

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Highways and Transport Committee** meeting held on Monday 31st October 2022 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Schlanker, Knight, Fyfe, Alford, Carlson, Simpson, Downe and Greenwell.
In attendance: Claire Barnes (Town Clerk), Newbury News, member of public

HT20220059. Apologies for absence – Cllrs Hudson and Winser
Also, from, District Cllrs

HT20220060. Declarations of interest – None

HT20220061. Appoint a deputy chair. Consider suggestion for co-option of member of public.
Proposed: Cllr Knight
Seconded: Cllr Simpson
Resolution: Cllr Hudson appointed as deputy chair.

HT20220062. Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 25th July 2022
Proposed: Cllr Knight
Seconded: Cllr Alford
Resolution: Agree minutes as a true record. One abstention.

HT20220063. Update on actions from previous meetings, not on this agenda – Outstanding actions: -
ACTION: District Cllr Benneyworth (DB) to advise on installation of a litter bin at Salisbury Road
ACTION: Cllr Knight to arrange display of the Wilton Windmill board

HT20220064. Feedback from West Berks Council on availability of combined recycling/litter bins –
Deferred to next meeting as DB not present.

HT20220065. Update on feed to CCTV at Triangle Field
ACTION: Clerk to chase HRFC's CCTV providers to see if it is possible to link up.

HT20220066. Note: Improved cycle parking report has been submitted to West Berks Council. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Hudson for his work.

HT20220067. Receive update on Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS), locations and rota –

- a) **Feedback on first few months of operation** - The SIDS are being rotated around agreed locations in Hungerford by our maintenance man who is also changing the batteries twice a week. The SIDS are making a difference and vehicles are slowing down demonstrating that there is a speeding problem, particularly on the Common. The long-term aspiration is for 20mph limits on narrower residential roads. Some statistics have been circulated showing the data collected so far. 1 in 5 cars are speeding past Cottrell Close. It is hoped there will be some traffic calming measures as a result of the evidence.
 - b) **Consider request for permanent siting by BMW garage** – Cllr Simpson advised she has spoken with the BMW garage owner who wishes to support the purchase of another SID to be

permanently located outside the garage. He offered to fund up to £1,000. This can be considered although it is best not to have a permanent site.

- c) **Consider suggestion for SID placement on Eddington Hill** – The request had been circulated. **See attached**
- d) **Agree purchase of more brackets** – Deferred as Cllr Hudson not present.

ACTION: HTC to collect SID data for one year to provide sufficient evidence for any traffic calming.

ACTION: H&T to put in a budget request for another SID.

ACTION: Cllrs Hudson and Schlanker to consider the sites near the BMW garage and Eddington Hill

ACTION: Office to reply that the request for SID placement on Eddington Hill will be considered.

HT20220068. Consider suggestion from member of public for more street trees – See attached. Patches of grass (owned by WBC) have been identified by a member of public as potential locations for tree planting. With reference to the query about the removal of a tree. There was no TPO on the tree, it was on private land and not in good condition.

ACTION: Clerk to ask WBC what the process is for having a tree planted on their land.

ACTION: Office to reply to request advising the action being taken.

HT20220069. Pigeon prevention – Consider options – See attached. There have been no proposals for a cull this year. A pest control company was appointed to advise on non-lethal methods to prevent roosting and breeding.

ACTION: Contact environmental health to report major breeding locations and request they help enforce netting/spiking/gel prevention measures be put in place.

ACTION: Office to issue a press release to inform public on any actions being taken.

ACTION: Cllr Schlanker offered to assist Clerk with FOI request.

HT20220070. Litter pick

ACTION: Cllr Knight to liaise with Town & Manor and Smarten Up Hungerford to arrange a date in the spring for a litter pick.

HT20220071. Feedback from The Croft Survey – See website for details. The consultation revealed a large majority were in favour of improving the footway and extending it under the railway bridge in the Croft.

ACTION: Advise WBC the outcome and ask them to instigate the works.

ACTION: Publish the results on our website including the comments and what is going to be done.

HT20220072. Event arrangements: -

- a) **Christmas – Electric lights usage, tariff and timers – See attached** – Cllr Schlanker advised there would be an approx. cost reduction of 2/3rds using timers to display lights from 4pm to midnight and a 1/3rd cost reduction to use photocells. However the committee did not wish to spend more than £3,000 on installing the extra equipment.

Proposed: Cllr Schlanker

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Agree £3,000 to reduce energy consumption and cost. Preferred option is photocells if technically possible.

Town & Manor has requested white lights are installed on the town hall and not blue. It may be too late to arrange this year but it was agreed the blue lights could be replaced with white. Costs would need to be considered.

- b) **Remembrance and Christmas – Councillor involvement required.** The Remembrance parade will form up outside the Town Hall at 10.30am on Sunday 13th Nov. HTC representatives should take part. Cllr Suimpson is cancelling the Shire Horse planned for the parade. Cllrs Fyfe and Greenwell gave their apologies for the Christmas Lights Switch on event. Councillors' help is needed with moving the barriers etc.

