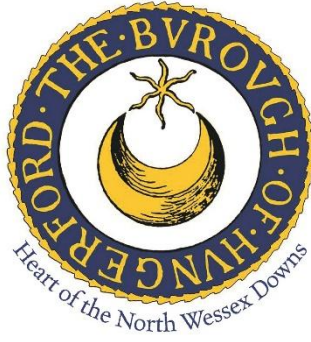


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 7th July 2025 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Simpson, Winsor, Alford, Reeves, Cole, Fyfe, Keates, Hudson, Montgomery, Brunning, Day and Mulholland.

Also present: Representatives from Penny Post and Newbury News, District Cllr Denise Gaines (DG) from West Berks Council (WBC), three members of Hungerford Archers and a representative from West Berks Food Bank. PC Luke Smith and PCSO Jo King.

In attendance: Town Clerk, (TC).

A presentation from West Berks Food Bank took place. The purpose of their visit was to share what they do. They have 6 centres and two warehouses. Deliveries are made to Hungerford on Tuesdays and Thursdays. **Please see report attached.** We were also advised that the Foodbank help support people in coercive relationships by providing basic items not accessible to them such as sim cards and sanitary products. During Covid Hungerford was one of the biggest users of the foodbank. This has reduced now. In answers to questions from Councillors they advised:

Many families don't meet pupil premium, and they don't know from one week to another how many families are going to be in crisis.

Hungry Holidays costs £76k to support and food is provided rather than vouchers. Tesco's in particular support them and they work with Neighbourly Fairshare. They don't give any food that is out of date.

They don't do any surgeries in Hungerford as it is quite a rural location however, they are trying to open up a 2hr session to help through the use of laptops. Cllr Fyfe offered use of the Magistrate Room for free.

Hungerford has donated 5.3k tonnes of food which came primarily from supermarkets and churches. However, they are 42% down in food donations overall this year due to the cost-of-living crisis.

Foodbank are looking to link up with the Community Hub Outreach and have a connection with Citizens Advice.

ACTION: HTC to share what the foodbank can do. 'Bankthefood' is the foodbank app where you can see what is needed.

Police Report – PC Luke Smith and PCSO Jo King entered. They reported their main concern at present is drug dealing in Priory Road and Northview. A community survey took place at the weekend and good feedback was received from the neighbours. They are hoping for a resolution in the next few weeks. Shoplifting from the larger stores in town has been brought to their attention over the last few days. They will be focussing on this in the oncoming months.

The Mayor reported that she had been contacted by several parents over the weekend about anti-social behaviour at Bulpit Play Park. The Police will increase their presence in the area but also encouraged people to report the issues directly to them, and if not an emergency through 101, Crimestoppers or through a form on the website. If it is not reported the figures will not reflect the resources required. The Mayor will be meeting with Sgt. Jo Willoughby soon

and has requested the past 6 months crime figures to compare with figures going forward following the change in Police staffing.

We were advised that speeding is not an issue for dealt with by the Police until it is a proven problem and West Berks Council are more knowledgeable initially. It was queried if there is any opportunity to use speed guns.

ACTION: DG will forward the WBC community speedwatch contact to Cllr Keates.

The police left the meeting.

FC202500101 Note apologies for absence. Cllrs, Armstrong and Carlson

Apologies also from, District Cllr Dennis Benneyworth (DB) and Vickers (TV) from West Berks Council

FC202500102 Declarations of interest - None

FC202500112 Consider request from Hungerford Archers – Refer to circulated information. (*this item was brought forward as representatives from Hungerford Archers (HA) were present*)

HA advised their archery club has been operating for 30 years on the John O Gaunt school pitch but now due to space the school have asked them to relocate. They have a membership of around 35, and as a small club offer a reasonable price. Most members are local and can walk to site. They are looking for a mowed turf of 80 to 100m in length and 30m across. They have considered 3 locations but Triangle Field is the favoured option being so close to their existing base and local. They have two twenty foot containers but can consolidate to one container. Currently they meet on a Wed evening and a Sunday morning for a couple of hours but can be flexible around the Rugby Club usage. We understand as the containers are under 2.4m height they don't require planning permission. Taster sessions using long, recurve or compound bows are on the first Sunday of every month.

ACTION: HTC support the initiative and will liaise with the Rugby Club.

FC202500103 Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council of 2nd June 2025 and outcome of actions

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Alford

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 2nd June 2025 were agreed as a true record. Two abstentions.

Outcome of actions:

DG advised she had spoken to Dann about the Sovereign garages and he will be looking at this next week. The car reported there is not abandoned.

The NWD meeting took place. The Mayor is demanding crime figures from the Police and has a meeting with Sgt Willoughby next week.

Jon Winstanley from WBC is chasing the relevant person about repairs to the bus stop on A338.

