

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 5th September 2022 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Downe, Winser, Alford, Carlson, Schlanker, Keates, Greenwell, Lewis, and Hudson.

Also: West Berks District Cllrs James Cole (JC), Dennis Benneyworth (DB)

Representatives from Penny Post, Newbury News and Adviser.

In attendance: Claire Barnes (Town Clerk)

Police Report: The police were not in attendance but sent the attached report. The Mayor praised the Police in acting so swiftly to move on travellers from the Triangle Field and the Common. The recent legislation helped permit this. She thanked all that helped clear up the disgusting mess left behind. It was noted that this incident wasn't included in the Police report, neither was there a mention of the other issues caused by the travellers namely theft of fuel, use of counterfeit £50 notes, shoplifting (approx. £2000 of clothing security tags were found), theft of tyres and intimidation.

FC202200169 Note apologies for absence - Councillors, Yakar-Wells, Shatford and Knight. District Cllr Claire Rowles also gave her apologies.

FC202200170 Declarations of interest – None

FC202200171 Approval of Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting of 8th August 2022, and outcome of actions

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Downe

Resolution: To approve minutes of 8th August 2022 as a true record. 3 abstentions

Outcome of actions: Cllr Schlanker to yet to be added as a signatory. Other actions are complete or on the agenda.

FC202200172 Receive Mayor's Report – See attached. Councillors were urged to respond to the Deputy Clerk giving their input for the Annual Report.

FC202200173 Receive District Councillor's Reports – DB gave an update on some of the actions resulting from the last H&T Committee meeting. The tri-bins are a work in progress and a bin has been requested for the new development at Salisbury Road. A site meeting will take place soon to consider the protection of various grass verges and DB will report back. JC advised a meeting with the CEO of West Berks Council is set for 15th Sept. Items for the agenda will include EV charging and planning process. It would be useful to have an explanation on differences between WBC's planning decisions and HTC's responses. Cllr Downe queried why WBC do not have a process or policy in place for charging of electric vehicles on the highway. Hampshire use cable protectors and Oxon have trialled gulleys. We have been waiting since last year for this information. JC asked why the SID on the Common had not been moved since installation. Cllr Hudson advised the plan was to move the SIDs every 3 weeks to different locations as this way they are more

effective. He has registered and had approved various locations. Town & Manor are responsible for the one on the Common and Cllr Hudson will help with arranging for them to move this to another location on the Common.

The BMW garage were very pleased with the effect of the SID that they would like a permanent one outside their premises.

FC202200174 Moving Traffic Offences enforcement powers consultation – deadline 20th Sept

ACTION: Please forward all email comments to Cllr Greenwell who will collate them and forward on.

FC202200175 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns. The Mayor raised a request for a latch for the Bulpit Lane Play Park gate.

ACTION: Add to R&A agenda.

FC202200176 Urgent repairs to Bridge St War memorial paving ahead of Remembrance – Refer to report

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Lewis

Resolution: Request maintenance man to carry out repairs ahead of Remembrance Sunday. If for any reason this is not possible instruct contractor to proceed with option 2.

FC202200177 Receive Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report) – None received

FC202200178 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for August

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree payment run for August totalling £13,597.29

FC202200179 Propose Year to date accounts – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

The RFO is to address some phasing issues for next financial year

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Agree year to date accounts with a positive variance of £20,120.

FC202200180 Consider environmental aims and objectives for inclusion in the Action Plan

ACTION: Cllr Downe will be producing an online anonymous survey for councillors to complete and will use the feedback to draft a document.

FC202200181 Skate Park Project – Update on progress. The Mayor advised that following the appointment of Maverick as contractor, the working party have visited various skate parks and have met on Zoom with the director of Maverick. It was agreed that a third concept will be produced, and further consultation will take place. It is important the project is not rushed, and the design is right for the town. The design should be available for next Full Council.

FC202200182 Propose delegation to F&GP the consideration of updates to policies - required for Local Council Award (LCA)

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Downe

Resolution: Agree to delegate decision on policy updates required for the LCA to F&GP.

FC202200183 Swimming Pool House – Update on the installation of Heat Pump. Cllr Downe advised

7 radiators, pipework and a new hot tank have been installed at Swimming Pool House. The installation was an excellent job, and the kwh usage will be monitored. Smart meters are in place. The tenant is happy with the result. It was noted the EPC requirement for a rented property will go up to a C in 2025.

An Air Source Pump is being installed in the library this week too.

FC202200184 Youth Council – Update on progress with DBS checks, Risk Assessment and Terms of Reference – These are in progress. DBS checks for all councillors is a topic for future debate.

