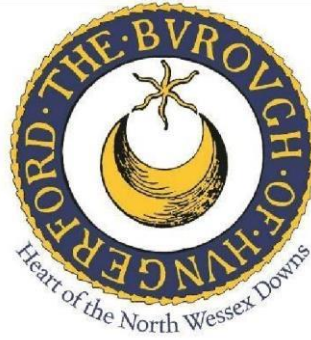


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 3rd June 2024 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Keates, Armstrong, Cole, Knight, Coulthurst, Carlson, Winser, Reeves and Montgomery.

Also present: Representatives from Penny Post and The Adviser and several members of public. District Cllr Tony Vickers (TV) from West Berks Council (WBC).

In attendance: Town Clerk, (TC)

Police Report: A report was received a couple of weeks ago to cover this month and last. (**see attached**).

Presentation: The Mayor presented Jenny Allen with a Mayor's coin and certificate in recognition of her charity work, raising almost £1,500 in memory of her late mother-in-law, by walking 13 miles for Alzheimer's 'Trek26 Stonehenge 2024' challenge.

Presentation: Charlie Barr (CB) from Youth & Community Centre addressed Council to talk about the activities of Hungerford Youth Club. (**see attached full report**). A video was played showing the youth club in action.

Questions followed from councillors. In response CB advised this week they are starting a Thursday evening club to engage with 13 to 15 year olds. They have 3 people on small contracts helping organise. A Youth Forum is being set up which is a bit different from a Youth Council. It is more like a School Council however they could come to Council meetings and interact with HTC. They are very open to anyone joining from other parishes. They have organised trips and some staff are qualified to do one on one work with the kids.

Cllr Winser requested that CB promotes the upcoming Hungerford's Got Talent show.

FC20240099 Note apologies for absence. Cllrs Hudson, Cusack and Schlanker
Apologies also from, District Cllrs Dennis Benneyworth (DB) and Denise Gaines (DG)

FC202400100 Declarations of interest - None

FC202400101 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 7th May 2024, and outcome of actions.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Coulthurst

Resolution: Minutes of 7th May 2024 were agreed as a true record.

Outcome of actions:

ACTION: Chase DG to see if there are leaflets available about the Housing Crisis.

Laying of the York stone slabs in the high street is complete. Cllr Keates submitted a feedback report about the work which has been sent to Avonline and WBC. The cables had been lain too shallow (in some places 50mm) which made it difficult for the contractors to get a good sub-base for the slabs. However they have done the best job in the circumstances.

WBC will be moving the bins to block vehicles from parking on the footway to prevent future damage to slabs.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Write back to WBC. HTC accept the bins as a temporary solution but request that bollards are installed to protect the slabs long term.

The Xmas light cables hanging down in the High Street have been secured properly.

FC202400102 Receive Mayor's Report - See attached report. The Mayor added that HTC have not let the Bewley matter drop concerning Lancaster Park. She has contacted the Head of Customer Services. With reference to landscaping, trees were planted late in the year and a 15% failure rate is possible. A costed management maintenance plan and cost implications have been requested and are awaited. Adoption of the road and pumping station has not happened. Very few get adopted retrospectively A Section 38 has not been signed. This would have ensured a standard is adhered to with the road surface and streetlights for example. The costs of undertaking a retrospective survey to confirm that the roads have been constructed to the adoptable standard might be as much as £100,000. Any remediation would be on top. The contract between Bewley and home-owners states that the roads will be built to adoptable standard, so Bewley will have to prove the construction. It was queried if Kennedy Meadow has been adopted and if it has a Section 38. WBC recommend this but it is only an option. TV advised developers can choose their own building control although they are encouraged to use the Councils. Cllr Cole asked if all parish councils should get together to take action, the subject be put on the next District Parish Conference agenda and government be lobbied. Cllr Carlson suggested publicity is used to push Bewley for action. There is no provision for the road to be adopted and the contract says it will be a private road. Liability is unknown. Penny Post will continue to report accurately on the current position.

FC202400103 Receive District Councillor's Reports – TV advised feasibility costs for the EV Chargers have been received but onsite designs and costs are awaited. There is a 90 day wait for SSE to access the grid. The location has yet to be confirmed. DG is acting leader of WBC for the next 3 weeks. TV is the vice chair of Council. Also, he is vice chair of North Wessex Downs, working towards a management plan with farmers and landowners. TV confirmed the planning application had been submitted from Town & Manor for the Wetlands project.

