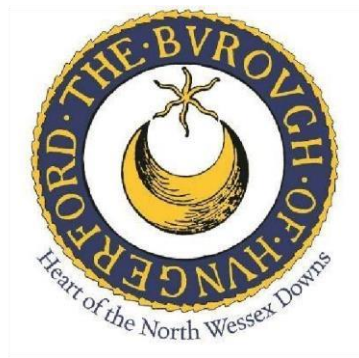


# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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**MINUTES** of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

**Present:** Cllrs Simpson, Fyfe, Keates, Armstrong, Cole, Knight, Coulthurst, Carlson, Winsor, Reeves, Alford, Montgomery, Cusack and Schlanker.

**Also present:** Representatives from Penny Post, Newbury News and a member of public. District Cllr Dennis Benneyworth (DB) from West Berks Council (WBC).

**In attendance:** Town Clerk, (TC)

**Police Report:** A report was received after the meeting. **See attached.**

A member of HEAT addressed Full Council. He started with congratulating the Council for a very successful D-Day event over the weekend and also pointed out how much better the paving stones in the high street are following the work done. HEAT ran an event last week in Church Street Car Park promoting electric vehicles and their benefits, including fuel at 20p a litre or less, cleaner safer air and less noise pollution. 20 plus vehicles were on exhibition including 5 BMW Minis and a presentation took place in the Hub to help anyone interested gather info. HEAT has produced a booklet dispelling myths and handed these out at the event and to Council members present. It was mentioned that Hungerford has been a victim of a lack of project management in respect of installation of EV chargers promised by WBC.

**ACTION:** DB will continue to chase WBC for progress of the installation of EV chargers for Hungerford.

**FC202400117 Note apologies for absence.** Cllrs Hudson,  
Apologies also from, District Cllr Denise Gaines (DG)

**FC202400118 Declarations of interest - None**

**FC202400119 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024, and of the Extraordinary meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 outcome of actions.**

**Proposed:** Cllr Keates

**Seconded:** Cllr Winsor

**Resolution:** Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were agreed as a true record. 5 abstentions.

**Outstanding actions:**

**ACTION:** Chase DG to see if there are leaflets available about the Housing Crisis.

Cllr Reeves met with Paul Hendry from WBC Countryside about the missed areas of grass cutting by their contractors. They will be more fastidious in future and will return and rectify. A member of public stepped in and cut the grass that had been left to grow to knee height in Ramsbury Drive Play Park as it was stopping the children playing. A third cut will happen within the next three weeks. As a result of complaints to WBC about the state of the Play Park equipment, a new slide has been installed. Cllr Fyfe has written to WBC requesting an explanation as they previously denied any repairs were needed. There are problems with other equipment there too. The next

ROSPA report for the Ramsbury Play Park is due in July and Cllr Fyfe is awaiting a response from the inspector as to when exactly this will take place..

A neighbouring resident had requested trees owned by WBC at the end of his garden be cut back as they are affecting his light. WBC has responded that they have a policy not to touch trees unless there is a safety issue.

With reference to the reassessment of Conservation areas, discussed at June's Full Council meeting, Cllr Cole reported he will be attending the West Berks Heritage Forum's AGM on Friday. He should know more detail following that.

**Proposed:** Cllr Simpson

**Seconded:** Cllr Winser

**Resolution:** Minutes of the meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 were agreed as a true record. 3 abstentions.

**FC202400120 Receive Mayor's Report - See attached report.** It was noted the Deputy Mayor covered some events for the Mayor in her absence.

**FC202400121 Receive District Councillor's Reports** – DG had submitted a report of which the main points were read out by the Mayor. **Please see attached**. DB had nothing to add. A site meeting will be taking place on 10<sup>th</sup> July ahead of the Western Area planning meeting. Cllr Fyfe is away so others will attend in his place.

**FC202400122 Chestnut Walk Tender** – update on progress from West Berks Council. From DG's report: At the current time due to negotiations the position on this scheme is that the Council and Sovereign Network Group are continuing to work together to establish a suitable solution for the future use of this site.

