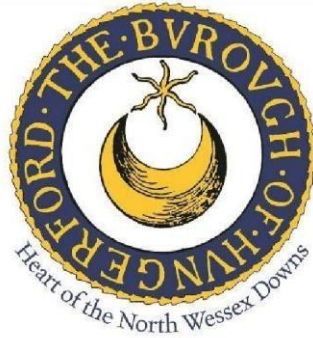


# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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**DRAFT MINUTES** of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

**Present:** Cllrs, Simpson, Fyfe, Keates, Cole, Knight, Coulthurst, Reeves, Alford, Hudson, Carlson and Armstrong.

**Also present:** Representatives from Penny Post, the Adviser and Newbury News. Several members of the public including representatives from local businesses, District Cllr Denise Gaines (DG) from West Berks Council (WBC) and a prospective new councillor.

**In attendance:** Town Clerk, (TC).

**A member of public** put the following question to Town Council (HTC). "The High Street Steering Group are planning to lose 4 prime parking spaces (please see their March 2024 minutes). This plan is still the plan that the Steering Group are staying with. Are the Councillors prepared to lose these valuable parking spaces in the town as I know overwhelmingly, the traders do not support this?"

The Mayor responded advising that the steering group had made no decisions, and they are currently voting on ideas. No options have been looked at in detail and formal plans would need to go through consultation before any are progressed. It was explained a consultation carried out by WBC produced a list of 10 objectives from the public that could be explored when funding became available and chances of that at present are slim. Councillors suggested that wider involvement from representatives of the town is required, and more flexibility is needed to consider views. HTC hears the traders concern and realises nobody wants to lose any car parking. It was confirmed that the Group will not be going ahead with Cllr Fyfe's proposed options. It was noted that WBC has pulled funding and if a conclusion can't be reached on the way forward it may be an entirely different approach is taken. HTC confirmed it will work hard to ensure everyone's interest is considered.

**Representative from RBFRS:** A presentation was given by the station manager. **(Refer to attached presentation slides)** He is in charge of all the on-call stations in Berkshire. Currently they are running a recruitment drive. There have been a couple of fire deaths in Hungerford recently and they are in desperate need of fire fighters, young and old, to increase the service provided by the Hungerford station. They are also developing their existing fire fighters. RBFRS provide free safe and well visits for residents at risk and can provide smoke alarms/detectors and other supplies. They offer educational sessions, can provide protection against arson and their fire officers can check public buildings are safe.

**Questions were asked and responded to as follows:**

*How many retained firefighters do we have in Hungerford?* 12 people providing evening cover. Daytime cover is needed, and they wish coverage currently at 50% to increase to 70/80%. From 1<sup>st</sup> Jan the requirement in hours per fire fighter can reduce to 30hrs and pay is provided for hours, training and a retainer. Our help is needed with recruiting to increase the numbers in Hungerford to an ideal 16-18 people. A fire call would require 6 on the engine. They are looking to repurpose their 4x4 ranger to use it for flood emergencies through the winter.

*Will RBFRS rescue cats?* First, contact the RSPCA and if after 24hours the issue is not resolved the fire service will help. Cats normally come down by themselves.

*If there is a 999 call in the High St how long is the response time?* It is 6 minutes turning time but usually takes 3 to 4 minutes if service is available locally. If not the service is reliant on Newbury to respond which is a 90 second turning time which usually takes 75 seconds but that will increase to 10 minutes including the travel time. The recent fire death happened when the appliance had to come from Newbury

*Do you cover the M4 as well? Yes.*

*Are they struggling for space in the Hungerford Station? Yes they are and the Police want extra room also. Unfortunately developing the station is years away.*

DG entered.

**FC202400177 Note apologies for absence.** Cllrs Montgomery and Winsor  
Apologies also from, District Cllr Dennis Benneyworth (DB)

**FC202400178 Declarations of interest – Cllr Knight (Hub)**

**FC202400179 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and outcome of actions**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Cole

**Resolution:** Minutes of the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024 were agreed as a true record subject to an amendment to change item FC202400170 Conservation area - Update to read 'Cllr Cole advised there has been some progress and they will, over the winter, start to put the paperwork together. Also to amend item FC202400173 to note purple socks will not be available from the Curve.