FC202400104 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns. Cllr Reeves has a meeting scheduled with Paul Hendry (Countryside WBC) at 3pm on 6th June. He will query the long grass at the WBC owned Ramsbury Drive Play Park and the standard of the play equipment which has splintering wood and a broken rung. The last ROSPA was carried out in March identifying problems which have not been fixed. Long grass attracts ticks and can accumulate litter. There have been many complaints and residents have been lobbying their MP. WBC advised the grass is not due to be cut until July. It is already very long due to a missed cut. HTC find this totally unacceptable. 5 cuts a year were agreed by Executive and should be adhered to.

ACTION: It was requested District Cllrs get grass cuts changed so verges and play parks are safe.

ACTION: Cllr Reeves will also request the above at his meeting with WBC.

It was noted Lancaster Play Park is looked after by a management company not WBC.

FC202400105 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for May.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Knight

Resolution: Authorise payment run of £24,104.38 for May.

FC202400106 Propose year to date accounts – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Agree year to date accounts, with a positive variance of £22,292 due to phasing issues.

- FC202400107 Christmas 2024** – The Christmas trees have been ordered and survey has been requested. The Christmas Lights Switch on will take place on Sunday 1st December 2024.
- FC202400108 Resource Centre – Consider extension of opening hours.** Support was expressed for the extension of opening hours providing they are of benefit to the community. It should be subject to liaison with the local residents.
- FC202400109 Receive report from Neighbourhood Plan Project Team – Please see attached report.** The next scheduled meeting has been postponed as we are still waiting to receive a full response to Reg 14 from WBC. Timings have slipped due to this. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Hudson and the Clerk for their continued work.
- FC202400110 Receive update on D-Day 80th Anniversary events** – Deputy Cllr Cole will be attending the proclamation at 8am on the 6th June on the Town Hall steps, in the absence of the Mayor. HTC has focussed all its effort on the D-Day Commemoration weekend on 29th and 30th June. BBWF is suspended at present due to the recent tragic spiffire crash. Prooerties in the high street have started to decorate their windows: the first being the Tutti-pole. The Swing dance is being promoted, and the new poster will be sent to the press. A host is required for the representative from the US embassy who will attend the stone unveiling.
- FC202400111 Receive any reports** (no more than 3 minutes per report which cannot contain any proposals). Cllr Cole attended the West Berks Heritage Forum meeting this week which discusses listing of buildings and blue plaques etc. He promised to manage reassessment of conservation areas. Those recently assessed have much more weight in NDPs. Hungerford’s current boundary has been extended and is defined. Cllrs Cole and Fyfe previously received training and were waiting for WBC to produce a consultant to assist with the large amount of work involved. Unfortunately, WBC can’t commit as they have no staff at present. Cllr Cole suggested a joint proposal of parishes working with WBC may be worth investigating as local knowledge is of particular value. He would not be suggesting that we take on any legal costs. It is of interest that Section 215 of the Town & Country Planning Act allows notice to be served if a building is harmful to the area.
- ACTION:** Cllr Cole will find out exactly what would be devolved to parishes and will report back.
- Cllr Fyfe reported he had received a copy of the last ROSPA report, dated March, from WBC for the Ramsbury Play Park and he will forward this to the office. Support was voiced for HTC to carry out an independent ROSPA inspection at an indicated cost of £150. Cllr Fyfe would attend.

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.

FC202400112 Review charging process for Triangle Field premises

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Request more detail on costs being incurred by RFC and the suggested reduction.

Meeting closed 9.10pm

POLICE UPDATE May & June 2024

Laura Farris MP hosted a local Crime meeting at Herongate at the end of April which was attended by Sgt Lond and members of the team.

The team recently joined colleagues from Wiltshire Police for a late night rural operation to deter and detect those committing rural crime.

We have also been raising awareness and supporting the national campaign Operation Sceptre focusing on engagement and prevention of serious violence and knife crime. We took our mobile knife arch to Hungerford Railway Station and spoke with commuters.

Jo and Lee have held HYS events at Lancaster Park and in our surrounding rural hard to reach areas. All of which have seen a good attendance. We are now counting down to the D-Day events as well as the Young Farmers event at Newbury Showground where we will have a stand.

We said goodbye to PCSO Sarah PRESTON, who covered the Downlands side of the area. She has left Thames Valley Police onto a new challenge in a safeguarding role at a school.

4 reports of Anti-social behaviour
4 Criminal damage
1 Shoplifting
3 Theft
3 Burglary all of which have been businesses.

43240195789 relates to an attempt break in at Hungerford Jewellers in the early hours of the 29th April. Damage was caused to the store front but no entry was gained. If you have any information that might help the investigation please contact us quoting the above crime number.

The Team

The current set up of the Hungerford and Downlands Neighbourhood Police Team is 1 x Inspector, 1 x Sergeant, 3 x Police Constables and 4 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 is address is below –

HungerfordandDownlandsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

And finally please keep reporting incidents to us via 101, the TVP website (www.thamesvalley.police.uk) or 999, in an emergency.

