

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor
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MINUTES of the **Annual Town Meeting** held on Wednesday 20th March 2019 at 7.00pm in Corn Exchange, High St, Hungerford

Present: Approx. 120 people including press

- Welcome from the Mayor and Introductions** - The Mayor welcomed everyone and talked about the change of format of the meeting this year. The approach is less formal, and feedback will be welcomed from the public. There is an opportunity to meet with local councillors and learn about future aspirations and projects. Groups that work in partnership with HTC have been invited to have a display. The Mayor welcomed from West Berks Council, CEO Nick Carter, Exec Portfolio holder for Highways and Transport, Jeanette Clifford, Gabrielle Mancini, Economic Development officer and the District councillors. She also welcomed each of the stall holders including the press and police. Town Councillors from each committee are available to talk to the public about how to become a councillor and be part of the team.
- Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 21st March 2018:** *Cllr Simpson proposed the minutes, seconded by Cllr Crane, no objections.*
- H2036 Neighbourhood Plan – Your views invited** - Cllr Downe is on the H2036 Neighbourhood Plan team. Since the survey was completed last summer a lot of work has been carried out gathering the responses and putting together Aims and Objectives. Comments on these are welcomed. The Neighbourhood Plan will allow us to choose the types of development, the design and the locations. There will be a referendum for the voters of Hungerford. If 50% plus one say yes then the plan comes into effect and has full legal status. Also, it will increase the levy the town gets. It will be a good guide for the town to know what the community wants.
- Opportunity to meet with exhibitors** - The Mayor advised a quick summary of public feedback will be taken 20 minutes after everyone has had a chance to look around.
- Feedback from team leaders:**

Finance & General Purposes – Cllr Winser has been explaining HTC expenditure through charts and photos. The public like the new meeting format.

Highways & Transport – Cllr Hudson said the main topics of interest included improvements to the railway station, a concern over speeding (on the Common, A4 to Marlborough and through the High St), bus services (keeping them running and introducing more), pigeons and replacing broken paving in the high street.

Chamber of Commerce – There are roughly 50/60 members which meet monthly and next meeting is on 26th March at the Rugby Club. Their biggest event is the Hungerford Extravaganza which Derek Loft organised and was master of ceremonies on the night.

Environment & Planning – Cllr Farrell has displayed the process of planning. Questions on Salisbury Road development were asked. Any info received will be shared with the public at the next planning stage.

Hungerford 2036 – Cllr Downe said people were interested that we will have more control with the NDP in place. The more input we receive from everyone the better.

Smarten Up Hungerford – Thanks were expressed to all the volunteers. Please let SUH know of any businesses that can help. All are welcome at the Croft Field Centre on March 27th for a get together.

Tourism & Economy – Cllr Crane thanked North Wessex Downs Henry Oliver for joining him. Welcome signs to Hungerford should go up shortly. Hungerford features in the Great West Way of which leaflets are available. Companies situated in Charnham Park employ over 1000 staff. Come along to the Trade Showcase on 16th October at John O Gaunt School to meet them and others.

Twinning Association – This has been running for 40 years. Hungerford is twinned with Ligueil and the next visit there is from 6th to 10th June 2019. There are still a few spaces left on the coach so if anyone is interested please get in touch.

Town & Manor – People were interested in the river and Hocktide traditions. The constable has been talking about the orchard purchased two years ago and the house discovered when the grounds were cleared. Trees are managed on their land and some have to be felled due to disease.

Hungerford Allotment Holders Association (HAHA) - This year HAHA are 10 years old. They manage two allotment sites.

Youth Council – Harry said they are trying to change the reputation of the youth and wish to provide facilities for young people. It is about what the youth council can do for Hungerford. The Chair Sebastian wants to join Youth Parliament and elections take place in June.

Recreation & Amenities – Cllr Hawkins advised there was a good amount of interest shown in recognising the assets HTC is responsible for. Everyone is encouraged to get involved with Hungerford in Bloom. Details will be out on the Town Council website on Friday.

6. **Questions and suggestions from the floor** –

Are the CCTV cameras monitored? Yes, the screens are located in the Town Council office and the police come in regularly to view footage.

How many houses are we building? The West Berks Council plan is out in 2020 so we haven't got final numbers yet. There will be 100 houses at Salisbury Road. The NDP gives power to the town to allocate locations and the number of houses at the locations.

About reinvigorating our high street – what is Hungerford doing compared to other high streets? Action for Market towns did a report a few years ago and Hungerford came out pretty well on the number of independent shops. The Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to reducing the number of empty shops.

What can the Youth Council do around the town? Volunteer for Smarten up Hungerford or at the Hungerford Hub and talk to other organisations around the town.

Peter Harries advised the library is on a 99 lease to Hungerford Town Council. The Hub run the library and raise the money to keep the building going. It is your library/Hub. Please support it. There are pop up shops, exhibitions and clubs such as Spanish etc.

7. **Opinion of new format** -The Mayor asked for a show of hands in favour of the new format. This was a large majority. The Mayor thanked the staff for their help with the arrangements.

8. **Announcing of Freedom Award Nominations** – The Mayor announced the 3 awardees with year are:

Chris Buck – She has been playing the organ for 30 years and organises the church flowers, choir and other charity events.

Ted Angell – He is heavily involved in CHAIN and collects prescriptions and shopping for those that need help.

Peter Harries – A former Mayor and current trustee of the Hub who has been involved in the Hungerford Club and Bowls Club.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm