

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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**MINUTES** of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford

**Present:** Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Alford, Carlson, Keates, Downe, Hudson, Knight, Winser and Yakar-Wells

Also: West Berks District Cllrs James Cole (JC), Dennis Benneyworth (DB), Claire Rowles (CR)

Representatives from Penny Post, Newbury News and the Adviser

In attendance: Claire Barnes (Town Clerk), CEO of West Berks Council, Nigel Lynn (NL), representatives from Hungerford Community and Library Trust, and a few members of public.

**Police Report:** The police were not in attendance however a **Police Report is attached**. The Mayor informed the meeting that in addition to the incidents mentioned on the report, the Plume of Feathers has recently had a break in to an outbuilding. Town Council CCTV footage can be checked.

The Mayor welcomed Nigel Lynn (CEO of West Berks Council). Hungerford is the first Town Council he has visited in his new role. He has been with WBC for 1 year but has previously worked in 10 different councils around the country including Spelthorne and Arun Councils. His background is education and leisure. He advised that looking at performance, WBC is a good council. Areas for improvement include customer care and he is wanting to improve relationships with external organisations. Problems include pressures on adult social care and child services. The demand is triple what it was a year ago and more money and resources are needed. There are not enough workers available. WBC agreed their budgets last night. Due to the number of services contracted out and the high impact of inflation, a lot of reserves will need to be used. He hopes to see an improvement from January 2024. Several new strategies are in place including opportunities for all, protecting and enhancing the environment, stronger communities and a great place to work, live and learn.

NL advised 98% of people have voter ID but the concern is that they will not remember to bring it with them. An advertising campaign is underway to promote awareness and local help with this was requested.

In response to the questions put to him in advance of the meeting, NL advised a wayleave needed to enable EV chargers to be installed at the WBC station car park has not been possible to obtain. Other locations that will now be pursued include the Church Street Car park and the Leisure Centre. The first phase outside of Newbury will be in Hungerford and fast and rapid chargers will be installed. Enterprise car club is up and running in Newbury. 'Lift share' a car sharing platform will soon be available in Hungerford.

Cllr Downe questioned the delay of the installation of the EV chargers. The wayleave issue was identified two years ago and it is a huge frustration that there has been no progress. NL agreed some pace is needed and he will chase urgently. Cllr Downe suggested there could be a benefit in talking to Oxford who are further ahead with their plans for providing charging hubs and booking facilities. There needs to be a package in place that will work for the community.

**A member of public** representing the Hungerford Library and Community Trust questioned NL concerning a business rates demand recently received for the Curve. **Please refer to full report attached**. NL accepted that not enough attention had been given to the partnership and he personally was not aware of the issue. He will see what can be done to help to ensure the good work continues. Cllr Knight advised the Trust has saved 72% on energy usage with the newly installed heat pump. The Mayor added that the current model works incredibly well.

Cllr Keates asked how we gain input and buy in from young people. NL advised they continue to listen and react and there is some tremendous youth work happening at the Waterside in Newbury but more is needed across the district.

The Mayor mentioned the number of children with SEN in Hungerford had increased considerably. NL agreed the pressure is high, but the services provided are very good. There are not enough child psychologists and one of their main priorities is to address this,

The Mayor expressed her concern that vulnerable Sovereign residents had received letters advising that their rent was to triple. Having challenged Sovereign, they advised the letters were sent in error. NL advised he was not aware of this. WBC has a joint venture with Sovereign and we would like to be kept informed.

NL explained the polling cards this year will be bigger than normal highlighting the need to bring your ID in order to vote. There will be national tv adverts and an awareness campaign through social media and posters. Cards will be put through doors.

Cllr Yakar-Wells complained the communication in the WBC housing team is shocking and the system is not working. She is an estate agent and all the estate agents she knows are having the same problems. NL advised they now have a permanent head of housing in place, and he will report the feedback.

Cllr Alford added that Hungerford also has a successful Youth Club running several days a week which is reliant on volunteers.

NL requested that we keep him up to speed as he wishes to work in partnership with Hungerford.

NL left the meeting.