**Outcome of actions:**

DG advised SEN school transport is difficult. WBC don't have facilities locally, so the cost of taxis is incurred to meet the legal need, which can be £1000s per child often including overnight stays with chaperones. This and adult social care are a huge part of WBC's budget. The service needs to be brought closer. It was questioned if the local private SEN schools could be developed to cater. DG advised houses would need to be built to access developers funding.

DG confirmed only the draft parking strategy is available on the WBC website.

Calvin from WBC and representatives from Veolia and Veolia industrial carried out a site meeting to look at cleaning all the York stone in the High Street. WBC are waiting a quote for a small patch to be cleaned to check the method is effective, before a quote is obtained for the full works. Costs need to be approved by WBC.

**ACTION** Clerk to keep DG informed and DCs to chase progress with costs for cleaning High St footway.

Cllr Simpson received an email from Charnham Park about their progress with trimming trees which should be complete by the end of November.

Cllr Coulthurst gave an update on Swings & Smiles. 109 High Street has offered to promote the sale of purple socks. Unfortunately, the Curve can't help but the Arcade is and others have been asked.

**ACTION** Cllr Armstrong reported the tarmac as well as the cobbles at the bottom of school alley needs repair. She will forward photos.

The WBC waste consultation has been responded to. It was queried if the green bins should be seasonal. DG advised this had been considered however evidence shows they are used all year around.

**ACTION** If you can volunteer as a marshal for the Remembrance Parade please contact Cllr Keates or D Loft.

**FC202400180 Receive Mayor's Report - See attached report.**

**FC202400181 Receive District Councillor's Reports –** DG advised the WBC budget consultation is going out on 11<sup>th</sup> Nov. The Housing Support Fund, a government grant given to WBC, of £700K, is available again. It is to help general public in need but some is ringfenced for free school meals, older people and carers. DG has leaflets and details are also on the WBC website. The last Housing Support Fund available over the summer was exhausted within 4 months.

DG was pleased that Hungerford was successful in obtaining CIL bids for the Wetlands Project (£100K) and Croft Hall (£67K).

On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> Nov there will be a cost-of-living district community forum in Hungerford at 6.30pm in the Town hall. It will also cover flood prevention and community initiatives.

The CEO of WBC is leaving, and they are looking to appoint an interim soon. The position will then be filled externally.

DG advised there are still plans afoot for the development at Chestnut Walk. It will not be a joint venture, still affordable, but with a more imaginative use of the area. That is all she can say at present. DG is horrified at the amount of people in hotels and hostels, and some have children. WBC are looking at a whole lot of housing possibilities and have met with CCB and housing associations. She advised there has been a huge response to the Waste Management Consultation. An increased cost doesn't stop people recycling.

**FC202400182 Soil conditioner giveaway – Request for a facility closer to Hungerford.** At the District Parish Conference the Mayor asked if the soil conditioner could be made available closer to Hungerford. It is currently only in Padworth. WBC were open to suggestions of locations. Marsh Lane Allotments are happy to receive some. Other locations near Hungerford were suggested.

**ACTION:** Agree suitable location and advise WBC.

**FC202400183 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns.** Network Rail recently were delivering track using a 60ft flatbed trailer plus cab and got stuck in Hungerford High Street. There is a concern about a return visit. Details of this are being requested.

**ACTION:** Suggest to WBC Highways that the corner at the Plume should be made a no left turn for trucks.

**FC202400184 Propose authorisation of payment run** (circulated along with copies of invoices) for October.

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Fyfe

**Resolution:** Authorise payment run of £28,533.31 for October.

**FC202400185 Propose year to date accounts –** Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report. Note: All committees will consider their budgets this month ahead of F&GP budget meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Proposed:** Cllr Knight

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**Resolution:** Agree year to date accounts, with a positive variance of £52,430.

**FC202400186 Note external audit – refer to auditor's report.** This was noted and thanks were expressed to the RFO and Clerk.

