HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Draft MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 2nd November 2026 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Keates, Mulholland, Day, Terry, Cole, Reeves, Brunning, Hudson, Armstrong, Reed. Carlson, Hall, Fyfe

Also present: Members of the press and public, PC Mike Greaves-Hurd.

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

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

The Mayor explained that the headteacher of John O Gaunt was due to present about plans for redevelopment of John O Gaunt School but has postponed as at this stage he has no plans to share. The head is due to meet with the Mayor and the Youth & Community Centre representative on 10th Nov.

Police Report from PC Mike Greaves-Hurd – Next Saturday 7th Nov at Hampstead Marshall Village Hall from 10am to 12 noon there will be a talk on how to stay safe with the Police, their cars and kit on show. It is open to all. They have received few calls about issues in Hungerford this month and are asking for info from the public to help get drugs off the streets. They are keen to issue warrants. Reports can be made anonymously via Crimestoppers. One of the councillors mentioned an incident on 31st Oct in the high street concerning a metal trough.

FC202600166 **Note apologies for absence –** Cllr Edginton. Also, two district councillors Cllr Dennis Benneyworth and Cllr Denise Gaines (DG)

FC202600167 **Declarations of interest –** None

FC202600168 **Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 5th October 2026, and update on any actions.**

Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Terry
Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 5th October were agreed. One abstention.

Update on actions:

The planning application for the moving of the telephone box has been validated and will now appear on the E&P agenda.

The salt bin at the top of school alley has been cleared of rubbish, again, and topped up with salt. The traffic regulations were publicised.

Chestnut Walk will be a regular agenda item on E&P to receive updates on progress from WBC.

A request for cobbles was put out in the Adviser and Penny Post. These would be perfect for use around the railings that are being renovated in the high street. There has been no response to date.

ACTION: Advertise request for cobbles on social media.
ACTION: Chase DG about Veolia's provision of holiday cover.

FC202600169 Receive report from the Hub – K Knight ***(Please see attached report)*** The Mayor introduced Keith as Chair of the Hungerford Library & Community Trust (HLCT). In addition to his report, Keith added that the price of electric is dearer than gas but solar has helped with their utility costs. Their ambition is to install air conditioning, and this would be paid for by external grants. If the initiative was successful, it would provide a cool space in the library in the summer and a warm space in the winter. The £10K grant they are requesting from Town Council is to cover their running costs. They pay staff, and business rates on the Curve shop and are disqualified for zero rates as they have two establishments. This totalled £2200 in backdated rates and £843 for this year's rates. On 5th Dec they will hold another quiz night. These are new fundraisers and have been successful.
It was questioned if a battery for the solar panels would help. Keith said it was marginal when they looked at it initially, but it is worth considering again. It was explained that four quotes for air conditioning had been obtained and different designs considered. The height of the air con units will be level with the lighting and be hung on the two main beams to be most efficient. Cost is in excess of £30k. It was queried if Town Council should pay as much as the £10k grant requested and it was suggested meetings could be held in Croft Field.
Keith explained the grant is important particularly as they get it matched by Greenham Trust. They obtain external grants for all the building improvements, and our grant would help cover the running costs only. They will need to raise £12K themselves. In real terms the £10K is 30% less than last year.
Christine from HLCT explained that the Curve is an important part of the community and it helps some contributors with mental health issues. It was also noted that Hungerford library is the first carbon neutral library in the UK which is a fantastic achievement. They confirmed it is their aspiration to put up blinds, and they are improving all the fire doors in line with regulations.
Thanks were expressed to Keith and the Hub.

FC202600170 Receive Mayor's report. Refer to circulated report. ***(Please see attached)***

FC202600171 Receive District Councillor's reports excluding planning – No District Councillors were present**.**

FC202600172 Planning – **To include the outcome of two recent Western Area Planning decisions, and the potential effects of the demise of the Western Area Planning Committee.**
(***Please refer to the attached two reports: from Cllr Cole and from a resident of 102 High Street)***
It was noted that a conservation officer had said that precedent doesn't apply in planning.
However if there is no good reason to stop a development it will be overturned at appeal.
As a result of the reading out of the attached reports the following proposal was agreed.
Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Terry

ACTION: **Resolution:** To request a ward member delays the decision notice on 100 High St, due to the lack of appropriate due diligence given when considering the application at the Western Area planning meeting. (Two abstentions – Cllrs Carlson and Reeves).