Report from Youth & Community Centre

Hello everyone, thank you for having me, it's a pleasure to tell you about how things are going at the youth centre, I won't be long I promise!

Some of you have been town councillors for a long time and will remember how it came about that the youth centre is now run by the community. For those who don't, the youth centre was built in 1970, back then it was set up as a West Berkshire project, fully staffed and linked to the school. Youth workers supported young people at the centre and also around town, they also covered Lambourn. They did detached work, which is when you go out to where young people are likely to hang out, and engage with them with the idea of helping them make better choices.

Ultimately, the aim is to prevent a young person from becoming involved in criminal activity by being a wise adult whom they trust. Of course, there are wise adults at school, but often the young people who are at risk of going down the wrong path are the same who have lost faith in schools and their staff, sometimes the schools have lost faith in them.

In 2012, following the financial crisis of 2009, all funding was cut, West Berkshire planned to close the youth centre and all its services. That's when the Hungerford Town Council stepped in, and alongside the Town and Manor of Hungerford and Greenham Trust, funding was found to ensure the youth centre building would stay open. The management of the youth centre, as well as running youth club sessions would be done by volunteers. At the time, youth club was called the wired rock café, the band practised, and the others hung out and listened. But it soon became obvious that running a youth centre is an enormous amount of work, and the youth club was so popular they had 100 children turn up! So they split the session into two sessions, but then the volunteers were doing even more!

Over the past 7 years that I have been at the youth centre, we have built up a small team of part time staff. They are all local and fully dedicated to the youth centre thriving and to young people receiving as much support as possible and having access to as many opportunities as possible. In order to do this, we have raised funds from many other organisations, the largest being the National Lottery Fund, who have committed to funding 50% of our youth project for 8 years. We still rely heavily on volunteers, as each session has one member of staff and four adult volunteers.

From running one youth night/week, we now run five, including one for SEN kids, and I can't stress enough how invaluable this session is for young people in our town. If you have a child with additional needs, finding places which are adapted to your child is tricky; our youth session gives those children the opportunity to socialise in an environment where they are not 'different', it is of enormous value to the children and their families.

We run a session for home educated children. For this group, having a place to meet other young people like themselves is really important. Often, they have ended up out of school due to anxiety or other mental health issues, so we provide a friendly, flexible space where they can socialise and make friends.

We also run several sessions for mainstream children, they are fun and local and cheap – the children pay £1 on the door – and are extremely well attended. The kids love their youth club!

And we're really starting to see HYCC fulfil its potential now: this was always a long-term project; we knew the benefit would not become apparent immediately. It was always about young people starting with us from primary school so that we would know them and work with them as they go transition to secondary school, where behaviour issues can become more problematic, and our advice and support becomes even more useful. That's starting to happen, and it feels like we're truly offering a strong and precious youth service to the families in Hungerford.

Finally, we're working on a couple of new things:

- Youth forum – a group of young people who represent the different clubs at HYCC, their job will be to feedback to the staff, volunteers and trustees on how they think the youth sessions should run. Also on any improvements to the facilities; they might be able to conduct their own fundraising project for a particular piece of equipment or building improvements. We'd like them to collaborate with the Town Council at some point, maybe next year they can come and do this presentation for you!
- The National Youth Agency is an organisation which regulates youth work in the UK – we have been working for a while now towards becoming accredited with them. In part because it will show that we are a serious organisation which can be trusted by parents and other organisations, but also because it has been a useful exercise for us to reach the next rung on the ladder from delivering tiny youth services to delivering medium youth services.

Hungerford is a great town to grow up in, it's a nice size – not too small and not too big, the countryside is beautiful. But mostly, it's thanks to its people, who are always looking for ways to make it a better place to live and grow up.

So thank you to you guys for choosing to spend a considerable amount of the Town Council's budget on the youth centre, it's good to be in partnership with you. The youth centre is always looking to do more for young people and the community, it's an amazing facility and we're very lucky to have it in our town.

MAYORS REPORT JUNE 2024

Town Band Concert

I was delighted to attend the Town Band's recent concert held in the Corn exchange. This year's concert was themed around movies. The concert was well attended, and the band played exceptionally well. James and Sandy's duo was the highlight for me. Congratulations to musical director Tim Crouter.

Walk -around.

Cllr Fyfe, Cllr Gaines, and I drove around sites in Hungerford which, Cllr Fyfe had identified as requiring some attention by WBC/Sovereign. There are many garage blocks within the town which are looking tired and in need of repairs. Cllr Gaines has noted the challenges and will report back to WBC. Whilst talking to a Sovereign representative, they mentioned another block of garages was flagged to them by a local resident. There will now be a visit at this location by Sovereign, I will feedback any actions.

