

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee** meeting held on Monday 21st November 2022 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs H Simpson, D Lewis, J Keates, N Schlanker. A Fyfe joined the meeting at 19.06 pm.

Also in attendance: Lydia Cutland (Deputy Town Clerk), District Councillor Dennis Benneyworth, a representative from Hungerford Allotment Holders Association (HAHA) and a representative from The Newbury Weekly News.

RA20220073 Apologies for absence – Cllrs Alford, Yakar-Wells, Winser and West Berkshire District Councillor James Cole.

RA20220074 Declarations of Interest – Cllr Schlanker (item RA20220076)

RA20220075 Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 17th October 2022 and update on actions:

Proposed: Cllr H Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: To accept the minutes of 17th October 2022 as a true record subject to one amendment. One abstention.

ACTION: Town Clerk to clarify the name of the councillor who seconded the resolution ref item RA20220067 – Triangle Field Height Barrier as the councillor named abstained from the proposal.

Update on actions:

RA20220063 - Marsh Lane allotment site lease – refer to report RA20220076 (see appendix). Until HTC and HAHA hear otherwise, it is assumed, as per the letter from HTC dated 18th October 2022 to the developer and landowner, that HAHA will tend and prepare their plot's for another year's cultivation. A holding response has been received from the developer acknowledging HTC's letter. Assessment of alternative allotment site at the end of the Triangle Field has been carried out by HAHA and HTC representatives - refer to report RA20220076 (see appendix). The site visit was promising.

ACTION: Town Clerk to contact WBC about possible access from the end of the field directly onto Inkpen Road.

RA20220063 - Town & Manor to be contacted to request use of any part of their land for allotments.

ACTION – Cllr Simpson will be meeting with T&M w/c 21st November and will discuss.

RA20220066 - Youth Council – refer to item RA20220078

RA20220067 - Consider HFRC's proposal to install another French Drain – HTC acknowledged receipt of letter dated 7th November which advised that any plans will be shared with HTC prior to work commencing.

ACTION – Clerk to provide update in due course

RA20220067 - Consider regular use of extra land at Triangle Field by RFC and consider grass cutting arrangements for HTC areas. Letter dated 7th November received from RFC have confirmed requirements and a quote to mow the grass. It was also noted in the letter that RFC are receptive to linking up CCTV cameras.

ACTION – Clerk to provide update if this is feasible due to some technical issues that have already been identified.

RA20220069 - Friendship Bench – Chamber of Commerce have been contacted by HTC and provided information with the location of an existing bench in Canal Wharf which could be re-purposed (as it is not already dedicated). Chamber of Commerce to advise if this is suitable and to share an image of what the bench would look like when painted. If the bench is suitable for Chamber of Commerce, then permission would need to be sought from WBC as it is on their land.

ACTION – Clerk/ Deputy Clerk to chase Chamber of Commerce for decision.

RA20220070 - Croft Field Activity Centre - refer to item RA20220081

RA20220071 – Skate Park – refer to item RA20220082

All other actions were completed.

- RA20220076** **Receive update on Marsh Allotments** – Incident of Vandalism and Theft
Refer to report RA20220076 from Town Clerk (see appendix). In addition a representative from Haha attended the meeting to provide a verbal update in which she reiterated that at the beginning of November, the allotments had been targeted with a spate of thefts, vandalism and what can be deemed as hate crime due the offensive graffiti. Both incidents have been reported to the police with two case numbers and it is hoped that in 3 weeks' time the police will be setting up a camera tracking system to monitor visitors to the site. Haha's treasurer is following up with the insurance company as many valuable items were stolen. The Haha representative also commented that at the beginning of November, the neighbouring Parish of Lambourne had been subject to an allotment break-in. Cllr Simpson expressed remorse on behalf of the Committee.
ACTION – Clerk to contact nearby Parish Councils as they could be impacted too.
- RA20220077** **Receive update summary of maintenance list**
Refer to report RA20220076 from Town Clerk (see appendix). With reference to the installation of the Tommies for Remembrance Day, Cllr Keates commented that in future these should be positioned with the guns facing outwards so that there is a large enough space between the two for people to walk between. The Councillors would prefer to see the Tommie wooden posts painted in black rather than being left with exposed wood.
ACTION – Clerk to note for Remembrance Day 2023.
- RA20220078** **Youth Council**
All DBS checks have now been completed but the risk assessments are ongoing.
ACTION – Cllr Lewis to liaise with the Town Clerk to progress
- RA20220079** **St Saviour's Cemetery**
The Deputy Clerk explained that on a recent visit to the Garden of Remembrance it was noted that the row markers are incomplete and suggested that in order to maintain ongoing record accuracy and to make the plot rows clear for visitors, it would be beneficial to mark the incomplete rows. This would mean that 6 x row marker stones are required at the total cost of £450 + VAT (£75 + VAT per marker stone). HTC's RFO has confirmed this could be costed against budget line 4201.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Schlanker

Resolution: To instruct the stonemason to proceed with 6 x row marker stones at the total cost of £450 + VAT to budget line 4201.

