

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

updated & adopted Feb 2025

1. Finance & General Purposes Committee
2. Environment & Planning Committee
3. Highways and Transport Committee
4. Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee
5. Delegation scheme

Committees may exercise delegated functions on behalf of the Town Council under the following terms of reference, subject to:

- The Town Council's approved budget and Financial Regulations
- Any previous minuted decision of the Town Council
- Any matters reserved to the Town Council by law

Note: The Mayor is an ex-officio member of all committees

1. Finance & General Purposes Committee

Membership: The committee consists of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairman and Deputy, and Chairmen of each committee.

Quorum: 3

The Finance and General Purposes committee provides the financial control for the Town Council and ensures that our monetary resources are managed wisely with the greatest benefit to all residents and within the financial rules governing Local Authorities. It meets every other month and deals with the following issues: -

- Setting of the Precept, which is agreed at Full Council and presented to West Berkshire District Council as an annual demand. This precept will influence the level of Council tax payable by each household within the parish.
- Co-ordination of the budgets of all other spending committees
- Approval of invoices for payment, monthly and control of debtors

- Arranging auditing of accounts and Internal Controls
- Distribution of grants. Applications are considered by committee and are generally paid to successful applicants in May. Grants must be of benefit to the people of Hungerford.
- Salaries, training and HR appointment
- Staff and councillors' expenses including civic and Mayoral expenses
- Insurance and Health & Safety
- Advertising, newsletters and subscriptions
- Computers, stationery and office costs
- Utility bills, rent and room hire
- Bank reconciliation and Investments
- Fundraising, CIL and S106 allocation
- Leases, licenses and contracts
- Policy review, GDPR and Data protection
- New project set up and management
- Legal issues

In addition:

- F&GP will discuss any question relating to the appointments, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service of any person employed by the Council.
- In every year, not later than the meeting at which the annual budget forecast is settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees.
- The Mayor handles formal grievances. Any appeal against its decision will be referred to the F&GP committee for a decision.
- Unresolved formal complaints can be referred to F&GP in the case of a member of staff.
- Annual appraisals will be carried out by the line manager. The Mayor and Chair of F&GP shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of all employees. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by the F&GP committee.

2. Environment & Planning Committee

Membership: Consists of town councillors and by agreement co-opted members of public.

Quorum: 3

Hungerford Town Council's Environment and Planning Committee meets once a month. As a statutory consultee the committee can comment on planning applications submitted to West Berkshire Council for building, structures, alterations, and for other planning amendments that need the approval of the Western Area Planning Committee. Although it can influence the outcome of the application the final decision rests with the Local Authority.

When recommending a response to the Local Authority it will consider:

- The best interests of Hungerford, its residents, and the well-being of the town.
- Government and local authority guidelines including material considerations.
- Protection of the local environment being an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

- The town centre being largely a conservation area.
- Any changes requested to listed buildings.
- Advertising and illuminations including shop signs be kept to a minimum.
- Buildings to be in keeping with the surrounding area.
- Protection against over development in tightly enclosed areas
- Any major developments by way of a presentation expected to indicate density and design.

3. Highways & Transport Committee

Membership: Consists of town councillors and by agreement co-opted members of public.

Quorum: 3

The Committee meets bi-monthly. The main areas of responsibility and interest are:

- Christmas lights
- Operation of CCTV
- Hungerford In Bloom Competition
- Arrangement of summer hanging baskets and troughs
- Church Street Public Toilets
- Supply, maintenance and refilling of Salt Bins
- Publicly accessible Defibrillators
- Arrangement of Litter picks
- Operation of HTC owned SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices)
- Support of local bus service

The Town Council are, through the Highways and Transport committee, facilitators to West Berkshire Council by reporting defects and are consulted on proposed changes on the following topics:

- Bus routes and railway station
- Parking
- Public Highways, Footways and Footpaths
- Street Cleaning and emptying of dog waste and litter bins
- Street Lighting and upgrade to LED
- Electric vehicle chargers
- Cycle routes and bike shelters

4. Recreation, Amenities & War Memorials Committee

Membership: Consists of town councillors and by agreement co-opted members of public.

Quorum: 3

The Committee meets bi-monthly. The main areas of responsibility and interest are:

- The Triangle Field Sports Ground on Priory Road which is now owned freehold by the Town Council having been purchased from West Berkshire Council in 2015. The main user of the Triangle Field is the Hungerford Rugby Club and it is also home to their club house. Representatives of the club assist in the day-to-day management of the multi-purpose

sports field. It is available for hire for a wide range of sports including rugby, football, keep fit, boot camps or any grass orientated sport, and also for recreation and other community leisure purposes.

- The War Memorial Recreation Ground at Bulpit Lane leased to the Town Council by the Town and Manor of Hungerford in 1951. The site includes the lower playing field area adjoining the town's cricket ground, the Bulpit Lane children's playground, the skateboard park, the residential property known as Swimming Pool House and also the War Memorial Avenue and the Tragedy Memorial Garden at the entrance to this.
- St Lawrence's Churchyard in the Croft and St Saviour's cemetery just off the Wantage Road. These are statutory responsibilities and involve arrangements for burials and interments of ashes, the keeping of burial records and the repair and maintenance of both sites. St Lawrence's is a closed churchyard.
- The allotment sites at Fairfields and Marsh Lane. 24 allotments at Fairfields are being worked, each one pole in size. A larger site at Marsh Lane provides 108 plots of varying sizes from one to four poles.
- The Bridge Street War Memorial and its surrounding site, including the paved area and the adjoining trees, shrubs and garden land.
- The Croft Field Activity Centre recently acquired on a long lease from West Berkshire Council. The building is hired out regularly to a wide variety of users. Facilities for hire include: a main room with kitchenette, a second room (North Room) with sink, toilets and showers, a large field which is used for outside activities, overnight camping, fetes, markets etc.
- The Hungerford Youth and Community Centre in Priory Road. This is leased from the Academy Trust and managed on a day-to-day basis by a management committee which includes two Town Councillors.
- Smitham Bridge children's playground acquired in the 1980s when the adjoining site was redeveloped for new housing and the playground site was donated to the Town Council.
- Benches - There are approximately 70 benches placed around the town.
- Improving the carbon footprint of council owned facilities

4. Delegation

- Any power or duty which is delegated under this scheme is subject to Town Council policy and the approved budget for the individual committee.
- Where powers of duties have been delegated to a Committee it shall be competent for that Committee in turn to assign functions or delegate powers and duties to the Town Clerk, or an officer, provided that any action taken under delegated powers be clearly minuted.
- A committee may set up a working group to investigate, consider and report back with recommendations on any issue.
- Delegation of specific duties to the staff are set out in their job specifications.
- The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items in the following circumstances (as per our Financial regulations):
 - a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];

- b) An expenditure item (authorised under 6.6 of our Financial Regulations, continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];
 - c) Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £60,000, monthly, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.
- Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
 - a) The Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £5000.
 - b) The Clerk and all other office staff for items up to £1000

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail unless under £100.

- In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £5,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.