

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor  
Cllr Helen Simpson  
57 Fairview Road  
Hungerford  
Berkshire  
RG17 0BP  
Tel: 07920 110380  
Cllr.helen.simpson@hungerford-tc.gov.uk



The Town Clerk  
Mrs Claire Barnes  
The Library  
Church Street  
Hungerford  
Berkshire RG17 0JG  
Tel: 01488 686195  
townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk  
www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk

**MINUTES** of the **F&GP Meeting** held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 7.00pm in The Library, Hungerford.

**Present:** Cllrs Winsor, Simpson, Fyfe and Schlanker. Also, Clerk, RFO and Cllr Yakar-Wells (not a committee member, entered during FGP2023004)

**FGP2023001**    **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Knight  
**FGP2023002**    **Declarations of interest** – Cllr Simpson (FGP20230015)  
**FGP2023003**    **Minutes - To approve and sign the minutes of the F & GP meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winsor  
**Seconded:** Cllr Fyfe  
**Resolution:** Minutes were agreed as a true record.

**FGP2023004**    **Receive an update on actions** – The following actions were outstanding:  
**ACTION:** Clerk to produce summary of the grievance policy actions for Mayor.  
All other actions were complete or on the agenda.

**FGP2023005**    **Review amended terms of reference (see attached)**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Schlanker  
**Seconded:** Cllr Winsor  
**Resolution:** Accept amended TORs. It was recommended that the layout could be reviewed in future to group similar responsibilities together.

**FGP2023006**    **Propose acceptance of the bank reconciliation**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winsor  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**Resolution:** Accept bank reconciliation totalling £633,999.28 as accurate.

**FGP2023007**    **Internal Control Document – Receive feedback on the following items from councillors:**

- Up to date Register of Assets. Cllr Simpson has checked the list.
- Physical assets, Financial Risk. Cllr Winsor has checked the physical assets and financial risks are covered under agenda item FGP2023009.

**ACTION:** Insurance and fidelity. Cllr Schlanker yet to do.

**FGP2023008**    **Internal control document – Allocate the following items to councillors for review**

- a) Annual review of contracts (where appropriate) – to be brought to F&GP
- b) Orders placed in accordance with Financial Regulations
- c) Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure
- d) Payments supported by invoices, authorised and minuted
- e) Regular scrutiny of income records to ensure income is correctly received, recorded and banked
- f) Scrutiny to ensure precept recorded in the cashbook
- g) Monthly reconciliation of Corporate Credit Card – Process already in place

**ACTION:** Cllrs Simpson and Winsor to carry out spot checks ref; above items b, c, d, e and f.

**FGP2023009 Review of Local Council Risk System documents as required by audit**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**Resolution:** Accept the revised LCRS documents for F&GP.  
It was noted item 377 under website document ‘add to January contractor’s list’ is to be completed.

**FGP20230010 Update on application to charity commission to obtain freehold of Bridge St War Memorial garden**  
An email has been received from the solicitor advising the charity commission has rejected our application. They are contacting the person dealing with the matter to discuss their objections.  
**ACTION:** Ask for a copy of the correspondence concerning the objections and wait to hear the outcome of the discussion.

## **Confidential PART 2**

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

**FGP20230011 Note Staff toil and holidays – TOIL** noted as follows: employee no. 1 (15.5), 2(0), 13(0), 14(3), 15 (0.5). Holidays noted as follows: employee no. 1(35hrs), 2(9 days), 13(1 day), 14(5 days), 15(10 hours)  
**ACTION:** Pay employee 1 for overtime.

**FGP20230012 Update on debtors – None**

**FGP20230013 H2036 hours for agreement**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Pay Clerk for 5.5 hours up to end of December 2022

**FGP20230014 Update on appraisals – Completed for employee number 1, 13, and 14. Scheduled for employee 15.**  
**ACTION:** Paperwork to be forwarded to Cllrs Simpson and Winser. Employee 2 appraisal to be arranged.

**FGP20230015 Review Contractor’s renewal terms**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**Resolution:** Agree annual contract with Windowflowers costing £4146.35 for supply of floral displays including maintaining and watering (final figure may vary awaiting confirmation of number of displays)  
  
**Proposed:** Cllr Schlanker  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**Resolution:** Agree additional annual contract with Windowflowers of £1210 to water 22 oak tubs and 6 window boxes on canal bridge (previously watered by Smarten up Hungerford)

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**Resolution:** Agree annual maintenance contract with Hungerford Cricket Club costing £1660

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Schlanker  
**Resolution:** Agree additional annual maintenance contract with James & Co costing £1800 for mowing of Triangle Field. One abstention.

**ACTION:** Appoint above mentioned contractors

**Proposed:** Cllr Schlanker  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Revisit the cleaning contract with Bloom after the building work has been completed at Croft Field. A deep clean may be required initially.

#### **FGP20230016 Propose rental increase**

It was noted that there would have been quite a saving following the installation of the heat pump however due to the increase in energy tariff and higher usage this is not so apparent. The tenants however are happy with the warmth.

**Proposed:** Cllr Fyfe  
**Seconded:** Cllr Schlanker

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Instruct estate agent to increase rent to £1,000 a month from Feb 2023.

Meeting closed 8.00pm

### **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS**

1. Finance & General Purposes Committee
2. Environment & Planning Committee
3. Highways and Transport Committee
4. Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee
5. Staff Sub-committee
6. 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

## 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

## **5. Staff sub-committee**

**Membership:** This is a sub-committee of F&GP, meeting every quarter, consisting of at least two chairmen or deputy chairmen of Committees and two councillors, at best practise to include at least two members of each gender. Recommendations will be made by the Staffing Committee to F&GP.

**Quorum: 3**

- The staff sub-committee 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 staff sub-committee handles formal grievances. Any appeal against its decision will be referred to the F&GP committee for a final decision.
- Unresolved formal complaints can be referred to the staff sub-committee in the case of a member of staff.
- Annual appraisals will be carried out by the line manager. The chairman of the staff committee or in their absence, the vice-chairman 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.

## 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, or sub-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, an officer or a Sub-Committee, 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 5.6 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 authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

- In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement, or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5000. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter