

**Minutes of the Meeting of Newbury Town Council  
Held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Newbury,  
at 7.30 pm on Monday 12 June 2023.**

**Present**

Councillors Phil Barnett; Vera Barnett, Alistair Bounds, Jo Day, Sam Dibas, Nigel Foot, Jayne French-Drayton, David Harman, Chris Hood, Roger Hunneman; Ian Jee, Pam Lusby-Taylor; David Marsh; Steve Masters, Vaughan Miller; Andy Moore; Gary Norman; Elizabeth O’Keeffe; Sarah Slack and Meg Thomas.

**Officers in Attendance**

Hugh Peacocke – Chief Executive Officer

**6. Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Councillors Phil Barnett and Vera Barnett, Billy Drummond, Martha Vickers and Tony Vickers.

**7. Declarations of interest and dispensations**

The CEO told the meeting that Councillors Nigel Foot and David Marsh are also Members of West Berkshire Council, which is declared as a general interest on their behalf and a dispensation is in place to allow them to partake in discussions relating to West Berkshire Council business.

**8. Minutes of the meeting of Newbury Town Council held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023.**

**Proposed:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Councillor Elizabeth O’Keeffe

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the meeting of Newbury Town Council held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 as a true record of the meeting.

**9. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Newbury Town Council held in the Corn Exchange, Newbury, on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**Proposed:** Councillor Vaughan Miller

**Seconded:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Annual Meeting of Newbury Town Council held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May as a true record of the meeting.

**10. Questions and Petitions from Members of the Public**

There were no questions or petitions from members of the public.

## **11. Members' Questions and Petitions**

The CEO said that Cllr. Phil Barnett had submitted a question. Cllr. Barnett was not in attendance and the mayor asked the CEO to read the question to the meeting:

*Until covid, The Mayor's Drive became an important feature in the Mayor's calendar for the year and the one day in the year that many elderly residents had the chance to be taken from their home to sample the lovely West Berkshire countryside and meet up with long lost friends at a stately home to enjoy an afternoon tea.*

*This activity, which has been in existence for many decades, came to an end when it was decided by this Council to cease the drive last year for a variety of reasons.*

*I have been asked by many of the residents that previously attended the event when it would take place again.*

*I therefore ask this Town Council: firstly to put every effort into establishing if this event could be reinstated and, secondly advertise if individuals or organisations would be willing to help with the arrangements in putting on this event.*

The mayor responded as follows: *Councillor Barnett is correct when he says that this was an important feature in the Mayor's calendar for the year. While this event was popularly known as the Mayor's drive and tea party, it was organised by other persons who invited the Mayor to attend the event. At no stage was it ever organised by the Council and it is not correct to say that this Council ceased the drive last year.*

*Last year the organisers advised the Council that for a variety of reasons they were unable to continue this event. The matter was considered comprehensively by the Council's Civic Pride, Arts and Culture Committee last July, which was attended by the organisers and all parties agreed that it was no longer feasible or practicable to hold this event.*

*Since then the Mayor has introduced a Festive Afternoon Tea Party as part of the Christmas calendar, for people aged over 75 in Newbury. The Council's current position in this matter is as set out in our Strategy where we state that we will: Support the organisation of an annual event for the over 75s in Newbury to be attended by the Mayor.*

The CEO will send a written copy of the response to Councillor Barnett.

## **12. Previous Mayor's final Report**

The Council received a report from the former Town Mayor, Councillor Gary Norman, detailing the many civic engagements he had attended between the January meeting of the Council and the Annual Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

The Council thanked Councillor Norman for his outstanding service during his year as Town Mayor. The CEO also thanked him on behalf of the Officers and the Civic Team at the Council.

**13. Town Mayor's Report**

The meeting received the report of the Town Mayor, which included the Annual Meeting of the Council and the Family Day in Victoria Park.

**14. Chief Executive's Report (Appendix 3)**

The Council received the report from the CEO of the Council.

**15. Election of Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council**

15.1 The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023-24.

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Jo Day

That Councillor Gary Norman be elected Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023-24. There were no other nominations for the post.

