money to fund the difference, seconded by Cllr Crane, 1 abstention, 1 against, rest in favour.

Propose preferred contractor - The lowest quote was received from RGC Construction. Cllr Benneyworth proposed we proceed with this preferred contractor, subject to the legal requirements being completed first and the time limit being checked for the length of the time that the quote will stand, seconded by Cllr Crane, 1 abstention, rest in favour.

Progress of Triangle Field Management Committee – The next meeting will take place on Wed 15th Jan, 7pm at the Rugby Club.

- 10. Dates of consultation for proposal of all through school at John O’Gaunt School – CONFIRMED AT**
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| Monday 27 January 2014 | 0930 - 1100 hours (Town Hall) |
| Monday 3 February 2014 | 1200 - 1330 hours (Magistrates Room) |
| Tuesday 4 February 2014 | 1630 - 2000 hours (Magistrates Room) |
- 11. Housing needs survey results – see item 8**
- 12. Freedom of the Town nominations process for 2014 – This is open from now. Need to publicise.**
- 13. Feedback on Sovereign consultation - mentioned under police report**
- 14. Feedback on Christmas Lights Grand Prize Draw, card & calendar sales and Santa’s Grotto -**
More raffle tickets need to be sold next year.
- 15. REME welcome home parade arrangements – Cllr Thompson –** The history is REME requested affiliation with the town and took part in the last Remembrance Day Service and also the ‘Switch On’ of the lights. Much work is taking place to arrange a home coming parade on Sat 8th Feb. The parade will start at the WW2 memorial, proceed along Bulpit Lane, Priory Road, the High St, past the Town Hall where a salute will be taken and REME will form in the Church St Car Park. A meeting will take place w/b 13th Jan with REME. There will be 7 mins disruption whilst they march down and some disruption to parking. The parade start time needs to be agreed with REME and is suggested at 1.30pm.
- 16. Any other Reports (3 minutes each) - all councillors –** A Chamber of Commerce meeting will take place this Wednesday with Mike King as speaker, from Action for Market Towns. Cllr A Wilson advised the Santa’s grotto raised £50 and she wished to pass on thanks to Cllr Thompson, Crane, Small and Farrell.

Meeting closed 9pm.