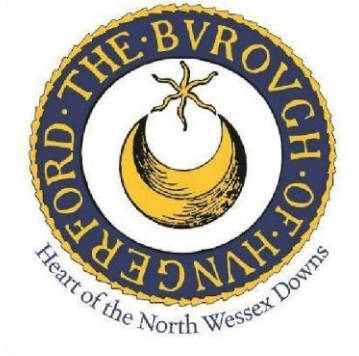


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Cllr Simpson
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

DRAFT MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 2nd April 2024 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

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

Also present: Representatives from Penny Post and Newbury News and a member of public. District Cllrs Tony Vickers (TV), Denise Gaines (DG) from West Berks Council (WBC).

In attendance: Town Clerk, (TC)

Police Report: A report was circulated to Councillors after the meeting (**see attached report**).

FC20240060 Note apologies for absence. Cllrs Winsor, Cusack.
Apologies from, Dennis Benneyworth (DB).

FC20240061 Declarations of interest – None.

FC20240062 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 4th March 2024, and outcome of actions.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Minutes of 4th March 2024 were agreed as a true record. One abstention.

The following update was received from DB on Chestnut Walk:

At present Sovereign on behalf of the Joint venture are about to commence the tender exercise. Once the actual tender price is confirmed this will enable a revised financial assessment to be undertaken, including a prospective indicative offer to the Council.

Questions were asked on how quickly the tender responses will be processed, if it is a public tender and if the project could be cancelled if not cost effective. The answers were unknown.

DG advised it would be a 13 week tender exercise, WBC are contributing the land and S106

money and Sovereign are carrying out the tender. She has asked for a meeting to gain further insight.

ACTION: Add Chestnut Walk to July Full Council agenda for update on progress from WBC.

ACTION: Clerk will forward the request sent to WBC for a grass cutting schedule of works, to DG to chase.

ACTION: Cllr Simpson to chase Nick Dale for improvement to the parking layby near the Burrough Arms.

Cllr Keates advised the Theatre Company do not have any technical equipment for the Hungerford's Got Talent event.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Moonraker for a quotation.

The Clerk has drafted a google application form for the event and the website page is ready to be populated.

Cllr Armstrong has invited the new Primary headteacher to a Full Council meeting and waits to hear back. Other actions are complete.

FC20240063 Co-opt a candidate to fill the existing councillor vacancy. A ballot vote was conducted, and Gordon Montgomery was elected. Gordon signed the Declaration of Acceptance Form and took his place at the table.

FC20240064 Receive Mayor's Report - See attached report. The Mayor added there are many activities in town with the up-coming Tutti Day.

FC20240065 Receive feedback from Annual Town Meeting. There were around 120 people in attendance and feedback has been positive. No questions were received during the question and answer session at the end. The Mayor thanked all that attended and added that the office had sent thank you letters to all the volunteers. DG added that WBC thought the meeting was impressive and was an example to other councils. Cllr Schlanker suggested we need to look at broadening our outreach.

FC20240066 Receive District Councillor's Reports – DG advised they are in purdah (pre-election period) and the following discussion/info is Council related and not political.
89% of families received their first choice of schools. There are 119 new affordable homes just been made available in Newbury. The empty home council tax charge is increasing by 100% for houses empty between 1 and 5 years, by 200% for houses empty between 5 and 10 years and by 300% for houses empty over 10 years. From 1st April 2025 second homes will be targeted. There is at least one uninhabitable house in Hungerford.
The Housing Support Grant last year for those in crisis was £1.3 million and was spent on free school meals and carers. This year it has only been issued for 6 months and the value is not known.
TV advised he is happy to take any questions on the Local Plan examination. The hearing sessions commence on the 8th May. A full set of responses to the inspector's questions is now on the WBC website.
There is a large increase in the amount of enforcement issues. A grant has been awarded to help all the back log to be determined before the end of June. The Planning department is being restructured and they will be gaining Debra Inston, (previously a conservation officer). Recruitment in planning is a struggle and is a nationwide problem.
WBC are suggesting focussing on flooding for the next community engagement. There were several properties in Hungerford that flooded in Bridge Street. Drainage clearance has stopped some of the problems reoccurring. Kintbury high street also flooded.
HTC was pleased that a volunteer came forward at the Town meeting interested in the role of Flood Warden.

ACTION: Cllr Schlanker to email DG advising of the Hungerford properties that flooded.

There are grants available of £5.5K per household for flooding.

ACTION: Cllr Armstrong to email DG details of the drain that is overflowing at the top of school alley.
Cllr Cole highlighted that rural roads that have no name (of which there are at least 25 in our area) can cause problems e.g. when reporting issues or processing planning applications.

