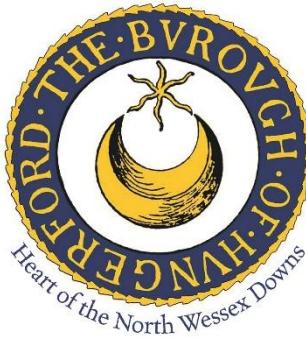


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Draft MINUTES of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 5th January 2026 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs. Simpson, Winser, Cole, Mulholland, Hudson, Alford, Day, Keates, Reeves, Brunning, Armstrong, Fyfe and Hall

Also present: Members of the press, and a prospective councillor.

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

The minutes of the meeting are recorded in order they were discussed at committee meeting.

The Mayor had been asked to select a winner from the entries of the Gingerbread Folk Trail that took place over Christmas. Congratulations to the winner, Amelia, who will receive a £50 toy shop voucher, kindly donated by a Faulkner and Booth dealer. The bonus prize for choosing a present for Santa goes to Imogen who 'liked the silver present she found at Farewise Travel and would like to buy Santa a holiday'. She receives a Hungerford Bookshop voucher. The Mayor praised Susan Mayes the organiser of the Gingerbread Folk Trail for her creative talent. Cllr Reeves was also thanked for helping with the promotion.

FC2026001 Note apologies for absence – Cllr Carlson
Also noted from the District Cllrs Vickers, Benneyworth, and Gaines (DG).

FC2026002 Declarations of interest - none

FC2026003 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 1st December 2025, and outcome of actions.
Proposed: Cllr Simpson
Seconded: Cllr Mulholland
Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 1st December 2025 were agreed. 4 abstentions. Rest in favour
Outcome of actions:

The gutters of the Queen Ann building in the high street have been cleared.

Sovereign have confirmed that many of their garages require new roofs and doors and they are awaiting quotes from their contractors for the work. In the new year they will have the information and decide if the work will proceed. We wait to hear the name of the new manager in charge.

ACTION: Chase Sovereign for the above and also for info determining which garages in Hungerford belong to them and which are privately owned.

A plaque will be arranged on a bench in town and there are plans to have a lasting memorial to remember John Willmott. Hungerford in Bloom will lead on this project.

The Mayor spoke with Jon Winstanley at West Berks Council (WBC) about the pothole outside John O Gaunt pub which has been refilled 7 or 8 times. He advised they are patching it whilst they wait for Thames Water to carry out a bigger improvement job. WBC had quoted a 147% increase in pothole repairs but how much of this is repairing the same pothole? WBC recently lowered their

tolerance level, filling smaller potholes in order to avoid facing bigger issues. Blackpool reportedly saved £1/2million annually by doing a proper job and filling a pothole once using heat to make the repair last.

ACTION: Cllrs Keates and Simpson will continue to monitor the pothole repair.

ACTION: We have received a response back from Sovereign following a number of raised issues about Lindley Lodge and Redwood House and will be meeting with them in January to talk through the issues further and consider any service level agreements in place.

ACTION: The Adviser have provided a quote for copies of the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan and will visit the office to discuss what it will look like.

All other actions are complete or on the agenda.

FC2026004 **Receive Mayor's Report – See attached report.** The Mayor added that Morrisons was open on Christmas day and they were busy giving out free samosas. Well done to Pav the manager.

FC2026005 **Receive District Councillor's Reports – No district councillors were present.**

FC2026006 **Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns**

The following points were raised:

Cllr Keates advised he had picked two people up off the floor that had slipped over. This was due to a wobbly paving slab that has since been fixed. There is a reoccurring problem with people falling over due to slimy pavements. One man broke his collar bone.

ACTION: Chase WBC again for the footway to be cleaned. Also ask Dick Lovett if they have an industrial floor scrubber that we could use. Check if WBC would indemnify us if we were to use it. Add to H&T agenda.

ACTION: Cllr Keates to report an unsafe slab near 95 High Street.

Cllr Hudson reported a dogwalker was nearly hit by a speeding car in Sanham Green. The 30mph signs will be installed at some point this year possibly when a 20mph is considered by the school.

Cllr Armstrong suggested we should have containers of foam bricks to throw at cars that don't stop at pedestrian crossings like they do in China.

FC2026007 **Propose authorisation of payment run** (circulated along with copies of invoices) for Dec

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Payment run authorised for December of £59,255.67

FC2026008 **Propose accounts to date – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report**

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree accounts to date with net income over expenditure of £13,701 with a positive variance.

FC2026009 **Review the HTC Action Plan – Refer to spreadsheets/website –** It was agreed the following updates should be made:

ACTION: Amend the action plans as follows.

- Add obtaining the lease of Ramsbury Play Park to the action plan
- Change quality award to high priority
- Change Localism to low priority
- Change grant presentation to medium priority
- Remove public parking
- Delete obtain longer lease for Fairfield and keep as a rolling annual lease
- Add expiry date of Christmas Lights contract
- Delete phase 3, Cladding for Croft Field

- Electric vehicle charging. We have no control over WBC siting or parking spaces. Take out except for consideration at our own car parks.

Proposed: Cllr Hudson

Seconded: Cllr Fyfe

Resolution: Agree the above amendments to the action plans.

ACTION: Clerk to speak to Lighting at WBC to fix replace two streetlights not working in Marsh Lane.

FC20260010 Consider response to WBC Consultation – Balancing their budget – There is only one issue relevant to Hungerford and that is the suggested outsource of adult respite care. It was agreed councillors should reply individually to the consultation.

FC20260011 Confirm Annual Precept request for April 2026-2027 following receipt of the taxbase (defer if not received). The taxbase received has reduced only very slightly so there will be no change to the Precept.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Propose an Annual Precept of £393,344 for April 2026-27 (a 2.45% increase on last year)

FC20260012 Arrangements for REME Freedom of the Town parade and budget – The Mayor reported that a Teams meeting had taken place before Christmas with REME, and we were advised that they are meeting amongst themselves to discuss what resources they could offer; possibly caterers. They will be updating us soon. The Clerk has informed WBC that a road closure will be required, and an application has been made. The event is likely to include a parade, ceremony and a dinner. The Town Hall has been provisionally booked. The project will be budget driven and fundraising may be needed.

ACTION: Wait to hear from REME and then establish a working party.

FC20260013 Consider quotation to replace Network Video recorder and router for CCTV system –

Proposed: Cllr Cole

Seconded: Cllr Armstrong

Resolution: Proceed with replacing the NVR and router. If a discount can be offered by SMART, it may negate the need to obtain comparative quotes.

FC20260014 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals). Fly tipping occurred at the WBC Station Car park recycling centre over Christmas. A discussion took place about options for improvement. WBC are not interested in sharing the costs of having an extra camera installed. Could WBC empty the containers more often or have a larger or extra facility? The latter was thought unlikely as their strategy is to reduce the number of centres.

ACTION: Report fly-tipping and flag up to WBC when it is full. Install a sign on site with a telephone number to call when it needs emptying. Add to a future H&T agenda.

Congratulations to Peter the streetcleaner who was nominated for an unsung hero award on Lorraine on Radio 2 over Christmas.

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.

FC20260015 Consider renewal of contracts received so far – see spreadsheet – item was deferred to F&GP

FC20260016 Ratify recommendation from F&GP to agree new contract with Volker for lampposts

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Cole

ACTION: **Resolution:** Agree contract with Volker from April 2026 for maintenance of lampposts. First year cost £7932.92 plus vat. Includes fault repair in 5 days and emergency call out to make safe, electrical test and a clean.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Mayor's Report – January 2026

I would like to wish Members a happy and healthy New Year. I hope 2026 brings success and happiness to you all. On a personal note, this will be a particularly busy and celebratory year for my family, with a family wedding and our 25-year silver wedding anniversary.

Passing of Sally James

It was with great sadness that I received a call in December informing me of the passing of Sally James. Sally was a well-known and highly respected member of our community and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

I have been requested, in my capacity as Mayor, to attend Sally's memorial service alongside the Constable. The service will be held at St Lawrence's Church at 2.30pm on Wednesday 7 January, followed by a gathering at the Corn Exchange. Hungerford Town Council extends its deepest condolences to former Constable Robert James and to all of Sally's family and friends at this difficult time.

December Engagements and Events

December was an exceptionally busy month, filled with community events, celebrations, and festive activities across the town.

