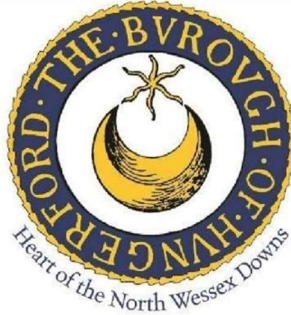


# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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**MINUTES** of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

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

**Also present:** Representatives from Penny Post, the Adviser, PCSO Jo King and Sgt Dan Lond. District Cllr Dennis Benneyworth (DB) from West Berks Council (WBC)

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

**Police report. (refer to our website for the full report).** The Police were present to answer any questions. It was noted there were two incidents over Christmas at Prospect Road which the Police attended and there has been some drug dealing on Fairview Road. One Stop has CCTV. There have also been problems at a property at Lancaster Park. The Mayor advised that the Police work really hard to obtain evidence for each case but sometimes the Crown Prosecution Service do not pursue it. Public are requested not to share Ring footage of incidents on social media as this can be prejudicial to the case. Please instead forward footage to the police.

The Mayor has escalated Council's concern that central government cuts will result in the loss of our local Sergeant (**refer to the Mayor's report attached for full details**).

DB highlighted that anti-social parking is occurring in the high street with delivery vans parking on the zig zag lines of the pedestrian crossing. It was advised that dialogue is underway concerning this. It is a motoring offence which can incur 3 penalty points.

In response to Cllr Alford's request the Police confirmed they would be happy to visit and talk to the Youth Club.

**FC20250015 Note apologies for absence.** Cllrs Montgomery and Winser  
Apologies also from, District Cllrs Denise Gaines (DG) and Vickers (TV) from West Berks Council

**FC20250016 Declarations of interest – None**  
Cllr Coulthurst entered.

**FC20250017 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and outcome of actions**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**Resolution:** Minutes of the meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were agreed as a true record, two abstentions.

**Outcome of actions:**

**ACTION:** Clerk continues to chase WBC to carry out cleaning of High St footway. There has also been a report of the public footway over the canal bridge being icy.

Amendments to several policies following the dissolving of the staff committee have been drafted and will be taken to F&GP for review.

The road works to Salisbury Rd took place on two Sundays and didn't cause a problem.

Other actions are complete or on the agenda.

**FC20250018** Receive Mayor's Report - See attached report.

**FC20250019** Receive District Councillor's Reports – DB advised contractors have been working at Station Car Park today fixing the camera and barrier. Cllr Hudson advised we are waiting for another scheme to come forward from WBC reference safety at The Croft. He also asked for WBC's support for the petition to reduce the speed limit to 30mph at Sanham Green and Horn Hill. DB will attend the speed review meeting if he can. Ward members can make representations. It was commented that the 'Report a problem' facility on the West Berks Council website is excellent but not enough people know about it. It was questioned if data can be pulled from the system to look at how often repairs are done; in particular potholes, such as the one by John O Gaunt pub which has been repaired several times.

**ACTION:** DB will investigate the above.

The Clerk flagged up that we have received complaints about the lack of maintenance at the Sovereign properties, Redwood House and Lindley Lodge. DB added that he has reported the dropped bollard there is not working. He will come in the office tomorrow to discuss these matters.

**FC20250020** Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns. The trees have been cut back at Bridge St war memorial gardens. Several items of concern brought to our attention by Smarten Up Hungerford were addressed at H&T. Cllr Fyfe has fed back to WBC about the loose bricks at the station car park.

**ACTION:** The Mayor will request DG carries out a site visit to Station car park.

**FC20250021** Consider support of campaign for improved safety of Lithium-ion batteries. (see below info) Councillors felt they were not fully informed however the campaign has been backed by NALC and many other councils.

**Proposed:** Cllr Keates

**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson

**Resolution:** To support if cost effective and fits in line with green policies.

**FC20250022** Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for December.

**Proposed:** Cllr Carlson

**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson

**Resolution:** Authorise payment run of £46,433.63 for January.

**FC20250023** Propose year to date accounts – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

**Proposed:** Cllr Carlson

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**Resolution:** Agree accounts, with a positive variance of £53,238.

**FC20250024** Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report which cannot contain any proposals).

The Finance report is attached.

Cllr Hudson gave an update on the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan, advising there had been little progress with Regulation 16 as we are waiting for WBC to review it at their next meeting in March. He reported that HTC's comments on the Local Plan Review consultation had been agreed last week. These have been submitted by the Clerk.

It was queried when the next litter pick will be. It was agreed we should continue to attend the litter pick organised by Town & Manor, date TBC. Councillors were encouraged to turn up on the day and include a litter pick of HTC areas that require it, such as the Triangle Field. Cllr Reeves offered to co-ordinate.

