

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor  
Cllr Keith Knight  
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The Town Clerk  
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**MINUTES of the Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 7.00pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford.

**Present:** Cllrs Knight, Simpson, Crane, Farrell, Winser, Chicken, Hudson, Small, Cusack, Downe, Brookman and Benneyworth

Also: Brian Quinn (Penny Post), John Garvey (Newbury News), PCSO Lee Bremner, Suzanne Taylor (Hungerford Nursery School), Paul Hewer and James Podger (District Councillors), Geoff Greenland (HAHA Chair), Hilary Cole (Deputy Leader WBC) and Gary Lugg (Head of Planning and Development WBC) and several members of the public.

**Police Report:** PCSO Lee Bremner reported on events from January to date. Overnight on the 21<sup>st</sup> January a blue 2013 registered BMW was stolen without keys. Between the 31<sup>st</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February, 3 vans were broken into with theft of tools and equipment in Bulpit Lane. The police are reminding people to take their tools and valuables inside overnight. Overnight on the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> February a purse was stolen in a residential burglary. Police have received reports of youngsters playing chicken on their bikes. Sgt Hawkett went to the Youth & Community Centre to talk to the youngsters and has identified and spoken to 2 youths. The mobile police unit 'Have your say' will be back in Tesco's car park every third Wednesday of the month starting on 21<sup>st</sup> February from 10.00am – 1.00pm.

Cllr Farrell asked how many police are covering Hungerford at any one time. There is an allocated shift car on duty every night but every free unit will respond to a 999 call. All the above incidents had not been discovered until the next morning. Cllr Farrell asked how big an area does the shift car cover. There may be more than one unit on duty it depends on what is happening and the work load. For example, today there had been 4 units in the area covering Hungerford, Lambourn and Kintbury.

**Hungerford Nursery School:** Suzanne Taylor reported the Nursery has an SLA for the Family Centre and has a teaching and training base which covers an area of 160 square metres with 953 under 5s. The nursery takes children aged 2-4 and currently has 122 children. The teaching/training base covers Hungerford, Wiltshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire. Last year the nursery gained an Outstanding Ofsted award for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row. It has just been awarded 'National Support School Status' which is hugely significant and there are very few of these across the country. This means they can work with any school in need. They achieved an Outstanding Food Trust Award and since the implementation of the 30 hours they now offer free school meals to a small number (approx. 6%) of children. They have a new website. 75% of parents came to their Open Morning. They are improving outcomes for children with special needs and are looking to recruit new governors. Their main challenge is financial and their 2019/2020 budget will be cut. They will need to find £20k (20% of their budget). The Family Centre offers various sessions including supporting vulnerable women, parenting and baby massage, focussing on mental health, substance abuse/alcoholism, offering peer support for employment. There is currently no charge for these sessions. The priority is to increase the income from teaching and to set up a CIO to apply for grants. They are looking for a part time grant finder. Cllr Knight offered to help with the CIO. Cllr Crane offered congratulations to Suzanne on behalf of the council for her recent Queens Award.

1. **Apologies:** Noted from Cllr Whiting
2. **Declaration of Interests:** Cllrs Winser, Small and Knight – Triangle Field Management Committee (TFMC), Cllrs Simpson and Knight (Library)

3. **Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and outcome of actions** - *Cllr Small proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Crane, 2 abstentions and rest in favour.*
4. **Neighbourhood plan – Cllr Hilary Cole and Gary Lugg (West Berkshire Council) to speak**

**- Any further matters for consideration followed by a vote on how to proceed**

Cllr Downe asked how our Neighbourhood Plan would fit with the new Local Plan WBC is currently drawing up and would WBC let Hungerford determine where and how their contribution is made. Cllr Lugg advised there is a planning hierarchy which has to be followed which is National Policy / Local Policy, Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Downe has led a successful NP elsewhere and asked if WBC would work with Hungerford as it is 6 years since legislation came into effect and there are a limited number of NPs in West Berkshire. Cllr Cole replied there is a commitment from WBC but the desire for a NP has to come from the local community. Locals need to accept development but some areas may not be acceptable and that is where there will need to be negotiation.

