

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor
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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 5th June 2023 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Alford, Carlson, Keates, Hudson, Knight, Winsler, Greenwell, Schlanker, Cusack, Armstrong, Lewis and Cole

Also: West Berks District Cllr Denise Gaines (DR)

Representatives from Newbury News and the Adviser

In attendance: Claire Barnes (Town Clerk) and a representative from Good Hope Farm.

Presentation from Good Hope Farm: Cllr Cole introduced Karine from Good Hope Farm who are based in Hampstead Marshall. He said her project is extremely interesting and recommended visiting. Karine explained she is French but has been living here for 30 years and has two boys, one with a learning disability. Her wish was to create a farm for children with learning disabilities. Educational plans stop after the age of 25 and only 5% enter paid work. She wants to provide structure and a purpose during the day. At Good hope Farm they have created a centre and fundraised for a polytunnel. Four areas have been planted (herbs, vegetables, flowers and orchards) providing work during the day and educating the children/young adults about healthy food. It is an inclusive positive environment benefiting well-being and providing exercise. They have registered with West Berks Social Services, but not enough people know about them. They are looking for more staff and to open more days a week. Karine talked through her power point which is **attached**.

The Mayor conveyed her support of the project and expressed her interest in visiting. Currently Good Hope Farm sell their produce at their gate. A small-scale café/shop would be their dream. They don't currently have an option to register on their website but do have an active Instagram account. Options for networking were suggested with local groups such as HEAT and the markets. Cllr Armstrong offered to put her in touch with her contacts at the schools and an IT contact for promotion.

Police Report: The Mayor advised we have not received a police report but have instead received a good response from the Super Intendent which is detailed in the Mayor's report (attached).

FC202300105 Note apologies for absence – All councillors were present.

The Mayor welcomed new Councillor James Cole and added that she was sorry to see Cllr Yakar-Wells leave but thanked her for her contribution and wished her well for the future.

District Councillors Benneyworth (DB) and Vickers (TV) were unable to attend.

FC202300106 Declarations of interest – Cllr Knight (CHAIN, Hub)

FC202300107 Approval of Minutes of the Annual meeting of the Full Council of 15th May 2023, and outcome of actions

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: To approve minutes of 15th May 2023 as a true record.

Outcome of actions:

DG confirmed the cracks in the damaged buildings at the top of the High Stret are being monitored. The full asset list has been circulated.

ACTION: Add to H&T agenda the unlit public right of way between Church Way and Prospect Road.

ACTION: DG will query the response received from West Berks Council (WBC) reference supplying lighting for Public Rights of Way.

FC202300108 Receive Mayor's Report for past month. Report attached.

FC202300109 Receive District Councillor's Reports – DG advised she officially became portfolio holder for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel from last Thursday and TV is the portfolio holder for Planning and Community Engagement.

She advised planning permission for the solar panels at the Nursery had been approved; members bids will be available from September and our Parish Plan Grant is likely to be approved this week.

ACTION: DG to find out when next round of CIL bids will be.

ACTION: DG will include Cllr Schlanker in a meeting being set up concerning countryside signage to see if HTC volunteers can help with the project.

ACTION: DG to ascertain what days the various recycling bins and dog bins are emptied. The overflowing cardboard recycling is due to be sorted today or tomorrow.

ACTION: DG to speak to Adrian Abbs the portfolio holder for environment about the EV chargers to find out the progress.

ACTION: DG to ask why it was necessary to install a third ticket machine in Church Street Car Park taking up a parking space.

ACTION: DG to report the rat infestation occurring in Atherton Crescent gardens to Sean Murphy at WBC.

FC202300110 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns. The Mayor advised she has written to the MD of Boots about the poor service in the Hungerford store. There are long queues and medication is not available to collect. She has received a response from the Area Manager apologising and explaining it is due to lack of staff. They will be monitoring it closely and visiting the store. She wishes to give them time to sort the issues and will be following up in a couple of weeks. The Surgery have been advised. Cllr Schlanker advised a prescribing pharmacist has to travel from London and lack of staff means they shut lunchtimes. It was suggested medication is ordered through the post to take the pressure off Boots. Ideally a cashier needs to be employed to sell the everyday products.

The Mayor has received letters of complaint about delays with the postal service. DG said WBC has written to Royal Mail and Laura Farris has taken the matter to the Minister.

The Mayor has received complaints from shop owners in the high street about loss of footfall due to abuse of their customers by the Big Issue Seller. He is an authorised seller and has been warned by the Police twice. If you have any concerns, please report them to the Big Issue.

It was agreed the weather and heat alert messages received by the Clerk should be circulated through our social media channels and be uploaded to our website.

As discussed at H&T the Canal & River Trust are looking to remove four dog waste bins from along the canal tow path in Hungerford due to costs. Kintbury are also being affected and are looking at possibilities of contributing. Cllr Cole commented that promoting the use of the canal tow path is in the town strategy list and removing bins would not help. The Clerk is looking at funding possibilities.

FC202300111 Receive any committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report) – It was noted that H&T and F&GP reports have been circulated. **Reports attached.**

FC202300112 Receive report from Hungerford 2036 Project Team (Cllr Hudson) – Report attached.

FC202300113 Ratify payment of grants recommended by the Finance & General Purposes committee totalling £11,000 – Refer to minutes of F&GP for spreadsheet.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Pay grants totalling £11,000. 3 abstentions.

FC202300114 Propose authorisation of payment run. (circulated along with copies of invoices for May)

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Schlanker
Resolution: Agree payment run of £62,288.63

- FC202300115 Propose year to date accounts** – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report
Proposed: Cllr Winser
Seconded: Cllr Alford
Resolution: Agree income and expenditure report with £179, 564 positive variances due to the precept not being received in the expected month.
- FC202300116 Consider action plan and any changes ahead of budget setting in the autumn.** (Refer to document on the website)
ACTION: Clerk to schedule a separate 'tea and a bun' meeting for the end of the month to discuss ideas for the action plan.
- FC202300117 Skate Park Project – receive update.** A site meeting is scheduled for tomorrow at 10am to meet with the contractors. Referring to the document received detailing the phases and prices in the contract, Cllr Knight queried if the CCTV coverage is required as HTC has its own cameras. The Clerk confirmed that we are still waiting for Gigaclear to provide broadband for our camera at the skate park.
- FC202300118 Propose additional expenditure for the Croft Field Centre renovation.**
It was agreed to discuss this item in a PART 2.
- FC202300119 Grant funding for Town Councils and criteria – refer to report.** The Clerk has put together a list of grant opportunities for councillor information and has applied for a Parish Plan grant to help with Croft Field expenditure. It was suggested that the allotments would benefit from a sustainability grant from Veolia. Also, it was queried if dog waste can be disposed of environmentally.
- FC202300120 Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals.** It was reported that some Gigaclear residents were affected by an outage for 3 days and this wasn't limited to Hungerford. Communication has been very poor, and Gigaclear had to be prompted to update their website. In other instances residents have been left with no connection for over 2 weeks.
ACTION: Invite Gigaclear to a future Full Council meeting.
ACTION: DG to query if WBC are looking after their contract as it was a WBC initiative.

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.

- FC202300118 Propose additional expenditure for the Croft Field Centre renovation.**
Proposed: Cllr Winser
Seconded: Cllr Cusack
Resolution: Agree expenditure of £5,674 (as detailed) for additional costs.
ACTION: Arrange meeting with project manager.

Meeting closed 9.10pm

Mayor's report for full council June 5th, 2023

Police:

Firstly, I'd like to note that I was mis quoted in the NWN last week and have received an apology. A correction will be issued in this week's edition.

Many of you are aware of a recent meeting held with the police & Crime commissioner, key stake holders and the superintendent. As I've said previously, this was a very productive meeting. I followed the meeting with a communication outlining key points raised within the meeting and any required actions as below.

TVP Challenges/ Actions Highlighted

- 1) Recruitment - 2 new officers hopefully appointed by November.*
- 2) Vehicles - shortage of parts and replacements, this is because of a national supply issue and high servicing levels required for police vehicles.*
- 3) Hungerford and Downlands neighbourhood team's patch covers a large area, making it almost impossible to be effective and informed of local intelligence around crime.*

Today, 24th May 2023, I have spent a large amount of my day, addressing the many concerns held by residents in relation to police attendance/presence within the town. A burglary at a public house in Hungerford, (broken into for a second time this weekend), was called into the police and sent to their AIU system (Assessment & Investigation Unit). This job then sat waiting for assessment and any required action. I know that attending a crime after it has occurred wouldn't be seen as an urgent police matter.

