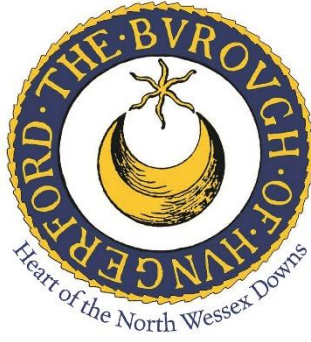


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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DRAFT MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 2nd June 2025 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Simpson, Reeves, Cole, Fyfe, Keates, Hudson, Carlson and Montgomery.

Also present: Representative from Penny Post and Newbury News, District Cllr Dennis Benneyworth (DB) from West Berks Council (WBC), and three members of public. Four members of Hungerford Resource Centre. Town Council solicitor.

In attendance: Town Clerk, (TC).

Below is the presentation from the Resource Centre which was read out at the meeting:

Why are we here?

We are here this evening to spread the word about the amazing and important activities happening at Hungerford Resource Centre

We have recently discovered through local engagement that a lot of the people we have spoken to are hearing about us for the first time and are uncertain about what we are, where we are and what the future is for our staff and customers.

What is a Resource Centre?

Hungerford Resource Centre is a purpose-built day centre dedicated to providing compassionate support to individuals who face unique challenges in their daily lives including physical, neurological and cognitive conditions, general health issues and those living with dementia or who are socially isolated.

People who use the service enjoy meeting with people and maintaining and developing functional, cognitive and social abilities and interests within the fun, inclusive environment that is nurtured by our highly trained team of staff. As well as meaningful daily activities that reflect the lifestyles and preferences of our customers, there are many socially stimulating activities, for example spending time in the community or joining an entertainer for a dance in the afternoon, helping them to achieve their social goals or simply enjoy the personal fulfilment of trying something new.

(If you would like to read more about these please pick up a brochure at the end).

Why is it important for the customers who use the service?

Although there are other wonderful groups and services available locally, the level of care that Hungerford Resource Centre provides is unique. Staff are trained to deliver person centred care that supports customers all round wellbeing.

They work with families and carers of individuals to ensure that cultural customs are respected, skills and abilities are promoted and changes and challenges for each person are monitored and supported.

As a local authority service we are able to work collaboratively with other professionals involved in the care of our customers to promote responsive, holistic care to those we support.

Why is it important for the local community?

As well as directly benefiting those who attend, the centre also provides an opportunity for often much needed respite for carers and relatives.

With their significant person or people being safely looked after, people who occupy the role of carer have a chance to recharge batteries, maintain social connections and in some cases make time for work.

Through our activities our customers can maintain links with the community and the community can benefit from being involved in the activities we provide. For example, we have visits from school children, the church and numerous volunteers and entertainers and these interactions, as well as being hugely enjoyable for our customers are equally beneficial for the health of the community.

What does the future hold?

Many of you will know the West Berkshire Council voted at the end of February to look at different ways of providing our day services.

While this period of exploration is ongoing, we are keen to tell you all that the centre is operating business as usual and we urge anyone who knows someone who would benefit from this incredible service to contact us either directly or through adult social care for west berks.

Where are we?

Ramsbury Drive situated close to Hungerford Common and a short walk from the town centre.

How can you find out more?

Brochure / council website / call HRC 01488 682601

It was commented that the title 'Resource Centre' does not perhaps clearly define what the organisation does. Whilst they can't change their name they do refer to themselves generally as a day centre. DB suggested that members of the Council may wish to have a tour of the centre. The Mayor added how much the facility was valued locally. Cllr Montgomery suggested a collaboration with Fairclose, which was welcomed. They already work with Greenfield and Phoenix House, and they do have transport facilities. Cllr Reeves remarked that the occupancy figures included in the consultation looked good. The Resource Centre confirmed that it had been a challenge with some days better than others. They have a capacity of 20. Other centres obtain over their capacity. They have had issues with communication and referrals taking a long time. Cllr Keates offered to put them in touch with a contact for digital inclusivity.

