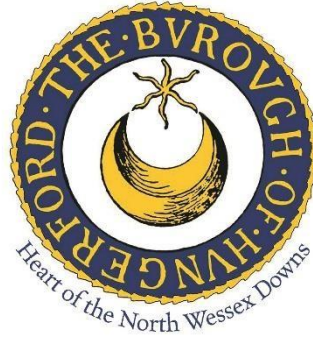


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee meeting held on Monday 20th January 2025 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs H Simpson, C Winsor, K Knight, D Alford, A Fyfe, J Keates, S Coulthurst & D Reeves

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)

Cllrs Simpson opened the meeting at 7pm, welcoming Cllrs

The minutes of the meeting are recorded in order of how they were discussed at committee meeting.

RA2025001 Apologies for absence – Cllr Montgomery, District Cllr Vickers

RA2025002 Declarations of Interest - None

RA2025003 Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 18th November 2024 and update on actions

Cllr Simpson confirmed she had received an email from a concerned mother regarding offensive graffiti at Bulpit Playpark which was racially offensive. Our maintenance person tried to remove the graffiti but was unable to do so and is in the process of ordering a new product. If this fails, the area will be jet washed and repainted if needed. It was noted that unfortunately, there is no CCTV in the Playpark so unable to identify offender.

Ramsbury Park – Cllrs agreed a site visit is required. Aim to look at option of HTC taking on responsibility for the playpark only and it was agreed HTC will need costs for the contractor for grass cutting. Cllrs discussed option of WBC awarding HTC a proportion of their budget to enable HTC to manage the park and for WBC to get the playpark in good order before the handover should HTC agree to accept responsibility for the playpark. Cllrs discussed the option of a working party to help work on the site.

Cllrs discussed benches in Hungerford and agreed the next bench required would be a made of composite, recycled material and if successful, the Bench Policy would be altered to reflect the change to style of bench used by HTC.

Action:

Bulpit Playpark: Office to arrange a site visit for Cllrs to meet Paul Hendry, and Cllrs Simpson to show the poor state of repair of the park and the poor level of work recently carried out by WBC contractors. WBC and Cllrs to discuss possibility of HTC taking on responsibility of park and discuss options re finance and maintenance if agreed.

War Memorial Avenue: Office to arrange a meeting with Ice Sapphire for Clerk, Cllrs Simpson, Fife & Keates

Benches: next bench required will be a composite bench and policy will be reviewed and changed according to outcome of trial.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Winser

Resolution: Minutes were agreed as a true representation of the meeting and its actions recorded

RA2025004 Receive updated summary of maintenance list

Cllr Simpson informed fellow Cllrs that a lot of work had been completed from the list. It was noted that the repair to the 'violent gate action' has been outstanding for a long period but this is due to difficulty in locating the correct part. It has been repaired twice during this period, but the maintenance person is pursuing an alternative option.

St Johns Ambulance Site – the fence has been damaged, and action is needed to prevent any further damage or illegal access.

Action: Office to contact representatives of St John's Ambulance to inform them of the damage to the fence

RA2025005 Receive update on ROSPA

Cllr Simpson confirmed there were no major issues highlighted

RA2025006 Propose acceptance of LCRS Annual Risk Assessments for this committee – see attached reports

Cllrs discussed the risk assessments and agreed clarification on 'site visits' was required. It was agreed that if the purpose of the site visit was to meet a member of the public/another person, then Cllrs 'must' go in pairs. If the visit is purely to visit a site with no contact with another person, then Cllrs 'should' go in pairs.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Winser

Resolution: LCRS accepted with one amendment to 'site visits' being adopted

RA2025007 Consider Hungerford Rugby Club request to hold a Car Boot Sale (Feb/March)

Cllrs discussed the request to hold a Car Boot Sale and agreed it can go ahead; it was noted that it is for a good cause and confirmed no charge to be made.

Proposed: Cllr Coulthurst

Seconded: Cllr Knight

Resolution: Cllrs agreed to the car boot sale with the condition that it is not held on the grass due to the time of year and recent/current weather conditions.

RA2025008 Outcomes and Updates from the meeting with Everyone Active and WBC regarding the Leisure Centre

Cllr Reeves provided a summary of the meeting with WBC, Jeanette Hog, Leisure Officer and others. (see report for full details)

Everyone Active is the second largest provider in the UK for Gym, Swim and Leisure Activities. They have recently taken over the Hungerford Leisure Centre as part of a wide package of Centres in the UK. Issues have been raised regarding cleanliness and staff morale at the Hungerford Centre.

Concerns have been raised that when the contract ends, Hungerford Leisure Centre will be 'dropped' and we will potentially lose the site. Cllrs discussed the need to improve cleanliness, staff morale, condition of equipment and general maintenance to ensure the centre remains viable. Cllr Reeves provided an update on the drive to increase marketing plans and increase repairs to the site. A deep clean is being arranged by external contractors. Other than the new Studio, which is being built, there are no other planned investment to the site scheduled, although it was noted that new Body Pump equipment had arrived.

Cllr Simpson thanked Cllr Reeves for his hard work on this and recognised his experience in this field.