Sadly, what the police fail to appreciate is the anger, frustration and vulnerability felt by residents, who are desperate for someone to reassure them they are important, safe, and kept informed. Instead, social media becomes explosive, and I am left to address the frustrations and disappointment of residents.

I am extremely sympathetic to the current challenges faced by TVP. The force is understaffed, underfunded, and working under extremely difficult constraints. As sympathetic as I am, I cannot ignore the residents of Hungerford whom I stood to serve. TVP must address the issues around real neighbourhood policing policies.

Hungerford because of its location (furthest west) isn't currently being policed effectively, I'm asking you to consider the allocation of the neighbourhood team, perhaps considering splitting the team to get real presence within the town.

Here is a summary of the response received from TVP:

Since our meeting, I have instructed that 2 PCSOs are based permanently at Hungerford Fire Station, which negates the need for those officers to book on at Newbury Police Station. This means that they avoid 2 hours of travel time each day and can spend more time on their area. A dedicated Police vehicle has also been allocated to the Hungerford Police Team to enable them to have the vehicle readily available for patrol for Hungerford, Lambourne and the surrounding villages.

Changes have already been implemented to the NPT to increase presence and engagement, two new officers are being allocated to the team to bolster police numbers for enforcement and problem solving, and steps are being taken to explore how I can base the whole team at Hungerford Fire Station to provide a better service to the West of the LPA. I would also like to reassure you that Crime and Incidents in the area are monitored by the LPA and are suitably reallocated where opportunities exist to detect offenders, alongside providing crime prevention and problem solving.

I have also received a response directly from the AIU.

Thank you for raising these concerns and giving me the opportunity to address them. I fear that there may be some misunderstanding of the Force's new Assessment and Investigation Unit (AIU) and I would like to provide reassurance to Councillor Simpson about the robustness of our processes.

I should start with a brief explanation as to why the AIU was set up in the first place. Following the Force's HMICFRS inspection of 2021 and our own internal reviews, it was found that our front-line teams were becoming over-whelmed with demand and struggling to cope. At the same time, we were not satisfied with the quality of service that the Force was able to provide to victims of volume crime. We sought to address that through the creation of a new Force-wide (but locally delivered) Assessment and Investigation Unit. The purpose of this unit was to make best use of our resources and technology to improve our victim service. This function was separated from our traditional local policing delivery model so that we could develop our expertise and standards consistently across the Force.

I know that everyone recognises that the demand on police forces far exceeds the capacity to respond. It was critical that we freed up our front-line response teams to focus on those jobs with the most threat, harm, and risk. At the same time, we were confident that the AIU could deliver a better standard of victim service and investigation through a more sophisticated prioritisation process. We have probably gone some way further than other Forces by focussing this prioritisation system on the impact that a crime has had on the victim and community rather than a broad-brush and blunt approach of prioritising purely based on crime type. Our intention therefore was certainly to be targeting our response at those crimes where residents would feel anger, frustration, and vulnerability.

There are several steps to this process that it is probably worth me detailing: 1) If a call taker, having undertaken the appropriate risk assessment, deems that a crime does not require an officer to be deployed in the first instance, they send the crime to the AIU. 2) This crime will have an initial review from the AIU within a couple of hours to ensure it is appropriate to be dealt with by the AIU. If the crime is found to have threat, harm risk or be particularly serious then the crime may either be sent back to our control room or placed higher in our triage queue for a quicker response. 3) This is followed by our triage process that involves contacting the victim and better understanding the crime, lines of enquiry, threat harm and risk, the impact that crime has had on the victim and the victim's expectations. Our aim is to do this within 24 hours. As we are a new unit and our resourcing is still being put in place, we do have some delays in our triage queue; however, we will see this come down significantly over the next couple of weeks. 4) Where there is deemed to be a reasonable line of enquiry that we can pursue, a crime will be sent for investigation and prioritised based on threat, harm, risk, and victim impact. 5) Whether or not there is a line of enquiry, we will also task the local policing area resources with reassurance, safeguarding or crime prevention where appropriate. We work with the local policing teams to ensure that those offenders who require an arrest are brought into custody at the earliest opportunity. 6) In addition to our triage process, we have a small team of analysts who will seek to find crime series and hotspots which require an enhanced response.