**FC20230034 Note apologies for absence – Cllrs Lewis, Greenwell and Schlanker**

**FC20230035 Declarations of interest – None**

**FC20230036 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023, and outcome of actions.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Downe

**Resolution:** To approve minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023 as a true record. One abstention.

**Outcome of actions:** A zoom meeting has taken place with WBC about the Town Strategy. There was some concern that the strategy was moving forward without timely input from the town and key members. However, it does yet need to go to the WBC exec committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> March to be signed off and it is a work in progress. A smaller group will continue to work and input into the strategy. Cllr Hudson would like access to the drawings shown at the meeting so he can send them to the H2036 NDP consultant. JC advised he will continue to be involved. It is not a done deal, and it is still open to Hungerford to decide what it wants to do.

**FC20230037 Receive Mayor's Report – See attached.** The Mayor added that the Town Meeting can proceed during the pre-election period.

**FC20230038 Receive District Councillor's Reports –** DB advised he is in touch with the service manager at Sovereign who acknowledged the service charge error. There will be an increase but not as much as said. The Mayor asked that she be copied in on any further correspondence concerning this. Attention was drawn to WBC's budget which had recently been agreed with a 4.99% increase in Council Tax (2.99% in basic council tax plus a 2% Adult Social Care precept). Demand for WBC social care services (over half the budget spend) required an extra £10m compared to 2022/23. DB advised there was proposal to pull the Local Plan due to it not being sound however WBC believe it is and it is now going through process.

DB announced that three tri-bins are on their way to Hungerford.

**ACTION:** DB will send details and sizes on the tri-bins across to the Clerk so locations can be considered.

It was suggested that the layby coming into town could be a possible site.

DB has been in touch with Laura Farris MP. She has been informed by the local roads and transport minister that councils might be able to enforce no parking on footways outside of London soon. Cllr Keates suggested we identify where footway parking is acceptable and work from there.

JC informed us it was Food Action week and there are free liner giveaways and a soil conditioner giveaway in Padworth. Next year he hopes it will be held closer in Newbury or Hungerford. Two more waste enforcement officers have been employed.

CR confirmed that she had spoken to Jon Winstanley chasing up the temporary traffic order for our Coronation celebrations. He has advised that it should be okay.

- FC20230039 To highlight awareness of election and co-option process.** At the last meeting questions were raised on purdah and how this affects HTC and particularly how this will affect the holding of our Town Meeting. The Clerk has obtained clarity and we are permitted to hold our meeting subject to certain restrictions. **Refer to attached report.**
- FC20230040 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns.** The temporary plastic ramps in place by the temporary traffic lights in the high street are loose and are being kicked around. As they are required to be in place for a while it was suggested a better more permanent solution should be considered particularly as there has already been an accident there. The Clerk has reported this to Highways maintenance and is waiting their response.
- FC20230041 Hungerford Bus services – Request for contributions. Please refer to attached report.** Cllr Knight added that WBC might receive Department of Transport funding to help with future financial support. After discussion,  
**Proposed:** Cllr Knight  
**Seconded:** Cllr Keates  
**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Stop our contribution to the H1 service from July 2023. Reallocate the subsidy of £5,000 per annum to help fund the new demand service being set up from May by Wiltshire Council.
- FC20230042 Consider response to Local Transport Plan Consultation (deadline – 22/3/23) –** Cllr Hudson commented that there is not enough detail on cost or monitoring. He outlined key points to include within our response as follows:
- Hungerford is a town, not a village.
  - There is much potential for Hungerford to be a more sustainable town in terms of transport with more walking, cycling and public transport.
  - 20mph zones including High St needed and a town square in front of Town Hall (re town centre strategy)
  - Rail service cut has been a disaster and we want services back.
- ACTION:** **Proposed:** Cllr Simpson  
**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson  
**Resolution:** Cllr Hudson and Town Clerk to write a response to survey monkey together.
- FC20230043 Propose support for the Kennet & Avon Community Rail Partnership –** Cllr Hudson advised that the Kennet & Avon CRT are looking to obtain an hourly service from Theale to Westbury and a new station at Devises.
- ACTION:** **Proposed:** Cllr Hudson  
**Seconded:** Cllr Winser  
**Resolution:** Cllr Hudson will draft a letter of support to send to Kennet & Avon CR identifying specific requirements for Hungerford
- FC20230044 Receive Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report) –See F&GP report attached.**
- FC20230045 Receive report from H2036 Project Team – Refer to attached report.** Cllr Hudson advised that the team was progressing the evaluation of the new sites and is currently obtaining the mapping which will then be forwarded to consultees. Meanwhile our NDP consultants are producing a draft of the H2036 plan. The Mayor thanked Cllr Hudson and Denise Gaines for stepping up as co-chairs. Denise added that she had responded to the Local Plan Review Consultation on behalf of H2036.