**FC202400187 Consider annual grant request for the Hub –** Cllr Knight read through his presentation. **See attached.** He advised the Curve makes £200 a month and the rest of the income is from hire fees to groups and from grants. The current working arrangement benefits all, saving money for HTC and allowing residents to make the most of the library service. However, inflation has impacted, and the Hub employs 2 members of staff which they struggle to pay, hence the larger grant request for next year. The solar panels, once they are installed in 2025, will help reduce the electricity costs. DG added that the Hub set up is held in very high regard by WBC and is an exemplary example.

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Support the Hub with an annual grant donation of £10,500 for 2025-2026. One abstention (Cllr Knight).

It would be the Hub's intention not to increase the donation request next year.

**FC202400188 Conservation area –** Cllr Cole advised there is no update to report.

**FC202400189 Consider quotation for additional flower tubs in high street, to be placed to stop people parking on the footway -** Cllrs Keates confirmed 2 wooden tubs are in place and are doing the job in the interim. A quotation for 2 concrete planters has been received at a cost of £1480 but we are waiting to see if we can improve on this price. The importance of visibility of children close to road traffic was raised. Care is needed when placing any large items on the footway.

**ACTION:** Review the use of the bay outside Dods. Can this be used as a loading bay?

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Clerk to apply for a member's bid for the tubs and any planting/compost required.

**FC202400190 Remembrance Day Parade – A call for veterans and current members of armed forces to take part in the parade on Sunday.**

**ACTION:** Councillors were requested to attend on Remembrance Sunday and at the service on Monday if possible.

**FC202400191 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report which cannot contain any proposals).** Cllr Hudson confirmed that all documents have been submitted to WBC for the Regulation 16 Consultation which will be a 6 week consultation. All responses to this will go to the Inspector and a referendum should take place in the spring. A round of applause took place to thank Cllr Hudson for all his work on the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan. Installation of Christmas trees in the high street has begun.

**Meeting closed 8.55pm**


**RBFRS Presentation**



**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

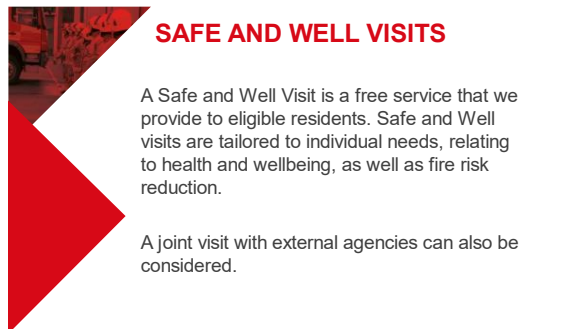
Service Provisions Presentation

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 RoyalBerksFRS   
  RoyalBerkshireFire  
 Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service



**RBFRS SERVICE PROVISIONS**

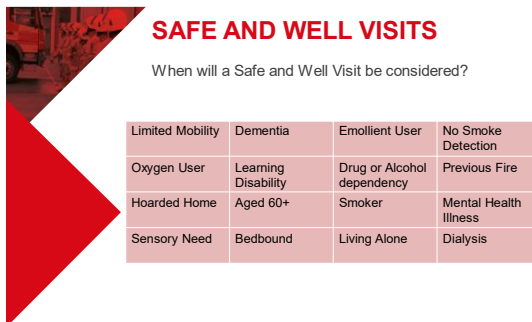
- Safe and Well Visits
- ARP (Adults at Risk Programme)
- Threat/Risk of Arson Safe and Well Visits
- Protection (Fire Safety Inspections)



**SAFE AND WELL VISITS**

A Safe and Well Visit is a free service that we provide to eligible residents. Safe and Well visits are tailored to individual needs, relating to health and wellbeing, as well as fire risk reduction.

A joint visit with external agencies can also be considered.



**SAFE AND WELL VISITS**

When will a Safe and Well Visit be considered?

