

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor  
Cllr Helen Simpson  
57 Fairview Road  
Hungerford  
Berkshire  
RG17 0BP  
Tel: 07920 110380  
Cllr.helen.simpson@hungerford-tc.gov.uk



The Town Clerk  
Mrs Claire Barnes  
The Library  
Church Street  
Hungerford  
Berkshire RG17 0JG  
Tel: 01488 686195  
[townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@hungerford-tc.gov.uk)  
[www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk](http://www.hungerford-tc.gov.uk)

---

**MINUTES** of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford

**Present:** Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Downe, Winsler, Alford, Carlson, Schlanker, Keates, Greenwell, Lewis, Hudson Yakar-Wells and Knight.

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 commented that she would feedback on anything further received concerning the serious incident.

**FC202200189 Note apologies for absence - None**  
District Cllr Claire Rowles also gave her apologies.

**FC202200190 Declarations of interest – None**

**FC202200191 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022, and outcome of actions**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Downe

**Resolution:** To approve minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 as a true record. 1 abstention.

**Outcome of actions:** Cllr Downe's survey on the environmental section of the action plan is on-going. Other actions are complete or on the agenda.

**FC202200192 Receive Mayor's Report – See attached.** The Mayor expressed her thanks to Hungerford Environmental Action Team especially Cllr Downe for running such a successful event, attended by around 500 people and the MP. Cllr Downe advised the Hub/Library is now being heated by a low carbon heat pump cutting energy consumption by two thirds. Gas will no longer be required in the building. The Mayor thanked all that attended the Proclamation reading.  
Cllr Lewis and Cllr Yakar-Wells arrived.

**FC202200193 Receive District Councillor's Reports –** A written report will be circulated. The cost-of-living fund was highlighted and a single point of contact for residents requiring help is available. CIL bids are open. (The Clerk advised she is drafting an application for the skate park). A £3k members bid is available too. The news that West Berks Council has decided not to proceed with the closure of No Trees Care Home was welcomed. DC Cole advised a walkabout with the economic team will take place this Thursday at 12.30pm reference the place-making strategy and representatives from HTC are invited to join them. DC Benneyworth advised he is working with Haha to obtain a Sovereign contact to help them with improvements to the site. Other points of note from the report are that 3000 children took part in the reading challenge and the food waste collections will start on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct. DC Cole will circulate info on 5G being rolled out in the area. He advised WBC budget will be considered shortly and there are likely to be cuts. It was confirmed that the money being distributed by Garry Poulson for transport is to benefit community groups.

Cllr Fyfe asked to be kept in the loop with the work to the A338 footpaths north. He asked for an update as work there seems to have paused.

Cllr Downe raised the issue of Station Road Car Park EV chargers which we are still waiting to be installed. It has now been 18 months. He asked that someone senior at WBC gets involved to sort the problem.

**ACTION:** Cllr Downe will draft a letter about the situation with the EV chargers to be submitted to the CEO at West Berks Council at his upcoming meeting.

It was questioned that as planning consent has been achieved for Phoenix Court will something now happen with Chestnut Walk. DC Cole advised the procurement process has started. Cllr Downe stressed that it is not acceptable to put the most expensive form of heating in the building as has happened at Phoenix Court.

DC Benneyworth will follow up on complaints about an overgrown hedge in Atherton that is obscuring a road sign and stopping the bus getting by safely.

**FC202200194 Consider options for Member's bid funding for wildflower or other planting** – It was commented that the wildflower matting is too expensive and there is no wish to carry out the work on the A4.

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Winser

**ACTION:** **Resolution:** Proceed only with seeding the co-op roundabout at no cost and lose matched funding. (option 3)

**FC202200195 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns.** None

**FC202200196 Receive Committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report)** – A report from F&GP was circulated. See attached.

**FC202200197 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for September.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Greenwell

**Resolution:** Agree payment run for September totalling £36,918.02

**FC202200198 Propose Year to date accounts** – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**Resolution:** Agree year to date accounts as accurate.

**FC202200199 Skate Park Project – Update on progress.** The Mayor advised the appointed contractor Maverick is meeting with the working party team of councillors to consider a Concept C. They will report back to R&A and a public consultation will follow. Subject to funding being in place it is hoped the project will be completed by spring/summer.

**FC202200200 Annual Report – Update on progress.** The clerk advised a draft will be circulated hopefully this week for any input. It would be good to include some of the environmental achievements.

**FC202200201 Triangle Field – Improvements to kitchen including new extractor fan flue** – A new kitchen has been installed. Concerns were raised over H&S, that the flue is large and positioned in an awkward place close to the changing room door. HTC were not advised of the plans in advance of the work taking place and the flue is ugly.

**ACTION:** Defer to R&A whilst councillors carry out a site visit.

**FC202200202 Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals** – Cllr Schlanker advised there will be a meeting at 6pm on 10<sup>th</sup> Oct to discuss the Emergency plan that he has been working on.

**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.

**FC202200203 Consider tender responses for Croft Field improvement project – Refer to report.**

Responses to questions raised were considered.

**Proposed:** Cllr Downe

**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson

**ACTION:**      **Resolution:** Hold decision on contractor and consult with the project manager. 2 abstentions.

Meeting closed 8.30pm

## **HTC POLICE REPORT Oct 2022**

Several members of the team were involved in the Policing operation in Windsor following the death of her Majesty the Queen. This was the largest operation in the history of the force. It was both an honour and privilege.

Since the beginning of September there have been 6 reports of anti-social behaviour and 1 shoplifting. There has also been 1 reported burglary to a business premise on the outskirts of town and 3 reported shopliftings.

There has been 2 reports of Criminal Damage, one of which was to farmland on the outskirts of town.

An estate in Hungerford was subject to a burglary non dwelling whereby tack rooms and outbuildings were broken into and items stolen. A further farm in Hungerford was broken into and a vehicle was stolen amongst other items.

We are starting to see an increase in rural crime offences, specifically in the last week across our area as well as over the borders into Wiltshire. This includes hare coursing offences as well as rural burglaries.

Two males have been arrested in connection with an incident of GBH in Hungerford. An 18 yr old man and a 20 yr old man, both from Hungerford where arrested on suspicion of GBH with intent. The incident happened on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September near to Hungerford Cricket club Bulpitt Lane. The victim a man in his 20s, was found to have been stabbed in the hands and one of his legs. He was taken to hospital for treatment and has subsequently been discharged. The two man arrested have since been released on bail until the 20<sup>th</sup> October.

### **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 is address is below –

[HungerfordandDownlandsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:HungerfordandDownlandsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

And finally a plea to keep reporting incidents to us via 101, the TVP website ([www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://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 September 2022**

### **Death of Queen Elizabeth II**

Hungerford Town Council (HTC) has not held any committee meetings this month, due to a period of mourning following the death of her late Majesty the Queen. The protocol following the death of a senior royal was immediately implemented and HTC produced a press statement, sending our sincere condolences following the official notice from the palace announcement. HTC worked closely with the Town & Manor, opening a public book of condolence in the foyer of the Town Hall and allowed public floral tributes to be placed on the town hall steps. The book of condolence has also been taken to Crown Mews and the Constable is arranging for it to be sent to Redwood House. Thank you to Constable Peter Joseph for arranging the red roses on the table and for supporting HTC throughout this period. Thanks to the office for being so prepared.

I was privileged to read the Proclamation of Assession to the community of Hungerford. Thank you to all Councillors and Trustees who joined me for this historic event. Special thanks also to Bellman Julian Tubb, Roger Ballard for the staging and Derek & Di Loft for provided the sound system and for keeping me calm, what an emotional day it was!

### **HEAT – Home Energy Conference**

Congratulations on this hugely successful event for the town, we certainly punch above our weight in terms of environmental matters. I spent around four hours at the event and attended the speaker sessions, I was hugely impressed and learnt a great deal. I often find these events a little heavy in tech, but I was really impressed with the delivery, pitched at just the right level for all, but with more detailed information for those who required it. The event was really busy with around 400-500 people popping in throughout the day, the timed sessions were all fully attended. The exhibitors received a good number of follow- ups. Congratulations HEAT especially John, who worked so hard to make this event a huge success for HEAT and Hungerford.

### **Crown Mews**

I enjoyed a very relaxed afternoon with the Crown Mews residents for their monthly get-to-together. I took the opportunity to present their Hungerford in bloom certificate. The residents thanked me again for taking over the book of condolence.

### **Pigeons**

I am receiving more and more complaints about the numbers of the pigeon population growing again within the town. HTC's Town Clerk has recently met with a pest controller who will write a report for H&T. As most of the buildings are privately owned or rented, HTC can only encourage pigeon proofing and offer advice to occupants.

### **H2036 -Neighbourhood plan**

A meeting has been scheduled shortly to discuss next steps on this project. WBC's local plan has been pushed back to 2024 and H2036 will be considering the impact this may or may not have on Hungerford's plan moving forward.

### **Chamber of Commerce**

I attended the recent Chamber meeting which was well attended. The team are working hard to recruit new members to the group. Karen Salmon has been re-elected as Chair. The committee remains the same as previously. Guest speakers were from Trindledown (National Animal Welfare Trust) and from the Retreat Hotel and Spa at Elcot. Thank you to Karen for staying on for a second year.

October is looking to be a hugely busy month with committee meetings and public engagements alongside the Freedom of the town awards. I'm really looking forward to the opening of the 'The Gallery' in bridge street plus attending a careers fair at Newbury College.

Cllr Helen Simpson  
Mayor

**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2022**  
**MONTH 6, SEPTEMBER 2022 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT**

**101 FINANCE:**

50% of the Annual Precept has been received.