Cllr Lugg advised 4 other local communities are embarking on NPs – Cold Ash, Compton, Tilehurst and Burghfield. The timing is perfect as WBC is starting on their own Local Plan.

Cllr Downe agreed the timing is good but what we have seen previously from WBC has not been encouraging and would there be renewed energy from those who would be involved at WBC.

Cllr Lugg said it was not such good timing back then, but now they are conscious of both the pros and cons of NPs.

V Crane asked what would be the cost of a NP; Cllr Cole advised that in the case of Stratfield Mortimer, 8 meetings were held before anything was drafted. Costs to WBC included £10k for the referendum election and £30k for the whole process. WBC does get help with funding for the first 5 NPs.

Cllr Farrell said that at a previous meeting with B Lyttle from WBC he had said a NP would make no difference in Hungerford. Cllr Lugg said HTC can land manage what happens in Hungerford providing the NP conforms and it will give more control at local level.

Cllr Farrell asked how long a NP will realistically stay in force as WBC's Local Plan run to 2036. Cllr Lugg replied WBC Local Plans are reviewed every 5 years and if there were no significant changes our NP would not change. If population numbers change, our NP would need reviewing. Government legislation allows NPs to be reviewed in the case of small changes, if there are large changes the NP needs to go to referendum.

Cllr Farrell asked if we had a NP would we be able to negotiate and Cllr Lugg said dialogue exists but is bound by policies. WBC would need to explain better why they are making certain decisions.

He was asked to explain why there was an extraordinary reason to override the AONB status. He advised AONB has national status and there are 2 levels, one when producing a Local Plan and one with applications. Significant weight given depends on government policies. The judge supported their decision at judicial review.

Cllr Crane asked about Brownfield sites. WBC replied they always look at Brownfield sites but there are nowhere near enough.

Cllr Benneyworth asked how WBC thought their relationship with Stratfield Mortimer had changed since they adopted their NP. Cllr Lugg said Stratfield Mortimer now has a much better understanding; they had 100 houses to allocate and were given the options of where they could go.

Cllr Downe asked the extent to which WBC would allow Hungerford to take on the allocation, Cllr Lugg confirmed WBC would leave the fulfilment to Hungerford providing it was in conformity. Regarding the protection of Employment sites, as WBC would also be starting a new Local Plan there would be dialogue about this and the key target would be to deliver affordable housing.

Cllr Cole said WBC is committed to affordable housing. Rural exception sites can be 100% affordable. For development on Greenfield the requirement is 40% and 30% on Brownfield.

Cllr Farrell asked how WBC would view self-build homes if we went with a NP, Cllr Cole said this was not an issue provided it was monitored so people cannot bend the rules.

J Booth asked how many houses Hungerford should take over the next 5-10 years. Cllr Lugg replied with the 100 already allocated and 30 through Windfall a year, that is it. There is a 635 allocation across West Berkshire.

Cllr Winsor asked what is WBC view on bringing empty properties back into use. Cllr Lugg said there are currently 95 across West Berkshire but the reality is that WBC does not have the resources to pursue this.

Cllr Hudson asked why WBC does not use Brownfield sites first. Cllr Lugg said in relation to the station development it cannot be used as it is a Protected Employment site. The existing Brownfield sites in Hungerford will be used as Windfall sites. Cllr Hudson asked when there will be a review of Employment sites, Cllr Lugg said we need to identify a need, look at what we have and where will it go. The review will be part of the new Local Plan.

Cllr Chicken asked if Employment sites can be elsewhere, other than the town centre and Cllr Lugg said these can be taken into account but would not necessarily replace like for like.

Cllr Cole mentioned West Berkshire has excellent superfast broadband which encourages more remote working, WBC considers Hungerford to be a Rural Service Centre. She encourages us to do a NP but we should not underestimate the amount of time it will take.

Cllr Podger commented that planning applications can be challenged and Government Inspectors can overturn local council decisions. Cllr Lugg said the Government requirement is a 5 year housing supply and with a NP in place there is limited protection for a number of years.

