

# 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> July 2023 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford

**Present:** Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Alford, Carlson, Keates, Hudson, Winsor, Greenwell, Schlanker, Cusack, Armstrong and Cole

Also: West Berks District Cllrs Tony Vickers (TV) and Dennis Benneyworth (DB)

Representatives from Newbury News, the Adviser and Penny Post

In attendance: Claire Barnes (Town Clerk), a representative from Citizens Advice Bureau and a member of public.

**Presentation from Citizens Advice Bureau:** Isabel talked through her power point presentation (**see attached**). She explained that prior to COVID most meetings were face to face but since they have been able to expand to provide advice virtually and over the phone, which some clients prefer. Following a triage, appointments are booked, and advice needed varies from specialist to volunteer. A holistic service is required as many clients have more than one issue. Currently there are 60 on the waiting list for Hungerford. Staff consists of around 10 full time including volunteers, which is not enough, and they are actively recruiting. The cost-of-living crisis is the current main issue, and they are helping with benefits, debt problems and budgeting. Problems are anticipated with rising mortgages. Hungerford comprises of 7% of all of the clients in West Berkshire and already 50 matters have been raised since April 2023. An important part of their role is campaigning for improvements and speaking with the local MP.

Isabel advised CAB has a good working environment and they support each other in their roles. She would be pleased to attend our Annual Meeting to advise residents of the services on offer. They are running a pilot program in the hub providing virtual meetings.

**Police Report:** A report has been circulated (**see attached**). The Mayor advised the Team has been busy in Henley. She is still campaigning for a better service to be provided in Hungerford.

**Prospective councillor:** Stella introduced herself and gave a brief summary of her career including 20 years as a merger and acquisitions investment banker in the city, COO of a hospitality IT company and landlady of the White Hart pub. She is also a volunteer for Test Valley Citizens advice and Christmas Homeless Crisis. She is interested in a more sustainable Hungerford.

The Mayor invited Stella to attend committee meetings taking place in July to get a feel for how the Council works and co-option can be considered at a future Full Council meeting.

**FC202300121 Note apologies for absence** – Cllrs Knight and Lewis.

**FC202300122 Declarations of interest** – Cllr Simpson (Hungerford & Camburn)

**FC202300123 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023, and outcome of actions**

**Proposed:** Cllr Winsor

**Seconded:** Cllr Alford

**Resolution:** To approve minutes of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 as a true record. One abstention.

**Outcome of actions:**

Next CIL bids will be in the autumn. A meeting took place about countryside signage. Dog bins are emptied on a Friday at around 9.30am. TV will chase for an update on the EV chargers and will

attend the next H&T. Reasons were given in DG's report of the necessity to install a third ticket machine in Church St Car Park that takes up a parking space. These are as follows:

- 1) No single point of failure – As both machines are mains powered and connected to an adjacent lighting column, we didn't want them connected to the same column. A light power failure is low priority and is often a 2-4 week wait for an engineer to attend. Should this have happened, the car park would have been forced to revert to payments by mobile phone only which I know would have caused a great deal of unrest amongst regular users.
- 2) From an operational perspective, it was more suitable to split the machines instead of having them side by side as often one machine (the one on the left of the two) typically sees twice the usage compared to the other.
- 3) From a customer perspective, one of the new machines is now on the side of the car park where the vast majority of customers exit the car park. We have received comments from customers in the past that they didn't see the machines on arrival when large vehicles were parked either side of the machines. There will also be an additional tariff board installed by the new machine.  
The rat infestation at Atherton Crescent will be looked at by the West Berks Council PPP group once they have the details of the addresses and residents affected. A 'tea and a bun' meeting took place to look at the action plan.

**ACTION:** Add to the H&T agenda to discuss signage, dog bins and EV chargers.

**ACTION:** DG will continue to try and find out who in WBC oversees the Gigaclear rollout.

**FC202300124 Receive Mayor's Report for past month. Report attached.**

**ACTION:** The Mayor will chase a response from Boots.

**FC202300125 Receive District Councillor's Reports –** TV is a new District Councillor for Hungerford. He advised he retired in 1995 and has spent 18 years on West Berks Council. He is a retired colonel and chartered land surveyor. Main projects he will be involved in include taking the Local Plan to adoption. There has been a 2 month pause in the Local Plan to understand where they are, and options include carrying on with main modifications or pulling it. TV advised they are very short staffed within the planning department and recently have appointed 3 new members of staff but are still short. Planning enforcement needs improvement and there are issues at Eddington. He is the representative for Community Engagement, the Rural Business Forum and Berkshire Historic Forum. He added that West Berks does not have a qualified conservation officer at present as the money ran out. He is looking at the issue recently raised of conservation verses environment with reference to buildings in a conservation areas and permission for solar panels and UPVC. TV is also a representative on the AONB.