RA20220080 Triangle Field – Consider HFRC’s positioning of extractor fan – refer to report RA20220080 (see appendix)

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: To instruct RFC to install and pay for a suitable barrier as per the recommendation report from Peninsula in order to satisfy H&S requirements.

ACTION – Clerk to contact RFC to progress and HTC’s insurers once in situ.

RA20220081 Croft Field Activity Centre – receive update on project
Cllr Simpson provided an update to the Committee. Meetings had been conducted on site that day with representatives from HTC, Kennet Design and two contractors. Each contractor had the opportunity to run through their proposed tenders again including costings. HTC have requested that both contractors make amendments to their plans so that they reflect current figures and that there is more parity between them and ensuring that all requirements such as WIFI, electric work etc has been included. Start date for either contractor would be almost immediately. In terms of next steps, revised plans and current material costs will be submitted to HTC prior to Full Council on the 5th December 2022 so that a final decision can be made at that time. Cllr Simpson expressed how important it is for the Councillors to review the final plans ahead of FC meeting.

RA20220082 Skate Park

The questionnaire, outlining options A&B is live until the 1st December. Verbal feedback from skaters so far has been positive towards both options. Once the feedback has been collated, a decision will be made at Full Council at the beginning of January.

RA20220083 Consider R&A budget for 2023 – 24

The draft budgets for 2023-24 were reviewed. The Councillors were in agreement with the proposed funds apart from the following exceptions:

Expenses

- 4210 – Smitham Bridge Play Area and 4232 – Playground repairs - the question was raised as to when the surfaces were last cleaned as moss is covering some of the matting. If the cleaning has taken place recently then it may be deemed more effective to conduct a twice yearly clean. Line item 4232 includes a £900 annual clean and the councillors require further clarity.
- 4218 – Triangle Field Business Rate – line to be removed as shows 0
- 4271 – Skate Park – clarity required if this relates to trees and fencing?
- 4293 – Croft Field electric – Councillors suggested a figure of £2,000 (instead of £1,500) due to increasing utility costs.
- 4294 – Croft Field water – it was noted the proposed figure has increased to £1,300 from £500 which seems significant.

ACTION – RFO to clarify for review at F&GP December.

ACTION – Town Clerk to confirm frequency of Smitham Bridge Play area surface cleaning

Earmarked Reserves

Croft Field – Repair Fund, Croft Field – Car Park and Croft Field – Toilet Re Organise – Councillors require clarity on what figures fall within build costs vs ongoing maintenance thereafter. It was also noted that the Croft Field Repair Fund would need to increase due to escalating material costs.

Allotments – if an alternative site has to be secured, set up costs would be incurred so should the figure reflect this?

Bridge Street War Memorial – it was noted that ownership of the war memorial was still unclear.

Pool House – suggested figure of £1,000 (instead of £2,000)
Fences/ boundaries – suggested figure of £1,000

ACTION – RFO to clarify for review at F&GP December.

ACTION – Clerk to confirm ownership of war memorial

Income

No suggested amends

RA20220084 Health & Safety

Councillors have now volunteered to carry out walkabouts on specific areas and will report to the Deputy Clerk if any issues are highlighted.

ACTION: Deputy Clerk to contact Cllr Knight to request he completes a H&S walkabout of the library and public toilets

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Appendix

R&A 21st Nov 2022 – UPDATES from Town Clerk

RA20220076 – update on Marsh Lane allotments

HTC received a response from Mark Norgate (the developer with an option on the land) that he is withdrawing his offer, made during a meeting with us back in Feb, of a 10-year lease on the Marsh Lane allotment. His position is now as outlined by his planning consultant Neame Sutton.

The letter received from Neame Sutton is a neighbourhood plan issue, and the letter was put before the H2036 team at their meeting on 20th Oct.