**102 ADMINISTRATION:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,502 positive variance. The £67 Income was charged to the Hub for carpet cleaning.

**103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:**

No Expenditure this month.

**104 POOL HOUSE:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £68 negative variance.

**105 CONTINGENCY:**

No Expenditure this month.

**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 £1,419 positive variance.

**202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:**

No Expenditure this month.

**203 ST SAVIOURS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £491 positive variance.

**204 CROFT FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £535 positive variance.

**205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:**

Net Expenditure is a £163 negative variance.

**206 TRIANGLE FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £122 positive variance.

**301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:**

No Expenditure this month.

**302 HIGHWAYS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,290 positive variance. Hanging Basket donations of £437 received.

**303 CCTV:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £544 positive variance.

This month's Net Income over Expenditure is a £151,542 negative variance, as this month's budget includes the £164,178 precept which has not yet been received.

Year to date Net Income over Expenditure is a £114,229 negative variance due to the precept phasing.

Claire Winser

Chair of F&GP

1<sup>st</sup> October 2022

FC202200194 Wildflowers

**Hungerford Town Council**

**Public Report to:** Full Council 3/10/2022

**Agenda Item No:** FC202200194 – Consider options for Member's bid funding for wildflower or other planting

**Background** Refer to previous report FC202200185

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

**Other information**

The matched funding confirmed from a member's bid application of approx. £3,500 towards a project costing £7132.50 plus vat is we understand NOT transferable to another project. The proposal put forward by WBC was considered at last Full Council meeting and queries were raised. The queries and responses are below;

- There was a concern about watering of the wildflower turf. It was noted there is a budget to water it 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.

**The price provided for watering was to cover the cost of each visit, so more could be requested, but it comes at a cost, so is dependent on the season we have and the amount of rainfall. The meadowscape pro installed on the roundabout suffered badly with the weather as it was just installed and left, as there is no opportunity to undertake watering on this roundabout, due to the traffic implications, hence why it was installed at 6am, to avoid any disruption, the watering is undertaken by a bowser on the back of a truck, so will partial block the road, so the roundabout works needs to be a install and forgot type of approach, which is why we will return to the wild flower seeding which coped better in previous years.**

- Council really 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 above it's just due to the lack of opportunities to maintain it, the seeding by our GM contractor in previous years seemed to do much better and is at no expense to the town council**

- As an environmentally friendly project, some Councillors were unhappy with the use of herbicide. Is there more information on this please or alternative options?

**The reason the contractor uses herbicides is to kill off any potential weed growth within the soil, otherwise this becomes the dominant species on the ground before the wildflowers start to establish, it's not a practice we like to see undertaken, but it provides the best outcome for the wildflowers, I'm sure there are other methods, which require more labour and increase the costs, we can ask the wildflower company if they have alternative methods for installation. (see following response from wildflower Company)**

With regards to Wildflower Turf you can just manually remove the surface vegetation by hand or machine (depending on size of area and accessibility) rotovate and lay the turf without using herbicides if you wish. We would always try and recommend allowing plenty of time to cleanse the area manually, allow time for another possible flush of weed or grass growth and clearing that before laying the turf to reduce as much possible competition on site as possible.

Re: Meadowscape Pro, as it is a seed based product with none of the root matting, weed suppressing capability of the Wildflower Turf, there is always risk of grass and weed ingress if the area is not cleansed thoroughly of any competition. You could lightly turf cut or gently remove surface vegetation as long as you try not to disturb the soil as much as possible which will wake up the existing weed/grass seed bank in there and then top dress as normal. Depending on the site, how carefully this is done and the historical weed burden on site, this could work or you might have to revisit the site regularly to check for weed/grass ingress and spot weed it out as soon as possible and most importantly before it sets seed itself to add to the problem. The results are not as guaranteed as using glyphosate as a 1 time application in order to replace with a better more biodiverse solution. Risks vs reward.

We have looked at and discussed with many landscape contractors possible alternatives but none seem as effective as glyphosate currently and they are either physical removal methods which take time, labour and equipment or there are alternative 'biopesticide methods' out there currently in the form of acetic acid and pelargonic acid which are not as effective and sometimes needs multiple applications to work. They can also do harm to wildlife in particular amphibians.

So I am afraid there is no silver bullet answer to this one and is one the whole landscaping/hort industry are wrestling with at the moment!

#### **Options**

- 1. Proceed with option as quoted by WBC and pay half the costs. This may be flexible. WBC indicated they could support us paying £2,500.**
- 2. See if alternative options are available to use matched funding – WBC to advise – thought not to be transferable?**
- 3. Proceed only with seeding the co-op Roundabout at no cost and lose matched funding**
- 4. Do nothing**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

The best option, based on the above information

**Signed:** Town Clerk 29/09/2022