Cllr Winsor asked who would be prepared to put themselves forward to prepare the NP and Cllr Knight replied he is looking for a team of around 7 or 8 people, with 5 or 6 names who have already come forward.

Cllr Downe proposed in principle to go ahead with a NP but he would like to have a commitment from WBC that they will provide strategic executive support and provide a timetable for us to work alongside. This was seconded by Cllr Simpson but other councillors were not happy with this proposal.

Cllr Lugg detailed the timetable for the WBC Local Plan with a proposed completion date of April 2020 but there could be some slippage on this. He gave a commitment to work together with us and to listen and to negotiate.

*Cllr Chicken proposed to proceed, in principle, with a Neighbourhood Plan, seconded by Cllr Farrell, all in favour.*

5. **Mayor's report** – the report has been circulated (and is attached).
6. **District Councillor's Reports** – Cllr Hewer is to meet with Highways officers and Cllr Brookman. 4 residents of Fairview Road would like them to install a residents parking area. The Boundary Review has been finalised – as from May 2019 there will be 3 District Councillors to cover Hungerford and Kintbury.
7. **Councillor vacancy – one position remains and can now be filled by co-option** – J Booth has expressed an interest in returning to the council. She came onto the council in 2007 and would be interested in R&A. Her resume will be circulated and this will be discussed at the next full council meeting.
8. **Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report)**
  - R&A – Cllr Small** – Committee met on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and minutes have been circulated.
  - F&GP – Cllr Benneyworth** – Items are covered in item 9.
  - E&P – Cllr Farrell** – Committee met on 15<sup>th</sup> January and minutes have been circulated. A site meeting with Rowlands has been arranged for Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 10.00am. The police station planning application is still pending – a site meeting has taken place and a hedge has been taken out and the site improved. (Report attached).
  - H&T – Cllr Brookman** – Report has been circulated (see attached).
  - T&E – Cllr Crane** – No meeting had been held.
9. **Finance – Cllr Benneyworth**
  - a) **Propose authorisation of cheque run payments (circulated) for last month** – *Cllr Benneyworth proposed authorisation of cheque run of £21,707.56 plus VAT, seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour.*
  - b) **Propose Year to date accounts – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report** – This is in line with budgets. *Cllr Benneyworth proposed acceptance of the year to date accounts, seconded by Cllr Crane, all in favour.*

**c) Propose adoption of amendments to Financial Regulations as recommended by F&GP. Consider a further amendment to express the expenditure limit as an equivalent % of the Precept (refer to circulated draft and highlighted amendments) – Cllr Benneyworth proposed expenditure over £5k comes before Council, below £5k authorised by Clerk/Mayor/Chair, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour. Cllr Benneyworth proposed in an emergency the Clerk can authorise up to £5k, seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour. Cllr Benneyworth proposed transfers of £30k within the Council's own accounts (rising from £10k previously), seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.**

It was decided not to accept the amendment to express the expenditure limit as an equivalent % of the Precept rather than £5k (numerical).

**d) Propose action with Defibrillator funds (refer to circulated report) – Cllr Benneyworth proposed taking the funds into Council income, having a new Defibrillator in Eddington and moving the Library Defibrillator to the Common, and adding defibrillators to H&T's remit, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.**

**e) Propose adding Cllr Simpson as a signatory (refer to circulated report) – Cllr Benneyworth proposed adding Cllr Simpson as a signatory on Close Bros Ltd and Newbury Building Society, seconded by Cllr Crane, 1 abstention (Cllr Simpson), rest in favour.**

**f) Propose Clerk & RFO have access to the Barclay PLC account for servicing requirements (refer to circulated report) – Cllr Benneyworth proposed the Clerk and RFO have access to the Barclay's account, seconded by Cllr Winser, all in favour.**

**g) Propose delegation of authority for Croft Field electric contract (refer to circulated report) – Cllr Benneyworth proposed delegation of authority for Croft Field electric contract to RFO, seconded by Cllr Brookman, all in favour.**