Due to the delay of the Local plan H2036 is issuing a second call for sites. All developers have been contacted including Neame. They will have the opportunity to formally apply along with everyone else and submit sites for consideration. H2036 will be considering all applications after the closing date 30th Dec 2022 and after WBC has carried out checks.

The allotment lease currently expires on 31st December 2022. The letter written to the landowner on 18th Oct stated 'If we do not hear from you by the end of October, we will assume that it is acceptable for the allotment holders to tend their plots and prepare them for another year's cultivation.' In response to a follow up letter on 7th Nov MN replied he had spoken to Mr Clothier recently and said he'd reply on his behalf. MN said he is somewhat snowed under at the present time, so apologies that he hasn't got round to doing so yet, it is on his list.

In the interim the Mayor and Town Clerk are in talks with the RFC about exploring the opportunity of having an allotment site at the end of the Triangle Field which could be offered in perpetuity.

On 15th Nov members of HAA met with Town Clerk and Cllr Downe on site. The leased area at Marsh Lane, is 2.7 acres, which equates to 10,926 sq meters (excluding the car park). Cllr Downe measured the area (past pitch 4) at Triangle Field to be approx. (c 9,500 sim)

The ground was tested and found to be acceptable. Not a bog but quite stony. Contact with the waterboard shows the water main ending at the Rugby Club. It is noted the cost of a bore hole would be significant as the water table is low. Marsh Lane allotments has containers, a generator and a peat toilet so to set up a new allotment site would be of significant cost, time and work. A high fence would need to be installed to protect plots from rugby balls and the area would need to be secure. Town Clerk to contact WBC about possible access from the end of the field directly onto Inkpen Road (preferably the stretch heading east not north – shown below in red).



The letter from Neame Sutton and the letter to Mark Norgate are all in the public domain. Newbury News may issue an article and HAHA are aware.

HAHA have also reported that over the last couple of weeks, Marsh Lane has been subject to a number of 'intrusions'. Initially these were limited to damage to padlocks. We did an online report to TVP. Last night we suffered a much more serious intrusion with a gap made in the security fencing, general vandalism around the site and, more unpleasantly, graffiti - mainly in the form of the Russian 'Z' and the word NATO on some polytunnels. Whilst it may have been coincidental, these were close to or on plots rented by Romanians. We have reported this and asked for the TV community team to attend. It has been passed on to them. A large number of thefts have taken place of plot holder's equipment.

RA20220077 - Summary of maintenance list – Update on main work done.

- Put up flags for Remembrance Sunday
- Repaired and installed Tommies for Remembrance Sunday
- Removed broken fence and made safe at Skate Park
- Installed Jubilee bench in high street
- Oversaw arrival of Christmas trees
- Liaised with local company to get 10 brackets made up for Xmas trees/flags & sprayed black
- Fenced off heat Pump at the library

Hungerford Town Council

Public Report to: R&A committee 21st November 2022

Agenda Item No RA20220080: Consider health and safety implications of the positioning of the external flue at the Rugby Club, Triangle Field.

Background

As part of the kitchen refurbishment that was undertaken by the Rugby Club at the start of 2022, a forced extraction system to prevent build-up of fats etc. has been installed. This has been sited outside on a vertical wall to prevent potential problems with roof leakage in the future. The vent exits the kitchen directly in front of the changing rooms and it is felt that this could be a hazard to players, particularly when exiting the building (see photo 1 below).

As a result, HTC took advice from Peninsula to conduct a H&S inspection.

Objectives:

- a) To ensure the positioning of the flue does not obscure access to the changing rooms and
- b) Identify appropriate measures to put in place if applicable.

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

Available budget (£s)

Cost centre n/a – see recommendation

Options

Feedback from Peninsula as follows:

“Following discussions with your fellow staff, it was felt that the most reasonably practicable course of action would be to separate people from the hazard in the form of a physical barrier. There are already metal barriers in situ leading to the accessible changing rooms and the referee’s room.

Barriers similar to these (see photo 2 below) so they reach the same height above the steps coming from the changing room will ensure that players are segregated from the area where the extraction system exits the building. You should ensure there is a horizontal cross rail fitted to discourage shorter players from attempting to duck under it”.

Recommendation(s)

Hungerford Rugby Club to pay for and install a barrier as per the Peninsula recommendation and specification.

Signed: Deputy Town Clerk
18th November 2022

Photos

Position of flue and proximity to changing rooms



Recommended barrier (but would have extra horizontal bar)