**FC202400123 Follow up from Streetlight report** – Cllr Schlanker advised he has visited every one of the 31 lights that HTC will become responsible for from April 2025. They are old and might need to be replaced. He suggested there are 4 or 5 that could probably be turned off.

**ACTION:** Obtain prices for maintenance. Approach Newbury, Kintbury and Lambourn TCs who may be in a similar situation.

It was noted we have some budget, but this may need to be increased. WBC do not have a statutory requirement to provide streetlighting. Questions were asked; would WBC delay the deadline for passing the responsibility to HTC? Do roads to the newly planned housing, referred to in the NDP, have sufficient lighting leading up to them?

**FC202400124 Health & Safety – Any complaints or concerns.** A lady entered HTC office having fallen over a broken paving slab. Cllr Schlanker advised there are around 20 broken slabs in the high street that have not been replaced. October is approaching when the footways usually become slippery. There is also a problem with guano from pigeons roosting on the town hall. Town & Manor are waiting on permission to net the bell tower.

It was reported that a child hurt themselves whilst playing football at Smitham Bridge Play park due to the uneven ground.

There has been an accident on the ramps at the Skate Park. There is full guidance on safety at the park and skaters do so at their own risk. The lack of toilet facilities at Bulpit play park was mentioned.

**ACTION:** Investigate improvements to level the grass by Smitham Bridge goals.

**FC202400125 Propose authorisation of payment run** (circulated along with copies of invoices) for June.

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Carlson

**Resolution:** Authorise payment run of £49,995.83 for June.

**FC202400126 Propose year to date accounts** – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

**Proposed:** Cllr Winser

**Seconded:** Cllr Knight

**Resolution:** Agree year to date accounts, with a positive variance of £1,427. It was noted some income has yet to be included.

**FC202400127 Note: Tender for Xmas Lights Contract has been issued.** Deadline for responses is 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**FC202400128 Receive report from Neighbourhood Plan Project Team – Please see attached report.** The next scheduled meeting has been postponed as we are still waiting to receive a full response to Reg 14 from WBC.

**FC202400129 Receive feedback on D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events – Cllr Keates**  
This was the most impressive event held in Hungerford for a long time. It comprised of three main events held over three days and took a committee of 13 many months of work to organise. Significant funds have been raised for RBL Hungerford Branch.  
Dwight bear has been auctioned raising further money for charity. Marion Stoud was thanked for knitting 3 characters two of which, the Navy and Flight Lieutenant, have been auctioned off and only the Army character is left to go. Over £1000 has been raised from the soft toys alone.  
There has been BBC coverage of the event and radio stations Kennet and Four Legs have both featured it. Cllr Reeves was thanked for his promotion through social media of the events which he did professionally for free and found time to do so alongside running his own businesses. HTC is now aligned with 32 other community groups. Penny Post has also promoted widely gaining some 3000 hits. The Convoy was delayed and whilst this was out of our control the shops and businesses benefitted through an extra hour of the crowds.  
Cllr Keates said he was prepared to be involved in arranging a dance for VE Day next year.

**FC202400130 Receive any reports** (no more than 3 minutes per report which cannot contain any proposals).  
Cllr Keates has spoken to BMW on site and was advised that the newly refurbished site will be open in about 2.5 weeks. The other site will be open sometime next year.  
Lancaster residents have received a letter from Bewley sweeping aside their concerns and not answering the further questions put to them. The process of the handover of the new homes has differed from what was described initially at the point of sale. Town Council do not want any sign off with Bewley without being informed first. Jethro Tull Lane is very narrow and is taking heavy traffic. It is not suitable to be an unadopted road.

**ACTION:** Cllr Coulthurst will send the Bewley letter to District Councillors. The Mayor has spoken with DG and will pick this up after the election.  
It was noted that Bewley has included members of the press in the circulation of the correspondence. Penny Post has published everything that is in the public domain.

## **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.

**FC202400131 HRFC Proposal** – It was agreed this will go to R&A committee to consider.

**Meeting closed 8.30pm**

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## **POLICE UPDATE July 2024**

The team have had a busy month with various community engagements and events.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> June Jo and Lee were invited along to Oaklands School. We visited each class and spoke about what we do. The children were very engaging and asked lots of questions. They enjoyed the chance to sit in and have a look round the police car.