The lease for the Hungerford Mens Shed has been drafted and is awaiting finalisation. Thanks to DG for getting the fee waived.

Cllr Keates advised he reported the loose electric wires in Atherton Road directly to SSEN via 105 and works were completed very quickly. This is after having waited weeks for action through WBC reporting it.

FC202500104 Receive Mayor's Report – Refer to attached report. Cllr Winsor added that there have been 21 entries to Hungerford in Bloom and the judging will last all day starting at 10am and finishing at 6pm. Britain in Bloom is on Wed 16th July and starts at St Laurences at 2pm. Cllr Montgomery mentioned to the Newbury News that a photographer would be great. Last Thursday a working party of 18 volunteers organised by the vicar helped with weeding and cutting back. This group will also be involved in the clearing of the station car park and the bridge. Cllr Reeves has contacted WBC about cutting the grass in Hungerford ahead of 16th.

FC202500105 Receive feedback from meeting with Aldi, reference application 25/01203/FULMAJ – Cllr Cole reported back on the meeting with Aldi. Please see attached his report. It was noted that WBC were responsible for the highways proposed layout and it was suggested that Paul Goddard may be able to explain the reasoning.

ACTION: Wait for response from Highways.

FC202500106 Receive feedback from meeting with WBC, reference the Leisure Centre Agreement – This item was deferred.

FC202500107 Receive District Councillor's Reports – DG advised the Local Plan was adopted on 10th June and work on supplementary planning documents has begun for Thatcham. Hungerford's Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) once agreed will become part of the planning process and timing is apt with it due to complete with the Local Plan already in place. Once the HNP is adopted it will carry weight in the planning process and attract 25% CIL.

DG announced progress with the empty Chestnut Walk building. It has been made safe of asbestos and a structural survey is being done. The fire damage was not as severe as thought and the roof batons have been replaced. We will find out soon if the building is fit to be reused as a paper is going to exec committee next week with options.

DG commented that the feedback to the Ridgeway proposal was positive. She has been to Hungerford Market and various other venues to promote the proposal to the public. Although the outline has been submitted all the detail will need to go to government by November. Oxford Vale will need to act on this. Steps to create the Mayoral Strategic Authority are not happening yet but it would be good as the area would include Oxford and Reading universities and some major infrastructure. There is no decision on where the centres would be based.

FC202500108 Consider response to Ridgeway Council Consultation – A WBC drop-in session took place at Hungerford Library on 25th June. There are also two WBC webinars providing an opportunity to find out more about the proposal, ask questions and share thoughts.

To register for the webinar at 6pm Wednesday 2 July– Click on the following link.:

https://westberks-gov-uk.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DscdbKH0R_qzheLJ8orAfg

To register for the webinar at 6pm Tuesday 8th July – Click on the following link.

https://westberks-gov-uk.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_lraAQfhbSJ-EtZ8iPpACCA

WBC strongly encourage Hungerford Town Council to complete the short online survey, available at twocouncils.org The survey is open until Wednesday 16 July 2025.

After discussion it was felt that it would be difficult to get all councillors to agree on a joint response to the consultation.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Montgomery

ACTION Resolution: Rather than an HTC joint response, it was agreed it was best for individuals to reply separately.

FC202500109 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns.

It was reported that Balfour have replaced all the spikes under the bridge.

A postal van is parking on the pavement between flower tubs in the high street, adjacent to the zig zags blocking visibility to the pedestrian crossing. The driver has had a warning.

ACTION: Cllr Fyfe will send offence details to the office for reporting to the Police.

FC202500110 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for June. (refer to HTC website to view pay runs)

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Reeves

Resolution: Authorise payment run of £34,677.87.

FC202500111 Propose accounts to date – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Agree accounts to date with a negative variance of £1,289.00.

FC202500112 Consider request from Hungerford Archers – (taken after item FC202500102 see above)

FC202500113 Receive update on Freedom of the Town (FOTT) arrangements – REME battalion is not available until Jan to March 2026. It was agreed we would look to proceed with the arrangements for March 2026 and try to keep the date flexible in the hope that a member of the royal family can

attend. As nothing is happening this Sept it was discussed whether we wish to also hold the usual ceremonies to award members of the public the FOTT.

Proposed: Cllr Fyfe

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Proceed with the standard nominations for 3 awards this calendar year.

FC202500114 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report which cannot contain any proposals).

ACTION: Cllr Hudson reported that we have received a letter from Andrew Mead, the examiner of the HNP and the deadline for replying to his questions is 17th July. The letter will be uploaded to our website with a copy of the response. We hope to have the draft response ready for E&P Committee to approve.

