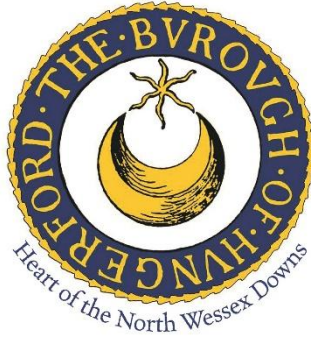


HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor

The Library
Church Street
Hungerford
Berkshire
RG17 0JG



The Town Clerk
Mrs Claire Barnes
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MINUTES of the **Full Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 7.00pm in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs, Keates, Mulholland, Day, Brunning, Fyfe, Carlson, Hall, Terry, Hudson, Armstrong, Cole and Alford

Also present: Members of the press, District Cllr Benneyworth (DB), PC Greaves-Hurd, and members of public.

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC)

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

FC20260064 Propose election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor and receive the signed acceptance of office forms

The Clerk opened the meeting and invited proposals for Mayor.

Proposed: Cllr Hall

Seconded: Cllr Cole

Resolution: Elect Cllr Jerry Keates as Mayor.

The new Mayor signed the acceptance of office form and received a round of applause. He was presented with the Mayor's chain. His wife and consort Deborah Keates was welcomed by all to receive the consort's chain.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Mulholland

Resolution: Elect Cllr Chris Hall as Deputy Mayor.

The new Deputy Mayor signed the acceptance of office form and was welcomed by the Mayor to come and be presented with the Deputy Mayor's chain.

The Mayor Cllr Keates thanked everyone for their support and looks forward to working together as a team.

FC20260065 Note apologies for absence – Cllr Reeves

Also noted from the District Cllrs Vickers and Gaines (DG)

FC20260066 Declarations of interest and signing of any dispensations – Members are reminded to notify the office of any change to disclosable interests or any new interest within 28 days of becoming aware of it. Each member should ensure they have signed a dispensation in respect of Council tax discussions. None declared.

FC20260067 Propose amendment to standing orders:

- Item 4k, to include election of the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of all committees to be carried out at the annual meeting of the council.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Mulholland

ACTION: Resolution: Amend standing orders to elect all Chairs and Deputy Chairs at the annual meeting of the council.

- Item 17e, to provide draft AGAR 7 days in advance of the annual meeting

Proposed: Cllr Keates
Seconded: Cllr Mulholland

ACTION:

Resolution: Amend standing orders for the RFO to provide the AGAR 7 days in advance of the annual meeting.

PC Mike Greaves-Hurd gave the following update: He is the dedicated PC for our area. Following info from Town Council about ASB at the skate park he has put in place additional foot patrols. They have not apprehended anyone yet but are continuing patrols. They can enforce a section 59 on a driver or vehicle which permits them to seize the vehicle on a second offence. A direct police contact has been given to the residents experiencing ASB in South View. There has been criminal damage in woodland. Saws have been seized and no further reports have been received. It is now fish poaching season. The police team has walked around with Town & Manor and completed some training. They are looking into long term problem solving for drug issues at two addresses. The police have received few calls to the area since January which is promising.

Cllr Hall reported incidents at One Stop with loud music and drug dealing. It is causing a nuisance to the neighbours who wanted the issue raised. PC Mike Greaves-Hurd confirmed they will step up their patrols in the area to twice a month when they are on late shifts. He asked residents to continue to report problems as dispersal orders can be put in place. It was requested we are proactive and give the police notice if there is going to be a football match on. If they have a couple of weeks' notice they can look to swap days.

FC20260068 Propose election of the Chairs and Deputies of all committees and receive signed acceptance of office forms where required.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Elect Cllr Mulholland as Chair of Finance and General Purposes

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Elect Cllr Carlson as Deputy Chair of Finance and General Purposes

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Hall

Resolution: Elect Cllr Hudson as Deputy Chair of Highways and Transport

Proposed: Cllr Hudson

Seconded: Cllr Day

Resolution: Elect Cllr Keates as Chair of Highways and Transport

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Day

Resolution: Elect Cllr Brunning as Chair of Recreation & Amenities and War Memorials

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Brunning

Resolution: Elect Cllr Hall as Deputy Chair of Recreation & Amenities and War Memorials

Proposed: Cllr Terry

Seconded: Cllr Day

Resolution: Elect Cllr Cole as Chair of Environment & Planning

Proposed: Cllr Hall

Seconded: Cllr Cole

Resolution: Elect Cllr Terry as Deputy Chair of Environment & Planning

FC20260069 Appointment of members to existing committees and external bodies – Confirm appointment as set out in the schedule.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Alford

Resolution: Confirm appointment of members to existing committees and external bodies as set out in the circulated schedule. The Mayor offered to join the Rotary.