Cllr Cole said he expects District Councillors (DCs) to get more involved in planning, but this will be difficult with only two DCs in future. It was suggested that we hold a regular forum for people to attend or invite planners to come to E&P to tell us what we need to do. How do we use and improve our NDP to keep it relevant?
Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Carlson

ACTION: **Resolution:** To investigate how our NDP can be used and kept relevant and how ward councillors can be more involved in planning. Invite WBC planners to consult with us in January.

FC202600173 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns –
A large corner verge at the top of Priory Road and Priory Avenue was going to have posts installed to stop cars mounting the pavement to park on the grass. This has not happened.

ACTION: Clerk to chase Heather Young for posts to be installed and double yellow lines. Report back to H&T.

ACTION: Cllr Fyfe to forward photos of the cars parked on the verge.

Another complaint was received about the state of the high street with the amount of pigeon excrement. Town & Manor are looking into this.

FC202600174 **Propose authorisation of payment run** (circulated along with copies of invoices) for October.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Carlson
Resolution: Agree payment run of £31,873.09 for October.

FC202600175 **Propose accounts to date –** Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Hall
Resolution: Propose the income over expenditure report for October of £246,340 with a positive variance of £86,190 and Cllr Mulholland's report ***(please see attached)***

FC202600176 **Propose completion of limited assurance review 2025-26 (External Auditor's Report)**
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Carlson
Resolution: Accept the limited assurance review 2025-26. One abstention (Cllr Armstrong)
Thanks, and well done were expressed to our RFO for a clean audit.

FC202600177 **New event: An Illuminated Vehicle Parade is happening in Hungerford on Saturday 19th December 2026. –** The Mayor read out the following:

The parade will set off from Hungerford Rugby Club at 6.30pm, travelling along Priory Road, down the High Street, around Charnham Park and then back up the High Street to finish at the Rugby Club where the bar will be open and all are welcome.

We'd love to see as many vehicles as possible joining in the fun! Tractors, cars, floats and vehicles of all types are welcome — the more Christmas lights, the better!

If you would like to enter your vehicle, please arrive at Hungerford Rugby Club by 6pm at the latest and let us know you're coming by emailing the Clerk. Please note that there will be no road closures in place, so walking displays cannot be accommodated.

FC202600178 **Consider CCTV quotations –** The Clerk explained that quotations had been requested for three locations: top of High Street capturing the mini roundabout, Bridge St and Skate Park Car Park. Whilst the first two are feasible, the latter is more difficult due to access to electric and broadband. Solar and sim cards are an alternative option.
ACTION: Add to the H&T agenda budget item to consider quotations for CCTV.

FC202600179 **Ramsbury Play Park –** We have been waiting for West Berks Council (WBC) to draw up a draft lease for this park for a while. A recent ROSPA received shows the condition of the equipment has deteriorated since we expressed our interest. The Multiplay unit is recommended for replacement and other items require repair. The grass is also overgrown; the trees need trimming and work to the gate is needed.
Proposed: Cllr Fyfe
Seconded: Cllr Armstrong
ACTION: **Resolution:** Clerk to write a letter to WBC stating that the playpark needs to be in a fully serviceable state in order for us to adopt it and WBC need to be diligent with cutting the grass. We need to agree a transfer date and an amount of money.
ACTION: Cllr Reeves to ring Matt Hart at WBC to get the grass cut.

FC202600180 **Supporting Peoples Emergency Briefing – To consider proposing the following:**

- To publicly support the National Emergency Briefing initiative's call for a live, televised emergency briefing introduced by the PM and the UK's Chief Scientific Advisor and delivered by independent experts.
- Inform residents including via [Council]'s social media channels and local press and media, of this decision;

- Make council-operated venues available for community screenings of, and discussions around, the People's Emergency Briefing.
- Write to [local MPs names] to inform them that this motion has been passed and urge them to sign up to join the Parliamentary Call for a live, televised emergency briefing.
- Write to the National Emergency Briefing team expressing [Council]'s support via councils@nebriefing.org.

Council felt they could not vote on the above as not enough members had viewed the Briefing.
Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Armstrong
ACTION: **Resolution:** Invite HEAT (Hungerford Environmental Action Team) to show the film to the Council. One abstention.

FC202600181 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals).
The Mayor mentioned the parade will form up outside the Town Hall for Remembrance Sunday at 10.30am. Cllr Day is in charge of the marshalls and has a written briefing.