FC20250086 **Note apologies for absence.** Cllrs, Armstrong, Winser and Alford
Apologies also from, District Cllr Denise Gaines (DG) and Vickers (TV) from West Berks Council

FC20250087 **Declarations of interest - None**

FC20250088 **Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 6th May 2025 and outcome of actions**

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 6th May 2025 were agreed as a true record. One abstention.

Outcome of actions:

Confirmation has been received from DG that she has diarised a site meeting a week before the 4th Sept 2025 to block off an area from vehicles so the volunteers can clear back the vegetation in Station car park. The loose and missing flints and bricks in the car park wall have been reported several times to WBC but they have no budget to deal with the improvements required.

DG has written to request a meeting with senior personnel at SNG (Sovereign Network Group) about the poor state of their garages and has emailed across our concerns.

ACTION: Await update from Sovereign on garages.

The response from Hungerford Carehome has been fed back to WBC and a further request to clear the verge to create escape areas for pedestrians from the traffic along the A338 has been sent.

We have been offered a couple of dates to meet with the North Wessex Downs representatives, 18th or 19th June in the morning. It was suggested HTC could meet at their office if it was easier.

ACTION: Councillors to let the office know which date they can attend the NWD meeting.

The Mayor advised that a key stake holder meeting about the loss of Hungerford's Sergeant is happening soon which she will attend with Lee Dillon MP, DG and Matthew Barber. DB will be unable to make the meeting but has made his views known.

ACTION: Await feedback following police meeting.

ACTION: Await feedback on repairs to bus stop on A338. DG is chasing.

FC20250089 Consider co-option of new councillors. There are currently four vacancies that can be filled by co-option. New councillors must sign a declaration of acceptance of office form before joining the meeting. All three candidates present gave positive feedback of the meetings that they had observed over the last month and were still keen to join. Councillors had no further questions.
Proposed: Cllr Simpson
Seconded: Cllr Montgomery
Resolution: Co-opt all three candidates, Nia Day, Jane Brunning and Simon Mulholland as councillors.
Each candidate signed their declaration of acceptance of office and joined the meeting.

FC20250099 Consider acceptance of the Licence to Sublet and Licence to Alter with reference to use of the Croft Field Centre by Hungerford Shed. *(This item was brought forward into Part 1 to allow questions to HTC's solicitor present)*
WBC is happy to give permission for the Hungerford Shed to operate at the Croft Field subject to the agreement of the above mentioned two licences. A sub-lease has also been drawn up which is based on the HTC/WBC lease. It was confirmed: -

- HTC wishes to retain flexibly concerning reinstatement in relation to building alterations.
- Installation of a separate electric meter and the registration fee both need to be paid for by the Hungerford Shed.
- The time period for insurance needs to be checked.
- A five year lease with a 2 year break clause is preferable.
- HTC wish to have confirmation of the name of the legal entity (Hungerford Shed??) as not in companies house, before agreements are signed.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Montgomery

Resolution: Delegate authority to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Clerk to finalise details of the paperwork with solicitor.

ACTION: Solicitor to email Hungerford Shed and copy in Clerk.

FC20250090 Receive Mayor's Report – Please see **attached report.**

FC20250091 Receive District Councillor's Reports – DB voiced his personal thanks to ex-councillor Rob Brookman who sadly passed away recently. Rob had previously chaired the H&T committee and had been heavily involved with the Christmas lights. DB commented on what a lovely person he was. Our thoughts are with his family. The Mayor will attend his funeral with other councillors that knew him.

DB advised WBC have received some requests from residents for 20mph limits and are keen to put up some limits. A few manholes have been fixed that were logged on 'report a problem'. Councillors mentioned that two cables, one outside 1 Bridge St and another on Atherton Rd are dangerous and are awaiting SSE to fix them. There is also a low hanging cable along the A338 near the carehome that the mayor has reported.

ACTION: DB will raise with the executive, that utility companies are letting WBC down.