**FC20250025** Ratify recommendations of committees to accept LCRS Risk Assessments

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Coulthurst

**Resolution:** Agree LCRS Risk Assessments for all committees

**FC20250026 Agree audit findings and amendments to standing orders**

The report showed just four observations that are all now in hand. The Standing Orders have been amended to be consistent with the Financial Regulations so both show tender thresholds inclusive of VAT. Staff were congratulated for a good audit.

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson

**Resolution:** Agree audit findings and amendments to standing orders.

**FC20250027 Propose revised fees and charges schedules for April 2025-26 (refer to draft documents)**

**Proposed:** Cllr Knight

**Seconded:** Cllr Hudson

**Resolution:** Agree fees and charges schedules for April 2025-26 all based on a 4% increase.

**FC20250028 Consider reduction in the number of streetlights** – Cllr Keates advised HTC are responsible for 31 streetlights that weren't suitable for adoption by WBC. We wish to ensure that all lights are standardised for ease of future maintenance. He has carried out a study with a lux meter and the LEDs are twice as bright as the old sodium lights and also have a wider spread. There are some sodium lights left in Marsh Lane, and Hungerford Newtown. Also, there is one at The Forge, Breach Square, Salisbury Road and by the junction of Priory Avenue and Priory Road. A survey was carried out of all the lights. It was found that Marsh Lane has 9 lights, all but one are sodium. It was suggested to reduce the number of illuminated lights in Marsh Lane as it is a no throughroad and a rural setting. It is an opportunity to cut back where not needed.

**ACTION:** Cllr Keates will speak to the residents of Marsh Lane.

**Proposed:** Cllr Reeves

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** To review Marsh Lane as part of a review of all the 31 x Streetlights

**FC20250029 Propose amended Terms of Reference (refer to draft)**

Following the dissolution of the Staff sub-committee, the terms of reference have been amended. F&GP committee will take on the responsibilities of the sub-committee with some duties being delegated to the Mayor and/or Chair of F&GP.

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Knight

**Resolution:** Agree amended terms of reference

## **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.

**FC20250030 Consider acceptance of contractor's terms**

**Proposed:** Cllr Cole

**Seconded:** Cllr Coulthurst

**Resolution:** Accept 1-yr contract with Windowflowers for provision and maintenance of the flowers in the high street at a cost of £4,617 (*note: price is quoted based on a set number of baskets/containers*) and a 1-yr contract with Windowflowers for watering of the SUH tubs at an annual cost of £1,364.

**Proposed:** Cllr Fyfe

**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson

**Resolution:** Accept a 3-yr contract with A D King for maintenance of St Lawrence Churchyard at an annual cost of £5316.

**Proposed:** Cllr Fyfe

**Seconded:** Cllr Armstrong

**Resolution:** Accept a 1-yr contract with James & Co for maintenance of St Saviours, the play parks and war memorial avenue at an annual cost of £24,830.

**Proposed:** Cllr Carlson

**Seconded:** Cllr Knight

**Resolution:** Accept a 1-yr contract with Penny Post for HTC's monthly online newsletter at a cost of £3,300.

**Proposed:** Cllr Keates

**Seconded:** Cllr Knight

**Resolution:** Defer decision to appoint a contractor for the servicing of the automatic doors based on cost and suitability, to the Clerk.

**ACTION:** Appoint contractors.

**Meeting closed 8.03pm**

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## **Mayors report - Full council February 2025**

### **Down to business**

As is often the case, HTC focuses the start of the year on lots of annual procedures and paperwork, this month's committees have been focused on our risk assessment documents, audits and Cllr's manually checking procedures. This isn't always Cllr's favourite past time, but it is important and required. It also gives us a real opportunity to discuss any changes or give explanation as required.

### **Town Meeting**

The towns annual meeting will take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, and we welcome community engagement. We will again provide opportunities for community partners to come together and share important news, plans, and experiences.

### **Pockets of sadness**

Sadly, Hungerford has areas which are looking a little tired and in need of some maintenance. The station road car park is one of these areas. This has been on our HTC's radar for some time. WBC has been asked to send contractors to smarten up the car park shrubs and overhanging trees. On a recent inspection Cllr's noticed some of the hard landscaping is now suffering from lack of scheduled maintenance. The flint panels in the brickwork, and the capping brick courses are so full of vegetation, the integrity of the walls is becoming compromised. HTC understands budgets are tight, however with ambition to work towards Britain in Bloom, we would like this gateway to the town to look better. Cllrs are keen to get a working party together to complete some of the landscaping tasks, hopefully WBC will see the urgency of the brickwork repairs and find some budget to rectify asap.

### **Memorial Avenue Gates**

Many of you will be aware of the gates and brick pillars which stand at the entrance of the memorial avenue. HTC will be looking closely at these to identify what remedial works may be needed to ensure their longevity. It appears to be the first scent post for many of our four-legged friends, almost eroding the first section of the iron gates leading into the avenue. More details will follow from a site visit to discover the scope of works.