Public and press left..

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.

FC202600182 Triangle Field Lease
ACTION: Cllr Hall will chair a working party consisting of the Mayor, Cllrs Hudson, Carlson, Day and Fyfe.
ACTION: Cllr Reeves will forward an RFP.

FC202600183 Future use of Newton's Garden and terms – The Mayor and Clerk have met with Oaklands school who have expressed an interest in using the green space. The Mayor has met with the lady who gifted the land and she would welcome this. Support was expressed for renting the land for a 3- or 5-year period with the first year rent free in exchange for installing a water supply.

FC202600184 Consider drafted Terms and Conditions for HTC
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Keates
ACTION: **Resolution:** Adopt the terms and conditions for standard services. 3 abstentions.

Meeting closed 9.20pm

Hungerford Mayors report October 2026

The opening of the Judiciary Reading

Deborah and I were honoured to represent Hungerford at the ceremonial event to mark the opening of the legal year. It was a great opportunity to engage with other mayors from across Berkshire and share experiences and best practice. The procession and church service was followed by a networking event allowing all participants to mingle, share and make connections across the county.

"Air Swimming" 2 person play by the Hungerford Theatre

We attended another magnificent stripped back play based on a true story of 2 women held in a mental asylum for the criminally insane for over 50 years. Their crimes? Suffering parental abuse resulting in a baby that was taken away and being different and wanting to be like your brothers. Sad poignant, gut wrenching and brilliant production by the Hungerford Theatre company

Medal presentations for the Hungerford Junior Touch Rugby Tournament

It was wonderful to witness the hard work by the Hungerford Rugby Club to deliver an outstanding event for junior players from across the region. The weather was perfect with a little overnight rain to ensure a good playing surface. I thoroughly enjoyed presenting 250 medals for all who took part in this inclusive event. I have to say the team from Hungerford were simply phenomenal, but I might just be a little biased!

The Royal British Legion Hungerford Branch Poppy Concert

Under the leadership of the musical director Tim Crouter the Hungerford Town band conducted a fabulous afternoon of entertainment in St Lawrences Church. Each time I hear them I am amazed by their professionalism and musical prowess. The solo performances were sublime and using a tuba in place of a cello in one of the arrangements was inspirational. Please support whenever you can. You will not be disappointed.

Quiz night in aid of the Hungerford Youth and Community Centre and the Kennet Wetlands project

Great event with very tricky questions and a silent auction with much merriment. Having won the quiz in 2025 the Hungerford Youth and Community Centre organised this year's event and jointly shared the evenings proceeds with the Kennet Wetland Trust. A group of us ensured a deserving young lady received the hover board (donated by John Shatford) she had her eye on for most of the evening. However, things got interesting when I was challenged to ride it up the high street for an outstanding additional £100 donation by a certain person called Nick. So, what's a mayor to do? Well of course I have accepted the challenge and another donation of £50 and will be undertaking lessons with a view to a fund-raising event for the Youth and Community Centre and the Kennet Wetlands Trust charities. It is hoped this challenge (spectacle) will take place in mid-January 2027. So, get your hands in your pockets and come and support an old man making a fool of himself. (Watch this space for more information).

Hungerford Freedom of the Town Awards

It is always humbling to see the selfless work carried out in and around our town making it an enchanting place to live and call home. The award of Freedom of the Town is the very best opportunity to honour and recognise those individuals who have gone above and beyond for the benefit of others. It was a privilege on Sunday 18th October to present the new awardees David Howard, David Small, Keith Knight, and Helen Simpson with their medals and citations. You can read their achievements on the HTC website and in Penny Post. They are invited to turn on the Christmas lights on Sunday 29th November with the event starting at 4 PM.

Hungerford Rotary 40th Anniversary Black Tie dinner

Deborah and I were honoured to be invited to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Hungerford Rotary at a black-tie event in the Croft Hall. We listened to accounts of fund-raising events and saw the incredible results their work has achieved both in our town and around the world. The stalwarts of Rotary lead by the president Robin Dudney were wonderful hosts and explained their eternal challenge is to attract younger members to carry on the good work into the future. Volunteers are being actively sought to carry on the great work and have a wonderful time doing it. Local enquiries to Nick Wedgwood or their Facebook page.