**Resolved:** That Councillor Gary Norman be elected Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023-24.

Councillor Norman thanked his proposer and seconder and all members of the Council for their unanimous vote for him. He said that the council's ambition going forward would be to deliver more of the ambitions of the previous Council and he welcomed the continued co-operation and support of the 2 Green Party members on the Council.

15.2 The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Deputy Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023-24.

**Proposed:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Seconded:** Councillor Sarah Slack

That Councillor Jo Day be elected Deputy Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023-24. There were no other nominations for the post.

**Resolved:** That Councillor Jo Day be elected Deputy Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023-24.

**16. Annual Governance Statement and End of Year Statutory Accounts 2022/23**

The Mayor told the meeting that the approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) must be carried out by the Full Council and that it must be done before the 30th of June.

The Chief Executive Officer referred members to the Internal Auditors Certificate in the Council's AGAR (page 3 of the Annual return) and it was noted that the Internal Auditors had given positive assurances in all relevant areas.

The CEO told the Council that they were required to approve each individual paragraph (1-9) of the AGAR.

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Vaughan Miller

**Resolved:** To approve each individual paragraph (1-9) of the Annual Governance Statement 2022-23 as defined at Section 2 of the Annual Return and

**Resolved** that Newbury Town Council has:

1. Put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
2. Maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
3. Took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.
4. Provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. Carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. Maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.
7. Took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
8. Considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.
9. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee for the Wash Common Allotments, discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.

The Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer then signed the Annual Governance statement 2022-23.

The CEO, in his role as Responsible Financial Officer, presented the signed end of year Statutory Accounts for 2022/23, subject to Audit (Section 2, Page 5 of the AGAR). He pointed out that Box 9, the total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets, at 31 March 2022 had been restated as last year's External Audit had reported that: *The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. Information received from the smaller authority indicates that a £75,000 design and consultancy fee has been included in Section 2, Box 9. The Practitioners' Guide states this cell shows the value of all the fixed assets and long-term investments owned by the smaller authority.*

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Resolved:** To approve the Accounting Statements 2022/23 as presented by the Responsible Financial Officer and to authorise their signing by The Town Mayor.

The responsible Financial Officer advised the members that the external audit would be undertaken by PKF Littlejohn and that the date for the exercise of electors' rights has been set as 14 June 2023. Following approval of the Annual return the appropriate legal notice with regard to public inspection would be published on the Council's website and displayed on the Town Hall notice board. The external audit may generate further amendments. The final Annual Return, including the Auditor's Certificate, is due for publication by 30 September 2022.

## 17. Working Groups

17.1 Strategy Working Group, including a long-term strategy for the Council:

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Jo Day

**Resolved: To Approve** the Terms of reference as presented and appoint the following members: Councillors Gary Norman, Vaughan Miller, Andy Moore, Jo Day, David Marsh and Pam Lusby-Taylor.

17.2 The Climate Emergency Working Group:

**Proposed:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Councillor Steve Masters

**Resolved: To Approve** the Terms of reference as presented and appoint the following members: Councillors Steve Masters, Meg Thomas, Martha Vickers, Roger Hunneman, David Harman and Sarah Slack

17.3 Member Support and Development Working Group:

**Proposed:** Councillor Vaughan Miller

**Seconded:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Resolved: To Approve** the Terms of reference as presented and appoint the following members: Councillors David Marsh, Elizabeth O'Keeffe, Jo day and Jayne French-Drayton

## 18. Committees

The Council received the minutes of meetings of the Town Council's Committees:

- Planning & Highways Committee Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> February 6<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup>
- Civic Pride, Arts and Culture Committee: 27<sup>th</sup> February (Draft)
- Policy and resources Committee: 17<sup>th</sup> April (Draft)
- Community Services Committee: 13<sup>th</sup> March (Draft)

## 19. Appointments to Outside Bodies

The meeting received a report from Councillor Sarah Slack, in her capacity as trustee on Citizens' Advice, West Berkshire.

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor David Harman

**Resolved: To Appoint** Members to serve on outside bodies, as shown on Appendix 1 attached to these minutes.

## 20. School Link Councillors

The meeting noted the Job description for this role, as circulated.

