HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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

Present: Cllrs, Keates, Mulholland, Day, Terry, Cole, Reeves, Alford, Brunning, Hudson, Armstrong and Reed. Cllr Carlson entered later.

Also present: Members of the press and public, PC Mike Greaves-Hurd, and District Cllr Denise Gaines (DG)

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

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

FC202600153 **Note apologies for absence –** Cllrs Hall, Fyfe and Edginton. Also, two district councillors.

FC202600154 **Declarations of interest –** None

FC202600155 **Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 7th September 2026, and update on any actions.**
Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Day
Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 7th September were agreed.

Update on actions:

ACTION: The planning application for the moving of the telephone box is in progress. Clerk to continue to pursue.

ACTION: The salt bin at the top of school alley having been cleared of rubbish, is full again. Get rubbish removed and bin topped up with salt.
Cllr Carlson entered.
Network Rail have been put directly in touch with the school about their suggestion of artwork around anti littering. The Mayor advised there is a meeting with North Wessex Downs about signage at the station this week. No design for signage has been received yet from the Men's Shed.
Two of the actions from Part 2 are complete and the other is on-going.

FC202600156 **Receive Mayor's report. Refer to circulated report.** ***(Please see attached)***

FC202600157 **Receive District Councillor's reports –** ***This item was taken later when DG arrived.***

FC202600158 **Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns –** Cllr Armstrong questioned what was happening with the damaged brick pier next to the railings at the top of the high street. The Mayor advised it has been laid down safe and will be repaired and tied in.
Complaints have been received about the state of the high street with the amount of pigeon excrement and full bins. The Mayor advised that this has been reported to West Berks Council (WBC). Veolia hold the cleansing contract. What is the provision for holiday cover when Pete the streetcleaner is away?
DG entered.

ACTION: DG will chase up these concerns with Veolia.
The road markings at the Bear roundabout have worn away and are scheduled to be repainted. Marlborough now manage the highways contract, previously held by Volker, for WBC. 80% of staff have been tuped across.

FC202600159 **Propose authorisation of payment run** (circulated along with copies of invoices) for September.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Carlson
Resolution: Agree payment run of £22,191.59 for September.

FC202600160 **Propose accounts to date –** Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Carlson
Resolution: Propose the income over expenditure report for September of £270,895 with a positive variance and Cllr Mulholland's report ***(please see attached).***

FC202600157 **Receive District Councillor's reports –** DG advised WBC were asked to complete a consultation for the government on the scheme of delegation for planning to which they responded that they did not agree with it. However it is going ahead regardless from 31st Oct 2026. There will be two levels of planning applications. Status 1 will cover single homes, extensions etc. to which it will be illegal for WBC to take to committee. Status 2 will cover listed buildings etc. and District Councillors will be able to go to a nominated member and officer to plead their case. It would need to pass the gateway test. All the info can be found on the WBC website. DG advised the planning applications will be labelled with status 1 or 2 when they are issued. There will only be one committee instead of Western Area Planning and Eastern Area Planning. Cllr Cole expressed his extreme unhapiness with the changes and thinks they are a recipe for bribery and corruption. DG also expressed her dismay with the changes. She advised that the Padel courts may be a Status 1 and Aldi, Status 2. The District Parish Conference takes place on 13th Oct and will have slides on this topic. Some concern was expressed that Highways issues on these applications haven't been picked up. DG advised 95% of plans are delegated now and applications can't go to committee now as there is not enough time. The reason for the scheme of delegation is to speed up the amount of development.
The Local Government Reorganisation is paused because some councils have taken government to judicial review. Rayner has halted all apart from Surrey.
DG confirmed Regulation 3 planning applications will be a Status 2.

Police Report from PC Mike Greaves-Hurd – Every three months the Police send out a survey to the community. The survey showed that the public wish the police to focus on anti-social behaviour. They have recently seized two vehicles and arrested two drivers. The Police are deployed where they get the greatest number of calls so please continue to report crimes. A new priority will be set in the new year. A joint operation is underway with Wiltshire and Hampshire to crack down on hare coursing. Public are encouraged to report any suspicious 4x4 vehicles.
Cllr Armstrong suggested they take a sniffer dog to school alley.
The Mayor advised that at H&T Committee last week, WBC agreed to do a road safety study at each end of the high street. They will also investigate speeding on the Common and access for emergency vehicles at Eddington. This info will be passed onto the Police,

FC202600161 **Setting of budgets – Please note each committee will consider their budgets during their next meeting in November.** This was noted.