Hungerford Leisure Centre 30 Year Celebrations

It was a pleasure to attend and mark the 30-year anniversary of the Hungerford Leisure centre. WBC Chair Cllr Stephanie Steevenson spoke of her delight in celebrating success of the facility and complimented Everything Active in their long-term investment and ongoing management. She emphasised WBC's commitment to Hungerford Leisure Centre and how absolutely vital it is for communities to enjoy fitness and wellbeing locally.

Remembrance Reminder for November 8th at 10:30AM

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 by reading the names of local heroes who given their lives for our freedom. It will commence at 10:45AM on Wednesday 11th November at Bridge Street war memorial.

Cllr Jerry Keates
Hungerford Town Council
Mayor

HUB/Hungerford Library and Community Trust report

Agenda Item No: FC202600169 Hungerford Library & Community Trust Grant 2027

Background

The yearly application for a grant to support the Hungerford Library & Community Trust for financial year 2027-28. Since June 2018 the trust has taken over the running of the Hungerford Library building (except for the Town Council Office and the public toilets). Hungerford Town Council have now leased the building from West Berkshire Council for 99 years at peppercorn rent of £5 pa and HLCT is sub-leasing the building from HTC.

I must point out that since the Library building has been taken over by HTC four significant financial benefits have occurred as follows:

1) The rent for the office of £5,000pa (in 2018 would be £8,100 at today's prices) paid by HTC to WBC (since 2009) is no longer paid.
2) Since 2017 WBC required an annual levy to be paid for a continuation for the library service of £1.00 per resident which would be £5,800 per annuum in the case of Hungerford. (Thatcham and Newbury Town councils pay £24,000 and £32,000 respectively) Due to the arrangements with Hungerford Library this levy has been waivered by WBC.
3) All HTC committee meetings and since 2022 monthly Full Council meetings have been transferred from the Town Hall building (run by Town & Manor) to the library resulting in an annual hire fee saving of approx. £3,900. This does deprive the trust from hiring out during council meetings resulting in less rental income.
4) The electricity and gas heating usage by the Town Council is paid by the trust. The total running costs have risen to £7000 pa for the whole building. During 2022 the trust has now installed a Electric Heat Source pump and control system at a cost of £15,000 resulting in improved green footprint for the building and the removal of gas usage since September 2022. Our electricity usage will rise but gas is no longer required I'm making an assumption that energy prices for 2026-27 will drop to £4000 pa after the installation of solar panels during 2025. The new outside pod installed in the car park takes its power supply from The Hub.

The takeover of the building lease by HTC means that just over £18,000 does not need to be paid to WBC and the Town & Manor. HTC does now pay for building insurance and exterior maintenance while HLCT pay for liability and contents insurance. HTC are currently holding approx. £11,000 in reserves for external building repairs.

All other running costs and further investment for the interior of the building are now paid for by the trust. The trust fundraise and hires the building out to the community & local businesses to generate revenue for these running costs of approx. £9000 in year 22/23 Whilst the revenue raised was increasing with regular booking established it is currently around 30% of the costs required. Covid 19 had a dramatic effect on fundraising with the building being closed for a total of 9 months in two periods of lockdown and ALL bookings cancelled revenue fell by around £8000. The Library has been reopened since July 2021 with bookings and revenue are starting to return to previous levels. Currently the running costs are around £32,000 PA. The hub employs a Hub manager who is seeking to increase fundraising and revenue opportunities.

Objective

To secure a grant for the financial year 2027/28 of £10,000 (last year £10,000 was also awarded which has been held since 2018 at this level) This grant if you take into account the £18,000 benefit that HTC now enjoy means that the council still have a significant gain of approx. **£75,000** to date with this arrangement (see table below) The trust is trying to manage its affairs in a prudent manner and has continued plans for a series of improvements to the building to help generate additional income and to improve the building environment. The financial strength of the Trust ensures that this long-term project does not fail.