The AIU is still in its infancy; however, the early signs are very positive. Victim satisfaction for crimes coming to AIU has risen by 16 percentage points compared to the months prior to AIU being introduced. We are seeing some excellent results in bringing offenders to justice through joint working of all our local teams. Increases in crime and the complexity of crime continues to challenge us; however, we are always striving to improve, and I am confident that we will do that over the coming months.

One of Hungerford's PCSO's was kind enough to accompany me to visit Abingdon's police call centre. I found this visit helpful; I am now better able to understand the call handling process. I was able to follow a call from start to conclusion. I was able to see how many calls were coming in on both 999 and 101 numbers. It was good to see that on a busy rush hour I only saw 5 calls waiting on the 101 number. It was good to see how the calls are prioritised to either an immediate despatch of officers, or further triage to determined if it goes to AIU or urgent follow up. Throughout, this process is overseen by senior officers

or supervisors further bolstering any decision making. I'd like to thank the team at Abingdon for their time on my visit.

Hungerford's concerns have been taken on board and real steps are currently being explored to provide the town with more police resource. My thanks to the Superintendent for his detailed reply and actions following our meeting.

Town Band

Thank you to Hungerford Town Band for their invite to their annual concert. I am always thrilled to listen to their incredible talent. Fabulous concert, I'm already looking forward to the next one.

Blind Club

Thank you inviting me to the Blind Club Gathering. A member of T&M was talking about the wetland project. It was great to hear all the questions around the project and interesting to hear members ideas about how their experience of the wetlands could be improved with special options for partially sighted and blind visitors. We then helped to judge their Coronation crowns.

Croft Field

Work is progressing on the renovations of the Croft Field Centre; Costs are continuing to escalate. HTC is currently looking at outstanding works still required and will try to forecast any unforeseen costs to complete the project.

Skatepark

HTC has now received our certificate of lawfulness so are now able to meet with contractors to schedule a start date. A new project will need careful consideration before commencing due to budget allocation and overspend on the croft field project. Grants have been applied for and we hope to proceed without any delay.

Sovereign & Aster

Sadly, I have received a resident complaint about anti-social behaviour (intimidation and criminal damage) whilst occupying a social housing property. I will contact the housing officer at Sovereign to escalate an urgent response.

There has also been a complaint about drug use, loud music, and aggressive behaviour in the LEAP (local Equipped Area for Play) at Lancaster Park/Kennedy meadow, District councillors are aware, and I will see what steps can be taken to address the concerns.

Helen Simpson
Mayor

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 5TH JUNE 2023

MONTH 2 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR MAY 2023

101 FINANCE:

The first Precept instalment of £172,346 has now been received, although budgeted in last month.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £4,990 positive variance. A donation of £2,304 was received from BMW which has been moved to EMR under the Moveable Speed Camera line.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

No Expenditure this month.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £25 negative variance. The budgeted Rent increase was not fully implemented.

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 £489 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

Net Expenditure is a £45 positive variance.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £50 positive variance.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £206 negative variance. Croft Field Rent of £750 was paid this month but budgeted in last month.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

No Expenditure this month.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £41 positive variance.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

No Expenditure this month.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £64 positive variance.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £210 positive variance.

April's Net Income over Expenditure is a £179,546 positive variance as the £172,346 Precept was received this month but budgeted last month.

Claire Winser, Chair of F&GP

4 June 2023

Hungerford Town Council Report from Highways and Transport meeting 29th May 2023

1. Appointments
 - a. Nick Schlanker was voted in as Chair
 - b. Richard Hudson was voted as Vice Chair
2. High Street Traffic
 - a. After the April working party meeting, a plan has been drafted with areas that could be considered for traffic calming
 - b. The plan to be circulated to members to decide which items should be discussed with WBC traffic department
 - c. Meeting with WBC to be arranged
 - d. The Working party will not meet this month
3. SID's
 - a. A new SID has been introduced covering A4 to the west of the town. This device is solar powered. The garage donated money which was used towards the SID.
 - b. All SID's have been upgraded to remove a Kph / Mph bug
 - c. The output of the SID's to be published on the HTC website
4. Changing Places facility
 - a. A review of the cost of supporting the service to be undertaken before a decision is made about its introduction
5. C&RT Dog Litter Bins
 - a. The C&RT have informed HTC that they will be removing the four waste bins along the tow path.
 - b. Discussion took place about HTC potentially funding the bins in the church yard
 - c. Action to discuss the impact of removal with C&RT
6. Survey of Byways and Footpaths
 - a. Approx. 50% of the WBC list has visited and reviewed
 - b. Three locations do need urgent repair
 - c. Majority of issues linked to faded signs and paths overgrown