HT20220073. Railway Station -

- a) **Installation of a gate for access to area north of London platform for maintenance** – It was agreed not to pursue this and remove it from future agendas.

b) **Update on CCIF bids** – It was noted that the painting of the railway pedestrian bridge will take place as part of the maintenance work scheduled by GWR for 2023-24.

c) **Land for sale and request for car park** – The land has been sold. No details known.

HT20220074. Consider introduction of speed limit for Sanham Green and Horn Hills – Deferred as Cllr Hudson not present.

HT20220075. Any H&S issues of concern including COVID (item was taken after HT20220061 as member of public was present reference HT20220075c)

a) **Update on plans for PROW signs and footpath improvement** – Cllr Fyfe advised the PROW signs will be done by the end of the year. A meeting is needed for the footpaths.

b) **High kerb and condition of car parking bay outside Fairfield flats** – The layby is in bad condition and there is a high kerb where the road falls away.

c) **Navigation of large vehicles at junction between High Street and Park Street** – The licensee of the pub on the corner advised that it is the fourth time the pub has been hit since he has been there. The footway outside Nye has previously had to be repaired and Mole Cottage has also been hit. Town Council are all extremely concerned of the danger of this and the risk to the public and the pub's business. The licensee advised an average of 20 artic lorries are going through a day, most into Saxons (located over the level crossing). The junctions do not allow a wide enough turning circle for heavy goods vehicles and often pedestrians are stood in the middle of the road trying to direct traffic. Town Council has CCTV footage of a recent accident, and the landlord also has video evidence of more incidences. The high street/park street junction is also very close to a pedestrian crossing. The committee suggested a weight restriction limit may be needed on the surrounding roads leading from the Common to the high street. WBC need to come and do a traffic survey.

d) **Surface of Jubilee Pedestrian Bridge** – The surface is peeling in some places.

e) **Use of two flat roundabouts at Salisbury Road** – Queries have been received over markings on the roundabouts and how to use them.

f) **Storm water drainage** – A report has been received of the rear of some properties in the High Street being flooded.

g) **Verges in Coldharbour Road** – Photos were shown of the verges which are deeply rutted and full of muddy water due to vehicles being regularly parked on them. Possible solutions are parking bays or a pebbly concrete surface.

h) **Bus stop required at Kennedy Meadow or Lancaster gate** – There is no proper bus stop and the buses only occasionally stop.

ACTION: Bring all the items above to the attention of West Berks Council, where possible mention at the meeting with the WBC CEO this week and request a site meeting with WBC Highways.

Meeting closed 8.55pm.

Hungerford Town Council

Public Report to: Highways & Transport 31st October 2022

Agenda Item No: HT20220069 – Pigeon prevention – Consider options

Background

Back in summer 2021, Hungerford Town Council instructed a contractor to carry out a cull to reduce the pigeon numbers in Hungerford. This was completed by a professional licensed contractor in line with the legal requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. A cull is justified when there is a threat to public health and other non-lethal methods of control are found to be impractical or ineffective.

Objective – Reduce the following risks:

Risk to public health: Feral pigeons act as reservoirs for many micro-organisms and zoonotic organisms which can cause infections and allergic diseases. Pathogens can be transmitted to humans by excreta, secretions or dust meaning that direct contact with the bird is not required. Though risk of transmission to healthy humans is low, there is a greater risk of infection with immuno-suppressed people

Accidents: Pedestrians slipping on surfaces/pavements covered in pigeon droppings. Damage to buildings: The acidic nature of the droppings can cause brickwork and woodwork to deteriorate. Litter from the birds, either through dropping from nest and roosting sites falls onto roads, pavements, and buildings.

Distress to residents: Invasion of pigeons into homes, residents unable to open windows and noise of birds on roofs and windowsills

Methods

Non-lethal steps taken to address the problem Installation of netting, spikes and fire gel to buildings, roofs, ledges and signs to prevent pigeons settling to roost and breed in the centre of town. Many property owners have pigeon proofed their buildings but there are some that require improvements. We cannot enforce owners to pigeon proof their properties.

Reduction of food supply by education of the local population not to feed the birds including press articles and signage. Street traders clearing up food waste as a condition of their license.

Daily cleaning of pavements is underway by West Berks Council Street cleaner.

Culling if none of the above are effective (**to date we haven't instructed a cull as recent media coverage would suggest**)

Action taken

A recent survey has been carried out by a professional pest control company and buildings that require pigeon proofing have been identified. (*see attached list*). A report outlining the works suggested have been forwarded to the property landowners encouraging them to take action.

