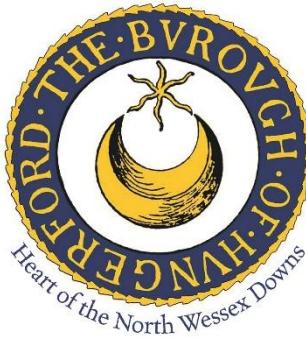


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 1st December 2025 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Simpson, Winser, Cole, Mulholland, Hudson, Alford, Day, and Keates

Also present: Members of the press, and a prospective councillor.

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

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

The Police were unable to attend and had asked the Mayor to warn everyone to be vigilant following a recent burglary in Chapel Court. Police will provide a report in January.

The Mayor welcomed to the meeting Sue Terry who is interested in joining the council. Sue was invited to attend the Council meetings in January. Co-option will be on the February full council agenda. Sue advised she is happily settled in Berkshire and is very interested to learn more about the workings of the Town Council. She has various experience which she hopes to contribute to HTC, specifically an interest in planning and affordable housing but would also welcome new challenges.

FC202500170 Note apologies for absence – Cllrs Reeves, Carlson, Brunning, Armstrong, Fyfe and Hall
Also noted from the District Cllrs Vickers, Benneyworth, and Gaines (DG).

FC202500171 Declarations of interest - none

FC202500172 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 3rd November 2025, and outcome of actions.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 3rd November 2025 were agreed.

Outcome of actions: We will wait and see how successful the electrical recycling venture is. DG is not present to give an update.

The topic of speeding in the high street will be discussed at the January meeting of Highways & Transport.

Cllr Day advised some more soil has been delivered to Marsh Lane but she is not sure who it was from.

West Berks Council (WBC) sent out a surveyor to assess the dilapidated building near Amore, and it has been deemed unsafe. We wait to hear what actions will be taken.

Cllrs Cole, Simpson and DG were given a tour of the Queen Ann building in the high street. The new owner/developer owns the whole site including Morrisons who have a franchise. It is a beautiful grade 2 listed building in a very poor state of repair. He has promised to take urgent action to clear

the iron guttering which is full of grass and a health and safety risk. The state of the building has long been a concern of WBC, and it is on their list of heritage buildings at risk.

ACTION: If no action is taken to clear the gutters this week, report to the PPP.

ACTION: Awaiting update from DG on the improvements required to the Sovereign garages.

Cllr Day is in touch with the school and other groups to arrange a meeting to discuss the feedback from the judges on our Britain in Bloom entry and see how we can improve for next year.

Cllr Keates attended John Willmott's tribute which he described as poignant and very moving. There are plans to have a lasting memorial to remember John, near the entrance to the town.

There was a good turnout on Remembrance Sunday with some veterans taking part in the parade. The Royal British Legion was packed afterwards.

FC202500173 **Receive Mayor's Report – See attached report.** The Mayor added that she is very busy with Christmas events.

FC202500174 **Receive District Councillor's Reports – No district councillors were present.**

FC202500175 **Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns**

The following points were raised:

ACTION: Request DG takes the lead to oversee proper repairs on a pothole near John O Gaunt pub which has been patched repeatedly (seven times) with the last repair only lasting 10 days.

ACTION: Escalate with Sovereign, DG, and PPP (environmental health) our concerns that nothing has been done to:

- improve the poor lighting along the footpath by Redwood House despite complaints by residents and the Police
- deter pigeons and clear up their excrement from the building
- repair damage to the interior of the building following a leak. Carpets are still wet, walls are black with mould. Residents were being asked to empty full buckets of water.
- sort the kitchen and get it up and running

FC202500176 **Propose authorisation of payment run** (circulated along with copies of invoices) for Nov

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Alford

Resolution: Payment run authorised for November of £39,378.93. One abstention, rest in favour.

FC202500177 **Propose accounts to date** – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Agree accounts to date with net income over expenditure of £16,870 with a positive variance.

FC202500178 **Review the HTC Action Plan – Refer to spreadsheets/website** – The Clerk has drafted changes to the plan which were highlighted at the meeting. Some suggestions were put forward for further change.

ACTION: Chairs of each committee will check through the plans in the next couple of days and the final action plan will be taken to January Full Council.

FC202500179 **Consider recommendations from F&GP for Annual Budget and Precept request for April 2026-2027.** It was noted we have yet to receive the band d figure from WBC, so figures have been based on last years for now.

Proposed: Cllr Winser

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Propose a provisional precept increase of 2.45% based on a budget of £393,344, (subject to change once the new band d figure has been received).

ACTION: Add this item to the January Full Council agenda.

FC202500180 Update on Neighbourhood Plan Referendum is 27th November.

The Mayor presented Cllr Hudson with a Mayor's coin for his outstanding contribution to the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan.

The result of the referendum was positive with 78% in favour and a 22% turnout. This is a fantastic result for the town. Hungerford will receive uncapped CIL at 25% which is so much better than 15%. Despite all the hard work some people were still not aware of what they were voting for.

There was some campaigning against and where housing is going will cause disruption but without a NDP it would still be in WBC's plan but without the benefits to the town. It is important to note that the town voted for this and the 7-year process to compile a plan was put together by volunteer residents of the town and guided by all the public consultations and surveys that took place. With an NDP in place Hungerford has a say rather than no say. It provides a direction for the town on many important topics such as the environment. We can continue to work together and in future consider rural exception sites for affordable housing. Thanks were expressed to the team and everyone involved including press.

