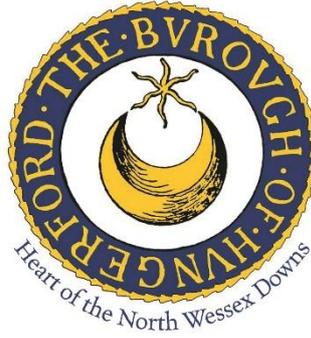


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Draft MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Monday 2nd February 2026 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Simpson, Cole, Mulholland, Alford, Day, Keates, Reeves, Armstrong, Fyfe, Carlson and Hall

Also present: Members of the press, District Cllr Gaines (DG), a prospective councillor and member of public. PCs Luke Smith and Mike Greaves-Hurd from Thames Valley Police.

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

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

Police Report: PC Luke Smith introduced a new member to the Hungerford and Downlands team, PC Mike Greaves-Hurd. They also have a third PC Chris Marsh and four PCSOs. They cover the area from Hungerford to Calcot and book on in Newbury. The mayor commented that it took a long time to get someone based in Hungerford and at present there is nobody based here. This is a conversation she will take up with the PCC. PC Luke Smith gave an update on crime in Hungerford advising there are no new emerging trends. They are keeping an eye on a couple of addresses and there are a few problems in Lambourn. Hare-coursing has reduced and there is a low amount of break-ins. In answer to a question raised he explained that organised gangs from Wales, Bristol and Birmingham access Hungerford as it is so close to the M4 and A4. Police are targeting those areas.

The mayor thanked the Police for attending and they left the meeting.

DG entered.

FC20260017 Note apologies for absence – Cllrs Hudson, Winser and Brunning
Also noted from the District Cllrs Vickers and Benneyworth

FC20260018 Consider co-option to fill councillor vacancy – Sue addressed Council. She has attended our committee meetings for over a month and commented that she has found them both interesting and dynamic and would like to join Town Council. Members were happy to vote without a ballot.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Hall

Resolution: Co-opt Sue Terry to fill the councillor vacancy.

Sue signed the acceptance of office and joined the table.

FC20260019 Declarations of interest - none

FC20260020 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 5th January 2026, and outcome of actions.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Mulholland

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 5th January 2026 were agreed. 1 abstention. Rest in favour

Outcome of actions:

DG apologised for not being able to chase some actions but has had family issues.

ACTION: DG will obtain details of the new manager in charge of the Sovereign garages. We wait to hear what work will be carried out and have requested a list of which garages in Hungerford belong to Sovereign and which are privately owned.

The mayor has spoken with Jon Winstanley at West Berks Council (WBC) about the pothole outside John O Gaunt pub which has been refilled 7 or 8 times. He has made a formal complaint to the CEO and the cost will be charged to Thames Water. It was noted that there is a bad leak on Blandy's Hill in Kintbury.

Cllr Keates wants to know if we are repairing the same potholes and are we getting value for money.

ACTION: DG will investigate the above.

ACTION: 95 High St still has a wobbly slab. Cllr Armstrong will report.

ACTION: The Adviser have visited the office about printing a glossy copy of the Hungerford Neighbourhood Plan and we await confirmation of any changes to their initial quote.

ACTION: Follow up on the action to install signage at the Station Car park recycle centre.

Lighting has been instructed to replace the two lanterns at Marsh Lane and all updates to the action plan have been made. All other actions are complete or on the agenda.

FC20260021 Receive Mayor's Report – See attached report. The mayor touched on the meeting she had with members of Sovereign at Redwood House, which is referred to in her report attached. She added that Sovereign don't have a budget to put in lighting in the alleyway but alternative cheaper options for lighting were considered. Cllr Keates and the Mayor have agreed to have follow up meetings. Communication needs to be improved so residents talk directly to Sovereign and don't need to contact Town Council.

FC20260022 Receive District Councillor's Reports – DG commented on how quickly Wales and West had completed the gas works and apart from a small area outside the town hall to be reinstated on the footway there are no issues outstanding. They have been dealing with gas leaks at the same time as the works. Wales & West were praised for their high-quality workmanship. WBC has now started works to the old bus stop at the south end of Salisbury Road. WBC are carrying out a call for sites however HTC do not need to respond as we have recently completed our NDP. A new compliance officer has been looking at the enforcement issues with Lancaster Park 's grounds as it is planting season. WBC enforcement strategy now has a new tier 'Assess the Harm' which will require action within 2 days. It was questioned what is happening with the development behind the Railway Tavern. DG advised it is subject to a planning performance agreement. Development is in talks with planning over viability.