- FC20230046 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for February**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson  
**Resolution:** Agree payment run for February totalling £20,004.35
- FC20230047 Propose Year to date accounts – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.**  
**Proposed:** Cllr Winser  
**Seconded:** Cllr Knight  
**Resolution:** Agree year to date accounts as accurate with a positive variance of £18,028  
Chairmen were encouraged to check what is left in their budget before the year end and what should be moved to ear marked reserves for agreed projects.
- FC20230048 Consider budget and planning for the Coronation – Cllr Keates advised the first meeting to plan the Coronation celebrations has taken place. He is approaching entertainments acts and suggested that they should be paid for their services this year. There will be an additional cost for sound and for marquees which will be needed due to the unpredictable weather May brings.**  
**ACTION:** Add budget for the Coronation to the F&GP agenda.
- FC20230049 Updates on arrangements for Annual Town Meeting – 16 organisations so far have confirmed their attendance. The Mayor encouraged all councillors to attend, some of which will be needed to man the HTC table. The office has display boards on which we can showcase our current projects.**
- FC20230050 Skate Park Project – Receive update.** The application for a Certificate of Lawful Development has been submitted.
- FC20230051 Croft Field Project – Receive update.** Internal renovation works have started today and will last approximately 12 weeks.
- FC20230052 Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals – None.**

## **PART 2 Confidential**

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.

**FC20230053 Filling of job vacancy – appointment of new admin assistant**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Winser

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Appoint chosen candidate.

Meeting closed 8.30pm

## **HTC POLICE REPORT March 2023**

We are pleased to report that February has been a quiet month in Hungerford Town.

2 reports of Anti-social behaviour

3 reports of Criminal damage

1 shoplifting

We are however still getting reports of rural burglaries to outbuildings. These burglaries have not been limited to the West Berkshire area so in recent weeks we have been joined by our colleagues in Wiltshire and Hampshire Police for late night rural operations to disrupt and deter those committing such offences

With the weather hopefully improving as we head into spring, we could see an increase in theft from vehicles parked at beauty spots such as Combe Gibbet, Hungerford Common and other areas used by dog walkers and those out for a stroll in the sunshine. This crime is carried out by opportunists and you can reduce the risk of having your vehicle broken into by considering the following:

- Don't leave **anything** in your car. Do not leave items of value in your boot.
- Open the parcel shelf and leave the glove box open to show would be thieves there is nothing of value left in the vehicle.
- Use well lit, secure car parks.
- Don't return to your car to leave purchases in the boot before continuing with your shopping as thieves may watch car parks.

### **The Team**

The current set up of the Hungerford and Downlands Neighbourhood Police Team is 1 x Inspector, 1 x Sergeant, 2 x Police Constables and 5 x Police Community Support Officers. The team are contactable by email but this should not be used in an emergency or for reporting crime as it is not monitored 24/7. The email address is below –

[HungerfordandDownlandsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:HungerfordandDownlandsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

And finally a plea to keep reporting incidents to us via 101, the TVP website ([www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)) or 999, in an emergency.

### **Report from Member of public**

The subject I am bringing to your attention is: The Curve at Hungerford Library, and the recent decision by West Berks Council to charge Business Rates.

Approximately five years ago Friends of Hungerford Library came to a formal agreement with WBC to form a charity now known as Hungerford Library & Community Trust, and to take over the costs of running and maintaining the Hungerford Library building. In return WBC was to maintain an agreed level of library service including staff, books and the IT system.