**h) Consider expenditure of remain grant budget on local community groups (refer to circulated report) – Expenditure of £300 to Wessex Rangers and £425 to Hungerford Theatre Company. Council queried the grant to the Theatre Company as the problem with the cable not being buried had been pointed out 18 months ago. Action: Cllr Winser to ask for further information from the Theatre Company. Cllr Knight proposed expenditure of £300 to Wessex Rangers, seconded by Cllr Crane, 2 abstentions (Cllrs Simpson and Farrell), rest in favour.**

10. **Library – Report from recent meeting with WBC** – Cllr Knight met with WBC last week. The roof and brickwork will be repaired by WBC at their cost. An extraordinary Full Council meeting before March might be necessary due to the timescales.
11. **Triangle Field - Any further action required on outstanding hirer fees** – The money is due to be arriving today.
12. **Action Plan – To be discussed at each committee (see draft circulated)** – This item was deferred. Any comments to be forwarded to the office.
13. **General Data Protection Regulations – Awareness and preparation for, and appointment of a Data Protection Officer (see report circulated)** - A report had been circulated and will be discussed at a future date.
14. **Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals** – Station Adoption – Representatives from GWR and ACORP made a presentation to the H&T meeting last week. This item will be on the agenda for the next H&T meeting.  
The public meeting with CALA Homes is on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm following the Chamber of Commerce meeting which is at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm.

# **REPORTS**

## **Hungerford Town Council, Mayor's report, Jan 2018**

- 3 Library Working Group Meeting**
- 4 Margret Williams Funeral St Lawrences**
- 8 Full Council Meeting**
- 15 E & P C'tee Meeting (first in Library)**
- 16 F & GP C'tee meeting**
- 17 Regular Meeting with Town & Manor**
- 22 Neighbourhood Plan Public Meeting**
- 23 Meeting with i3web in Hungerford**
- 28 Meeting at Youth and community centre (Art Group)**
- 29 H & T C'tee meeting**
- 30 Meeting with West Berks Council re library lease**
- 30 Hungerford Library Trustee meeting**

**Keith Knight**  
**Town Mayor**  
**5th February 2018**

## **Highways and Transport Committee Report for February 2018**

### **Railway Station**

We still have not had a decision on our grant application to GWR to extend the Up line passenger shelter.

We had a presentation on 'adopting' Hungerford station by a representative from GWR and ACORP. More on this when we have had chance to absorb and discuss the information disseminated.

### **Street Lights**

I believe that the street light outside No.1 Bulpit Lane has been replaced but we have not had confirmation from WBC. Claire has arranged for our insurance to cover future damage to HTC owned street lighting equipment.

I am working on a plan to replace HTC owned street lights on a street by street basis to bring them up to WBC standard so that they can be adopted by WBC.

### **Pigeons**

A meeting has been arranged by the T&M with HTC and 2 representatives of WBC environmental health to discuss how we can deal with the problem in the future. This meeting is scheduled for 7 February.

### **CCTV**

The CCTV camera installation at the skateboard park is now complete. We will consider further CCTV cameras in Bridge Street later in the year.

### **Christmas Lights Update**

Overall I was very impressed with the installation, removal and disposal of the trees by Shield Electrical.

As I have stated previously, this year (2018) will be my last organising this event and we need at least one, if not two Councillors, to assist me this year so that there will be a smooth transition to Christmas 2019.

Cllr. Finlay has volunteered to look at future funding for the lights

RB  
1/2/18

## Environment & Planning

Most of the last month had been taken up with preparation and discussion of the NP, this will be decided for or against at Monday's meeting. However two applications of interest are pending. The Old Police Station on Park St.

The owner had already removed the dense hedge to improve visibility at the junction. The planning for conversion of the building is still awaited by E&P.

I have just received another application for the Roland's site. The original for Eight units was won at appeal last Aug. This is for Seven units. This will be on next E&P.

I have also had ( along with the office) an email from J Wilmot I have asked him to contact WBC direct, as although his planning consultants have said Planning not required, to erect a boundary fence he needs to be absolutely sure this is the case.