It was noted that the Hungerford Park planning application has been deferred from the Western Area Planning meeting at the last minute. DB has been chasing for progress on the cleaning of the high street footway and Daniel Warne has been in touch with highways. It was requested that the cleaning takes place ahead of our Britain in Bloom judging day on 16th July. DB advised there are on-going problems with Bewley Homes and he will get back to us with an update.

FC20250092 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns. Cllr Keates reported that another delivery wagon has mounted the footway which not only causes damage but also means pedestrians have to

walk in the road. We can ask business owners to discourage their delivery drivers from doing this. Penny Post are happy to issue a statement from HTC regarding this.

FC20250093 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for May. **(refer to HTC website to view pay runs)**

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Authorise payment run of £32,106.45.

FC20250094 Propose accounts to date – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree accounts to date with a positive variance of £11,265.

FC20250095 Ratify grant payments as recommended by F&GP committee to the sum of £8,675. Refer to spreadsheet.

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Cole

Resolution: Confirm grant payments as recommended to the sum of £8,675.

FC20250096 Agree SSE contract for Lamppost electricity following the transfer of responsibility to HTC from April 2025.

The RFO's progress so far with obtaining prices was noted. Full details are still awaited from SSE. It was suggested multi-year contracts should be considered and a broker approached.

FC20250097 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report which cannot contain any proposals).

Cllr Montgomery left the meeting.

Cllr Cole reported that he attended the Heritage Forum on Thursday. There is a new conservation officer but unfortunately they did not attend. There was a discussion about the local listing process. Most of Hungerford town centre is Grade 2 listed. We can look at what else might need to be listed which is important as it affects the planning process. The forum are looking at restarting the process of redefining the Heritage Conservation area. A project manager is needed to put together a report. We wait to hear what the time requirements are for this.

It was noted that the Coin shop is being refurbished and the hoarding has been removed. WBC highways feel that planning has made a wrong decision on the bollards.

Cllr Hudson advised that Regulation 16 Consultation has completed. 46 comments were received which although higher than most is not surprising as the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan is allocating planning. The comments were relating to the two planning sites, and these will now go to Andrew Mead the inspector who has local experience of West Berks. The inspector will modify and potentially there could be an examination in public. It was noted that Whitchurch Town Council had written with their support.

Cllr Reeves has read the financial benefits of the Aldi planning application and encourages everyone to read them. He thinks the store would be of huge benefit to the town.

Members of press and WBC left the meeting.

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.

FC20250098 Agree change in staff hours

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: To increase weekly hours by two for employee number 17.

FC20250099 Consider acceptance of the Licence to Sublet and Licence to Alter with reference to use of the Croft Field Centre by Hungerford Shed. (This item was taken after FC20250089 in Part 1 – refer to above)

FC202500100 Update on legal fees – It was noted that WBC had withdrawn its legal fees for licences. Fees remain payable for a possible land acquisition.

Meeting closed 8.37pm

Mayor's Report – June 2025 Full Council Meeting

In Memory – Rob Brookman

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of former councillor Rob Brookman. Rob passed away peacefully, with his wife Penny by his side.

Rob will be remembered fondly for his dedicated service to Hungerford Town Council, particularly through his longstanding chairmanship of the Highways and Transport Committee. He played a key role in ensuring the smooth running of the town's annual Christmas Lights installation, a highlight in the community calendar. Personally, I am grateful for the guidance and support Rob offered me when I first joined the council.

On behalf of Hungerford Town Council, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Penny, Rob's family, and all who knew him.

Mayor's Appointment

I am honoured to have been re-elected for my eighth and final (I know, I've said this before) term as Mayor of Hungerford. It continues to be a great privilege to serve our town in this role.

I'd like to express sincere thanks to Cllr James Cole for his valued support as Deputy Mayor during the past year. I am also pleased to welcome Cllr Claire Winser as Deputy Mayor for 2025/26. I look forward to working alongside Claire and the full council team in continuing to serve our community.

We also extend our thanks and best wishes to former Mayor Keith Knight, who has chosen to step back from HTC. Keith remains active in his many volunteer roles, and we thank him for his loyal support and significant contributions over the last decade.

As we move forward, we are enthusiastic about welcoming new members to fill the current councillor vacancies and strengthen our team.

Clarification – CHAIN Magazine Article

I would like to address a miscommunication that appeared in a recent CHAIN magazine article. While Hungerford Town Council has a strong and valued working relationship with our local Royal British Legion (RBL), the upcoming events for Armed Forces Day (28th June) and VJ Day (15th August) have been organised by RBL, not HTC.

HTC will of course be attending and supporting these events, just as we did at the recent VE Day service.

As in previous years, HTC will co-organise the Remembrance Day service in November in collaboration with the RBL. Our apologies have already been sent in response to this earlier misunderstanding.

Twinning Visit from Ligueil

On 23rd May, I had the pleasure of joining Hungerford's Twinning Association, alongside Constable of the Town & Manor Philip Porter, to welcome seven intrepid cyclists from our twin town of Ligueil. All aged over 70, the group completed their journey to Hungerford, supported on the final stretch by two local cyclists.

The group received a warm Hungerford welcome, followed by a reception and well-earned refreshments at the Hub. I was honoured to receive a beautifully handwritten letter from Ligueil's Mayor, Michel Guignadeau, along with a commemorative bronze plaque. In return, I sent a letter and small gift on behalf of Hungerford.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of our twinning with Ligueil, and we look forward to a return visit in July. Special thanks to Constable Philip Porter for his excellent French, which helped make our guests feel especially welcome.

Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Regulation 16 consultation period for our Neighbourhood Plan has now closed. The Neighbourhood Plan team will meet shortly to review and consider the responses received. We will keep the Council updated on next steps as the process moves forward.

On-going

Although this report is quite short and later than I wanted to share, there is a lot happening which we will report/share as soon as there is more news.

These Include:

- 1) Resident letters over concerns regarding pigeon numbers – looking at humane methods available and costs.
- 2) Police –meeting with key stakeholders to address resident concerns. Plus understanding the concerns of neighbouring parishes who are equally concerned.
- 3) On-going concerns relating to Sovereign maintenance of Hungerford assets
- 4) Hungerford Community Shed sub-lease
- 5) Public concerns relating to pedestrian safety on a missing section of footway
- 6) Britain in Bloom

Warm regards,

Helen Simpson

Town Mayor

Hungerford Town Council

Arts for Hungerford	£250.00
Bridge for Young People / Young People First	£350.00
Citizen's Advice	£500.00
Chain	£1,500.00
Daisy's Dream	£200.00
Eight Bells for Mental Health - Day to day running expenses for Mental health support service 25/26	£250.00
HAHA	£500.00
Home-Start West Berkshire - Baby Project	£250.00
Hungerford Bowling Club	£300.00
Hungerford Carnival	£400.00
Hungerford Food Community	£100.00
Hungerford Comedy Club	£100.00
Hungerford Brownies and Guides	£100.00
Hungerford Ladybugs Toddler Group	£100.00
Hungerford Primary School	£100.00
Hungerford Tennis Club	£175.00
HRFC - via members, family & friends - not officially HRFC so accounts not available	£150.00
Hungerford Theatre Group	£250.00
Hungerford Town Band	£800.00
Hungerford Town Football Club	£200.00
Hungerford Twinning Association	£200.00
John O'Gaunt School PSA - Outdoor Fitness Suite	£250.00
NWN Over 80s	£300.00
Parkinsons UK, Newbury	£100.00
Recovery in Mind	£200.00
Swings and Smiles - Play Leader	£300.00
The Tuesday Burchett Club (Holiday for disabled members)	£350.00
Time to Talk West Berkshire	£200.00
<i>Non-Good Exchange</i>	
Ben East	£200.00
	£8,675.00