The 3G pitch at JOG School will be done by mid-October. The Mayor pointed out there were delays from WBC which resulted in increased costs and a lot of preparation work had been done by the school and HTC prior to WBC being involved.

Cllr Fyfe advised the 'Solar Together Berkshire' initiative links through to a preferred bidder and they don't do ground mount solar panels.

TV advised the Environment Portfolio holder is Adrian Abbs and suggested we approach him directly. The person to lobby directly for a policy on solar panels is Bryan Lyttle.

**ACTION:** Cllr Hudson will include something in the NDP about solar in a conservation area.

**FC202300126 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns.** No concerns were raised.

**FC202300127 Receive any committee reports (no more than 3 minutes per report) –** An F&GP report has been circulated. **See attached.**

**FC202300128 Receive report from Hungerford 2036 Project Team (Cllr Hudson) – Report attached.**

**FC202300129 Ratify recommendation from R&A to appoint contractor to paint play equipment in Bulpit Park – refer to report.** It was pointed out that agreeing to paint all the equipment in one go would

clear out our funds and it would be better to stage the work. There are items that aren't very old that won't need doing yet such as the seesaw.

**ACTION:** Take back to R&A to consider the state of each item of equipment.

**FC202300130 Propose payment of grant to Hungerford Camburn of £1,000**

**Proposed:** Cllr Cole

**Seconded:** Cllr Schlanker

**Resolution:** Agree grant to Hungerford & Camburn for £1,000.

**FC202300131 Propose extending 365 licence to include councillors – refer to report.** There was general agreement that this would make the councillors' working environment easier.

**Proposed:** Cllr Cole

**Seconded:** Cllr Greenwell

**Resolution:** Obtain 365 licences for all councillors.

**Proposed:** Cllr Schlanker

**Seconded:** Cllr Keates

**Resolution:** Transfer funds of £1,000 to cover the 365 licences, from EMR pest control.

**FC202300132 Propose authorisation of payment run.** (circulated along with copies of invoices for June)

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Simpson

**Resolution:** Agree payment run of £26,979.19.

**FC202300133 Propose year to date accounts – refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report**

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson

**Resolution:** Agree income and expenditure report with £11,153 positive variance.

**FC202300134 Consider outcome of discussion on action plan and any changes ahead of budget setting in the autumn.** (Refer to document on the website)

**ACTION:** Mayor to go through Action Plan with Town Clerk and bring back edited version to next Full Council for agreement.

**FC202300135 Croft Field Project – Consider further build alterations.**

It was agreed the best option was to put a step into the North Room rather than raise the level of the floor. The latter would require the fire door to be changed and a further ramp to be installed to the gazebo at a significant cost. A step would cost a fraction of the price but would require good warning signage and redirection for wheelchair users. An internal ramp is not a good option due to the space it would take up.

**Proposed:** Cllr Keates

**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson

**Resolution:** Authorise the Clerk to instruct the builders to install a step.

**ACTION:** Clerk to check with insurers about cover for third party property left in the building.

**Proposed:** Cllr Hudson

**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson

**Resolution:** Delegate decisions on the fire and intruder alarms to the Clerk, Project Manager and Mayor.

The cost of the electrics is additional and is estimated at £6k. We wait actual figures.

**FC202300136 Update on Skate Park Project. Work commenced on 26<sup>th</sup> June and will take 13 weeks.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson

**Resolution:** Cllrs Schlanker, Keates and Simpson are appointed as a project assurance team to assure the delivery of the Skate Park Project as per the spec.

**FC202300137 Note delay on start date of new on-demand bus service until 31<sup>st</sup> October. Propose continued support of H1 in the interim.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Cusack

**Resolution:** Continue to support the H1 service until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

**FC202300138 Update on JOG artificial pitch project. Work has commenced and HTC has donated £10,000 towards the project** This was discussed under item FC202300125 above.