On the evening of the 10<sup>th</sup> June the team were in Newbury multi storey car park taking part in a training exercise with South Central Ambulance service and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue. These exercises are important and help us all to prepare for real life scenarios.

The Young Farmers event at the County Show ground on the 16<sup>th</sup> June was very well attended. We were joined at the event by colleagues from the Rural Crime Taskforce.

Jo and Lee thoroughly enjoyed the D Day weekend. It was great to see so many people out lining the streets and at Sunday's event supporting the town. Well done to everyone involved in the planning and organising. You did Hungerford proud.

Month of June:

2 reports of Anti-social behaviour  
3 Criminal damage  
1 Shoplifting  
2 Theft  
2 Burglary

43240307849. We are appealing for witnesses to an assault. The victim was attacked at some point between 2045hrs Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June and 1230am Sunday. The victim a man in his late teens sustained stab wounds and required treatment at hospital. He was wounded to his side, arm and forehead.

### **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 4 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 please 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 June 2024**

The first part of my report is from Deputy Mayor James Cole who kindly attended various engagements whilst, I was away on holiday with my family. Thank you for representing HTC in my absence James.

### **James Cole's Report 5-15<sup>th</sup> June**

In the absence of the Mayor, I had the pleasure of attending the King's Proclamation on the 6th of July. We gathered on the steps of the Town Hall with the Constable and other representatives of the Town and Manor to hear the Bellman read the D-Day Anniversary proclamation at 8 am as prescribed. As always, he did a wonderful job.

I attended The Lord Lieutenant's Summer reception, held as a preview of the Windsor Flower Show, where as well as meeting the new Lord Lieutenant Andrew Try, those I talked to include the previous Lord Lieutenant, several deputy Lieutenants, the Mayors of Newbury and Slough and the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police. It is a good venue – I had never even heard of the Windsor Flower Show - the new Lord Lieutenant is one of the people that has been behind the resuscitation of this long-running event.

I attended a performance of the Stranger, an Agatha Christie play put on by the Community of Hungerford Theatre Company in John O'Gaunt School Hall on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June. The Stranger is an Agatha Christie play that I had never come across – it has not been performed that often - but it made for an enjoyable evening's entertainment. Kathy Bossom was particularly good as "Mrs Huggins".

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June I went to St Lawrences Church, Hungerford, for the official opening of the changes made to the "back" of the church, the western end; Bishop Olivia came to officiate, and this could be her last time in Hungerford as Bishop of Reading. What the team has achieved is remarkable – taken from the church website "The project has provided us with a new glass entranceway, a brand-new kitchen, one replacement loo and one new disabled loo, a large downstairs flexible meeting area, two upstairs meeting rooms, additional storage, and access once again to the long blocked off west door", this project has created space and light. I looked on the Internet for pictures of how it used to look, and they don't exactly jump off the pages – the result of the new works is very photogenic. However please note that while the job is done, they are still raising money to pay for it.

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### **Camburn Trust**

As a trustee, I was delighted to again be part of the interview team. It was such an inspiring morning, listening to those applying for a grant to support their studies. I could not be prouder of all the stories of achievements and future goals and aspirations. HTC gave a grant to support this charity and it is a pleasure to be part of the trust.

### **Chamber of Commerce**

The AGM was held again at Hungerford Rugby Club on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>, Thank you to the Tuttipole for the delicious snacks. I was delighted to see Karen Salmon voted in again as chair. Karen has been a terrific ambassador for Commerce in Hungerford and works incredibly hard for all the members. HTC has worked with Karen quite closely to launch the Visit Hungerford website. If you haven't had the opportunity to look at the site, please take a moment to do so. We are thrilled with how the site looks and it's already receiving a large amount of hits and sessions.

### **D-Day 80 Commemorative weekend**

Wow, wow, wow, I am completely overwhelmed at what Hungerford has achieved by pulling off this incredible weekend of commemoration.