Council Saving Benefits Since 2018

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Projected 2027
Office Rental Paid to West Berks Council	£5,000	£5,087	£5,137	£5,267	£5,637	£6,019	£6,236	£6,492	£6,758	£6,994
Room hire costs to Town & Manor	£2,800	£2,849	£2,877	£2,949	£3,156	£3,371	£3,492	£3,618	£3,748	£3,879
Charge for Library Service Imposed by West Berk	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£5,800	£6,003
Total Costs savings by HTC	**£15,618**	**£15,755**	**£15,834**	**£16,037**	**£16,615**	**£17,213**	**£17,552**	**£17,935**	**£18,332**	£18,974
Accumlative savings since 2018	£15,618	£31,373	£47,207	£63,244	£79,859	£97,072	£114,624	£132,559	£150,891	£156,172
Grant to HCLT	£10,000	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£9,000	£10,500	**£10,000**	**£10,000**
Accumaltive Grant	£10,000	£19,000	£28,000	£37,000	£46,000	£55,000	£64,000	£74,500	£84,000	£94,000
Net Savings to HTC per year	£5,618	£6,755	£6,834	£7,037	£7,615	£8,213	£8,552	£7,435	£8,332	£8,974
Accumlative savings since 2018	£5,618	£12,373	£19,207	£26,244	£33,859	£42,072	**£50,624**	**£57,872**	**£66,204**	**£75,178**
								to date		

* Note HTC hold a reserve for external repairs to the building of £11000.

Projects undertaken since taking over building in 2018

1) New Kitchen has been installed into the building (this was paid for by a Tesco Grant)
2) A total of 50 new folding chairs have been purchased to enable the Hub to hold meetings and events in the building
3) New book racks on wheels have been purchased to enable the space in library to be opened up for events.
4) New LED lighting installed saving running costs. (a grant of £5,000 secured from WBC)
5) The rear garden has been landscaped (during summer 2020) with a new wooden fence, shed and seating at a cost of £4000
6) The internal layout has recently been changed which involved moving data cabling and power for the WBC PCs and acquiring some new furniture.
7) The outside lighting has been replaced with energy efficient LEDs during summer 2021 helping to reduce electricity usage.
8) Refurbishment of The Curve (room at front of library) New LED lights , racking and new furniture and decoration.(summer 2021) Note that West Berkshire council now charges the hub business rates for the shop which was backdated to when the shop opened in 2021 , resulting in a charge of £2,200 this financial year and an ongoing charge of approx. £700 per year going forward.
9) The Hub building space is now used as a venue by Hungerford based groups and charities we have offered a reduced rental to these groups such as CHAIN , Hungerford Theatre Group, Hungerford Cancer support and the U3A who have all benefited from this Hub initiative.
10) Installation of electric Heat Source pump and new heating control system for the building replacing the original gas boiler when the building was constructed in 2008.
11) To Improve the green footprint solar panels on roof have now been installed (spring 2025)to generate electricity (savings in running costs) This will cost £35,000 with funding via The Greenham Trust.

Future Projects

1) Install Air Conditioning in the building
2) Installation of a disabled toilet for users
3) To continue to offer reduced rental space to ALL Hungerford based charities and groups on a permanent basis.

Options.

Agree/disagree with the objective above or award a different amount.

Financial and Legal implications

Awarding this grant from annual savings as described still leaves council with a £6k surplus.

Other information

Risks:

- Trust would **fail** without access to sufficient grants resulting in Town Council having to run the building itself at greater cost.
- If building handed back to WBC approx. £18,000 of annual costs would be incurred by HTC.
- Flagship project held in high esteem by West Berkshire Council could fail resulting loss of reputation for Hungerford and the Town Council.

Benefits:

- Maintain Library and Hub community building in Hungerford to the benefit of all users and residents

Recommendation
Continue to provide an annual grant to the trust for the year 2026/27 for an amount of £10,000.

Signed: Keith Knight (Chair of Trustees) 28th October 2026

Report from Cllr Cole – FC202600172

This item is intended to cover

- Chestnut Walk
- 100 High Street
- The future in the light of no Western Area Planning

Please note that I have been specifically asked to avoid mention of councillor names.

I start with **100 High Street because** this agenda item was prompted by an email from a resident Ed Pellew sent initially to a Hungerford and Kintbury ward councillor and copied to a number of us – you have all seen it subsequently.

Ed said "**I am even more concerned by the reasoning offered in support of approval".** Of course he was unhappy with the result but the content of his email is all about how the result was reached.

I have picked only 4 paragraphs of a long and well-written email – please assume for each that Ed is reacting to something said at Western Area by one of our ward councillors

This is not a picturesque historic street through which visitors wander. It is a proposed dwelling concealed behind Hungerford High Street, within its historic burgage plot layout, accessed via a private, enclosed dead-end route. The development would be invisible from the public street. There is no public footpath, no attractive streetscape for tourists to admire and no wider public experience of the development of the kind you described. Its consequences would instead be experienced by neighbouring residents.