**FC202300139 Changing Places – update on Project.** The Clerk gave a brief update. A site meeting took place with WBC representatives to look at the site in Church St Car Park where a pod for a Changing Place Facility could be placed. This is a disabled toilet that includes other facilities for the severely disabled including a hoist and adult size changing table. It would be located where the bike racks are at present, and these would be re-sited within the car park. The cost for a pod is £80K, which is a more expensive option than fitting out an existing building. WBC has funding of £35K so there is a shortfall of £45k. HTC does not have any funds for this project. There is an urgency for the project to proceed this year otherwise funding could be lost. Funding to bridge the shortfall would need to be sought elsewhere and one option is a CIL bid (available in autumn).

**ACTION:** Defer to next Full Council meeting.

**FC202300140 Propose purchase of Christmas Trees for 2023 display – Refer to report.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Armstrong

**Resolution:** Agree purchase of Christmas trees as outlined in the report, totalling £7,368.35 plus vat.

**FC202300141 Hungerford Leisure Centre – West Berks Council has a new contract with Everyone Active.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Winser

**Resolution:** Clerk to chase the Leisure Centre for a meeting and seat at the table.

It was commented by one councillor that the new branding at the Leisure Centre is wasteful with the issue of 200 new swimming hats.

**FC202300142 Any other Reports (3 minutes each) not to include any proposals.**

Meeting closed 9.05pm






# Over the last year

We have slowly returned to working from the office.

We **learnt** that:

- Operating a hybrid service allows us to see more clients
- Some clients prefer advice over the phone
- We can do complex casework remotely

## How can clients access us

-  **Face to Face**
-  **Telephone**
-  **Email**
-  **Video call**
-  **Letter**

**Initial Assessments / Triage**

- Signpost
- Advice
- Request further information e.g. client to send in paperwork

**Appointments**

- In depth advice
- Support with paperwork e.g. filling in forms

**Complex Casework**

- Contact 3<sup>rd</sup> parties
- Create budget sheets
- Do benefit applications
- Support with appeals

## Our Services

**Core Service**  
General advice and information in all areas including benefits, debt, employment, housing, consumer, immigration, family and legal rights

**Money Advice Team**  
Specialist advice in debt, budgeting and financial capability. Our team is qualified under the FCA rules and we hold the AQS mark at caseworker level

**Carers Team**  
Advice and information for Carers and people with disabilities and long term conditions. Our carers team give advice and information about entitlement to care, help and support. They specialise in all disability benefits

## How we helped

-  **1840** clients
-  **9713** issues  
Top issues:
  - Benefits
  - Debt & Financial Capability
  - Housing
  - Relationship & Family
  - Employment
-  **Almost 50%** of our clients report a disability or long term condition

**84%** of our clients would recommend our service  
**82%** of our clients found a way forward

4

## Current Issues

- Cost of Living Crisis is having an impact on residents
- Increase in demand for charitable help and food bank vouchers, fuel and Council Tax debt
- Helping a higher number of clients with disabilities to claim Personal Independence Payments and appeal decisions
- Clients in the middle income bracket struggling to pay their bills

We are working closely with other local organisations to support residents

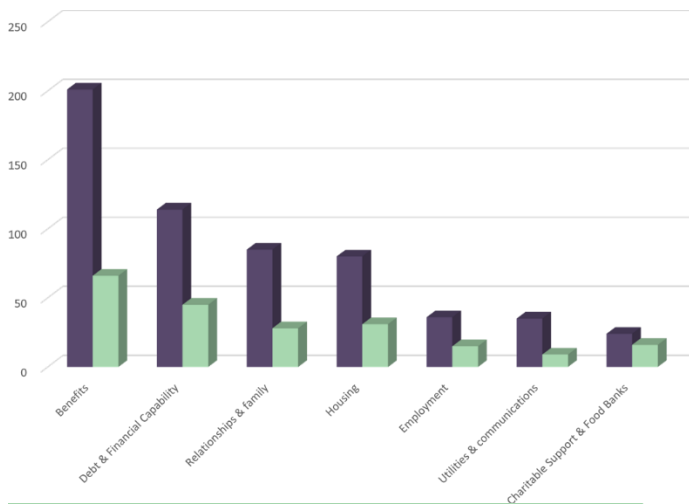
### Hungerford clients' 2022/23

- We saw **129** clients from Hungerford
- We helped clients with **599** new issues
- We achieved over **£80k** of financial outcomes for our Hungerford clients

This is 7% of the total clients CAWB dealt with in 2022/23

#### In quarter one of 2023-24, we have already helped:

- 50 Hungerford clients
- With 178 Issues



### Our Financial Impact



**Citizens Advice West Berkshire gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward whoever they are and whatever their problem.**

Any other questions please contact our office  
[enquiry@cawberks.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@cawberks.org.uk)



Citizens Advice West Berkshire is an operating name of West Berkshire Citizens Advice Bureau, which is a charity and limited company registered in England and Wales. Registered Office: 2nd Floor, Broadway House, 4-8 The Broadway, Northbrook Street, Newbury RG14 1BA. Registered Charity No1115036. Registered Company No 05821486. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617791.