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Steve Masters

**Resolved: To Appoint** Members to serve as school link councillors, as shown on Appendix 2 attached to these minutes.

## 21. Standing Orders

The CEO presented the proposed amendments to Standing orders. He told the meeting that the changes proposed in this review address the following matters:

- Updates to reflect current practice and convention of the Council
- The Change in name of the Civic Pride, Arts and Leisure Committee to Civic Pride, Arts and Culture.
- An update regarding "Virtual" attendance at meetings, to reflect the current Government legislation around this (Standing Order 8.11)
- An amendment to say that in the case of the Council's committees, any member not appointed to a committee may act as a substitute ( Standing Order 11)
- Some corrections to numbering in the Standing Orders

**Proposed:** Councillor Elizabeth O'Keeffe

**Seconded:** Councillor Ian Jee

**Resolved: To Approve** the agreed amendments to Standing Orders.

## 22. Treasury Management Policy

The CEO told the meeting that the Council holds substantial funds in its current account. This can often arise due to the cyclical nature of the precept payments (half in April and half in October.)

He pointed out that Councils are not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, which has an upper limit of £85,000. Therefore, the Council may need to move some funds from its main bank account, into some other secure deposits, to spread the risk, in the event of any financial failures. (This was not a reflection on the Council's bank, which has an excellent credit rating.)

**Proposed:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Resolved: To Approve** the following addition to the Council's Treasury Management Policy:

***Security of funds***

*The Council can at certain times of the year hold substantial funds in its current account. This can arise due to the cyclical nature of the precept payments (half in April and half in October.)*

*Councils are not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, which has an upper limit of £85,000. Therefore, the Council may need to move some funds from its main bank account, into some other secure deposits, to spread the risk, in the event of any financial failures.*

*Alternatives available include the following*

- *Short term investment with the District Council*
- *Increasing our investment with the Public Sector Deposit Fund*
- *Other investment managers in the sector*
- *A combination of the above.*

*The Council's Responsible Financial Officer will arrange any such transfer of funds. These will be subject to the Council's approval processes, which include the CEO and 2 members of the Council. Where time permits, all transfers should be approved beforehand by the Policy and Resources Committee. Where this is not feasible, the RFO may arrange transfers, after consulting the Chairperson of the Policy and Resources Committee and reporting to the Council at the next available opportunity.*

**23. Forward Work Programme for Full Council meetings 2023/24**

The meeting noted and agreed the Forward Work programme.

Agreed that Berkshire Youth be invited to make a presentation to the January meeting of the Council.

Agreed that the Council's representatives on outside bodies be invited to report to the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

Agreed that the School Link Councillors be invited to report to the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**24. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Proposed:** Councillor Steve Masters

**Seconded:** Councillor Vaughan Miller

**Resolved:** That under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential personal and financial business to be transacted.

**25. Finance and Corporate Services Manager**

The meeting received a report from Councillor Elizabeth O’Keeffe, the Chairperson of the Council’s Selection panel for this post.

The Selection Panel comprised Councillor Elizabeth O’Keeffe (Panel Chairperson), Councillor Gary Norman, Chair of the Council’s Policy and Resources Committee, Ms. Melanie Ellis, Chief Finance Officer, West Berks and Hugh Peacocke, CEO, Newbury Town Council. Four candidates were invited for interview and the interviews were completed on 7th June. The Panel unanimously scored Mrs. Liz Manship as the best candidate for the role.

The Panel recommends that the position is offered to Mrs. Manship subject to satisfactory references, the Council’s normal terms and conditions, as well as the following special conditions:

- If appointed, Mrs Shipman will be on probation until/ unless she has achieved the AAT level 2 foundation qualification.
- The Council will allow a half day per week as study leave until the qualification is achieved.
- The post holder is expected to achieve the qualification within 18 months, maximum.

The Panel did not recommend any of the other 3 candidates for the role.

**Proposed:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Sarah Slack

**Resolved: To Approve** the recommendations of the Council’s Selection Panel for recruitment to this post.

**26. Community Café for Victoria Park**

The meeting received an update on the position in relation to the proposed construction of a Community Café and new Sports Changing Rooms for Victoria Park.