FC20260070 Approval of Minutes of the Full Council meeting of 7th April 2026, and outcome of actions.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Cole

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 7th April 2026 were agreed.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Armstrong

Resolution: Minutes of the meeting of 13th April 2026 were agreed, two abstentions, rest in favour.

Outcome of actions:

The following actions remain outstanding as listed below:

ACTION:

Some of the Sovereign garages are marked for asset disposal. We await clarification from DG.

ACTION:

Kofi (West Berks Council) has agreed a provisional date to do a site visit to consider problems of fly tipping at the recycling area in the station car park. He will bring along a structural engineer to look at the station car park wall which requires repair. Cameras at the station might capture the ASB.

ACTION:

Simon from Hungerford Print Company will produce the glossy copies of the NDP within 2 weeks.

ACTION:

Government changes on planning are undergoing consultation. DG will bring details of this to a future E&P meeting.

ACTION:

Cllr Fyfe's query on the Station Yard application is being looked in to. The application for Station Car Park has been approved for 42 properties subject to discharge of conditions on SUDS. DG will check the S106 to see what the shared ownership options are.

ACTION:

It was commented that money is being spent on Newbury Football Club but not other clubs. DG will take this back to WBC. She advised they require a certain number of pitch playing surfaces in an area to benefit mental health.

All other actions are complete.

FC20260071

Receive incoming Mayor's report. Refer to circulated report. *(see attached)* The Mayor added that one of the first issues of concern is what could happen at Chestnut Walk. WBC have said they appreciate residents/Town Council engagement but have not involved us in the process. He read out a statement from Town Council: -

Statement on Chestnut Walk

Hungerford Town Council has significant concerns regarding the current planning application for Chestnut Walk. However, we also recognise this as an important opportunity to engage constructively with West Berkshire Council and to work collaboratively toward a solution. We wish to ensure that any development at Chestnut Walk delivers a cost-effective, sustainable outcome that aligns with our adopted Neighbourhood Plan. At present, the proposal appears to present a short-term, temporary solution that raises a number of serious questions, including the following points: -

We seek clarity on how such a temporary arrangement will benefit the individuals being housed, and what their expected profile will be. The proposal appears to prioritise expediency and cost-saving, but without sufficient detail on long-term outcomes or suitability.

Concerns also arise regarding the appropriateness of this development in a rural location, where access to transport and essential services is limited. How will residents maintain access to their existing support networks? What provisions are in place given the absence of 24-hour security or policing?

For families, particularly those with children who may only remain in this accommodation for a short period (e.g. up to six weeks), how will continuity of education be ensured? What impact will this have on Special Educational Needs provision within Hungerford?

We also request further information regarding the social support structures that will be available to occupants. Additionally, clarification is needed on what West Berkshire Council means by "tenancy sustainment" in this context.

It is also important to note that West Berkshire Council previously condemned this building approximately ten years ago. We therefore ask for clear justification as to how it is now considered fit for purpose.

We are currently awaiting a formal response from West Berkshire Council regarding our planning objections. We hope that they will recognise our genuine desire to work collaboratively and reconsider

the available options for Hungerford in a way that ensures appropriate, sustainable, and community-aligned outcomes.

We respectfully request that West Berks take the opportunity to stop, engage and listen to Hungerford residents on this matter.

DB entered.

Cllr Cole responded to the statement as follows: We responded to the planning application as required – I think our response was both reasoned and reasonable and I look forward to planners' reactions – but I think you are telling us that this is not just a planning issue and I entirely agree. The way it has been presented so far feels a little bit as if Hungerford is being “done over” by West Berks

The Housing Mix in Hungerford's Neighbourhood Plan as approved and adopted by West Berks includes “Hungerford has a higher share of older residents while West Berkshire has a higher proportion of younger ones”

My impression is that this is not changing – many of us anticipated that the Lancaster Park development would bring in a higher percentage of young families and I don't think that happened – the share of older residents has if anything increased; West Berks previous plans for long term affordable housing units were not out of line with Hungerford's needs whereas this change of mind is out of line and looks like an attempt to save money that does not make medium or long term sense. I see nothing in Hungerford's Neighbourhood Plan that encourages this.

This is an opportunity for West Berks to actually talk to Hungerford, and I would be more than happy to support you if you want to take this route”

Cllr Terry commented as follows: " It's not just a one-off planning issue at Chestnut Walk, but it *is* an opportunity. It's a great opportunity to create something that's right for Hungerford on this site, cost-effective permanent housing that meets the town's existing needs -and we have ample evidence of that in the Neighbourhood Plan, produced by Hungerford residents, and the Housing Needs Assessment that gives us all the numbers and backing data.