Published by Citizens Advice West Berkshire June 2023

## **HTC UPDATE JULY 2023**

Since mid-June Jo and Lee, 2 of our Police Community Support Officers have been based back out of Hungerford TRI Station. Please note the TRI Station is not open to the public and the nearest police station is Newbury. You can also contact us online or via calling 101.

The team have had a busy June with various commitments across the Thames Valley area. Several of the team supported Royal Ascot as well as the Henley Royal Regatta. We have also attended many school fetes across our local policing area – with many more booked in for July and August. A highlight we are looking forward to is Hungerford Carnival which takes place on July 16<sup>th</sup>.

For the month of June there have been 7 reports of anti-social behaviour and 2 reports of Theft. One of these thefts was of milk from a doorstep in the early hours of the morning. The second theft was from a vehicle parked in one of the laybys on The Common.

With the dry and sunny weather due to stay for a while longer this is the time of year when historically we see an increase in theft from vehicle reports at beauty spots. In our local areas these being Hungerford Common and Combe.

This crime is carried out by opportunists and you can reduce the risk of having your vehicle broken into by considering the following:

- Don't leave **anything** in your car. Do not leave items of value in your boot.
- Open the parcel shelf and leave the glove box open to show would be thieves there is nothing of value left in the vehicle.
- Use well lit, secure car parks where possible.
- Don't return to your car to leave purchases in the boot before continuing with your shopping as thieves may watch car parks.

There have been no reported burglaries or shopliftings for June.



## **The Team**

The current set up of the Hungerford and Downlands Neighbourhood Police Team is 1 x Inspector, 1 x Sergeant, 2 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](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

Mayors report July Full Council – Cllr Helen Simpson

### **Skatepark**

I am so excited to see this project start, this has been a long-awaited aspiration of the team and I'm thrilled we've been able to fund raise and save for this project. Our Facebook announcement received a few negative comments (mainly due to incorrect assumptions), but most were extremely positive. I visited JOG school recently and several parents came to thank HTC for the new park and to tell me how excited their children were to use it when finished.

Sadly, due to the planning delay, we have missed our build schedule, meaning the project won't now be completed in time for school holidays. Apologies for the delay but this was taken completely out of our hands. I am looking forward to the grand opening in October.

### **Croft Field**

I would like to express my thanks to Town Clerk Claire Barnes, for her continued work on this project. Claire has a tight focus on this build and is keeping Cllr's fully informed at every step. HTC had hoped for a more streamlined project management on this build but has been quite challenged with many additional costs associated with the project. The building is old and tired, as soon as one step forward is made another hurdle is waiting to be addressed.

HTC is doing everything it can to complete this project which will now come in over budget.

The important note is, this building will once again be a thriving community space, clean, secure, with good facilities, but most importantly assessable to all. Well done, Claire.

### **3G pitch at JOG**

I was delighted to see the first signs of the long-awaited full size, 3G playing pitch commencing at JOG this week. I would like to thank Sam Tilling-Wells (school business manager) for her tremendous efforts in bringing this project together. It certainly feels a long time ago when, JOG, HTC, and Hungerford Town Football Club came together with, the FA, to share an idea to fund a full-size FA standard pitch.

I was disappointed recently to hear of delays around access and land ownership, leading to timescales on this project slipping. Costs have now increased as material costs have continued to rise. Luckily everything came together, and we're now extremely excited to see the pitch completed soon.

Congratulations to everybody involved, especially to Sam and Town Clerk Claire Barnes who did an incredible amount of work in the early stages. This is going to be a fantastic resource for the school and the wider community. "Small but Mighty"

### **JOG 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Congratulations to JOG academy on their recent 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. It was lovely to see staff and pupils both old and new come together to celebrate 60 glorious years. I was delighted to look



through the registers and photographs of the school's history. Cllr Fyfe and I enjoyed the cream tea and chatting to the many residents who attended. I'm sure there was a lot of teasing about the fashion and hairstyles from the last 6 decades! Congratulations JOG, I hope the school continues to flourish within our wonderful community.