More fundamentally, your comparison suggests a misunderstanding of the particular historic character of this part of Hungerford. Its burgage plots and their relationship to the High Street are not interchangeable with picturesque lanes in other historic towns. That this comparison came from a ward councillor representing Hungerford is especially concerning.

Later he writes

What I question is how the benefit of one new private dwelling was judged sufficient to justify a lasting deterioration in the residential amenity of at least five existing households, particularly when part of the positive case presented rested on an analogy so fundamentally disconnected from the reality of the site

And later again

You acknowledged that you had not attended the site visit, yet opened the debate with a favourable assessment based on your initial impression of the plans, without explaining how the detailed evidence of harm had informed your judgement.

I have to say that I agreed with Ed and I hope that the bits that I have picked to read out make sense to those that do know Hungerford.

The original recipient of the email has responded at length; however that email says "I had another engagement on the day of committee site visits, as the Council's representative on North Wessex Downs National Landscape and Vice Chair of its government body. It was their Annual Forum in the Hungerford Corn Exchange".

Yes, it was – I attended all of that Forum bar three quarters of an hour out at the site visit to 100 High Street with the agreement of the National Landscape CEO; and I am sorry I seem to have missed seeing you during the day.

Ed gives credit to the other two councillors – "both took the time to respond to residents".

However, rewatching the meeting:
One of them told us in a three minute speech of being appalled about the street scene but from 30 seconds into the speech for the next 2 and a half minutes we heard about the NPPF, that 1 dwelling was less harmful than the previous application for 2, that changes to a Conservation Area were regrettable, that it was less of a problem for parking, but that one Councillor from outside Hungerford had had to pay for parking.
Loss of gardens was mentioned and presumption in favour of development was stated twice.
There was no mention of the effect on the neighbours. One sixth of the time speaking as ward member for the town, none for the neighbouring residents, five sixths for West Berks.
The other councillor had the right to speak as ward member but was absent.

When it came to the debate that led to the decision the recipient of the email admitted not being at the site visit but on balance thought it looked as if it should be approved
One West Berks councillor got it entirely right about the impact on 102's garden, the Chair very clearly sympathised, another West Berks councillor said the application did not deliver that much benefit, did not weigh the heritage aspects properly, and the neighbour's issues added weight to the Heritage side, and offered to propose against the application.
However, our ward councillor was clear about what needed to be achieved, and stated so, promoting that this application should go through. Our other ward councillor had the opportunity to change the way this went - there is no doubt in my mind that legitimate planning reasons such as the neighbour issues and heritage aspects were not fully taken into account in the Planning Balance and there is no doubt in my mind that our ward councillors could have changed the outcome but both chose not to support Hungerford.

Chestnut Walk

Circumstances were different – Sue did a great job setting out what should have been done (far better than I – she will do far better than I if Hungerford finds itself at a planning committee in the future);
However the outcome was similar
In short form
One ward councillor took the Ward member slot and spoke openly on behalf on West Berks – it was legal as confirmed by West Berks Council Legal.
Another told us amongst other things of living in a mixed neighbourhood and implied that Hungerford people should live the same way.
Our third ward councillor was not to be seen
So of course it went through.
There was no ward member support for Hungerford

I note one thing – if a Neighbourhood Plan is not specific on a point it can be ignored – on Chestnut Walk we were told that Hungerford's Plan addresses Permanent Dwellings but not Transient accommodation and that the Plan Housing Mix covers all types of people – had this been permanent accommodation the Hungerford Plan would have had more weight, probably enough to make the difference. It seems Neighbourhood Plans must cover everything or they are open to being ignored.

Turn to the future

As of now as we know there are no more committees for the majority of applications – exceptions include applications of 10 or more new houses and that some Listed Building consents can go to committee, but by far the majority of what we see here will never go anywhere near a committee.
At present we have 2 applications of particular interest.

A supermarket – the website shows 4 public objections and 284 public supporters

Some Padel courts – that last Western Area Planning refused to agree a Padel application not very far away from Hungerford, but made clear that in general Padel was to be supported and that the applicant should put in another – different – application. On ours there are a couple of objections and we have been told that there is a lot of local support.