Looking at it from my specialist housing development experience, I can see how WBC could lead an initiative bringing some fresh creative thinking to design and deliver a high quality –and properly-green – sustainable housing scheme for the long-term, that reflects the local residential character and helps create dynamic movement in Hungerford's housing market.

Proper resident involvement is critical here. I would – and think all of us here would - really welcome HTC and local residents working together with WBC to unlock the potential of this site. It could be a win all round: helping WBC's affordable housing targets, delivering Hungerford's Local Plan and respecting local residents' aspirations for their hometown.

If WBC take this golden opportunity to engage with us all –in proper consultation and listening mode– it'll be the start of a positive partnership and the key to success. If that's the direction, you're setting out Jerry, I'm fully supportive."

The Chair of Chamber of commerce asked if we were looking for affordable housing? She advised WBC was given an opportunity by Bridge for Young People to use the site for ex-foster care leavers. Currently the leavers are having to go to Reading, away from their families. She had gained support from the Good Exchange, but WBC have shown no interest in the project. She can arrange for someone to come and do a talk about the project.

The use of Chestnut Walk needs to be in line with our adopted neighbourhood plan.

DB commented that the application that is before you will be the one that is considered. In the case of Chestnut Walk it is considered a minor application and requires only 5 objections to go to committee. The Mayor pointed out that at the District Parish Conference WBC talked about working with parishes and collaboration, but there had been no collaboration on this. There has been 10 years of procrastination, and we are not happy about the decision. Why did the original project fall apart? It was commented that it is WBC marking their own homework and they do not realise the feeling of local residents.

ACTION:

Any questions for DB should be sent to the Clerk for her to forward on.

ACTION:

Clerk to send an electronic copy of the Chestnut Walk statement to members of the press as requested.

FC20260072

Receive District Councillor's reports – DB congratulated Cllr Keates in his new role as Mayor. He encouraged applications for members bids which are now open. He confirmed that WBC does not

have to automatically take its own applications to Western Area Planning. The press queried what constitutes a minor application.

FC20260073 Health & Safety – Receive any complaints or concerns – The installation of tree pits down the high street is waiting the approval of Town & Manor. This would reduce the trip hazard. It was reported that dog fouling in the church yard and Croft has increased. Lots of people are walking their dogs off lead and not clearing up after them. One instance has been caught on CCTV.

ACTION: Office to promote the importance of clearing up after your dog on social media.

FC20260074 Propose authorisation of payment run (circulated along with copies of invoices) for April.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Agree payment run of £25, 383.45 for April.

FC20260075 Approve the use of BACS and Direct Debits for payments and approve the current Direct Debit list as required in our financial regulations, refer to details circulated.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Approve use of BACS and DDs for payments and approve the list circulated totalling £1925.

FC20260076 Propose 2025-26 year-end budget/accounts – Refer to circulated Income/Expenditure Report and agree year end transfers

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Propose the income, expenditure report of £41,875.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Propose the year end transfers to Ear Marked Reserves of the following:

Contingency to REME re food bill £ 730.00

Unused TF money re maintenance £1600.00

Unused S/Lights n/c 4365 to streetlights £9000.00

Contingency to EMR re Men's Shed £1500.00

FC20260077 Propose delegation of review of the following policies to Finance & General Purposes committee to be brought back to future full council for ratification. Financial Regulations and Risk Management Policy.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree delegation of review of the Financial Regulations and Risk Management Policy to F&GP.

FC20260078 Note the dates for the period of the exercise of public rights are 3rd June 2026 to 14th July 2026 and the publication date on town council website will be Tuesday 2nd June 2026.

These were noted.

FC20260079 Propose the review of effectiveness of our system of internal control – Refer to circulated document

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree the review of effectiveness of our system of internal control.

FC20260080 Annual Governance and Accountability Return. Propose acceptance of Section 1 of Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 and acceptance of Section 2 Accounting statements 2025-26.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Propose acceptance of Section 1 of Annual Governance Statement 2025-26

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Propose acceptance of Section 2 Accounting statements 2025-26.

The paperwork was completed and signed.

FC20260081 **Asset Register** – Approve the register of assets and note the total year-end figure £509,134.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Keates

Resolution: Agree the asset register with a year end figure of £509,134.

FC20260082 **Calendar of Meetings** – To agree Full Council and Committee meetings will continue to be held in the library building for the forthcoming year. Dates of the meetings can be found on our website.

Proposed: Cllr Keates

Seconded: Cllr Cole

Resolution: Agree the library as the venue for town council meetings and the calendar of meetings.

FC20260083 **Appointment of HTC or staff subscriptions to other bodies** – Confirm appointment as set out in the schedule. Any alterations to be noted.