Actions:

- Cllrs Simpson, Reeves and Town Clerk (TC) to arrange a meeting with WBC Portfolio Holder for Leisure
- Cllr Reeves to send a copy of the contract to Cllrs Simpson and Coulthurst for review
- Cllrs to agree dates for future JACK committee meetings.

RA2025009 Update on H&S checks (including updates of water leak at Swimming Pool House and collapsed grave/vault at St Lawrences Churchyard)

Swimming Pool House update: The Town Clerk confirmed that HTC should be able to claim back three quarters of the cost of the repair of the water leak.

St Lawrence's update: Cllr Simpson confirmed that the collapsed vault had been filled by Tactical Facilities, but the soil has sunk and requires top up. A survey will be carried out by Dune CEC to identify the condition of other graves and vaults at St Lawrence's and a thorough plan of action agreed on receipt of the report. There is currently an issue with mole hills at St Lawrences Churchyard and Cllrs requested DTC contact the contractor to the contractor to carryout Mole Trapping

Actions:

- Office to liaise with contractor to top up the site of the grave
- DTC to instruct contractor to carryout Mole Trapping and email costs to Cllrs

RA2025010 Agree actions on follow up letter to St Saviours Deed Holders regarding its return to a Lawn Cemetery and update on Freedom of Information Request received

DTC confirmed that following the initial letter, a number of deed holders had removed the items not permitted within the regulations of St Saviours Cemetery and confirmed that there remained approximately 14 deed holders who have not done so, therefore requiring HTC to arranged the removal of items not permitted within the regulations.

It was confirmed that the regulations are sent to all deed holders, are on the Notice Board at St Saviours as well as being on HTC website.

Cllrs agreed that the next step was for HTC to remove the items and retain them securely for families for a further six months so that they can be collected by the deed holders if required.

DTC confirmed that HTC had received a FOI request from a deed holder who had been contacted requesting removal of the decorative boarder and white pebbles that had been placed there without authorisation. The request asked for copies of the Rules & Regulations for the following dates:

- Rules & Regulations 3rd May 2016
- Full agreement 5th November 2018

- Amendment on 16th July 2019 and Amendment on 19th November 2019
- Amendment on 19th May 2020
- Amendment on 16th March 2021 and Amendment on 16th November 2021

DTC confirmed that request had been complied with by the Town Clerk, and we are waiting to hear further.

Proposed: Cllr Coulthurst

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Cllrs agreed HTC to arrange removal of discussed items not approved by the Regulations.

RA2025011 Update on changes to Terms & Conditions for Marsh Lane and Fairfield's Allotments - see attached reports

Cllr Simpson presented an overview of the changes to the Hungerford Allotment Holders Association (HAHA) Constitution and thanked them for the work carried out. It was acknowledged that the changes to the Allotment Terms are now complete, and a draft Memorandum of Terms had been completed by the TC. This is with HTC solicitor to confirm compliance and will be forwarded to HAHA to confirm agreement. Once agreed, TC will circulate the revised documents. Outstanding action: Amendment to Heads of Terms.

RA2025012 Discuss option of HTC entering Britain in Bloom

Cllr Coulthurst presented a summary of her visit to Amersham to meet with one of their Town Councillors to discuss Amersham's journey towards joining Britain in Bloom (BiB) and to discuss the viability of Hungerford joining. Please see report which outlines the:

- Process of joining
- The Judging Route
- Identifying potential 'features' to celebrate as part of BiB
- Requirements for staff/volunteers
- Budget
- Key tips
- What Hungerford currently has in place and what needs to be developed

Cllrs discussed the possibility of applying for a grant from GWR to have feature billboard 'Welcome to Hungerford' positioned by the walkway which could feature the GWR logo, combined with the clearing of the land by the station would help make the area more welcoming to visitors.

Cllrs discussed the benefit of submitting a grant for additional planters with The Good Exchange as this will be match funded.

Hungerford has many organisations already working hard to make Hungerford more attractive e.g. Smarten up Hungerford, Town & Manor, Chamber of Commerce, St Lawrence's Church grounds, and Canal Group to name but a few and it was noted that there are many areas that would contribute to Hungerford's BiB journey. These include Hungerford Common, The Marsh, pretty High Street, the proposed wetland centre, The Wharf and The Rose of Hungerford etc. There is also the option of widening the parameters to include the Garden Centre, Lower Denford and the various approaches to Hungerford.

It was recognised that more community engagement would be required, and it could be that the various clubs around Hungerford would like to get involved e.g. The Bowling Club, The Rugby Club, the Nursery, Primary & Secondary Schools.

A number of local organisations could be approached for sponsorship and possibly the Chamber of Commerce could write a letter to its representatives.

The option of entering this year and having a phased approach was discussed and it was considered important that Hungerford in Bloom remained a feature of HTC calendar.

Cllr Simpson queried the sponsor for the Roundabout by Charnham Park as it was agreed more could be done to make the roundabout more eye catching. Cllrs agreed a Working Party would be beneficial to help navigate the various elements of Hungerford joining Britain in Bloom.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Coulthurst

Resolution: Cllrs agreed HTC should continue with Hungerford in Bloom and enter Britan in Bloom with the support of a working party.

Actions:

- Cllr Coulthurst to talk to key organisations as outlined above
- Working party to be agreed and time and date of meeting to be arranged.

The meeting ended at 8.25pm