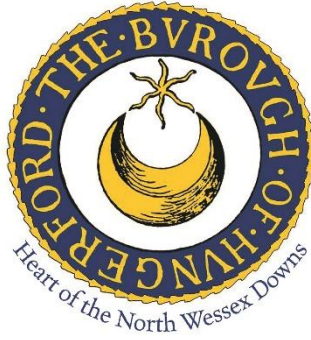


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Draft MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 1st June 2026 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Mulholland, Day, Brunning, Fyfe, Carlson, Hall, Terry, Armstrong, Cole, Reeves and Alford

Also present: Members of the press, District Cllrs Benneyworth (DB) and Gaines (DG) and a member of public.

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

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

The Police couldn't attend due to resourcing issues. They have advised there are no major updates or anything that would need to be brought to the Council's attention. If we have questions, we are invited to pass these on.

FC20260085 Note apologies for absence – Cllr Hudson, Keates

FC20260086 Declarations of interest – Cllr Hall (family connection - The Plume)

FC20260087 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 5th May 2026, and outcome of actions.

Proposed: Cllr Hall

Seconded: Cllr Terry

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 5th May 2026 were agreed, one abstention.

Outcome of actions:

- DG advised she had sent details of the Sovereign garages to Cllr Fyfe.
- A site meeting took place with WBC (West Berks Council) to consider problems of fly tipping at the recycling centre at the Station Car park. Several proposals have been put forward for WBC consideration A structural engineer is carrying out a survey independently on the retaining wall. .
- A sample glossy copy of the NDP has been produced by Hungerford Print Company for consideration.
- In response to the comment that all the money is being spent on Newbury FC and none on Hungerford, DG advised that under the WBC playing pitch strategy money must be spent on Newbury Football Club. The pitch was closed and the stands and pavilion removed. The club is returning to the same location and there will be a 3G or 4G pitch installed, but it can't have plastic as it can pollute the waterways. DG suggested we put a plan together of what Hungerford needs identifying capital costs rather than revenue. Allocation is based on need not per capita.
- Cllr Fyfe commented that out of the £1.8million active travel funding pot, Hungerford has only received a £6K cycle shelter. DG confirmed that there have been other expenses such as footway works at Smitham Bridge, and other aspirations include cycle parking, signed cycle routes etc.
- The date for Chestnut Walk's WAP meeting will be in August. They have had the pre-app and received lots of objections. DG will not be on the planning committee and will be speaking in favour.
- Cllr Hall and Kate Edwards from Town & Manor appeared on Meridian this evening highlighting the concern about litter and dog poo being left on the Common.

- Other actions including the amending of the standing orders, forwarding of our statement on Chestnut walk to the press, and promoting the importance of clearing up after your dog on social media have been completed. Government planning changes will be discussed at E&P.

The following action remains outstanding:

ACTION: Cllr Fyfe's query on the Station Yard application is being looked in to. The application for Station Car Park has been approved for 42 properties subject to discharge of conditions on SUDS. DG will check the S106 to see what the shared ownership options are.

FC20260088 Receive Mayor's report. Refer to circulated report. (*see attached*) Cllr Hall read out the Mayor's report.

FC20260089 Update on filling of councillor vacancies
Anthony Edginton (a prospective councillor) introduced himself. He moved to Hungerford 2 years ago and lives in a Commons property. He has been a project manager for 10 years in civil service and now works for Vodafone. He was invited to attend future Council meetings.

FC20260090 Update on Sovereign Flats – Prospect Road – There were two police visits to Prospect Road recently, one on blue lights. SNG say they couldn't act as the calls were reported anonymously. One of the tenants is moving out but the other will remain as SNG are now not selling the flats. DG advised SNG will need to make good the property before re-letting. There are huge amounts of rubbish and several shopping trolleys there. WBC can't stop SNG selling off properties. Currently they must tell Government if they plan to and a new bill requires SNG to give WBC 4 weeks' notice before they sell a property. There is a petition to get the length of notice extended. DG is requesting a meeting with SNG. She advised the threshold for viable repair is £40k and if the cost is over this SNG have the right to dispose of the property.