Options

1. Wait feedback from property owners on the actions they plan to take.
2. Consider installing our own spiking under the bridge (above our noticeboards) as Network Rail will not action this. See link. Cost £150. Also includes quote for work to sign (forwarded to WBC) and work to bridge (forwarded to Network Rail) [Download Hungerford Railway bridge and signs .pdf](#)
3. Report property owners to the Environmental Health if their building is being used as a breeding ground and absolutely no attempt is being made to stop this.
4. Any other suggestions

Recommendation(s)

The best option, based on the above information

Signed: Town Clerk 19th Oct 2022

HT20220067 (c)

Message: Hello, I wish to ask the council (assuming this is their responsibility) about the potential of more street trees on a few of Hungerford streets. I'm currently only thinking a maximum of five trees but would welcome more. Locations I would suggest including the area of green sandwiched between Atherton Crescent and the A338 (where a tree was felled in the last six months), the crossroads of Bulpit Lane and Priory Avenue and the junction of Priory Road and Sarum Way. I understand there are many factors that could influence this including resident opinions and underground infrastructure; however, I feel the inclusion of more street trees would greatly enhance the towns character, particularly if these were native British species. Street trees bring nature into urban areas which brings residents enjoy and the trees can also help to lower urban temperatures. Both of them are needed in a time of wildlife decline and global warming. On a separate note, yet tree related, I wish to ask whether the tree felled (a red horse chestnut) at approximately 143 Priory Road (near John O Gaunt school and the rugby club) was on private land or falls within land under council responsibility (by which I mean pavement). It was a shame to see it gone and visually it appears the tree did not grow within the properties own land. Should this tree have been felled? Thanks

Name and contact supplied

HT20220068

Dear Councillor Simpson

I'm writing to bring to your attention the speed and general disregard for safety of the traffic on Wantage Road / Eddington Hill.

The traffic coming both down and up the hill is extremely fast. There have been numerous instances of motorists, both cars and bikes, overtaking dangerously both up and down the hill. Right outside our house. This is still a residential area, but we feel that this isn't recognised as such as we are not central to Hungerford Town. This traffic problem is even worse when an m4 diversion is in place and all the motorway traffic is coming through.

Each day a number of families with young children walk from this area to schools within the town and have to perilously cross this busy road taking their lives into their hands as the traffic is so fast.

Over the past couple of weeks, we have had tradesman parking legally on the road next door, due to speed there have been at least 4 occasions where other motorists have hit these vans causing damage to both vehicles usually one or other of the wing mirrors being destroyed. If they were travelling at a sensible speed this would be avoided and we're lucky its only vehicles being hit, and they are not hitting pedestrians.

Recently there has been a speed happy/sad face sign placed on the A4 between Eddington and the garden centre, is this something that we could get on the hill as I believe it would make a great difference and hopefully prevent the inevitable injury, or worse, to a pedestrian. There is a 30-mpg sign coming down the hill that does light up, but this seems to be ignored.

The ideal solution would be to get a speed camera installed but maybe a sad/happy speed sign is a good first step.

I look forward to receiving your thoughts on this issue.

Kind regards,

Name and address supplied

HT20220072a Xmas Electric Usage

Hungerford Town Council

Public Report to: Highways and Transport 31st October 2022

Agenda Item No: HT20220072a Christmas – Electric lights usage, tariff and timers

Background The cost of electricity has increased astronomically due to various outside influences. Our Christmas tree light electricity is unmetered and as it is an “event contract” we are unable to set up a fixed contract with SSE Southern Electric.

HTC has budgeted £350 for Christmas 2022 electricity, but this will now not cover our costs. The LED Xmas lights remain on 24 hours a day.

Cost for Christmas lights 2022

The current price for unmetered electricity for November 22 to January 23 is:

82.67p per unit

£1.231 standing charge per day.

Looking at Christmas 2021:

Number days = 35

Units used = 1382

Therefore, estimating the same number of units are used during Christmas 2022

35 days @ £1.231 = £43.09

1382 units @ 82.67p = £1142.50

Total cost will = £1185.59

(The standing charge has doubled, and the unit price has trebled)

Objective – To reduce costs for HTC and households that provide electric for our Christmas trees.

Options

1. Shield can install a timer to the outside of lampposts. Costing approx. £50/£60 for a set of lights and there are 80 or 90 plug ins. Estimated £5,000. (firm quote requested)
FIRM QUOTE SINCE RECEIVED Shield will install 54 Plug in timer/Skt trailing lead assembly for a price of £3000.00 + Vat. The manufacturer offer a 3 year guarantee for the external items (Box, Lids, Seals etc.) and 15 years for the internal equipment (Skt & Timer)
2. Shield advised we can use photocells which only come on during the dark hours from dusk to dawn. Then you are really wasting the time from midnight through to 7pm when not many people will see them.
3. WBC can arrange with their contractor, Volker Highways, to fit a new isolator unit with built in timers to each lamppost. The cost is £192.59 per column. There is a 2–3-week lead time on the components. (There are approx. 25 columns used for Xmas lights) = £4814.75
4. Consider paying the householders for any increased energy costs due to the Christmas Trees. One property owner so far has requested not to have a Xmas tree because of the electricity cost.
5. Keep as per last year as significant investment is required to reduce the energy bills.

Other information – FYI the electric for CCTV and Croft Field are in a fixed contract for another 2 years.

Recommendation(s) The best option, based on the above information

Signed: Town Clerk 20/10/2022