**Cllr Jerry Keates**, led the volunteer team and project, which has been a year in the planning. Jerry alongside, myself, Claire Barnes, Cllr David Reeves, Derek Loft, Neale Marney, Kate Edwards, Fiona Hobson, Susan Mayes, Nicola Wood, Simon Hobden, Cllr Keith Carlson and Cllr Denise Gaines. **YOU ARE ALL SUPERSTARS!** I could not have been prouder.

Formal thanks to all our sponsors will follow from the team and HTC when we've found our feet again and reflected. I know we have made an enormous amount of money for the Royal British Legion Veterans (Hungerford Branch); I can't wait to share all the news in due course.

Thank you to all the residents and visitors who came out to enjoy and support this event.

Cllr Helen Simpson  
Town Mayor

## District Councillor Update – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024

1. Apologies for not being with you this evening – there is an event taking place on Thursday which is taking up a great deal of time.
2. **The enforcement issue at the site outside of Hungerford** which the planning committee will be familiar with is currently being dealt with by Fenella Woods I received a response from Bob Dray as to the progress with the following update.  
**“Owing to the number of units and the complexity of the planning history, the enforcement officer is having to undertake a considerable amount of desktop investigation before carrying out a comprehensive site visit. This is aimed to be completed a site visit arranged on 18<sup>th</sup> July. Carrying out this investigation in advance of the visit will enable much more effective progression at that point, as opposed to visiting cold without a thorough understanding of the history”.** I will update the Council if there is any change to this schedule.
3. **The Station Car Park** FOI meeting is scheduled for the 12<sup>th</sup> July with Jon Winstanley (Highways) and Sarah Clark (Legal), me and Councillor Fyfe and the Mayor.
4. **Chestnut Walk** – At the current time due to negotiations the position on this scheme is that the Council and Sovereign Network Group are continuing to work together to establish a suitable solution for the future use of this site. As soon as there is any further update it will be sharing this with all interested parties. I know this is not an ideal response but it's the only one available at the moment – I hope to have a more definitive answer at the next council meeting.
5. **The paving slab replacements** in the high street seem to have taken place. Have HTC received any update on the bollards requested? If not let me know and I will follow it up.
6. **I would like recorded my Congratulations to the D Day Committee, Hungerford Town Councillors, HTC Officers and the ladies from Smarten up Hungerford for their amazing work this weekend for the D Day celebrations. I thought, along with most people I have spoken to that it was truly spectacular.**

### July 2024 Update on Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)

28/06/24

Very Slow progress again this month:

- Reg 14 Consultation completed but not had all comments back from West Berks yet...awaiting highways and drainage, although good full response on everything else.
- The programme below is struggling. Several activities are out of our control which will mean that mid 2025 is likely for adoption.
- Had a discussion with West Berks, but the problem is the Local Plan Examination going on.
- Key next actions are:
  - Complete the Consultation comments and draw up potential changes based on these.



- Update plan and submit to West Berks for Rule 16 Consultation.

Neighbourhood Plan Programme					DRAFT																									
					2024												2025													
Ref:	Activity	No of Weeks	Start date	End date	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun							
1	Review by Cttee & Council Consultations	14 weeks	18/09/23	08/01/24																										
2	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	8 weeks	11/12/23	16/02/24																										
3	Publish Draft for Consultation (Rule 14)	6 weeks	16/02/24	29/03/24																										
4	Update Plan following consultation	2 weeks	04/04/24	30/06/24																										
5	Submit to WBC prepare for Reg 16 Consult	4 weeks	01/07/24	31/07/24																										
6	2nd Consultation (Reg 16) (carried out by WBC)	6 weeks	01/08/24	30/09/24																										
7	Finalise Plan and prepare for Examination	8 weeks	01/10/24	30/11/24																										
8	Examination	1 week	01/12/24	31/12/24																										
9	Inspectors Report Preparation	8 weeks	01/01/25	28/02/25																										
10	Moifications	2 weeks	01/03/25	30/03/25																										
11	Prepare and carry out Referendum	8 weeks	01/04/25	30/05/25																										
12	NP comes into force	2 weeks	01/06/25	30/06/25																										
	key on colour coding:																													