WBC did give the charity a generous set up fund, which was put to good use, but from day one the charity has had to find and maintain funding for the ongoing costs of running the library building complex.

We do get an annual grant from HTC which is match funded, and in return the charity provides space for their Council offices and the use of the library for their meetings.

As part of our search for income in Nov 2021 we turned a small empty office space off the foyer into an area offering local artisans somewhere to display and sell their goods, and in return they donate 15% of their sales to the charity. A percentage of the items on sale are donated in their entirety i.e. the whole price goes to the charity.

Over £1,900 was donated to the charity last year from the artisans, and those of us who are responsible for this side of our fund raising effort are thrilled with what we have achieved. The Curve has not only raised funds, it also fulfils a further Trust aim for the Hub to creatively support and provide space for community initiatives – volunteers man the space and all contributors are local.

We do appreciate when it comes to business rates that we do not fit into any category satisfactorily. However, this administrative difficulty does not seem reason enough to tax the Trust's essential charity funds. One cannot deny



that it makes very little sense for WBC to take money from the charity which exists to safeguard a WBC building, and we feel most strongly that an exception should and could be made to rectify the situation.

I thank you for the opportunity to bring this to Council's attention.

### **Mayors Report- March Full Council Meeting 2023**

This month has been very busy for me personally, I organised a party for my Mum's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday whilst organising a wake and helping my family come to terms with the loss of my Father-in-Law. Thank you to Councillors and staff for all your support whilst I've been pre-occupied.

### **Health & Safety**

R&A has been conducting our additional council health and safety checks on our facilities. This is an annual commitment to compliment and add another layer to the formal processes already in place. The checks also help councillors to fully inspect and give an opportunity to see what's on offer and how we could potentially see improvements or share ideas, which could offer more community benefits, or just improve the overall appearance of the facility. I am always interested to hear ideas on how or what the community could do to improve areas within the town.

### **Town Meeting**

There was some considerable discussion around our town meeting and clarity was sought from West Berkshire Council's Legal team and the National Board of local councils to determine if our meeting could proceed due to the pre- election period. It has been determined, HTC is able to proceed but cannot make any political reference, statements, or decisions during this period. HTC is a non- political Council. I hope you will pop along to the Town Meeting on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March in the Corn Exchange. We look forward to welcoming you.

### **Churchill Meeting**

This month Churchill presented to our planning committee; they were presenting to councillors ahead of a planning application for the Oakes Brothers site located next to the Railway public house. If this becomes a formal application, it will go through our usual planning meeting for comment.

### **Staff Appraisals, Home Working**

All staff appraisals have now been completed. HTC has an exceptional team of staff and I'd like to thank them for another busy and productive year.

HTC is hoping to have more office presence as we reduce our working from home time. This will be reviewed again in six months.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

I'd like to thank Jon Shatford for his commitment to the neighbourhood plan as co-chair, Jon has now passed the baton to Cllr Richard Hudson who will continue to co-chair with Denise Gaines, Jon will remain as a team member. The plan is moving forward, our second call for sites was very productive, these sites will now follow the same process as sites previously put forward in the first round.

### **Kings Coronation**

The Jubilee team have re-formed to start to plan the Kings Coronation celebrations in Hungerford. More details will follow but please save the date for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May on the Croft Green. I hope we will have a similar occasion to the Queens Jubilee. All welcome.

## Presidents Lunch

HRFC (Hungerford Rugby Club) invited councillors to attend the president's lunch on Saturday. Jerry, Nick, and I, had a lovely afternoon at the club. Thank you to Steve Mills for the kind invitation and to Steve's wife Deborah for the delicious meal. Sadly, the team lost on Saturday, but Hungerford played well and were up against a top of the league team.

## Town Strategy Meeting

There was some concern Hungerford, wasn't having a fair bite of the cake when it came to the town strategy. A zoom call was held with WBC, plan developers and key stake holders in the town, to iron out some concerns and ask more questions. Largely I believe the concern had largely been down to poor communication and insight to next steps. I think it's important to note that any available funding for Hungerford can only be a bonus for the town. I, alongside key stakeholders will continue to work with WBC to deliver a plan which is sound, achievable and to Hungerford's benefit not detriment.