CF

Feb 2018

### Report to: Hungerford Town Council – Defibrillator Fund

#### Agenda Item No 9(d):

Defibrillator fund £4417.52 held by the Town Council in trust

#### Background

For a number of years the Council held funds collected to install Defibrillators in the Town. The main organiser of the installation and checking of these machines has been undertaken by a Mr Neil Marney.

The position of the funds held has been raised by the Internal Auditor to clarify the situation.

There are now six defibrillators, (seven when including the fire station) in the parish and the Council did agree to adopt the six in 2016 and are recorded on our Asset Register.

It is Mr Marney intention to install a further device at Eddington, which will cost approx. £2500.

In addition, now that the Fire Station has its own defibrillator, that the one on the Library is moved up close to the Common

#### Objective

- To clarify the position of the Funds as to whether the funds should be adopted by the Council
- If agreed to adopt the funds, which Committee should take responsibly for oversight.
- If agreed to adopt that the Council agrees the further installation at an appropriate site in Eddington is agreed, with the remaining balance is placed to earmark reserve to be used to fund repairs, replacement batteries.
- To agree in principle to move defibrillator from Library Building

#### Options

If we take no action the Council position will be that, it has taken ownership of these Defibrillators without any clear plan as to maintenance and no budget.

#### Recommendations

- That the Council agreed to accept the £4417.52 as income to the Council
- That Highways & Transport Committee includes this under their remit.
- That the Council agrees in principle to the installation of a further device in Eddington at a suitable site.
- The Council agrees in principle to moving defibrillator from the Library to a site closer to the common.

**Signed:** Jeff Ford  
Responsible Financial Officer  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## Report to: Hungerford Town Council – Signing Arrangements

### Agenda Item No 9(e):

Signing Arrangements on the Close Brother PLC & Newbury Building Society

#### Background

With resignation of the former Chairman of Finance & General-Purpose Committee we need to add a further signatory to both these accounts. Council should note that the mandate requires any withdrawal to be any two (out of four) to sign. Cllr Simpson has offered to become signatory to these account

#### Objective

- To update our Banking Accounts considering Member changes.
- Cllrs Crane, Benneyworth, Farrell are present signatories

#### Recommendations

- That the Council resolves to add Cllrs Simpson to the Close Bro PLC and Newbury Building Society Account

**Signed:** Jeff Ford  
Responsible Financial Officer  
25<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## Report to: Hungerford Town Council – Croft Field Electric Contract

### Agenda Item No 9(g):

Electric Contract – Croft Field Renewal by 28<sup>th</sup> April 2018

#### Background

In 2016 we entered into a 2-year contract for supply of Electric. As this deal is coming to an end we need to obtain a fresh contract. As prices can be only valid for a matter of days we need to request authority to delegate the decision to the RFO and Chair or Deputy of Finance & General Purposes Committee and report back either to full council or F & GP as to outcome.

#### Objective

- To get a competitive deal for 1-3-year period.

#### Recommendations

- That the Council resolves to delegate authority to the RFO and either Chairman or Deputy Chairman of F & GP and report back to either Full council or F & GP

**Signed:** Jeff Ford  
Responsible Financial Officer  
25<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## Report to: Hungerford Town Council

5<sup>th</sup> February 2018

### Agenda Item No X:

To Authorise the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to have access to the Barclays PLC account for simple Servicing Requirements. This is not a request to authorise payments from the account.

### Background

In accordance with our Financial regulations only two Members can authorise payments from the account. However as neither the Town Clerk or the RFO are known to the Bank they will not deal with them and must get a member who is an authorised signature to speak to the bank on our behalf.

The Bank now allows (as per attached) the ability for non-authorised signatories to be recognised and action simple requests re statement queries, stop cheques, order cheque / credit books etc.

### Objective

- To improve ability for Town Clerk & RFO to deal with Barclays Bank PLC without need to involve an authorised Signatory Member

### Recommendations

- That the Council resolves to authorise the signing of the attached Simple Servicing authority to allow the Town Clerk (Claire Barnes) or RFO (Jeff Ford) the ability to deal direct with Barclays Bank PLC

**Signed:** Jeff Ford  
Responsible Financial Officer

25<sup>th</sup> January 2018