

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Tourism and Economy Committee** held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford

**Present:** Cllrs Crane, Knight, Farrell, Chicken & Small. Cllr Simpson attended the meeting, though is not on the committee.

Also present Anthony Buckwell (Town & Manor), Nigel Perrin (Chamber of Commerce), Brian Quinn and Penny Locke (Penny Post)

- 1. Apologies for absence.** Cllr Wilson.
- 2. Elect Chairman for Tourism & Economy Committee.** Cllr Crane expressed that he was happy to continue on as chair. Cllr Small proposed Cllr Crane as Chair of the committee which was seconded by Cllr Farrell, with all in favour. Cllr Farrell proposed Cllr Small as deputy which was seconded by Cllr Knight, with all in favour.
- 3. Declarations of interests.** None.
- 4. Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016.** Cllr Crane, proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Knight, with all in favour and two abstentions.

#### **Update on actions from the previous meeting:**

**Picnic area** – WBC has said that the layby at the end of Charnham Park is not safe. WBC owns the verge and the land is owned by Ramsbury Estates. AB asked if the wharf had been considered as a tourist point.

**Car parking charges** – still waiting for the outcome of the consultation, which is due on 9<sup>th</sup> March. Some background information was given by Cllr Knight on the presentation given to WBC. Most revenue comes from 1-2 hour parking, though an annual season ticket can be bought. It was thought that a 3-month or 6 month ticket should also be available.

**Action:** Cllrs Crane and Knight to follow-up feedback from Mark Edwards (WBC).

Some discussion followed about use of long term parking, as it is less expensive to park here and use the train.

**Action:** Cllr Knight to follow this up.

AB added that there are many considerations for parking as one of the current car parks may be re-developed in the future and the implications of electrification of the train line from Newbury. Cllr Crane thought this should be raised at H&T.

**Action:** Place on H&T agenda.

**Pigeons in the High Street** – A conservation officer will be serving notice on Mr Dodds about the pigeons and the buildings. NP added that they had given Mr Dodds money towards the spikes that are currently on the building.

5. **Pigeons – Update on funding:** NP stated that Chamber of Commerce may be able to donate money towards the cost of the cull. AB also thought T&M may be able to contribute.
6. **Hungerford Town Guide** - Cllr Crane introduced Nigel Perrin, Anthony Buckwell, Brian Quinn and Penny Locke. Cllr Crane stated that the current Town guide was not fit for purpose, with it containing too much information for visitors and insufficient information for residents. It was suggested that a shorter town guide was produced to include “Why come to Hungerford” and things to do. NP left that the guide had a small distribution and did not attract footfall. AB commented that previous versions were given out at Littlecote Hotel which encouraged visitors to come into town.

BQ and PL produce a weekly newsletter with a large circulation and a high open rate. It contains summaries with links to gain more information. Brief discussions have been held with Cllr Crane and Town Clerk. A draft list of contents has been drawn up. Printed information often goes out of date whereas use of social media is increasing and can be regularly updated. The guide needs to be made relevant, giving a flavour through an editorial and a link via the web.

Some absences from the guide were noted e.g. antiques, children’s clubs/interests and walks. It was noted that often in different forums people ask the same information e.g. places available to hire.

PL made the suggestion of a guide with a front cover with a montage of pictures of Hungerford and the first quarter of the book for tourists with the back  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the book giving information about living here.

The concept was then discussed with a number of different thoughts being aired. Funding of the booklet would be through selling of advertising space, though offers may be available. NP raised the Hungerford Town Team, who have their own web site, and was concerned about the dilution of effort and people not knowing where to go for information.

BQ added that a 24 page booklet would be able to run commercially, with links to social media.

AB added that the number of antique outlets is dropping in a number of locations. However, there are many antique shops in Hungerford and these outlets should be encouraged to contribute to this venture.

NP has been in contact with Newbury Weekly News about using its web site to host short videos of Hungerford which could be linked to other town web sites through Newbury Weekly News as they print a number of papers for different towns.

Hungerford is part of the Great West Way. To fit into their promotional material a synopsis of Hungerford is required which can be sent overseas to generate interest. A discussion was held on the best attributes of our town. These included the historic town, wharf area, local eateries, antiques, walks, fishing and the arts. Thoughts also included creating hotel offers to tie with some of the events in the Town’s calendar e.g. Victorian Extravaganza, HADCAF events.

The work of Hungerford Town Team was discussed and how hard it was to find locations to distribute leaflets. Many leaflets are undistributed and are now out-of-date.

MC asked for those present to voice what was most important to them, either a small visitor guide or an updated town guide. Concern was expressed that guides can go out of date quickly, though it was acknowledged that some people like to sit and look at

printed material. Most of those present felt that a small historic document which includes the beauty of Hungerford, canal, walks, AONB, the common. It was suggested that key information could be given with links to web addresses and apps provided which could give up to date information. BQ suggested a range of format types which could include a map of the area. This would not be delivered to residents, but be available to a wider audience. A working group was formed to create the tourist leaflet. The members were NP, representative from Town & Manor, Cllr Crane, Cllr Chicken, BQ and PL. This group would meet and report back at the next meeting.

**Action:** Working party to meet and discuss contents of visitor leaflet.

BQ asked about the original guide as it was clear that people in Hungerford did required information about local amenities. A combination of printed material with links to on-line information was suggested as it could be updated easily. Cllr Crane felt that the visitor's leaflet should be generated first and then the town guide could be reviewed. BQ reminded the Committee that advertising was required to fund the projects and it was essential to have the correct format, e.g. size and relevance.

- 7. Welcome signage update** – It is intended to ask GWR for a copy of their artwork on their welcome sign so that it may be incorporated into a banner to put on the Railings to welcome people into Hungerford. It is hoped that this can be used to show Great West Way how we would like to use the signage. MC made a proposal to accept the quote for the banner at a cost of £140 and agreement in principle of the quote for a welcome sign. This was seconded by Cllr Chicken, all in agreement.

**Action:** Office to re-contact GWR for the artwork and arrange for the banner to be produced.

- 8. Review of Terms of Reference.** The Committee reviewed the terms of reference and were happy with their contents.
- 9. Coaches – update on the meeting held with WBC Highways.** The idea of parking outside the library was not well received and it was suggested that outside of No5 High Street would be best, though councillors raised concerns due to the current issues with that location. Some discussions were held about parking locations for coaches and drop off points.
- 10. Major Employers Forum Update.** This concept is being re-named as Hungerford Trade Fair. It is hoped that this can take place at John O'Gaunt School at the end of June. The fair is intended to demonstrate to children and parents that there are many companies in Hungerford that can offer opportunities and will allow communications between us and employers.

Meeting ended at 8:50 pm.