FC20240067 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns. Cllr Schlanker advised the paving in the high street needs to be cleaned or grooved as it is slippery. There is a mis-match of cracked and broken slabs. (refer to the Mayor's report attached for details). Jon Winstanley (WBC) is very much in favour of Hungerford receiving York stone replacement slabs.
Cllr Schlanker raised the issue of the 31 remaining streetlights that WBC do not wish to adopt. They are in bad locations and in a poor state. We have been told it is our liability if we do not maintain them. TV advised it is part of the WBC plan to devolve anything it does not have a statutory requirement to maintain.

ACTION: Cllr Schlanker will email DG, via the office, about the Streetlights. It was queried which roads containing the streetlights are adopted.

Cllr Fyfe has conducted a survey of the Cuttings and WBC car park. There are a mixture of old lights and new, and some that need repair. He suggested that the whole lot should be done in one go.

ACTION: Cllr Fyfe to draft a letter to WBC responding to their email.

Cllrs Coulthurst and Simpson met with the MD of Bewley directly and were told landscaping would be done by the end of the year, and it isn't. The planting season is now finished. A letter requesting that West Berkshire Council take action over Bewley's failure to deliver the landscaping has been drafted. It is now a planning issue.

ACTION: Clerk to email the letter to the district councillors.

FC20240068 Receive any Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report). See attached Cllr Carlson advised his F&GP report (in the absence of Cllr Winsler) has been uploaded to the councillor shared documents.

FC20240069 Consider recommendation from R&A and office for instruction of works to replae skate park fencing (refer to report). *This item has been brought to Full Council due to the high cost (in line with our Financial regulations). Four quotations for fencing have been received.*

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Schlanker

ACTION: **Resolution:** Appoint contractor (Broadmead) to proceed with installing new fencing around the Skate Park at a cost of £17,408.74. Treework will be completed as soon as possible at a cost of £870 by Hungerford Tree Surgery. The total cost of the improvements are £21,343.74 which include installation of 80sm of grasscrete by Grassmats Ltd (£1,000) and installation of bonded resin to the eroding banks by Infinity Playgrounds (£2065).

ACTION: Office to advise Cllr Fyfe when the Grasscrete is to be fitted so he can meet the contractor on site.

FC20240070 Opening of Changing Places Facility – It was announced the the Changing Places Facility is now open and has been used for the first time today.

ACTION: An official ribbon cutting event with WBC will be arranged.

FC20240071 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for March. It was noted this includes a payment of almost £40k towards the leisure centre.

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Authorisation of payment run of £67,251.74 for March.

FC20240072 Propose Year to date accounts – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Schlanker

Resolution: Agree year to date accounts with a positive variance of £3,489.

FC20240073 Receive report from Neighbourhood Plan Project Team – Please see attached report Cllr Hudson added that a response had been received from WBC to Reg 14. Thanks were expressed to Laura (WBC) for this.

FC20240074 Receive report on Town Centre Strategy (TCS) – A new member (Ed Mills – a commoner) has joined the group. This is a WBC sponsored group and they wish to keep it fairly compact. The meeting is achieving some results with a project underway to improve the towpath from Hungerford to Newbury. The canal towpath has been walked and the first third is mud. There will be some crossover between the advisory group and Town Council where agreements need to be made. Cllr Cole advised predetermination is not allowed at WBC and this is a good rule to follow. He has met with the complainant (mentioned at March FC) and had a very constructive meeting. He thanked Marlborough Law for hosting the last meeting and confirmed the date of next meeting as 9th May.

FC20240075 Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals.

Cllr Keates advised Royal British Legion are making wreaths for the 80th Anniversary of D-Day and HTC will be laying one. If anyone in town wishes to donate to the RBL, please contact them.
Cllr Armstrong is speaking to Cllr Winser about the Hungerford's Got Talent event planned for July.

Meeting closed 8.20pm

POLICE UPDATE April 2024

March has been another quiet month crime wise for the town.

Jo and Lee along with Tracie, who is our Neighbourhood administrator attended the Annual Town Meeting on the 20th March. We had many visitors to our stand, asking lots of questions and seeking advice. We look forward to this yearly event as it is a great opportunity for us to engage with the Hungerford community.

For March

0 reports of Anti-social behaviour

2 Criminal damage

1 Theft

1 Burglary

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 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

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

MAYORS REPORT APRIL FULL COUNCIL 2024

Town Meeting

I was delighted to see another great turnout for the annual town meeting. It was good to have so many groups and organisations represented, giving residents a real opportunity to ask questions and speak to councillors in person. I believe we had around 120 residents in attendance. Thank you to staff & councillors for supporting the event and to all those who participated. I was surprised we didn't have any questions at the end of the evening, hopefully this means questions were answered throughout the evening's discussions.

Royal British Legion Women's section Tea Party

I was delighted to be invited to a gathering of the women's section, hosted at the Hungerford branch. This gave me the opportunity to donate the funds raised at the Mayor's Christmas carol concert. The group were thrilled with the donation and look forward to supporting the women's sections many activities over the coming year. Thank you for making me feel so welcome.

Poetry Competition

It has been nice to read many of the poems located within the library as part of the poetry festival. Well-done to all those who participated. What a very clever community, so full of talent.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Hungerford Neighbourhood plan pre-submission regulation 14 consultation and SEA (strategic environment assessment) has now closed. The data will now be looked at closely by the NDP team.

Steering Group Meeting

The group held another meeting to discuss projects to be considered within the steering group. At our next meeting we are looking at parking in more detail. Information has been requested from WBC to assist with our discussion.

Paving in the High Street

I know from the many discussions held with residents, paving on our high street has become a real concern. Many of you know our high street is paved in York Stone. Works completed by a contractor last year were sub-standard, the paving has not been replaced with York stone in parts, reinstating the paving on poor foundations has led to some of the paving to rock. Secondary to this, large delivery vehicles have been driving onto the paving causing the poorly laid paving to crack. WBC is aware and have/will be addressing. WBC council needed to fill some urgent areas with tarmac (easier to remove when correct paving is available). The contractor is finding it difficult to source the York stone, they were looking to compromise and install concrete slabs. I think it's important to ensure our town paving looks as it did before it was poorly reinstated/damaged by vehicles. WBC service director Jon Winstanley agrees, Jon has given me reassurances the towns paving will be completed in York stone and will assist in considering measures to stop vehicles from driving onto the pavements for deliveries in future.

Charnham Park

This week I met with Business and facilities executive manager for Charnham Park, Mark Ransom. Mark has recently been promoted into his role and has been appointed to manage the day-to-day activities within Charnham Park. Aware the site has been a little neglected over time, Mark is looking to bring the park back to its former glory. Works planned include management of the many trees (sadly some have signs of ash die back and will need to be felled). Mark is looking to bring the canopy down to recommended legal height. All signage at the entrance of the park will be deep cleaned along with other signage throughout the park. Reinstatement of the circles at each of the openings to the roads. The works will take place as the growing season allows. Mark is also speaking to WBC about lowering the speed limit to 20mph throughout the business park. There are some bigger more community-based projects being considered within the site; these are in the very early stages and couldn't be discussed yet. Thank you for your time, HTC look forward to seeing the improvements at this important gateway to the town.

Garry Poulson Retirement

I was delighted to be invited to Garry's retirement party hosted in Newbury. It was nice to see so many people attending to say a personal thank you to Garry, for 25 years dedicated to the West Berks volunteer centre. HTC send our warmest regards to Garry, we wish him a long, and healthy retirement. We would also like to offer our congratulations to Rachel Peters who has become the new chief executive.

Term ending

This is the last full council meeting before May. I would like to thank all the 2023-24 Chain gang for their warmth, friendship, and guidance throughout the year. We've attended some wonderful events and celebrations within our communities. It was a pleasure sharing the year with you.

Finally

I would like to wish my deputy, Claire a speedy recovery. Get well soon Claire.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 2 April 2024
MONTH 12 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR March 2024

101 FINANCE:

100% of the Precept has been received. Negative variance £236.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,475 negative variance.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

Net Expenditure £7,778 negative variance. Contribution for Leisure Centre higher than budgeted.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £65 positive 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 £4,810 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

Net Expenditure was a £41 positive variance this month.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £147 negative variance.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £564 positive variance.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

Net Expenditure is a £363 negative variance this month.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £45 negative variance.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £729 28 negative variance this month.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £7,735 positive variance.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £153 negative variance.

March's Net Income over Expenditure is a £3,489 positive variance.

Keith Carlson,
Deputy Chair of F&GP,
2 April 2024

April 2024 Update on Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)

28/03/24

Good progress this month:

- Reg 14 Consultation completed on Draft Plan & SEA. Wide consultation: Online, Direct emails, Library & Town Meeting and front page of the Adviser.
- The programme below is similar to last month so on track...just. Several activities are out of our control which will mean that 2025 is likely for adoption.
- West Berks have resource problems due to the Local Plan and may be late commenting on our Plan. We also rely on them for the Reg 16 Consultation.
- Key next actions are:
 - Analyse 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												2024			2025		
Ref:	Activity	No of Weeks	Start date	End date	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	13/05/24	21/06/24						■	■	■									
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