ACTION: Consideration should be given to printing some glossy copies and or a marketing summary of the plan.

FC202500181 Consider response to parking consultation – see link below for details.

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/parking-review-37>

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Cole

Resolution: Respond to the consultation welcoming the changes.

We look forward to seeing other improvements for concerns raised, considered in due course, such as the turning into Park Street, the Croft and adoption of a small strip of land from Sovereign to install a piece of footway in Church way.

FC202500182 Mayor's Carol Service – takes place on 14th December, 6pm at St Lawrences. All welcome.

FC202500183 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals). None

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.

FC202500184 Review correspondence received reference St Saviours

The content of the letter was considered in depth, and it was agreed to respond in writing, answering the queries raised.

Proposed: Cllr Alford

Seconded: Cllr Hudson

ACTION: **Resolution:** Maintain and enforce existing regulations.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Mayor's Report – December Full Council 2025 - Cllr Helen Simpson

Neighbourhood Development Plan

My heartfelt congratulations go to everyone involved in the creation of Hungerford's Neighbourhood Development Plan. This represents an extraordinary amount of work over the past seven to eight years, and I am absolutely delighted that Hungerford will now have this vital tool to guide future development and policy.

At a time of uncertainty around potential unitary changes, housing policy and environmental planning, having our own clear, community-shaped plan puts Hungerford in a very strong position. I am also thrilled that the town will benefit from a higher, and uncapped, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Special thanks must go to Cllr Hudson and Town Clerk Claire Barnes, whose perseverance has kept the momentum going throughout. I will admit to being extremely emotional when Cllr Carlson sent me the results on Thursday. This is a wonderful achievement for the town.

Poppy Appeal, Poppies to Paddington & Remembrance Sunday

Once again, Hungerford continues to punch well above its weight. Our local Poppy Appeal has raised an incredible **£31,204.70**, a testament to the generosity of our community. My sincere thanks to Di and Derek Loft and to all the volunteers who so tirelessly support this cause.

It was an honour to send Hungerford's wreath to Paddington Station for the annual remembrance service. Handing the wreath over at our local station and speaking with veterans, even for a brief moment, is always deeply meaningful.

Remembrance Sunday was, once again, extremely well attended. Thank you to Tim and Marcus for the Tiger Moth fly-past, to all the marshals. Derek, Jerry, Claire B, Myles (president at the RBL) and team. 6 Armoured Close Support Battalion REME Rev, Mike Saunders, thank you for all for your contributions, as always, reflective and moving.

Christmas Lights Switch-On

Wow - what a night! The Christmas lights look absolutely wonderful, and the coverage on social media has been fantastic. It was lovely to see so many people come out to celebrate, and I continue to be amazed by the depth of talent we have in Hungerford. Congratulations to our Freedom of the Town awardees, who had the honour of switching on the lights this year.

Shirley Valentine Theatre Performance

I was delighted to attend an intimate one-person performance of *Shirley Valentine* hosted by the theatre company. It was an outstanding production from start to finish. Flawlessly delivered and thoroughly enjoyable. My congratulations to all involved.

North Wessex Downs Heritage Forum

Cllrs Fyfe, Cole and I attended the North Wessex Downs Heritage Forum, which was extremely informative. The quickfire sessions were particularly engaging, and it was inspiring to hear about the wide range of projects being undertaken. The event was exceptionally well attended and informative.

Budgets

My sincere thanks to our Finance Officer and to HTC's Chair of Finance, Cllr Winser, for their hard work during this year's budget meetings. This year has been especially busy, and their careful attention and diligence are greatly appreciated.

Police

My follow-up meeting with Matthew Barber has been postponed until January, and I will update Council in due course.

Upcoming Events

I look forward to seeing many of you at the festive events taking place over the next couple of weeks:

- **Hungerford Victorian Extravaganza** – Friday 12th December
- **Hungerford Town Band Concert** – Saturday 13th December at 3pm in the Town Hall
- **Mayor's Christmas Carol Service** – Sunday 14th December 6pm

On behalf of Hungerford Town Council, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

**FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 01
DECEMBER 2025**
MONTH 8 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2025

101 FINANCE:

Bank interest of £664 has been received. Net Income for the month is positive variance: £664.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £11,121 positive variance. Room hire inc Christmas and FOTT.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,500 positive variance this month.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,035 negative variance this month. House rent is now being paid near the end of the month and isn't yet on the system.

105 CONTINGENCY:

No Expenditure this month.

107 ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING:

No Expenditure this month.

109 HUNTERFORD 2036 PROJECT:

No Expenditure this month.

201 RECREATION & AMENITIES:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,849 positive variance. No invoice yet for Grounds maintenance from Trev

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £150 positive variance.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

No Expenditure this month.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £292 negative variance.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £150 negative variance. £150 expenditure was on the roof survey

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

No Expenditure this month.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £3,041 positive variance. Expenditure in month was £30,809.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,400 positive variance.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £341 positive variance this month. Gigaclear charged us 3 months for SP House's broadband.

901 RESERVES:

Transfer of £1,988 from EMR.

November's Net Income over Expenditure is a £16,870 positive variance.

Year to date Net Income over Expenditure is a £98,994 positive variance.

Keith Carlson

Deputy Chair of F&GP

29 November 2025