Without going into details on these this evening for this "future" I would like to know

- What our ward councillors are going to do on behalf of Hungerford?
- What Hungerford should do about its Neighbourhood Plan?
- Particularly in the light of the return of Ridgeway and the expected move of the HQ of West Berks to Didcot, how should HTC approach Planning?

Member of Public's speech on 100 High Street - FC202600172

Thank you for allowing me to speak and thank you to Hungerford Town Council for taking residents' concerns seriously.

I'm here representing myself and other neighbouring residents affected by the proposed development at 100 High Street. I live at 102 High Street, immediately adjoining the site.

Our concern is not simply that the Planning Committee approved the application. It's whether the decision was reached with a proper understanding of the site and its consequences for neighbouring homes.

The committee approved one additional private dwelling despite the anticipated loss of residential amenity to at least five existing households. One committee member even described my property as a 'loser'.

But my greatest concern comes from Councillor Vickers' subsequent written response to an email I sent.

He acknowledged paying relatively little attention to the application beforehand, missing the site visit and entering the debate predisposed to support approval.

This raises the question about possible predetermination. Councillors are of course entitled to have an initial view, but they must remain open to changing their minds in light of evidence.

More seriously, he acknowledged that the committee's inability to access the site was problematic and that members considered deferral. Yet he explained that a further site visit would have been pointless because the committee was about to be reorganised.

Surely the deciding factor should have been whether members had sufficient information to make a properly informed decision, regardless of administrative changes?

He also placed considerable weight on permissions granted in 2016. But those permissions have lapsed, and at the time, neighbouring properties were under different ownership arrangements, some were empty or tenanted, and affected residents were largely unaware of the proposals.

Residents have now submitted extensive evidence of the harm this development would cause, particularly given the unique relations shop between Noos. 100 and 102, which cannot be fully appreciated from plans and photographs alone.

If the earlier permissions effectively settled these questions, what meaningful weight was given to the evidence submitted during this new planning process?

I recognise that overturning planning permission is difficult. But judicial review is not the only mechanism. Under Section 97 of the Town and Country Planning Act, West Berkshire Council also has powers to revote or modify a permission in appropriate circumstances.

I would therefore ask Hungerford Town Council to take three practical steps:

First, seek a formal explanation of why the application proceeded despite the acknowledged difficulties inspecting the site.

Second, establish how the 2016 permissions were weighted against the new evidence submitted residents.

Third, formally request urgent legal advice on the decision-making process, including possible pretermination, and consideration of the available legal options, including Section 97.

We are not asking anyone to overturn a decision simply because residents disagree with it. We are asking whether it was lawfully and properly reached, and whether there is a route to reconsidering it.
These decisions have permanent consequences for people's homes. The very least residents deserve is confidence that the evidence was properly considered.
Thank you

Finance & General Purposes 'End of Month Report' for Full Council of 2nd November 2026

Income and Expenditure Report for October 2026 (Month 7)

101	Finance	Bank interest of £618 received.
102	Administration	Actual Income over Expenditure £3,951 positive variance against budget, due in part to timing of invoices and salaries.
103	Grants and Donations	Actual Expenditure over Budget £800 negative variance.
104	Pool House	Nothing to report.
105	Contingency	Nothing to report.
107	Environmental & Planning	Nothing to report.
201	Recreation and Amenities	Actual Income over Expenditure £4,135 positive variance against budget, due to timing of costs.
202	War Memorial Ground	Actual Expenditure over Budget £136 positive variance.
203	St. Saviours	Actual Income over Expenditure £988 positive variance against budget.
204	Croft Field	Actual Income over Expenditure £292 positive variance against budget.
205	Library Maintenance Costs	Nothing to report.
206	Triangle Field	Actual Income over Expenditure £354 positive variance against budget.
207	Flowers – HiB Hanging Baskets	Actual Income over Expenditure £347 negative variance against budget due largely to timing of donations budget.
301	Christmas Lights	Nothing to report.
302	Highways	Actual Income over Expenditure £1,692 positive variance against budget, due to timing of costs.
303	CCTV	Actual Income over Expenditure £30 positive variance against budget.
901	Reserves	Expenditure of £2,830 against reserves, due to extra grass cuts, railings (£1,919), Newton Garden allotments (£340) and winter planting for SUH (£571).

Year to Date Income over Expenditure	**£246,340**
Variance from Budget	**Positive: £86,190**

Simon Mulholland
Chair of F&GP

30th October 2026