Limited Mobility	Dementia	Emollient User	No Smoke Detection
Oxygen User	Learning Disability	Drug or Alcohol dependency	Previous Fire
Hoarded Home	Aged 60+	Smoker	Mental Health Illness
Sensory Need	Bedbound	Living Alone	Dialysis



**SAFE AND WELL VISITS**

**During the visit, we will:**

- Ask a series of fire risk assessment questions
- Check each room of your property to identify any potential hazards
- Check that you have working smoke alarms on each level of your home and where appropriate, fit free ten -year smoke alarms
- Provide fire safety advice and show you how to test your smoke alarms
- Work with you to create an escape plan for you and your family
- Provide advice, signpost or refer you to our partner agencies that can support you with health or wellbeing needs.



**SAFE AND WELL VISITS**

 10 year battery smoke alarms  
 Fire Retardant throws, bedding & pyjamas  
 Hard of Hearing alarms  
 Flame Retardant Spray

## ARP

- The Adults at Risk Programme (ARP) is a free educational session aimed at professionals who work with vulnerable people in the community.
- The sessions provide an understanding of how to prevent emergencies and what resources are available to you from RBFRS.
- An ARP session will help you develop care plans for looking after people with disabilities or other needs who are at greater risk of fire.

## ARP

ARP training sessions cover-

The Service Provisions RBFRS provide

Fire Safety in the home and who is more at risk

The protection measures & additional equipment that's available

Understanding responsibilities regarding Regulation 28

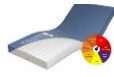
How and when to make a referral to RBFRS

The risks faced by people with disabilities or other needs

## ARP

### Regulation 28-

The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 allows a coroner to issue a Regulation 28 Report to an individual, organisations, local authorities or government departments and their agencies where the coroner believes that action should be taken to prevent further deaths.



## THREAT/RISK OF ARSON SAFE AND WELL VISIT

A Threat/Risk of Arson Safe and Well Visit is offered to any of the following-

- Anyone that has received a direct threat of arson
- Anyone that's been the victim of an arson attack
- Anyone deemed to be at risk of arson (Domestic Abuse)

Pre Visit -



We will acknowledge your referral and attempt to contact the victim straight away.



The address will be flagged with Thames Valley Fire Control Service.



We aim to visit within 48 hours, where possible.



We'll inform you once a visit has been arranged.

## THREAT/RISK OF ARSON SAFE AND WELL VISIT

The purpose of a Threat of Arson Safe and Well Visit is to provide enhanced fire safety precautions to a domestic property using number of risk specific measures and to provide extensive fire safety advice to the occupants.



Fitting an Arson Proof Letterbox where necessary.



External Security Advice.



Additional Smoke Alarms Fitted - particular emphasis to external doors.



Formulating a bespoke fire escape plan.



Fire Retardant spray applied to carpets, door mats and curtains.

## THREAT/RISK OF ARSON SAFE AND WELL VISIT

- A Safeguarding Referral will be completed post visit, detailing the preventative measures that have been put in place and any further concerns disclosed by the occupant
- This referral will be signposted back to the referrer
- Details of how to make a Threat of Arson Referral will be emailed along with the referral form.

## PROTECTION

Our Fire Safety teams can advise on whether all fire safety regulations are in place or what to do if this is not the case for any public building or block of flats.

These are some of the key areas Fire Safety Inspection Officers will look at during an inspection-

- That a competent Fire Risk Assessor has carried out a fire risk assessment of the premises
- Compartmentation between flats, common areas and between corridors and stairs
- That stairwells are maintained
- Means of escape - stay put policy or a designated evacuation plan
- That there is a maintained and tested alarm system
- That fire doors are in good condition and maintained
- What type of cladding system is on the building

THANK YOU

ANY QUESTIONS

## Mayors report November 2024

### Mayors Report November 2024

#### Opening of the Judiciary Reading Minster

Cllr Knight attended this annual event with me. The chain gang come together alongside the Lord-Lieutenant and the High Sheriff of Berkshire to mark the opening of the judiciary year. This event is always very well attended and highlights the work of the justice system.

