

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY
ON MONDAY 22 JULY 2024 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT

Councillors: Phil Barnett (sub), Nigel Foot, Chris Hood, Roger Hunneman, Ian Jee, David Marsh, Vaughan Miller, Sarah Slack, Meg Thomas and Martha Vickers.

In Attendance

Martin Kavanagh, Services Delivery Manager
Caroline Edmunds Community Services Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

PROPOSED: Cllr Meg Thomas

SECONDED: Cllr Roger Hunneman

RESOLVED: That Cllr Vaughan Miller be elected as Chairperson.

PROPOSED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Cllr Sarah Slack

RESOLVED: That Cllr Roger Hunneman be elected as Vice-Chairperson.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Vera Barnet – Substitute Cllr Phil Barnett

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The Services Delivery Manager declared that Councillors Phil Barnett, 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.

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

PROPOSED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Ian Jee

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on Monday 8 April 2024 are approved and signed by the Chairperson.

PROPOSED: Councillor Roger Hunneman

SECONDED: Councillor Nigel Foot

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Extraordinary Community Services Committee held on Friday 14 June 2024 are approved and signed by the Chairperson.

Cllr Martha Vickers arrived at 7:50pm

5. APPROVAL OF GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP MINUTES AND WORK PLAN

PROPOSED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Ian Jee

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Green Spaces WG of 4.04.24, 9.5.24 & 13.6.24 and to acknowledge the Work Plan.

Cllr Ian Jee thanked NTC Parks & Open Spaces Officer, James Heasman for his good work and commitment in finding extensive sponsorship for the Newbury in Bloom presentation evening and prizes.

6. FLOOD AND DRAINAGE FORUM UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from Cllr Nigel Foot and Cllr Ian Jee regarding the Flood & Drainage Forum which includes the Environment Agency, Thames Water and West Berkshire District Council.

There was suggestion of a restructuring of the Forum.

7. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Questions received from Paula Saunderson:

1. "Who is responsible for this part of the river from downstream of the Walton Way Bridge to no.3 River Walk and please can you show a Map on your screen? Please see my Attachment 1 which will guide you in your response. You are currently attempting to cut a small path of the verge next to the pathway. The rest is now merged with the Top of the River Bank".

Answer from Services Delivery Manager, "Newbury Town Council responsible for this section."

2. Who is responsible for the breakdown of the Spatial Flood Defence in front of my house and further along ? See Attachment 2. And can you please provide the wording from your deeds that show this should be maintained to a height of 243ft O.D. Newlyn? Maps required please.

Answer from Services Delivery Manager, “Newbury Town Council is not a flood authority. We will need further clarification on this question from you we do not recognise the breakdown to which you refer. So we will work to resolve these issues outside of the timeline of this meeting directly with you.

3. Who is responsible for not maintaining the extremely large willows which are pulling down the banks in front of my garden and on the North Bank, when will they be addressed please? See Video Attachment 3. The Willows on both sides of the river are far too large and are pulling down the Banks of Riverside Lane & River Walk.

Answer from Services Delivery Manager, “We have the riparian rights for the south bank of the river and I confirm we survey the trees on the bank in line with our policy and we had planned works with contractors on site, however we were unable to complete the planned works as a result of residents feedback”.

It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged on site with Ms Sanderson together with the Chair of this meeting, Services Delivery Manager and our Parks & Open Spaces Supervisor (tree inspector).

All answers to Ms Saunderson’s questions would also be emailed directly to her.

8. MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

Question from Cllr Meg Thomas.

“I request that the committee expresses its concern to WBC about the unsatisfactory management of the dog poo bins under their jurisdiction. In addition, please could public health advice be provided on these bins?”

Answer from Chairperson.

“There was a possible option for the maintenance of these particular bins at Wash Common to be passed to NTC to manage but this was taken out of our hands. West Berkshire Council currently retain the maintenance contract for the bins in question.

There was a supplementary question from Cllr Alistair Bounds who has also raised a concern regarding the bins along the canal by the Monkey Bridge, which are also maintained by WBC.

Cllr David Marsh is asking a question at the Executive Committee at West Berkshire Council with regards to the bins in question and will report back to this meeting.

9. FRIENDS OF NEWTOWN ROAD CEMETERY ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received an annual report from Maureen Hudd, Chair of the Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery.

There was suggestion from Maureen that a water supply could be 'tapped into' from the Lodge building. The Friends have contacted Sovereign Housing to this regard and are in discussion with them.

Maureen asked if they may have a representative at the Green Spaces Working. The Chairperson will take this request to the next Green Spaces Working Group.

The Services Delivery Manager advised that the refurbishment of the Chapel is a larger task than first anticipated. The works will need to be assessed and further quotes submitted.

Maureen was thanked for her very interesting and informative presentation which was well received by the Committee and for all the work that the Friends do for the Cemetery.

10. VICTORIA CAFÉ PROJECT UPDATE

The Services Delivery Manager gave an update on the Victoria Park Café project and next steps were noted.

11. SERVICES DELIVERY MANAGER'S REPORT

The contents of the Services Manager's Report were noted.

Cllr Sarah Slack asked if the standing water that accumulates on the Bandstand can be rectified. The Services Delivery Manager confirmed that the company who refurbished the bandstand will be coming back to undertake snagging works and this will be added.

Cllr David Marsh asked when the Market Working Group may meet in the future. There was suggestion that members of the Working Group could visit other towns Markets.

It was agreed that a meeting date of the Market Working Group would be arranged for September.

12. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 24/25 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Forward Works Programme was noted.

Fencing Victoria Park play area – we are continuing to monitor this in line with ROSPA guidance. There are no plans or need to fence the play area at present.

Hutton Close – next steps following the planting of the flower beds and tree planting was discussed including the suggested footpath. The Services Delivery Manager will investigate the current situation with WBC regarding any plans for the suggested alterations to the road and footpath adjacent to Hutton Close.

Cllr Sarah Slack requested a report at the next meeting on how we, as a town, can cooperate with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It was noted that we may be eligible for carbons credits for work already undertaken in the last two years. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) are leading on this project.

The Services Delivery Manager, Parks & Open Spaces Supervisor and Cllr Sarah Slack are investigating the project and how we can be involved and will include in the September CS Committee Meeting if possible.

The Café Project update to be added to the September forward work plan.

The Market Working Group to be re-established and a date set for September.

13. WASH COMMON CONSULTATION PHASE TWO-GREEN FLAG STATUS

The Services Delivery Manager gave an update regarding to Wash Common and the recent meeting with Historic England. As a result, some changes will need to be made to the vehicular access surrounding the Recreation Ground/mounds and Allotments at Wash Common.

Flood alleviation ditch works that can be completed were reviewed and noted. These works are not currently in the NTC budget for 24/25, so funding is required the these works to be undertaken.

It was suggested that CIL monies could perhaps be used for a new vehicular access that could possibly be from Glendale Avenue.

It was agreed that it was imperative that local residents and existing allotment tenants are kept informed when any plans are made. Meetings have already taken place with local residents and allotment holders on site.

The slides from the presentation today will be added to these minutes and added to the Newbury Town Council website for public view.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON THANKED ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9:25 PM.

DRAFT