FC20260023 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns

The following points were raised:

ACTION: Cllr Simpson will speak to WBC about the state of school alley which is full of dog mess and leaves.

ACTION: DG will speak to Peter Walker at WBC and arrange for someone to meet on site to look at the safety of the white railings by Atherton roundabout and options for a pedestrian crossing there. Add to H&T.

FC20260024 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for Jan

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: Payment run authorised for January of £42,718.65

FC20260025 Propose accounts to date – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report

Proposed: Cllr Carlson

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree accounts to date with net income over expenditure of £11,813 with a positive variance.

FC20260026 Note results and actions following audit. The RFO ran through the audit report and advised general reserves will be reviewed with the budget next time, all bank statements in future need signing and dating in addition to the bank reconciliations, an amendment has been made to the bike to work scheme entry as required, and any cash deposits will be logged in a new book. Wiltshire Council has confirmed there will be no charge for the bus service for last year.
The audit response and actions were noted by Council.

FC20260027 Code of Conduct Review – F&GP committee recommended no changes to the current document.
Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Cole
Resolution: No amendments required to the Code of Conduct following the review.

FC20260028 Propose acceptance of Annual Risk Assessments 2025-2026 (LCRS) as recommended by committees
Proposed: Cllr Carlson
Seconded: Cllr Keates
Resolution: Propose Annual Risk Assessments 2025-26 for all committees

FC20260029 Updates on arrangements for REME Freedom of the Town parade and budget – Event to be held on Sat 25th April 2026
Road closures are in place and the Town Hall and RBL are booked. A marshalls group of volunteers is on standby. Military vehicles will be parked along the high street on the day. REME have had meetings and we are waiting the result of these, particularly about catering and numbers. We can fundraise once we have further details. Cllr Keates, the Mayor and Town Clerk are chasing.
ACTION: Wait to hear from REME and then establish a working party.

FC20260030 Discuss arrangements for the Annual Town Meeting (18th March 2026 from 6.30pm in the Town Hall) – This will follow the same format as last year.
ACTION: Consider obtaining a second advertising banner to hang under the bridge.

FC20260031 Receive any reports (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals).
ACTION: Report the fence that is down near the RBL next to the Sovereign garages.

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.

FC20260032 Consider renewal of contracts received so far – see spreadsheet
Proposed: Cllr Alford
Seconded: Cllr Armstrong
Resolution: Appoint Hungerford Cricket Club to continue with their contract at an annual cost of £1,660. One abstention.
Proposed: Cllr Carlson
Seconded: Cllr Cole
Resolution: Appoint Tactical Facilities to continue with their contract to empty dog bins and 1 litter bin at an annual cost of £2,097.16. One abstention.
Proposed: Cllr Mulholland
Seconded: Cllr Day
Resolution: Appoint Tactical Facilities to continue with their contract to empty the wheelie bin at the Croft, increasing frequency to once a week, at an annual cost of £665.60. One abstention.

FC20260033 Propose appointment of new contractor for supply of defibrillators

It was felt important to have new cabinets for the new defibrillators. Questions were raised about the warranties and installation.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Reeves

Resolution: Defer decision to F&GP committee members. Obtain further info on installation options, warranties and funding from British Heart Foundation.

FC20260034 Propose acceptance of new working pattern for employee no.17

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Armstrong

Resolution: Agree new working pattern.

FC20260035 Ratify agreement of H&T committee to appoint Volker to replace all non-led lanterns with LED

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Mulholland

ACTION: **Resolution:** Agree replacement of all non-led lanterns with LED at a cost of £268.78 per lantern x 21.

Meeting closed at 8.39pm.

Mayor's Report – February 2026

The year began on a sombre note with a remembrance service for Sally James. Sally lived a full and dynamic life, and it was deeply moving to hear the family's heartfelt reflections, recognising her many achievements and the positive impact she had on others.