FC20260091 Receive District Councillor's reports – DB advised the member's bid window has now closed. They were oversubscribed and will be having a meeting between the three district councillors to look at how the grant is allocated.
Cllr Reeves asked if WBC planning can speed along the Aldi application as it has received so much support. DG advised it is with Highways and they are working on a safety scheme. She is as anxious as Cllr Reeves to get it done.

ACTION: DG will find out when we are likely to hear about progress on the application.

FC20260092 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns – Cllr Hall declared his interest in a complaint received against the Plume for putting tables and chairs on the pavement without a licence. The office has reported it to Highways safety. It is noted that the tables block sight lines near the roundabout.

FC20260093 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for May.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Cole
Resolution: Agree payment run of £26,425.93 for May.

FC20260094 Propose 2025-26 year-end budget/accounts – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Hall
Resolution: Propose the income over expenditure report for May of £216,080 with a positive variance of £135,696.

FC20260096 Agree Annual Audit - Refer to report (*agenda item taken ahead of FC20260095*)
Cllr Mulholland advised that Council have to agree the audit before the AGAR. He advised we have received a glowing audit however, the accounts figures have changed to include a small amount of cash and a minor amendment.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Terry

Resolution: Agree the audit observations.

FC20260095 Annual Governance and Accountability Return. Please note following our audit the AGAR needs to be signed and proposed again as the figure in box 8 has changed - Propose acceptance of Section 1 of Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 and acceptance of Section 2 Accounting statements 2025-26.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Agree the year end report.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Propose acceptance of Section 1 of Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 and acceptance of Section 2 Accounting statements 2025-26 as revised.

The paperwork was completed and signed.

FC20260097 Propose auditor as independent and appoint for next three years.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Armstrong

ACTION:

Resolution: Appoint the auditor IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd for the next three years at a discounted annual fee of £798 and note his independence from Town Council.

FC20260098 Ratify the adoption of the following policies as recommended by F&GP:

▪ **Dignity at Work Policy**

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Brunning

Resolution: Adoption of the Dignity at Work Policy as drafted and recommended by F&GP.

▪ **Risk Management Policy and Arrangements**

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Reeves

Resolution: Adoption of the Risk Management Policy and Arrangements as drafted and recommended by F&GP.

It was also agreed to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

ACTION:

Clerk to upload policies to the website and sign the pledge.

FC20260099 Ratify Grant Payments as recommended by F&GP committee to the sum of £9,616.50. refer to spreadsheet. Cllr Mulholland explained F&GP has prioritised applications from within Hungerford and for children in need. Cllr Reeves suggested in future weighting the selection criteria in favour of groups that operate the 'turn no child away' policy making sports fully accessible, regardless of ability.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Hall

Resolution: Agree allocation of grants to the sum of £9,616.50 as detailed in the spreadsheet.

ACTION:

Arrange payment of grants and add to F&GP to discuss future weighting criteria and if a second round of grants should take place.

FC202600100 Appoint DRC Drones at Town Council's preferred contractor for drone footage and grant permission for them to use Town Council land.

Proposed: Cllr Hall

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

ACTION:

Resolution: Appoint DRC Drones as our preferred contractor and grant permission to use land subject to sight of insurance.

FC202600101 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals). Cllr Reeves gave an update on grass cutting. He has asked WBC why the grass has not been cut since April. Cutting was supposed to resume the Tuesday after the bank holiday, but it hasn't. We haven't received our second cut in May. The long grass results in a loss of open space for residents. Cllr

Reeves agrees with no mow May for areas out of town, but not for urban areas. The rotten bollards at Atherton have been hidden by the long grass and the weeds are spreading which can lead to kerb erosion.

DG said to copy her in if he has to chase further. The contractor should provide photo evidence of each grass cut.

Anthony Edginton is keen to attend the Environment and Planning meeting next week.

ACTION: Clerk to add Co-option to the next Full Council agenda.

Confidential PART 2

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.

FC202600102 Agree next steps with Leisure Centre – The importance of the use of the swimming pool particularly for children’s swimming lessons was highlighted.

ACTION: Pay the outstanding invoice to WBC for last year’s contribution requesting WBC in turn agree to come to the table to discuss changes to the agreement. Clerk to check it will be without prejudice. Cllr Cole to make contact.

FC202600103 Ratify bank signatories as recommended at F&GP

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Agree new bank signatories as detailed in the report.

Meeting closed at 8.33pm.

Hungerford Mayors report May 2026

Well, where did that month go! Since being elected by the Town Council it has been my sincere privilege to be your Mayor.

One of my first duties was to chair the full council meeting and I read a statement of HTC’s position regarding the WBC planning application for Chestnut Walk. We have objected to the provision of a homeless facility that is directly against the key issues facing our town in our accepted and ratified Neighbourhood Plan and this has now been brought before western Area Planning scrutiny in August.

We (Deborah and I) attended our first formal ceremonial events at the mayor making for Newbury and Thatcham and it was really good to see how they launch their new Mayors into their appointments. I wish Cllr Jo Day for Newbury and Mark Lillycrop for Thatcham all the very best wishes in their roles for the year ahead. With Mayor making in mind, I have decided to move the Mayors reception from April to May in future to enable the outgoing Mayor the opportunity to both thank everyone for their support for the previous year and to enable them to launch the new Mayor with an informal handing over of the reigns.

After 12 months of lobbying Sovereign Network Group for progress on the legal adoption of the 10-metre hedge that has been a pedestrian impasse for circa 30 years, I have received an email on behalf of their head of legal promising an update. This was however after a significant degree of detective work and a robust escalation process which so far reached the COE of SNG and with intervention from MP for Newbury Lee Dillion. I await news with bated breath as I have so far been waiting since Monday 18th May on this promise. If this is not forth coming, I will publish the full email trail in the public domain. *(update - we have since received a response from SNG’s strategic disposal and asset transformation lead confirming they are happy to transfer the strip of land to WBC and have sent them Heads of Terms).*

I am extremely disappointed with a few selfish and inconsiderate individuals who think it is OK to let their dogs foul the streets of our beautiful town without picking up after them. The Town and Manor face exactly the same challenge

with those who feel the common is actually a dog toilet rather than a land to graze animals and residents to enjoy without fear of excreta. We will be joining forces with T&M on an education and drive for responsible behaviours. You might have seen activity by a small army of various dayglo (both Pink and Yellow) jacketed volunteers in preparation for Hungerford's entry into Britain in Bloom in and around the town. Judging has been announced for the 10th of July. Sadly, we have had some plants stolen from along the Church wall already which were grown by the BIB team. I have now been informed that this has happened again. I really do not understand why some people find this acceptable.

We have as Smarten Up Hungerford re planted the Tubs and planters in the high street and other spots with new flowers for the summer period for all to enjoy and it is a significant challenge to keep them all watered until the contractors take over in June. If you do see someone struggling with watering cans please do lend a hand as its really appreciated.

A small team from HTC met with WBC regarding the issue of fly tipping at the recycling point in the station carpark. A number of proposals were taken away and we are looking forward to enforcement against the perpetrators going forward. Clearly it needs to be understood that it is not a rubbish tip or household waste dump. The message is if it is not recycling and in one of the various skips then it is fly tipping and not acceptable.

I can't attend June's Full Council meeting so deputy Mayor Chris Hall will be in the chair for his first chairing duty so please be kind to him.

Cllr Jerry Keates
Mayor

Finance & General Purposes 'End of Month Report' for Full Council of 1st June 2026

Income and Expenditure Report for May 2026 (Month 2)

| | | |
|-----|--------------------------|--|
| 101 | Finance | Bank interest of £603 received. |
| 102 | Administration | Actual Income over Expenditure £12,889 positive variance against budget. |
| 103 | Grants and Donations | Nothing to report. |
| 104 | Pool House | Actual Income over Expenditure £35 negative variance against budget. |
| 105 | Contingency | Nothing to report. |
| 107 | Environmental & Planning | Nothing to report. |
| 201 | Recreation and Amenities | Actual Income over Expenditure £2,089 positive variance against budget. |
| 202 | War Memorial Ground | Actual Expenditure over Budget £160 positive variance. |
| 203 | St. Saviours | Actual Income over Expenditure £376 positive variance against budget. |
| 204 | Croft Field | Actual Income over Expenditure £1,086 positive variance against budget. |
| 205 | Library | Nothing to report. |