### **Ramsbury Drive Play Park**

Cllr's will meet WBC to discuss on-going maintenance at this site soon. Sadly, it doesn't look like our budget can stretch to managing the whole area. Instead, we may consider adopting the park and managing it with our own contractors, ensuring the park continues to thrive and be well maintained. When we have considered the financial implications and liability, we will bring back to the council for full consideration.

### **Police**

As promised. I held a telephone meeting with the chief superintendent to discuss Hungerford's concerns, relating to the neighbourhood policing team, and the potential loss of our Hungerford Sgt. Although no promises were made, it was agreed they would go back over the plans to see if there could be a better split of the three Sgt's that would be more geographically sympathetic. I suggested Hungerford and downlands was one placement due to our rural location, Newbury and Thatcham the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> to cover the remainder. I think the concerns were understood. The lack of funding from central government hasn't helped to overcome the challenges faced. It was agreed the chief superintendent would consider the options available and get back to me. I will follow up and feedback.

### **Spring**

Spring is my favourite time of year, walking around the town over the last week, it's such a joy to see all the little snowdrops coming into flower, soon they will be followed by the daffodils and bluebells. We are really very lucky to be surrounded by such wonderful countryside. Despite the hay fever, from all the tree pollen, I'm certainly feeling ready for spring. Enjoy!

Cllr Helen Simpson  
Mayor

## **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2025 MONTH 10 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR JANUARY 2025**

### **101 FINANCE:**

Full Precept received.

### **102 ADMINISTRATION:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £2,231 positive variance.

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

No Grants paid this month.

### **104 POOL HOUSE:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £100 positive variance.

### **105 CONTINGENCY:**

No Expenditure this month.

### **106 TOURISM SUPPORT BUDGET:**

No Expenditure this month.

### **107 ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING:**

No Expenditure this month.

### **109 HUNGERFORD 2036 PROJECT:**

No Expenditure this month.

### **201 RECREATION & AMENITIES:**

Net Income over Expenditure is an £164 positive variance.

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

No Expenditure this month.

### **203 ST SAVIOURS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,915 positive variance.

**204 CROFT FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,908 positive variance.

**205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:**

No Expenditure this month.

**206 TRIANGLE FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is an £29 positive variance.

**301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:**

Net Income or Expenditure is a £584 positive variance. A Good Exchange Grant of £676 was received.

**302 HIGHWAYS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £2,164 positive variance.

**303 CCTV:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £101 positive variance.

**9001 RESERVES**

A total of £3,547 was moved from EMR for the Rugby Club CCTV costs, SP House leak repairs & St Lawrence collapsed grave works.

January's Net Income over Expenditure is an £13,322 positive variance.

The Year-to-Date Net Income over Expenditure is a £53,238 positive variance.

Claire Winsor

Chair of F&GP

31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

**Campaign for improved safety of Lithium-ion batteries**

Support means as much or as little as you choose. You can just say you support, and we will add you to the list of 500+ Local Council supporters. In addition, you can help in the way indicated below. But its up to you.

The Government's Product Safety and Metrology (PRAM) Bill will be reaching the Commons soon, so it would be great if you could alert your MP and ask him/her to speak in the 2nd Reading debate mentioning the importance of this issue – of the need for greater safety regarding lithium-ion batteries.

Thank you  
All the best  
Ron

**From:** BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk> **Sent:** 28 January 2025 10:26 **To:** BAILEY, Ron <ron.bailey@parliament.uk> **Subject:** FW: Safety of lithium-ion batteries campaign

Dear Local Council

**Safety of Lithium-ion Batteries Campaign**

You may recall that I wrote to you in June last year to inform you of this campaign. So let me reintroduce myself. I am the assistant to Lord Foster (hence my email address) and the Parliamentary Advisor to the charity Electrical Safety First (ESF). ESF and Lord Foster launched this campaign in June last year to ensure the safety of Lithium-ion batteries. The attached transcript of a webinar held by ESF on 30th December outlines the issues and the campaign, which is designed to save lives and cut down on fires and save damage to property. There are four issues

- That e bikes and e scooters and the Lithium-ion batteries used to propel them are subject to independent testing before being marketed. Currently this is not the case.
- That regulation are made to ensure the safe disposal of the batteries. Currently this is not the case resulting in fires in bin lorries and waste disposal sites.
- That charging kits and conversion kits used on the bikes are also safe. Currently regulations do not cover this.
- That online marketplaces through which many goods are sold nowadays are subject to the same safety regulations as high street shops. Currently this is not the case.

This campaign has the support of a large number of organisations (see attached) including the NALC and the SLCC as well as 500 individual local Councils, and we are already discussing this with Ministers – who are not unfriendly. We feel, therefore, that the support of local councils will keep the momentum going and hope you will be able to back this campaign.

I look forward to hearing from you,

All the best  
Ron Bailey