Volunteer Recruitment Day

Although I was unable to attend the Volunteer Recruitment Day, I was delighted to hear that the event was well attended and generated significant interest in volunteering across the community. Volunteering is a rewarding way to give back, while also offering opportunities to build new friendships and professional networks. I would strongly encourage anyone with spare time to consider becoming involved.

Meeting with MP Lee Dillon

I was invited by the Chamber of Commerce to attend a meeting with MP Lee Dillon. Unfortunately, due to illness, the meeting was cancelled and will be rescheduled shortly. I am also seeking to arrange a further follow-up meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

Hungerford Archery Club

HTC held a meeting with Hungerford Archery Club, alongside the Rugby Club, to finalise arrangements for a new home for the Hungerford Archers. Final details were discussed, and it is hoped that the required paperwork will be signed off in the near future.

Wash-Up Meeting – 2025 Extravaganza

HTC members met with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss the 2025 Extravaganza. HTC recognises the significant scale of this event and the considerable workload placed on a small group of volunteers. The purpose of the meeting was to better understand any challenges or concerns and to explore how HTC might support future events. Queries were raised and it was reassuring to learn that these matters were already being addressed. This was a positive and constructive meeting, and offers of support were shared.

SNG: Redwood House / Lindley Lodge

HTC met with SNG management to discuss a number of resident concerns. The meeting was extremely helpful and provided greater insight into the challenges faced by SNG.

Recent issues have included pigeon infestation, build quality, and difficulties in sourcing replacement parts. A site visit highlighted several ongoing problems, including leaks, boiler faults, and significant accumulations of pigeon guano, all of which have resulted in costly maintenance requirements.

SNG acknowledged that communication has been a source of frustration and have now provided a more direct line of contact. They expressed regret that some issues took longer to resolve than desired, noting the balance required

between maintenance costs and resident service charges. Quotes are currently being obtained to install pigeon netting, and consideration is also being given to improved lighting along the avenue.

JAC Meeting Hungerford Leisure Centre

The quarterly joint advisory committee meeting was held at John O'Gaunt school. Although I am not on the committee, I attend to support Cllr Reeves and Winser. A new user member, (who although was away on this occasion), sent in a report to share her experience of the leisure centre and offered suggestions for consideration.

Potholes

The large pothole on the corner (near John 'O'Gaunt pub) has again opened up. I have contacted West Berkshire senior management to ask for an urgent update.

A formal complaint has been sent to Thames Water from West Berkshire who are now thankfully engaging. A test hole will be dug to fully understand why the hole keeps re-opening. Hopefully a solution will be found soon.

Cllr Helen Simpson - Mayor

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES REPORT FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 02 FEBRUARY 2026 MONTH 10 INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR JANUARY 2026

101 FINANCE:

Bank interest of £647 has been received.

102 ADMINISTRATION:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £4,060 positive variance.

The Bike to Work payments & income are now being recorded as a debtor balance in the balance sheet as per the Audit recommendation.

103 GRANTS & DONATIONS:

Net Income over Expenditure is an £80 positive variance this month. Two Grants were paid this month; Lady Bugs £100 & £20 top up for the Mayor's Carol Service donations.

104 POOL HOUSE:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £94 negative variance.

105 CONTINGENCY:

Net Expenditure is a £2,889 positive variance this month. £111 was assigned to the DTC replacement PC.

107 ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING:

No Expenditure this month.

109 HUNGERFORD 2036 PROJECT:

No Expenditure this month.

201 RECREATION & AMENITIES:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £2,053 positive variance.

202 WAR MEMORIAL GROUND:

No Expenditure this month.

203 ST SAVIOURS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £959 negative variance. No Burial fees recorded this month.

204 CROFT FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £1,862 positive variance. Croft Income was £1,307 above budget.

205 LIBRARY MAINTENANCE COSTS:

No Expenditure this month.

206 TRIANGLE FIELD:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £408 positive variance.

301 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £252 negative variance this month.

302 HIGHWAYS:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £3,008 positive variance, a generous anonymous donation of £1,525 was made to purchase 20 St George & 20 Union Flags.

303 CCTV:

Net Income over Expenditure is a £371 negative variance this month.

901 RESERVES:

Transfer of £2,109 from EMR.

January's Net Income over Expenditure is a £11,813 positive variance.

Year to date Net Income over Expenditure is a £104,694 positive variance.

Claire Winser
Chair of F&GP
30 January 2026