FC202200185 Consider wildflower planting proposal – refer to report. Councillors voiced concern over watering of the wildflower turf. It was noted there is a budget to water just the once. What would be the outcome of a dry period on the turf? Would extra watering be put in place? The seeded roundabout did not survive and could not be watered. Council wanted wildflower turf on the roundabout (outside the Co-op garage) as its primary location. Was there a reason why this wasn't possible in Hungerford? Newbury roundabouts were successful. As an environmentally friendly project, some Councillors were unhappy with the use of herbicide. More information or alternative options are required. The member's bid is valid until next June.

ACTION: Clerk to request more info or alternative options for planting.

FC202200186 Pavement licensing and A-boards – Cllr Fyfe to report – Discussed under part 2

FC202200187 Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals – None

PART 2 Confidential

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

FC202200188 Consider tender responses for Croft Field improvement project – Refer to report. Various questions were raised following the receipt of the tender responses.

ACTION: Clerk to request the information required.

FC202200186 Pavement licensing and A-boards – The West Berks Council A-boards policy was discussed and the existing pavement licensing policy which allows 5 days' notice to be given for an application.

Meeting closed 8.50pm

HTC POLICE REPORT SEPT 2022

At the beginning of the month members of our team along with colleagues from our Problem Solving Team at Newbury successfully obtained a 3 month House Closure Order at an address in Hungerford. PC Morris said at the time: "Anti-social behaviour, disorder and nuisance behaviour will not be tolerated and we will continue to protect the community."

Due to the ongoing Police investigation we will not be making further comment at this time. This month there has been 1 reported burglary to a business premise on the outskirts of town and 3 reported shopliftings. Considering we are in the midst of school holidays there have only been 3 reports of anti-social behaviour, none of which have involved youngsters.

The Team

The current set up of the Hungerford and Downlands Neighbourhood Police Team is 1 x Inspector, 1 x Sergeant, 3 x Police Constables and 5 x Police Community Support Officers. The team are contactable by email but this should not be used in an emergency or for reporting crime as it is not monitored 24/7. The email address is below –

HungerfordandDownlandsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

And finally a plea to keep reporting incidents to us via 101, the TVP website (www.thamesvalley.police.uk) or 999, in an emergency.

We sometimes find that news travels fast round a community but if no one tells us, we don't know about it.

Mayors report August 2022

Have we got a new Prime Minister yet? Seems to be going on forever!

Welcome back!

I hope you've all enjoyed the summer-break; it certainly got a bit hot under the collar with the temperatures didn't it!

I enjoyed a wonderful trip to Norway and came home feeling rather disappointed in the UK. Not only is Norway impeccably clean (absolutely everywhere), the public transport system is amazing, the roads quiet, electric vehicles are the norm! So many lessons still to be learnt in the UK. I stayed with friends who work in the healthcare system which (although expensive in taxes) is also fairly impressive.

August is a month where no meetings take place, other than a small full council/ finance meeting, although there is still a lot which goes on behind the scenes.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the office staff, firstly for surviving the heat and secondly for getting through various tenders, contractor meetings and for working to achieve the good council award scheme (HTC's long -standing ambition). I'm pleased to say we are very nearly there (well done Claire, I know this was a lot of extra work).

Freedom of the Town

I was thrilled to be able to contact this year deserving recipients. It's probably my most favourite part of the role, being able to recognise the incredible efforts and commitment of Hungerford volunteers. Huge congratulations to, Penny Locke, Jennifer Bartter and Martin Crane OBE. I can't wait to celebrate your incredible achievements/commitment to Hungerford.

Hungerford care home

Jon and I attended a leaving party at Hungerford care home for two long standing members of staff. We had a lovely afternoon with the patients and staff and met the new care home manager Carol Marsh.

Meeting of Council Parish/Town Chairs

Cllr Fyfe and I met with other parish/town chairs to discuss some on-going concerns/challenges that collectively we all face from time to time, trying to gauge how we could improve our communications with WBC. I genuinely believe HTC's working relationship with WBC is better now than in previous years and we've worked incredibly hard as a town to be heard.

Sadly, we missed the follow up meeting, but this has resulted in our District Cllr's securing a meeting with WBC's Chief Exec Nigel Lynn to address some of the points which have been raised. I think this will go some way to building good relations and better communication for both parties.

Focus for September

Croft Field improvements, Skate Park re-build project, Annual report, Freedom of the Town Ceremony.
Cllr Helen Simpson - Mayor

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 5TH SEPTEMBER 2022

MONTH 5, AUGUST 2022 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT

101 FINANCE:

50% of the Annual Precept has been received.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Expenditure is a £8,370 positive variance, Staff Salaries for August of £4997 have not been included.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

Net Expenditure is a £4,349 positive variance, £1,065 paid out in Grants this month.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £68 negative variance.