May 2023 Update on Hungerford 2036 Neighbourhood Plan (Cllr Hudson)
01/06/23

There has been some progress that in summary includes:

- The assessments for the new sites. All consultations have now been received and the evaluation is being completed by Navigus Planning.
- The Plan text is progressing. The Plan Committee have responded with detailed comments to Navigus planning. This includes information received from a request to key organisations in the town about the main issues challenges and opportunities over the coming years, i.e. Town & Manor, CoC, schools, surgery etc. Navigus have confirmed that they will respond during week starting June 5th.
- An updated programme has been produced as shown below and includes comments from Navigus. It has slowed up as we have been delayed by the above and we had missed out or underestimated some activities..... but there is progress. The end date is now expected in October 2024....A long process!!
- Key next actions are:
 - complete site assessments
 - complete draft of the Plan

Good Hope Farm



Good Hope Farm is a Community Project dedicated to the benefit of Adults with Learning Disabilities and the local Community.

Hamstead Marshall

Presented by Karine Giannamore

Learning Disabilities

A **learning disability** is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which **affects someone for their whole life**.

People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information and interact with other people.

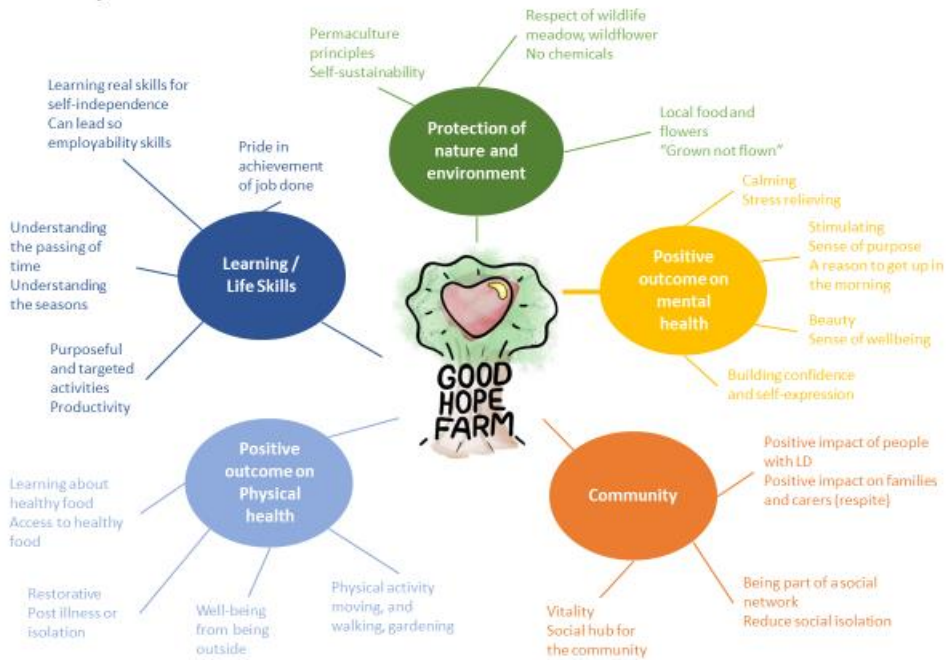
We expect the number of West Berkshire residents with all types/severity of learning disabilities to increase **by 1.5% between 2020 and 2025** (based on Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information).

According to the West Berkshire Market Position statement, the goal of Adult Social Care is **"for the vulnerable, to promote learning, independence, health and well-being"**

GHF Story in Photos



Five Key Benefits



Moving Forward

Our current needs:

- Access road into the garden area for wheelchair users or difficulty walking and emergency access.
- A better integration of GHF within the social and well-being support network within the community, Adult Social Care and local surgeries to get adequate referrals.

Our future needs:

- As we get more established, to build a low key environmentally integrative building for safety, comfort and shelter for our GH Farmers.
- Full-time staff to support our GH Farmers and be open more days.

Follow our progress on Instagram: [good_hope_farm](https://www.instagram.com/good_hope_farm)