### **Boots Chemist**

Some of you may have noticed the announcement that 300 stores are going to close. I have spoken to the area manager. Sadly, he hasn't been informed which stores will close, he believed Hungerford would be ok. Most store closures will be because two stores both owned by Boots (from a takeover) are located on the same street. Hungerford doesn't have this scenario.

He also said things were improving but, there was still more to do. It was interesting to learn they currently don't have enough staff to cover the front till, stock in the store has needed to be reduced to prevent shoplifting within the store.

The area manager will be speaking with senior management this week (currently on annual leave) and has promised to come back to me later in the week.

## **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2023**

### **MONTH 3 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR JUNE 2023**

#### **101 FINANCE:**

Net Income of £245, Bank interest received.

#### **102 ADMINISTRATION:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £362 positive variance.

#### **103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:**

Net Expenditure is a £1,800 positive variance this month.

#### **104 POOL HOUSE:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £60 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 £2,583 positive variance.

#### **202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:**

Net Expenditure is a £45 positive variance.

#### **203 ST SAVIOURS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £867 positive variance.

**204 CROFT FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £5,532 positive variance. A Grant of £5,000 was received and transferred to EMR towards the refurbishment costs.

**205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:**

Net Expenditure is a £61 negative variance.

**206 TRIANGLE FIELD:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £172 negative variance.

**301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:**

No Expenditure this month.

**302 HIGHWAYS:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £982 negative variance. No SID income received as budgeted.

**303 CCTV:**

Net Income over Expenditure is a £130 negative variance.

June's Net Income over Expenditure is a £11,153 positive variance.

**Claire Winser, Chair of F&GP, 2 July 2023**

**July 2023 Update on Hungerford 2036 Neighbourhood Plan**

**01/07/23**

There has been some progress that in summary includes:

- The HELAA site assessments for the new sites have been completed by Navigus Planning. Now to evaluate against the plan objectives.
- The Plan text is progressing. We are on a second draft which was discussed at our recent meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Additional input required on the Design Brief, Movements Plan and the Leisure, Wellbeing and Learning chapter.
- An updated programme has been produced as shown below. If we can get the plan agreed in the summer, then consultation in September. The end date is still expected in October 2024, or at least by the end of 2024.
- Key next actions are:
  - complete site assessments against plan objectives
  - complete draft of the Plan
  - prepare for consultation in the autumn

Neighbourhood Plan Programme

				DRAFT												01/07/2023																									
				2022				2023								2024																									
Ref:	Activity	No of Weeks	Start date	End date	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec											
			(Mondays)	(Fridays)																																					
1	Call for sites	6 weeks	15/11/22	31/12/22	█																																				
2	Evaluation of sites	20 weeks	06/02/23	30/06/23	█																																				
2B	Consultation on sites	4 weeks	17/07/23	11/08/23													█																								
3	Agree tender for consultant planners	2 weeks	23/11/22	09/12/22	█																																				
4	Tender consultants for next stages	4 weeks	12/12/22	06/01/23	█																																				
5	Evaluate tenders and appoint	2 weeks	09/01/23	20/01/23	█																																				
6	Prepare Draft NP	20 weeks	23/01/23	30/06/23	█																																				
7	Review by Cttee & Council & Consultation	4 weeks	03/07/23	29/07/23													█																								
8	Publish Draft for Consultation	8 weeks	31/07/23	29/09/23													█																								
9	Update following consultation	8 weeks	02/10/23	24/11/23													█																								
10	Submit to WBC	4 weeks	27/11/23	22/12/23													█																								
11	2nd Consultation (Reg 15)	8 weeks	02/01/24	23/02/24													█																								
12	Finalise and prepare for Examination	8 weeks	26/02/24	26/04/24													█																								
13	Examination	4 weeks	29/04/24	24/05/24													█																								
14	Inspectors Report	8 weeks	27/05/24	26/07/24													█																								
15	Moifications	4 weeks	29/07/23	30/08/24													█																								
16	Prepare and carry out Referendum	6 weeks	02/09/24	11/10/24													█																								
17	NP comes into force	2 weeks	14/11/24	25/10/24													█																								