#### Purple Socks Campaign -Supporting the UN Day of disability

Supporting local charity Swings and Smiles, we met with a local retailer to launch the campaign in Hungerford. Thank you to the Hungerford Arcade and Hungerford Adviser who are stocking a selection of socks to sell in aid of

the charity. Hopefully more retailers will get involved to raise the profile of the needs of disabled people. Let's turn Hungerford purple on 3<sup>rd</sup> December

### **Meeting- Rev Mike Saunders – what can we do to help**

James, Stella, Mike and I met to discuss hardship within the local area. We are trying to reach people that may not be obvious within the community, who could use a little support. It was decided that local school headteachers, alongside the foodbank may help to identify local need. It was decided that small hampers with a few Christmas treats might be a way of helping when funds are stretched at this time of year. Some other ideas were: New baby hamper, basics hamper, new house essentials. St Lawrence's will be the base for on-going support. Please ask Cllr Coulthurst for further information if you would like to support.

### **UN Day**

I attended an event organised by Graeme Panting alongside MP Lee Dillon and the Newbury Town Mayor. The event was organised to mark the work of the United Nations. Several speeches were read to mark the vital work carried out by the UN. There was a profound speech which highlighted the song written by Michael Jackson called 'Man in the Mirror' it was noted that we can all look in the mirror and decide to make a change.

### **Poppy Appeal Concert – Hungerford Town Band**

I attended the concert held at St Lawrence's church alongside the Constable. The concert was held to raise money for the Poppy Appeal and Hungerford Town Band. The band were exceptional (as always), we were spoilt with a 10-minute medley of essential Elton John and the band did this music legend total justice. Congratulations Hungerford Town Band. The solo performances were exceptional.

### **Halloween Fancy Dress – Royal British Legion**

I was asked to attend a children's Halloween party at the RBL and to judge the best fancy dress costumes. I was delighted to see all the effort made with some amazing costumes and face painting. Well done to all those who turned up looking splendid. Four prizes were awarded for the best costumes and runners up. A big shout out to the legion committee who really pulled out the stops for this annual party. The event is paid for by the committee who really work hard to decorate and entertain the children. Well done team!

### **District Parish Conference**

Several councillors and the Town Clerk attended the conference at WBC. The meeting was well attended. Several speakers delivered presentations on and including the Library Service, Climate and Ecological Emergency, Berkshire Youth, Waste Management to name a few. There are many consultations that members of the public can complete if they'd like their viewpoint heard and recorded. All WBC consultations can be found here [\[LINK\]](#).

Devolution - Parish & Town Councils paying for increased services, which are delivered by WBC, were discussed. Supporting WBC to provide additional services like: Dog Poo Bins, Waste Bins. Gully Clearing, Street sign cleaning to name a few. More discussions alongside careful budget planning will be needed before HTC would/could consider supporting.

### **REME meeting – Planning Remembrance Sunday**

Details have been finalised and Hungerford will come together on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November in remembrance and to honour those who served and lost their lives serving.

If you would like to walk with the veterans, please meet outside the Town Hall at 10.30am

Cllr Helen Simpson

## MONTH 7 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2024

### **101 FINANCE:**

£183,515 received this month, balance of annual precept.

### **102 ADMINISTRATION:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £8,009 positive variance. Salaries of £5,664 have not been included this month.

### **103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:**

No Expenditure this month.

### **104 POOL HOUSE:**

Net Income over Expenditure is 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 £772 positive variance. The £824 income was for a bench purchased by a resident.

### **202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:**

Net Expenditure is a £31 positive variance this month.

### **203 ST SAVIOURS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £95 positive variance.

### **204 CROFT FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £315 negative variance. Rental Income of £531 not recorded this month.

### **205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £120 positive variance this month.

### **206 TRIANGLE FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is an £521 negative variance this month, additional perimeter work completed.

### **301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:**

No Income or Expenditure recorded this month.

### **302 HIGHWAYS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £4,165 positive variance. Town & Manor contributed £442 to the Dog Bin collections.

### **303 CCTV:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £189 positive variance.

October's Net Income over Expenditure is an £11,973 positive variance.

The Year to Date Net Income over Expenditure is a £52,430 positive variance.

Claire Winser

Chair of F&GP

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