105 CONTINGENCY:

Net expenditure this month of £1,477 which was a contribution towards the St Saviours fencing.

106 TOURISM SUPPORT BUDGET:

No Expenditure this month.

109 HUNGERFORD 2036 PROJECT:

No Expenditure this month.

201 RECREATION & AMENITIES:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,420 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

No Expenditure this month.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £4,725 positive variance. Burial Fee Income has increased by £3,761.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £547 positive variance. Income was down by £57.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

No Expenditure this month.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £117 positive variance.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

No Expenditure this month.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £488 positive variance.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £66 negative variance.

This month's Net Income over Expenditure is a £20,120 positive variance.

Year to date Net Income over Expenditure is a £45,711 positive variance.

Claire Winser

Chair of F&GP

3rd September 2022

FC202200185 Wildflower

Hungerford Town Council

Report to: Full Council 5th September 2022

Agenda Item No FC202200185: Consider wildflower planting proposal

Background Meetings with West Berks Council, Paul Hendry and DC Benneyworth have taken place to discuss options for planting wildflowers in Hungerford to produce displays akin to the beautiful wildflower planting that we have seen in Newbury on roundabouts. HTC was promised wildflowers on the mini roundabout by the co-op garage for free and a members bid (50% funding) for other planting at other locations.

WBC raked in seed on the co-op roundabout this year but due to the drought the seed did not take. This free option is still available for next year and should be successful in normal weather.

In addition to the above WBC propose employing a contractor to carry out a much more involved project along Strongrove Hill to produce a display for next year. There were two areas considered as shown on the plan. WBC suggest option 2. We only have a members bid for one of them. Paul Hendry has advised that if HTC cannot match fund the full 50% WBC may be able to find funding to help bridge the gap.

Paul Hendry advised it is quite an expensive option because all the existing vegetation needs to be removed, a herbicide is required and a compost or turf is then laid which includes the wildflower seed. The best display will last for two years, and after that the display will not be as bright, but it will last for around 5-7 years, and maybe even 10 before it will need planting again. It is a long-term investment which he hopes HTC would be in support of.

WBC will be paying for the on-going maintenance costs. It makes sense to substitute a grass cutting maintenance regime with a display of flowers and a reduced number of cuts and collections.

Objectives To help the environment and provide an eco-friendly area. Other benefits include reducing maintenance work and providing a beautiful display.

Available budget (£s) – Contingency/CIL

Options

1. **Proceed with Wildflower planting in Area 2** – Includes trimming the cherry tree branches and planting 300m² mixed daffodils with 135m² wildflower turf with scatter bulbs beneath.
2. **Agree our budget – £4279.50 maximum** (up to 50% of £7132.50 plus vat).

Recommendation(s)

The best option.

Signed: Town Clerk, 5th September 2022

FC202200176 Bridge Street War Memorial paving

Hungerford Town Council

Report to: Full Council 5th September 2022

Agenda Item No FC202200176: Consider quotes to repair paving at the War Memorial, Bridge Street.

Background

In certain areas of the paving at the War Memorial, the bricks are protruding significantly. This is deemed as a Health and Safety issue proving to be a tripping hazard especially as the area is visited often by families with pushchairs and those who may be less mobile using walking aids etc.

On inspection the bricks are repeatedly being pushed up due to the tree root below and with the interchangeable weather, the problem is persisting. See photos below. All of the trees around the paving are in a conservation area.

In addition to this being a H&S issue, it is worth noting that Remembrance Day services will be taking place soon so the paving will need to be made secure.

Objectives To agree the preferred paving repair option.

Reference to Action Plan Aim - Ensure public open spaces are safe and well maintained.

Available budget (£s) - Option 2 - Allowance within Salary budget. Option 1 – Nominal code 4260 War Memorial & Gardens.

Options

Quotes were sourced as follows:

1. All Inc Property Services

- Option 1: Levelling the bricks by cutting back the tree roots underneath. Including materials and labour @ £600
- Option 2: Cutting down the bricks so they are shallower in the ground (ie no tree root removal). Including materials and labour @ £400

2. HTC maintenance man

As option 2 above ie lift the bricks and cut them longways so they are shallower and then laid back down. This option would be cheaper as HTC's maintenance man could do the work rather than a contractor.

Verbal advice has also been taken from Hungerford Tree Surgery who suggested that the roots are best left alone and the cheaper option may solve the problem for quite some time. No tree application would need to be made either as no roots would need to be cut back.

Recommendation(s)

The best option to ensure the Council's assets are maintained to the benefit of the public.

Signed: Deputy Town Clerk, 1st September 2022

Photos

1)

Protruding bricks



2)

Bricks lift out easily



3)

Visible tree root under bricks