FC202600162 **Ratify recommendation from F&GP for no change to the financial regulations**
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Keates
Resolution: Agree recommendation from F&GP for no change to financial regulations

FC202600163 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals).
Details of Traffic Regulations for Canal Walk and Homefield Way, are available online from 8th Oct.
ACTION: The Clerk will circulate the traffic regulations and publicise as suggested by DG.
ACTION: DG will keep us updated on the progress with Chestnut Walk.
The asbestos and utilities have been removed from the building, so it is now bare. The procurement process to appoint contractors will take 6-8 weeks. DG requested that any complaints are passed onto her. WBC may hold public meetings when reaching milestones.
Cllr Cole read out his report on the railing's conservation project. ***Please see attached.***
ACTION: Advertise on social media a request for residents to donate any unwanted cobbles for the project.
HELP (Hungerford Environment & Local Projects) offered to help with the painting.

FC202600164 Discuss option for an additional CCTV camera south facing in Salisbury Road and provide an indication of costs – The Clerk advised she had received an indication of costs of between £4.5k and £5k to purchase and fit a new Tandem CCTV camera to the existing system. It would provide a 180-degree view, include a PTZ camera and be an improved spec. It was questioned if this is the priority location as other areas had been identified. There is limited budget and there may be a benefit of an economy of scale.
Proposed: Cllr Reeves
Seconded: Cllr Armstrong
ACTION: **Resolution:** Agree to price up suggested areas for CCTV coverage and bring back quotes to Full Council (as over £5K)

Public and press left at 8.00pm.

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.

FC202600165 Triangle Field Lease
It was noted that a lease of around 25-30 years would be usual for a sports club for them to be eligible for larger grants. Good governance was raised as being important along with maximising use of the facility.
ACTION: Clerk to pause discussions with solicitor, investigate option of using a consultant and obtain guidance from WBC.

Meeting closed 8.40pm

Hungerford Mayors report September 2026

Chestnut Walk public consultation meeting
I attended the WBC planning consultation at the youth and community centre on the 3rd of September. Myself and Cllr Sue Terry, gave a short presentation comparing the Hungerford proposal with a facility at Thatcham and outlining our non-planning concerns for local residents and any future guests. HTC also objected via the formal planning process on fundamental planning issues at HTC Environmental and planning committee meeting and presented at the western Area Planning meeting. The planning application was passed, and work has commenced on the property conversion. HTC will keep abreast of developments throughout this process.

Hungerford Twinning Association AGM
It was a pleasure for Deborah and I to attend the meeting and learn about the association. The eternal challenge is to attract younger people to carry on the good work that has been going since 1980! There will be a visit to Ligueil (pronounced leeguy) in 2027, and we are really looking forward to visiting and meeting everyone in the town. If you

would like to get involved (you don't have to speak French) then please do contact the association or HTC and we can pass on your details.

Poppy Thank you evening at RBL

Di loft hosted the event to thank everyone for their fund-raising participation and kick off the 2026 /27 collection. Certificates were presented to amazing poppy collectors for their dedication spanning many years giving their time for others. It would be wonderful if we could beat last year's total of over £32K with all monies going to the Royal British Legion. I would like to personally extend thanks to Di for the hard work and detailed planning, without which we would struggle to reach such a fantastic result. Thank you to all those who take time to remember those who have been in harm's way for our freedom. "All gave some, some gave all"

Chain AGM

I attend the Chain AGM held in the library and heard about the amazing work carried out by the organisation. This year they have replaced both the Handy Bus and the Chairman vehicle. The chain handy bus is a vital service for many elderly in the town and surrounding area and Chain are always seeking helpers in the form of volunteer drivers and bus assistants to help with passengers. If you have any free time and can help in any way, please do contact chain or HTC so we can pass on your details.

HTC Grant Awards

It was emotional and humbling to hear from so many organisations doing so much for those less fortunate and in some cases in extreme need. We had the honour to present the award certificates on the morning of Saturday 26th Sept at the Croft Activity Centre. For those who did not apply for a grant this year there will be a second opportunity to apply later this year.

Hungerford In Bloom Awards

This year has been particularly challenging with the extremes of heat and burden of watering and physical exertions for all gardeners. It was remarkable to see the amazing planting and dedication around our wonderful town. Well done to all who took part and it was a privilege to award the prizes this year. The town has looked truly beautiful and thank you so much for all of your hard work and not forgetting the stupendous vegetables!

WBC Traffic Surveys

At the HTC Highways and Transport committee meeting WBC highways agreed to conduct traffic safety surveys in the town. These are in response to traffic safety concerns acknowledged by your councillors. The focus areas this time will be the entry and exit speeds into and out of the high street and on the common. There will also be a parking and access survey carried out in Eddington.

TG Jones and Post Office counter closure

TG Jones have now formally announced the closure of the Hungerford branch and will be extracting themselves from the lease when they are able. This will also sadly mean the eventual closure of the post office counter business co located in the store, stated to be on 9th January 2027. Please be mindful and respectful to the staff at this difficult time who have been under pressure for some time. I had concerns that that TG Jones national divestment would affect our town some months ago and engaged our MP Lee Dillion to work on our behalf to determine the facts. Previous public announcements by the company stated no decisions had been made. They finally publicly confirmed closure this week.

I can now state that a few parties are interested in securing the lease, one of which is committed to keeping the post office counter business and its staff. For commercial and sensitivity reasons it is not possible to provide further details.

There have been a few questions asking why the counter can't go back into the post office building. The answer is that counters were divested in 2012 and therefore are 2 totally separate businesses.

Remembrance Reminder for November

The Hungerford Royal British Legion Remembrance Day will take place on Sunday 8th November this year.
If you are a Forces Veteran or if you know of one, please let them know that they are invited to march in the Hungerford RBL Remembrance Parade. Form up will be at 10:30 sharp outside the Town Hall.

Armistice day will be commemorated with a small service and the reading the names of local personnel who given their lives for our freedom on Wednesday 11th November commencing at 10:45AM at Bridge Street war memorial.

Cllr Jerry Keates
Hungerford Town Council
Mayor

Finance & General Purposes 'End of Month Report' for Full Council of 5th October 2026

Income and Expenditure Report for September 2026 (Month 6)

101	Finance	Bank interest of £638 received.
102	Administration	Actual Income over Expenditure £6,263 positive variance against budget, due in part to timing of invoices and salaries.
103	Grants and Donations	Actual Expenditure over Budget £500 negative variance.
104	Pool House	Actual Income over Expenditure £160 negative variance against budget.
105	Contingency	Nothing to report.
107	Environmental & Planning	Nothing to report.
201	Recreation and Amenities	Actual Income over Expenditure £1,468 positive variance against budget, due to timing of costs.
202	War Memorial Ground	Actual Expenditure over Budget £2 positive variance.
203	St. Saviours	Actual Income over Expenditure £358 positive variance against budget.
204	Croft Field	Actual Income over Expenditure £48 positive variance against budget.
205	Library Maintenance Costs	Actual Income over Expenditure £680 positive variance against budget, due to donation and timing of costs.
206	Triangle Field	Actual Income over Expenditure £609 positive variance against budget.
207	Flowers – HiB Hanging Baskets	Actual Income over Expenditure £157 negative variance against budget.
301	Christmas Lights	Actual Income over Expenditure £60 positive variance against budget, due to donation.
302	Highways	Actual Income over Expenditure £3,337 positive variance against budget, due to timing of costs.
303	CCTV	Actual Income over Expenditure £652 positive variance against budget, due to timing of maintenance.
901	Reserves	Expenditure of £2,709 against reserves.

Year to Date Income over Expenditure	**£270,895**
Variance from Budget	**Positive: £86,895**

Simon Mulholland
Chair of F&GP

4th October 2026

Brief report on the railings project - Cllr Cole

Brief in part because I cannot make a proposal under this section so there will be an agenda item at E&P which will cover Local Listing

Current status

- The welding is done
- Most of the paint is off bar the gate
- 4 main panels are rust-treated and primed, down to but not including the bottom rail

We still have to

- Get the gate shot-blasted
- Agree the shade of white topcoat
- Find some cobbles to at least go under the railings
- Remove unwanted concrete that is in the way of doing the job on the bottom rail
- Fill a couple of holes in the bollard / gatepost
- Complete rust treatment, prime and paint

Requirements from now

Muscle to take gate off and load to car.

Agree the shade of white – not modern "brilliant white". Stewart Hofgartner of "Below Stairs" has become a great supporter of the project as is Hugh Pihlens of the Virtual Museum. We have not asked Hugh yet, but we hope to get their agreement to the shade to be used.

Jerry had the idea that we could ask the town for any old unused cobbles that originally came from the High Street. If we were able to match locally that would be great – if that does not work, there are sources of supply and there may well be sources of cash (next year if necessary).

Jerry, you have told us that you will remove the concrete upstands.

Most of the work has been done by Helen, with a little help from Jane and from me and from Ollie from the Three Swans who was helping when the Britain in Bloom inspectors came round. If anyone else can spare time to do a little painting that would be great

Local Interest

From HTC's point of view, I am also pleased to report continuing and increasing highly positive interest from passing residents, who are now actually expressing thanks to Helen. Any questions to Helen.