Following on from Cllr Fyfe's observations of the play park in Ramsbury Drive, and the recent social media posts about the length of the grass in the park and surrounding areas. HTC has made direct contact with WBC. I am also aware residents contacted the MP to discuss these concerns on her recent surgery. WBC admitted the site had missed the last grass cut and have agreed this will be done by July. I personally find this unacceptable as the grass is already at shin height. Parents are concerned about ticks being present in the long grass. I think it's a real shame this lovely green space which families (without gardens) have enjoyed previously, is currently now lost to our community. Cllr Reeves has a meeting with WBC's countryside manager to discuss areas being missed by contractors.

The play equipment (although, we've been assured the park is safe and has passed recent ROSPA inspections) is looking extremely unloved. I contacted WBC directly and they have agreed to undertake minor repairs shortly. If parents remain concerned, I urge them to report using the report a problem page.

Chestnut walk

When speaking with a Sovereign contact last week. They informed me that the delay on the new housing development at Chestnut Walk, was not due to them. They said that matters were in the hands of West Berks Council's legal team.

EV fast charging stations

Despite many reassurances that our rapid EV charges would be installed as a priority in Hungerford, we appear to be no further forward. Does it/should it really take this long? I am finding it increasingly embarrassing to still be having this conversation five years on.

Chain reception.

In the Chairs absence I was asked to deliver a welcome speech and to express thanks to all the members of the Chain family. The charity continues to go from strength to strength. It was a pleasure to welcome everyone and enjoy a lovely afternoon tea with all the volunteers.

New Civic Year

HTC has now voted in all the committee chairs and deputies for the civic year. I look forward to working alongside all councillors throughout the year. Thank you for your continued commitment to HTC and the community.

D Day 80

On the 6th June at 8am the Bellman will read the proclamation from the town hall steps alongside Constable Julie Lloyd and Deputy Mayor James Cole.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 3RD JUNE 2024 MONTH 2 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR MAY 2024

101 FINANCE:

The first Precept instalment of £183,515 has been received.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £13,917 positive variance. Unbudgeted £4,088 has been received from the Good Exchange for the D. Day budget. Insurance & Subscriptions budgets of £6,850 will be paid next month.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

No Expenditure this month.

104 POOL HOUSE:

On budget.

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 £1,778 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

No Expenditure this month.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £969 positive variance.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,065 positive variance.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

No Expenditure this month.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,008 positive variance, 2 months' rent as the HRFC rent was late last month.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

No Expenditure this month.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,946 positive variance. The Church Street Toilets cost was water only this month.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £228 positive variance.

May's Net Income over Expenditure is a £22,292 positive variance.

Claire Winser
Chair of F&GP

June 2024 Update on Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)

01/06/24

Very Slow progress this month:

- Reg 14 Consultation completed but not had all comments back from West Berks yet...awaiting highways and drainage, although good full response on everything else.
- The programme below is struggling. Several activities our out of our control which will mean that mid 2025 likely for adoption.
- Had a discussion with West Berks, but problem of the Local Plan Examination going on.
- Key next actions are:
 - Complete the Consultation comments and draw up potential changes based on these.
 - Update plan and submit to West Berks for Reg 16 Consultation.

Neighbourhood Plan Programme					DRAFT																				
Ref:	Activity	No of Weeks	Start date	End date	2024												2025								
					Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar					
1	Review by Cttee & Council Consultations	14 weeks	18/09/23	08/01/24	■																				
2	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	8 weeks	11/12/23	16/02/24	■	■	■																		
3	Publish Draft for Consultation (Rule 14)	6 weeks	16/02/24	29/03/24			■	■																	
4	Update Plan following consultation	2 weeks	04/04/24	12/04/24					■																
5	Submit to WBC prepare for Reg 16 Consult	4 weeks	12/04/24	10/05/24					■	■															
6	2nd Consultation (Reg 16) (carried out by WBC)	6 weeks	10/06/24	22/07/24							■	■													
7	Finalise Plan and prepare for Examination	8 weeks	24/06/24	23/08/24								■	■	■											
8	Examination	1 week	02/09/24	06/09/24														■							
9	Inspectors Report Preparation	6 weeks	09/09/24	18/10/24															■	■					
10	Moifications	2 weeks	21/10/23	01/11/24																■	■				
11	Prepare and carry out Referendum	8 weeks	04/11/24	27/12/24																	■	■	■		
12	NP comes into force	2 weeks	30/12/24	10/01/25																				■	

key on colour coding: ■ completed ■ future activity ■ activity involving public