Proposed: Cllr Mulholland

Seconded: Cllr Carlson

Resolution: Agree the subscriptions as set out in the schedule totalling £3226.80.

FC20260084 **Receive any reports** (no more than 3 minutes per report and not to include any proposals).

The Mayor thanked everyone for voting him in and commented that it is good to bring forward different opinions and discuss. He suggested that a succession plan for future roles on the council should be looked at in September well ahead of the May Annual Meeting. He would be happy to dedicate a couple of years to the role of Mayor.

Cllr Fyfe expressed a vote of thanks to the previous Mayor Helen Simpson and Deputy Claire Winser for their long service as councillors. This was supported by all councillors.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Mayor Elect report May 2026

Cllr Jerry Keates

H&T Chair

April has been quite a hectic month with Easter, Hocktide, the Mayors reception and FOTT Parade.

Hocktide

Monday 13th April HTC was kindly invited by the Constable to witness the tradition of Ale tasting and verification of the bread. I can confirm the beer I had was certainly a goodly brew! Deborah and I attended the Hocktide lunch on Tutti Day (Tuesday) and I urge anyone who has not done this to do so. Indeed, Roger and Lorraine Ballard were finally shod despite being lifelong residents of the town and a great time was had by all. The final part of the week was the constables parade held on Sunday.

The Mayors Reception

This was held on Friday 17th in the RBL Club and was primarily to thank people for their hard work over the preceding year and it also afforded Helen the opportunity to say her goodbyes before standing down as Mayor and leaving the council. She will now be able finally to focus on her hobbies and home renovations whilst squeezing in a huge family wedding. We also said goodbye to Claire Winser who will be missed but will be found as the driving force behind Hungerford in Bloom.

Station Litter pick

Myself and Richard from HTC, SUH and GWR conducted a 6 monthly litter pick on the waste ground behind the northern platform of Hungerford station. Disappointingly we filled a considerable amount of waste bags again. GWR have now fitted hidden CCTV cameras to keep an eye on potential offenders before deciding on next actions and securing funding for possible solutions. Calum (GWR) is also going to highlight the significant amount of land that might be potentially used as additional parking if justification can be demonstrated for investment.

REME FOTT award

What a fabulous event we had on Saturday 25th April as HTC bestowed 6 Armoured Close Support Battalion the freedom of the town. It was truly a history making day, if rather hot for the 300 soldiers on parade. It was also poignant as this was Helen's final civic event and a culmination of her 10 years on the council and 8 years as Mayor. A huge thanks goes out to the team that always work away tirelessly to make things happen in the background for our wonderful town to enjoy.

It has been somewhat strange writing a mayor's report when I have not had any official duties this month but that will obviously change going forward. I feel extremely privileged to be put forward as the Mayor of Hungerford and will do my very best for the town residents and to fiercely protect our way of life and all that we hold precious. We have an extremely strong team of councillors and brilliant office staff which makes me confident that we can deal with anything that is put in our path in the coming year ahead.

Finance & General Purposes 'End of Year Report' for Full Council of 5th May 2026

Income and Expenditure Report for April 2025 – March 2026

101	Finance	Bank interest of £12,346 received.
102	Administration	Actual Income over Expenditure £19,052 positive variance against budget.
103	Grants and Donations	Actual Income over Expenditure £3,026 positive variance against budget. The Leisure Centre payment budgeted at £43,000 accrued to following year.
104	Pool House	Actual Income over Expenditure £974 positive variance against budget.
105	Contingency	£1,640 spent out of £6,500 budget.
107	Environmental & Planning	Actual Expenditure over Budget £94 positive variance.
109	Hungerford 2036 Project	No Expenditure.
201	Recreation and Amenities	Actual Income over Expenditure £7,523 positive variance against budget.
202	War Memorial Ground	Actual Expenditure over Budget £1,784 positive variance.
203	St. Saviours	Actual Income over Expenditure £4,020 positive variance against budget.
204	Croft Field	Actual Income over Expenditure £2,862 positive variance against budget.
205	Library Maintenance Costs	Actual Expenditure over Budget £590 positive variance.
206	Triangle Field	Actual Income over Expenditure £3,868 positive variance against budget.
301	Christmas Lights	Actual Income over Expenditure £2,833 positive variance against budget.
302	Highways	Actual Income over Expenditure £29,474 positive variance against budget.
303	CCTV	Actual Income over Expenditure £529 positive variance against budget.
901	Reserves	Expenditure of £43,448 from reserves.

Year to Date Income over Expenditure £41,875 Carried over to offset 2026 – 2027 budget

Simon Mulholland
Chair (Elect) of F&GP
4th May 2026