- **2 December** - Attended the Hungerford Primary School Year 2 Christmas Play. As always, the performance was outstanding. I was extremely impressed by the pupils, who were word-perfect even at their first performance.
- **8 December** - Tuesday Burchett Club Christmas Tea. It is always a pleasure to be invited to celebrate with this group. The event provided a valuable opportunity to speak with residents, particularly those who are less mobile, allowing them to raise any concerns in a relaxed and friendly setting.
- **10 December** - Art Exhibition at John O'Gaunt School. The standard of both art and technology on display was exceptional, as it has always been. It was a pleasure to speak with students and staff, and I wish all those taking GCSEs this year the very best of luck.
- **11 December** - John O'Gaunt School Year 11 Christmas Dinner. Congratulations to Years 10 and 11 for hosting such a lovely evening. The dinner and entertainment were thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.
- **12 December** - Victorian Extravaganza. Congratulations to the Hungerford Chamber of Commerce for their considerable efforts in organising another successful event. It was very well attended and clearly enjoyed by many. Highlights included the Scottish pipe band, mulled wine, and making table decorations at the Methodist Church. I was disappointed to read some negative comments on social media and would encourage residents to support the volunteers who work tirelessly for our community.
- **13 December** - Hungerford Town Band Concert. It was wonderful to see such a strong turnout this year. The band delivered an outstanding performance, supported by delicious refreshments, audience participation, and a successful raffle. We are extremely fortunate to have such a talented local band.

- **13 December** - Hungerford Town Council Christmas Gathering. Thank you to Colin and the team at *Terrace View* for hosting a very enjoyable evening. For clarity, councillors and staff personally covered the cost of this event.
- **14 December** - Mayor's Carol Service. Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the collection for local charities. My thanks also go to the office staff for organising the refreshments.
- **15 December** - Christmas Hampers. Congratulations to Stella and St Lawrence's Church for hosting. A tremendous team effort ensured the successful packing and delivery of hampers to local residents. It was heartening to be able to bring some Christmas cheer to those who needed it most.
- **16 December** – Thank you to Hungerford Chamber of Commerce and BMW for hosting the Christmas gathering. The new showroom looks great.
- **20 December** - Newtown Carol Service. This was my first time attending, and I was honoured to be asked to do a reading. The setting was wonderfully authentic, with the service held in a barn, seating on hay bales, and children placing animals in the manger—an absolutely delightful experience.
- **21 December** - Candlelight Service at St Lawrence's Church. Another very well-attended service. Thank you for the invitation to read and for the refreshments provided afterwards.

Closing Remarks

I would like to thank the wider community for their warm hospitality and for inviting Hungerford Town Council to be part of so many celebrations throughout December. These events truly highlight the strong sense of community and local involvement within the town.

As we move into the New Year, Members should note that Hungerford will experience some disruption as works commence through the High Street. Please be patient whilst these necessary works are completed. HTC will be monitoring the works.

A huge thank you to Broadmead Estate for offering to chip and recycling Christmas trees for a donation, all donations made go to support local charities, The Constable and I met with Jim and thanked him for his service, we think Broadmead Estates has been operating this service, for 20 years. The three groups chosen this year are CHAIN, Youth & Community Centre and Community Christmas Hampers.

Marcia Wadden will leave for a Team Vicar position (one of three looking after 9 Clarendon Team churches, a section of the Diocese of Ramsbury) at the end of February; she'll live in Alderbury, just south of Salisbury. Her last service is expected to be Sunday, 22nd February. I really hoped Marcia would stay longer in Hungerford. I for one will miss her dearly. Sending our very best wishes for the future Marcia. HTC will miss your enthusiasm and community support.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Hilary and team for hosting Christmas lunch for those alone on Christmas day. Hilary has been organising the Christmas lunch for many years now, thank you for everything you do to support our community, Hilary. You deserve to be recognised. I've heard lots of lovely feedback from those who attended the lunch. Residents really do appreciate the effort.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 05 JANUARY

2026

MONTH 9 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2025

101 FINANCE:

Bank interest of £1,069 has been received.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £8,739 positive variance.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £5,401 negative variance this month. Two Grants were paid this month; Hungerford Library £4,876 & St Lawrence Hampers £525.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £169 positive variance.

105 CONTINGENCY:

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 a £797 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £12 positive variance.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £403 positive variance. No Burial fees recorded this month.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £601 positive variance. Croft Income was £508 below budget.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

No Expenditure this month.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £411 negative variance. Rent of £542 has not been recorded.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £4,807 positive variance this month, phasing issue.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £3,851 positive variance, phasing issue.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £41 positive variance this month.

901 RESERVES:

Transfer of £631 to EMR.

November's Net Income over Expenditure is a £13,701 positive variance.

Year to date Net Income over Expenditure is a £102,012 positive variance.

Claire Winser

Chair of F&GP

23 December 2025