Cllr Helen Simpson, Mayor

**FC20230039 Election**

## Hungerford Town Council

**Public Report to:** Full Council 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Agenda Item No:** FC20230039 To highlight awareness of election and restrictions during the pre-election period.

All details of the process of standing for election can be found on HTC's website, along with the Nomination form and an annotated form explaining how to complete the form. HTC will be spreading awareness of the election though social media and posters. Some printed forms will be made available for the public in the library foyer.

## Background

A query was raised regarding the holding of our Town Meeting during the pre-election period (Purdah). It was suggested that this was not permitted. Advice has been obtained from the WBC and HALC.

**Objective** To clarify rules. Please refer to advice below and at the foot of the report.

## Advice received from WBC.

If the annual meeting of Hungerford Town Council takes place during the pre-election period (previously referred to as Purdah), this does not impact or limit the ability of any existing councillor from taking part. That would include existing town and district councillors.

The period of heightened sensitivity in the pre-election period should not prevent local authorities from conducting their normal business. It does however impact how a council promotes its activities, and generally, decisions that are politically contentious should not be taken during the pre-election period. I hope that the above is of some assistance, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further clarification.

Kind regards,

**Sarah Clarke**

**Solicitor – Service Director, Strategy & Governance**

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## Advice received from HALC

I have attached our key topic note giving guidance around the pre-election period and this should answer your questions. I would suggest you read through this but, in summary, you can continue with 'business as usual' but must ensure that the council does not show support for a particular election candidate or political party.

Kind regards

Jane Ives

Member Services Manager

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## Reference to Council Strategy, where relevant

Holding the Annual Town Meeting is a high priority in our Action Plan.

## Other information

Parish and town councils must also hold an Annual Meeting of their parish sometime between the 1 March and 1 June each year. It is good to have a gap between the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Full Council meeting to avoid confusion. HTC have historically held the Annual Town Meeting in March before the end of the financial year.

## Recommendation(s)

Proceed with the Annual Town meeting noting the advice and restrictions detailed above.

**Signed:** Town Clerk 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023



## Hampshire ALC Key Topic Note – Advice during Pre-Election Period

The term 'pre-election period' (also known as 'purdah') is used to describe the period of time before an election which normally commences with the publication of the election notice and ends when the election closes. Sometimes, this period is referred to as the period of 'heightened sensitivity'.

The legislation that applies to the pre-election period is the [Local Government Act 1988 s.27](#) which states:

### **Prohibition of political publicity.**

- (1) *A local authority shall not publish, or arrange for the publication of, any material which, in whole or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.*
- (2) *In determining whether material falls within the prohibition regard shall be had to the content and style of the material, the time and other circumstances of publication and the likely effect on those to whom it is directed and, in particular, to the following matters—*
  - (a) *whether the material refers to a political party or to persons identified with a political party or promotes or opposes a point of view on a question of political controversy which is identifiable as the view of one political party and not of another;*



(b) where the material is part of a campaign, the effect which the campaign appears to be designed to achieve.

(3) A local authority shall not give financial or other assistance to a person for the publication of material which the authority are prohibited by this section from publishing themselves.

In summary, the Act defines publicity as “any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or to a section of the public” and that councils should “not publish any material which, in whole, or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.”

The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity is based around seven principles to ensure that all communications activity is:

- lawful
- cost effective
- objective
- even-handed
- appropriate
- has regard to equality and diversity
- issued with care during periods of heightened sensitivity.

It is the last point above that is most relevant during the pre-election period and extra care should be taken when considering any form of public statement.

Member Services Team

Hampshire ALC Key Topic Note – Advice during Pre-Election Period (May 2021)

This document is owned by Hampshire ALC and may be provided to other County Associations

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### **During the pre-election period, councils should not:**

- Produce publicity on politically controversial matters
- Publish any materials or issue statements that seek to influence voters
- Report views or proposals or issue statements on politically controversial views in such a way that identifies them with an individual councillor or group of councillors
- Publish material designed to affect public support for a candidate or for a political party
- Issue photographs that identify candidates i.e., in a newsletter, or on a Facebook page
- Arrange events that involve candidates
- Produce any documentation where the content or style, or the timing of the document, have an effect on those to whom it is directed regarding promoting or supporting a candidate or political party

### **What can councils do during the pre-election period?**

Councils are allowed to publish factual information which identifies the names, wards and parties of candidates at elections.