Cllr Cole attended the Heritage Forum on 1st July. He advised that Newbury have 19 blue plaques, Thatcham have 10 but Hungerford do not have any. The Forum would offer advice if we wish to apply for one. Similarly if we wish to list a building. Currently there are no requests from Hungerford. If a building is not listed it is not considered important in planning terms. There are a small number of amendments to the conservation areas queuing to be approved by West Berks Council. Cllr Cole advised there are other ongoing projects involving graves and transcription of memories, and encouraged the recording of local history where possible.

ACTION: Add blue plaques to the next E&P agenda.

ACTION: Arrange the moving of the Welcome to Hungerford sign to include the Lancaster Homes development.

Meeting closed 9.10pm

Mayor's Report

Full Council Meeting – July 2025

Cllr Helen Simpson – Mayor of Hungerford

1. Police and Crime Update

On Friday, 6th June, I attended a policing meeting in Newbury, hosted by MP Lee Dillon. Also in attendance were Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Barber, TVP's Emma Tompkins, and Ward Member Cllr Denise Gaines. A joint press statement was issued following the meeting, with an agreement to reconvene in November to assess the impact of recent operational policing changes.

I have requested crime statistics covering the previous six months to better understand any emerging trends or results from these changes. I have not yet received this data. I understand a local resident has also submitted a similar request for the detail.

In the coming weeks, I will be meeting with Hungerford's newly assigned Sergeant to identify key local concerns and ensure communication channels are working effectively under the new arrangements.

Important Message to Residents:

Please report all incidents of crime. Accurate reporting helps our town receive the support and resources it needs. Here's a guide on how to report:

- **999** – For crimes in progress or emergency situations
- **101** – For non-emergencies
- **Online:** www.thamesvalley.police.uk – Fast and efficient; takes about 10 minutes
- **Crime stoppers**

Examples of When to Call:

- **999:** Street fights, thefts in progress, suspicious entry into property
- **101 or online:** Overnight shed break-ins, vandalism, antisocial behaviour, theft from parked vehicles

2. Hungerford Twinning Association

As President of the Twinning Association, I attended their recent AGM at the Hub. We shared our condolences with Penny Brookman on the passing of her husband, Rob, a former HTC councillor. I also attended Rob's funeral on 3rd June – it was a beautiful and heartfelt service.

The Twinning Association is actively seeking new members. If you are interested in joining, please contact the team to find out more about their upcoming meetings.

3. Constable Philip Porter – Town & Manor

I had a productive meeting with Constable Philip Porter, who has some exciting ideas for his term, particularly focusing on supporting Hungerford's youth. Philip has launched a new award at John O'Gaunt School, and I look forward to working alongside him throughout the civic year at community events.

4. Chamber of Commerce AGM

I attended the AGM with Cllrs James and David. Congratulations to Karen Salmon on her appointment as Chair for 2025/26. The accounts were approved, and upcoming town events were discussed.

If you have a community event you'd like listed on the Visit Hungerford website, please share the details with the Chamber – they will ensure its promoted.

5. Armed Forces Day – Hungerford RBL (28th June)

I was honoured to attend the family fun day hosted by Hungerford Royal British Legion. The event was well-organised and enjoyed by many. The REME team engaged brilliantly with children, and activities included military vehicles, face painting, live music, food vendors, and a fantastic raffle. Thank you to everyone involved for a memorable and sunny afternoon.

6. The Camburn Trust

The Camburn Trust has concluded its interviews and funding allocations for 2025. The students who applied were a pleasure to meet – talented, driven, and aiming for high-level qualifications. The Trust will adjust its schedule next year to encourage earlier applications, as this year's numbers were lower than hoped.

7. Hungerford Town Band Concert

I attended the Town Band's summer concert at St Lawrence's Church, which featured a Disney theme this year. As always, it was a joy to hear our talented local band perform. Huge thanks and congratulations to Tim Crouter and the Hungerford Town Band for another fantastic evening. We are incredibly fortunate to have such dedicated musicians supporting events across our town.

8. High Sheriff's Summer Reception

Alongside Cllr Fyfe, I attended the High Sheriff of Berkshire's summer reception. It was a warm and welcoming evening with many civic leaders present. It was also a pleasure to meet the new High Sheriff, Sean Taylor, and fellow incoming mayors.

9. Aldi Planning Application

Hungerford Town Council held a meeting with representatives from Aldi to discuss their proposed planning application. The meeting was constructive, allowing for questions to be addressed.

Cllr Cole will provide a full update, and the planning application will be reviewed at HTC's next Planning Committee meeting on **Monday, 14th July**, where Aldi representatives will be in attendance.

Cllr Helen Simpson
Mayor of Hungerford
July 2025

Cllr Cole's UPDATE on Aldi session in Herongate, 7th July 2025

We had what we thought was a very useful session with Aldi representatives today

- The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the Chair of Highways and myself attended for HTC, plus Denise Gaines for West Berks
- It was an information gathering session - Aldi gave us a presentation on what they proposed and why, helped by a representative from the landowner.
- Our questions were in particular around those asked at E&P last month. Aldi appeared not to have seen those questions but most were answered straight off anyway – a few around the access from the A4 they took away to get a response
- Aldi are keen. They do not have other immediate options waiting in the wings. I would not expect any delay if planning permission were given.
- We made no commitments – nor were we asked to of course – the HTC view will be agreed at E&P next week.
- We have invited them to send someone along to E&P next week and they are happy to do so.
- We did say that as the overwhelming public reaction to date as seen on Facebook has been positive. We did not see the need for a formal public consultation. E&P next week is a public meeting so anyone who wants to hear what is being said should come along to that.

Detail

Aldi

- Over 1000 stores in UK
- Employ local - majority tend to live within a mile of the store they work at. Pay more than minimum wage, no zero hours contracts.
- This store would employ around 40 staff.
- 75% of product sourced from within UK
- Self-sufficient stores
 - No gas, carbon neutral, solar panels

- most waste recycled – baled waste packaging goes out with the returning delivery vehicle.

This application

- Pre-planning sessions with both Planners and Highways
- This design is intended to suit Hungerford - brick to fit with the look of Undys, coming from the west
- Solar panels
 - High grade solar panels enough to power the store – difficult to get the Grid to take power from store roofs, so that’s why the full roof-space is not to be used at the start.
 - 6 car chargers
 - However will be set up so that panels can be added, and ducting for extra car chargers will be installed.....
- Planning issues include
 - Traffic and access – we talked about the proposed roundabout, the design of which has come from WBC, the Bear corner and the question of a crossing for pedestrians.
 - Sequential tests in respect of the Town Centre
 - They looked at 9 other sites – all unsuitable or not available
 - Impact locally
 - Tesco is trading very well according to WBC figures – will be affected but can absorb the impact (“over-trading”)
 - Other impacts on traders minimal
 - No café
 - They argue that it will reduce the traffic in respect of people going “out of area” to Newbury or Marlborough.
 - Bio-Diversity Nett Gain – we suggested that they talk to T&M. They are happy to go local
 - Noise and light
 - Deliveries tend to be 3 to 4 a day. Forward in, back into a sealed unloading area, forward out. Minimum “beep beep”.
 - Hours – store open 8 am to 10 pm, building open an hour before and an hour after
 - Lighting has not been a discussion point but internal lighting reduces to every third aisle after store closure and they do use directional lighting. We advised that lighting is more of an issue in an AONB area.

We suggested they talk to Karen Salmon for the Chamber of Commerce.

Committee might be September.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 7TH JULY 2025 MONTH 3 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR JUNE 2025

101 FINANCE:

The first Precept instalment of £191,970 has been received.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £2,099 positive variance.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

NET Expenditure is a £650 positive variance this month.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £169 positive variance due to the rental increase.

105 CONTINGENCY:

No Expenditure this month.

107 ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING:

No Expenditure this month.

109 HUNGERFORD 2036 PROJECT:

No Expenditure this month.

201 RECREATION & AMENITIES:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,091 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

Net Expenditure is a £525 positive variance this month.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,663 positive variance.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £724 negative variance.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

Net Expenditure is a £289 negative this month, Double glazing replacement for the Curve.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £521 positive variance.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

No Expenditure this month.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £6,610 negative variance. Line 4356; Hanging Basket costs include additional watering for SUH tubs.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is an £35 positive variance.

901 RESERVES:

Transfer of £785 from EMR.

June's Net Income over Expenditure is an £1,289 negative variance.

Claire Winser
Chair of F&GP
4th July 2025

Facts and Figures for Hungerford Residents

**FY April to March – 7 day food parcels

2020	Adults 902	Children 753	Total 1655 Meals Provided 34,755
2021	Adults 438	Children 311	Total 749 Meals Provided 15,729
2022	Adults 436	Children 384	Total 820 Meals Provided 17,220
2023	Adults 352	Children 295	Total 647 Meals Provided 13,587
2024	Adults 327	Children 221	Total 548 Meals Provided 11,508

Hungry Holidays Initiative– Clear criteria to schools – Households they are gravely concerned about – not just pupil premium.

2024 - 43 Households and 104 Children

2025 – 40 Households and 99 Children – stock delivered 1.6 tonnes in total

Amelia – Benefits and Welfare Advisor – Confirmed financial gains for all West Berks Foodbank clients for FY24/25 = **£313,585.47**

FY 24/25 Food donated by Hungerford supermarkets, schools and churches = 5393.2Kg

Food distributed to Hungerford ward clients holding vouchers 8840.7Kg (excl HH)

Difference – over 3.4 tonnes