**Proposed:** Councillor Roger Hunneman

**Seconded:** Councillor Steve Masters

**Resolved: To Authorise** officers to explore all the options for meeting the needs set out in the design brief for the proposed Community Café in Victoria Park and report back to the next appropriate Council/ Committee meeting.

**There being no further business, the Town Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.53 pm.**

**Town Mayor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES  
FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR (2023-24)**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Outside Body</b>	<b>Representative</b>
1.	Newbury Twin Town Association	Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor: Nigel Foot, Andy Moore
2.	Wash Common Community Association	David Marsh, Jayne French-Drayton
3.	Time to Talk YCS	Elizabeth O'Keeffe
4.	West Berks Citizens' Advice-Trustee	Sarah Slack, Elizabeth O'Keeffe
5.	Age UK, Newbury	Vera Barnett
6.	Volunteer Centre West Berkshire	Andy Moore
7.	St Bartholomew's School Foundation	Nigel Foot, Sam Dibas
8.	Newbury Almshouse Trust	Martha Vickers, Jayne French-Drayton
9.	Greenham & Crookham Commons Commission	Roger Hunneman, Billy Drummond
10.	Berkshire Association of Local Councils (and NALC Super Town Council Committee / WBDALC)	Gary Norman
11.	Spring Festival Committee	Chairperson of Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee: Jo Day
12.	Community Youth Project (Greenham Community Centre)	Elizabeth O'Keeffe, David Harman
13.	River Lambourn HLF Project	Ian Jee
14.	West Berkshire Heritage Forum	Gary Norman
15.	Disability External Scrutiny Board Observers	Steve Masters
16.	Clay Hill Community Association	Pam Lusby Taylor
17.	BID Observer	Gary Norman
18.	Friends of West Berkshire Museum	Nigel Foot
19.	Wash Common Community Library	Roger Hunneman
20.	Patient and Public Engagement which is a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board	Martha Vickers
21.	Culture and Heritage Strategy Delivery Board	Meg Thomas
22.	West Berkshire Homelessness Strategy Group	Martha Vickers
23.	Age Concern Newbury and District	Vaughan Miller
24.	Newbury Community Football Group	Vaughan Miller
25.	Berkshire Youth Waterside	Elizabeth O'Keeffe, Martha Vickers

In each and every case, the relationship between the Council and the Outside Body is different. It is up to each representative (working with other representatives if relevant) to decide the importance and relevance of a report to the Council and act accordingly.

**Town Council Link Councillors for Schools 2023-24**

<b>School</b>	<b>Link Councillor/Representative</b>	<b>Former Link Councillor/Representative</b>
Falkland Primary School	Meg Thomas	Chris Foster
Fir Tree Primary School and Nursery	Pam Lusby Taylor	Pam Lusby Taylor
John Rankin Infant and Nursery / Junior Schools	David Marsh	Sarah Slack
Park House School	Jayne French-Drayton, Roger Hunneman	Tony Vickers
Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery	Steve Masters	Erik Pattenden
St Bartholomew's School	David Marsh, Sam Dibas	David Marsh
St John The Evangelist Infant and Nursery School	Nigel Foot	Martin Colston
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Elizabeth O'Keeffe	Elizabeth O'Keeffe
St Nicolas Church of England School	Nigel Foot	Nigel Foot
Speenhamland Primary School	Chris Hood	Jo Day
Trinity School	Jo Day, Martha Vickers	Jeff Beck

Victoria Park Nursery School	Martha Vickers	Martha Vickers
The Willows	David Harman	Billy Drummond
The Winchcombe School	Jo Day	Stephen Masters
Newbury College	Ian Jee, Sam Dibas	Martin Colston
Highwood Copse	Billy Drummond	
iCollege	Gary Norman	
Castle School	Meg Thomas	
Mary Hare	***tbc*** <i>Sarah Bledin</i>	
Ladybirds PreSchool	Vaughan Miller	
St Gabriel's	Sam Dibas	