Councils can continue to communicate any statements, press releases etc, that they would have done in the normal course of their business except they should not quote any individual seeking election.

Councils can hold meetings and make decisions as normal, but it may be best to refrain from making any decisions about a politically controversial matter until after the election period. They can determine budgets and respond to planning applications even where those are controversial.

Councils can publish factual information to counteract misleading, controversial or extreme (i.e., racist or sexist) information.

If councils fail to follow the code without good reason, then legal action can be taken against the council which could result in payment of legal costs and of course reputational damage.

## Essential Resources

[Recommended code of practice for local authority publicity](#) (Gov.uk website)

[A short guide to publicity during the pre-election period](#) (Local Government Association website)

**This document reflects our advice based on our understanding of the current legislation and guidance and our knowledge of the sector. It is not however intended to be formal legal advice.**

**For more complex issues we are able to obtain initial specialist advice on legal, employment, financial and planning matters as part of your membership fee. Please contact us to access this service.**

Member Services Team

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Hampshire ALC Key Topic Note – Advice during Pre-Election Period (May 2021)

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**FC20230041 Buses**

### **Hungerford Town Council**

**Public Report to:** Full Council Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Agenda Item No:** FC20230041 Hungerford bus Services – Request for contributions.

#### **Background**

**Change to service** - Cllr Fyfe identified that there are no bus stops at the new developments on Salisbury Road and contacted WBC to see if this could be rectified. He was advised that Wiltshire Council plans to end Swindon's Bus Company 20 service in July. A limited timed service will continue past July. School buses will not be affected.

**New plans** This is the only local bus service serving Hungerford from the Ham / Shalbourne area. The plans are to replace it with a demand responsive service. Such a service would be operated by minibuses and these would be able to come into Jethro Tull Lane and Kennedy Meadows. Passengers would have to pre book their journey.

**Request for contribution** - Hungerford Town Council was asked to make a small annual contribution direct to Wiltshire Council for this service as it would include the two new housing estates off the A338 and also the existing bus stops (and opposite these) between the Town Centre and the new housing estates.

**Town Clerk and Cllr Knight met with Paul Sanders (Demand Responsive Transport Manager for Wiltshire Council) on Teams on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb to gather more info see below:**

**Who is running the demand service?** E-Zec Medical have been contracted to run the service on behalf of Wiltshire Council. E-Zec is expanding to do local government work and also cover Swindon hospital. The service is branded as Wiltshire Connect but will be serving Hungerford. The vehicles are being provided by Wiltshire Council and will be brand new Mercedes Sprinter low floor minibuses. There will be two vehicles operating, one 8-seater and one 16-seater. They are not electric as it was not feasible due to the rural location, lack of infrastructure, battery range (due to 14-hour operation) and cost. This is a change from the previous 30-seater buses. There will be 2 drivers operating under the domestic driver rules with a maximum journey of 15 miles.

**Does the destination need to be in Wilts?** No

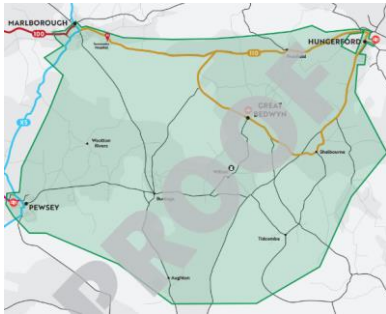
**Is the service valid for trips wholly in Hungerford?** Yes, we are happy to provide journeys into Hungerford town centre for the Salisbury Road/Kennedy Meadow area and we can set up stops in the booking app for those areas. This is a draft of the operating map of the service.

**What is the cost of running the service?** The cost to Wiltshire Council for the new DRT service going into Hungerford will be approx 120K per annum though we have a grant from the DfT to help cover some of the costs.

**What is the expected contribution?** We are open to negotiation, but we would be hoping for a contribution of between £5-10,000 per annum. We could then review this after the first 12 months based on usage from the area. (When speaking to Paul he indicated that between £5k and £7k would be acceptable).

**Start date** The new Wiltshire Connect DRT service is due to start around May and therefore a decision from Hungerford Council is needed by the end of March) so they can include the area in the promotional literature. They are happy to produce a dedicated flyer for the area promoting the service and to create a special promotional fare as well for trips into town.

**Can they include the H1 service?** They would be happy to consider including the existing H1 service. They can even do a timed service for this.



**Can they use existing stops?** Yes, they can either use existing stops or other landmarks providing it is safe to stop. An area of Hungerford that would be covered is based on the existing 20 and 22 service but they could adapt to include H1 etc.

**Booking the service:** The service will be available Mon-Fri from 6am to 8pm and 7am to 7pm on Saturday. You can ring and book. Also, you can pay for the fare on the App. A Wiltshire Connect App is being built which will be on-line at the end of March. The fares charged will vary from around £2 for a single ride, £3 for a long ride and £1 for a short ride. There will be a 10-journey saver and concessions with a half fare for 21-year-olds and under. They will include connections with the rail services.

**Objective** Retain provision of local bus service at best cost.

### Options

- 1) Consider contributing to Wiltshire Council so Hungerford can benefit from the demand responsive service. We need to advise them of our decision by the end of March.
- 2) Look to cancel the existing contribution toward the H1 bus service if the service is amalgamated into the demand responsive service.
- 3) Repurpose the budget for the H1 to the new demand responsive service.

### Financial and Legal implications

Cost for H1 service 2023-24 £5023.83. Budget available £5,500

### Reference to Council Strategy, where relevant

Encourage the use of public transport by improving facilities and increasing passenger comfort. Reduce congestion in the High Street

### Consultation:

M Metcalfe (WBC). The notice period is 3 months to end the H1 contribution, but he would be happy to reduce this to possibly one month's notice if required.

### Recommendation(s)

The best option, based on the above information.

**Signed:** Town Clerk 2/3/2023

**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023**

**MONTH 11, FEBRUARY 2023 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT**

**101 FINANCE:**

The Annual Precept of £328,357 been received.

**102 ADMINISTRATION:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,710 positive variance.

**103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:**

No Expenditure this month.

**104 POOL HOUSE:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £68 negative variance.

**105 CONTINGENCY:**

No Expenditure this month.

**106 TOURISM SUPPORT BUDGET:**

No Expenditure this month.

**109 HUNGERFORD 2036 PROJECT:**

No Expenditure this month.

**201 RECREATION & AMENITIES:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,265 positive variance.

**202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:**

On Budget this month.

**203 ST SAVIOURS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £2,114 positive variance. Burial Fee income increased by £876.

**204 CROFT FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £155 positive variance.

**205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:**

Net Expenditure was a £139 negative variance.

**206 TRIANGLE FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £122 positive variance.

**301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £50 positive variance.

**302 HIGHWAYS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £6,091 positive variance. The Bus Route Subsidy wasn't paid in this period.



**Councillors table** - As requested, a table will be set up for Town Councillors and this will be at the back of the hall. Post it notes will be available for any members of public to submit their questions. ***Please let me know if you will be able to attend and if you would like to be on the table so I can make sure there is enough room.***

**Displays** - HTC will display the final plans for our skate park and Croft Field Centre, the usual financial information, Hungerford in Bloom literature and perhaps plans for the Coronation. We can have some nomination forms on hand. ***If there is anything else you would like on display please let the office know.***

**Organisations attending** So far 15 organisations have confirmed their attendance and will need a table.

#### **FC20230050 Skate Park Project - receive update.**

An application for a Certificate of Lawfulness has been submitted and HTC has paid the fee. On receipt of planning permission technical drawings can be finalised and a contract drawn up.

#### **FC20230051 Croft Field Project – receive update.**

The builder has been given the access codes as he is due to start work the week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023.