

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY  
ON MONDAY 28<sup>th</sup> OF MARCH 2021 AT 7.30PM**

**PRESENT**

Councillors Martin Colston; Olivia Lewis (Chair); Nigel Foot; Chris Foster; Tony Vickers; Roger Hunneman; Sarah Slack; and Martha Vickers (Vice-Chair), and David Marsh

**In Attendance**

David Ingram, Community Services Manager  
Darius Zarazel, Democratic Services Officer

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Jon Gage, he is substituted with Tony Vickers  
Apologies received from Jeff Beck and Steve Masters

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

The Community Services Manager declared that Councillors David Marsh, Tony Vickers, and Martha Vickers 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.

**3. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY-CHAIRPERSON**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr Sarah Slack be elected as Chairperson.

Cllr Sarah Slack thanked Cllr Lewis for her services as Chairperson of this Committee over the last two years.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Sarah Slack

**SECONDED:** Cllr Roger Hunneman

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr Martha Vickers be elected as Deputy-Chairperson

**4. ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE VICTORIA PARK SUB-COMMITTEE**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr's Roger Hunneman, Jon Gage, Nigel Foot, Jeff Beck, Sarah Slack, David Marsh, and Martin Colston be appointed as members of the Victoria Park Sub-Committee.

**5. APPROVAL OF TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE VICTORIA PARK SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was noted that the strategy needs updating in light of the change of date for the opening of the Victoria Park Community Café.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Roger Hunneman

**SECONDED:** Cllr Tony Vickers

**RESOLVED:** That the Terms of Reference of the Victoria Park Sub-Committee be approved.

**6. ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Chris Foster

**RESOLVED:** That the current members of the GSWG be appointed for another term as members of the Green Spaces Working Group.

**7. APPROVAL OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**SECONDED:** Cllr Martha Vickers

**RESOLVED:** That the Green Spaces Working Group continues to operate under the current Terms of Reference up until they are reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.

**8. MINUTES**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martha Vickers

**SECONDED:** Cllr Chris Foster

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2021, be approved, and signed by the Chairperson.

**9. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Question received from Paula Saunderson:

*"A. Regarding Wash Common Trees and the removal of 15 trees in peak reproduction time:*

- *Please would you explain why are you doing this work in the main reproduction period for many species in a habitat such as this?*
- *Will there be an Ecologist present?*
- *Have all the trees and the under storey been surveyed for protected species?*

- *What are the longer-term plans for regeneration?*
- *What's the impact on that complete wildlife corridor – as shown on the attached WBC GIS map?*
- *Do you have a Biodiversity policy to follow?"*

Response from the Chairperson:

"Thank you for your question. The Council regrets the loss of any of its tree stock.

Therefore, we have a policy to replace each lost tree with 2 more. However, we must have regard to the health and safety of people using our lands.

The Scots Pines to be removed in the woodland are at Wash Common Recreation ground are dead. They present a real and imminent danger to the public. It appears that they have not survived the changeable weather conditions and the wet over the winter / Spring period. In addition to the original 15, 2 more have been found. There are bound to be more, over time.

Members and the Council's Parks & Recreation Officer met on site to consider several issues around their removal, clearing the debris and replanting. The immediate works on reducing the height of the dead trees is being put in hand with an approved certified Arboriculturists, future replanting and other works will be subject to and included in the overall Wash Common Consultation outcome process."

Question received from Paula Saunderson:

*"B. Regarding the new building in Victoria Park, the Community Café:*

- *Why have you decided to make the design of the new building for a specific purpose (café, toilets, changing rooms) rather than as a Community Hub with wider use and events?*
- *What are the Key Objectives this building and the Planning Application wish to fulfil?*
- *What Project Management Software will be used to monitor the Design, Build, and Implementation phases?*
- *Will the revised site be Dementia Friendly West Berks initiative (<https://dementiafriendlywestberkshire.co.uk/>), by incorporating the long planned sensory gardens.*
- *What is the Operating Model for the building once built?*
- *Will the Build Phase be a Net Zero Construction?*
- *Will there be Air Conditioning?*
- *Will it be conducted as a Net Zero Operation once up and running?*
- *Will the drainage be adequate for additional fats, and wipes etc. generated by an eating establishment, community toilets, and changing rooms?*
- *Are you contented that the Flood Risks from Ground Water Risings and predicted Climate Changes are adequately mitigated to ensure there are no cumulative or downstream impacts on the Northbrook Stream and the Kennet & Avon Canal & River?"*

Response from the Chairperson:

“The Council's Community Café has been highlighted in the Council's Strategy 2019 –2024 as the **number one priority** item with the desire as stated:

- A) We will target BREEAM Excellent for the building design and construction
- B) Café will be designed to enable carbon neutral operation with PV panels for electricity generation and air source heat pumps for heating
- C) Café will have a toilet with baby changing facilities and disabled access; & the building will also house male, female, and disabled toilets for users of the park
- D) The building will have changing facilities for tennis coaches and other users of the tennis courts
- E) The building will be the CCTV hub for the park.

The Design has been worked up in consultation with all relevant Statutory Bodies including the Environment Agency and is subject to approval at the West Area Planning Committee, West Berkshire Council, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021.

The Case Officer's Report & recommendation sets out all the policy requirements and how these will be met.

All of the information about the café is available on the WBC Planning portal (Application Re: [20/02294/COMIND](#)). Once planning permission is obtained, the Council will consider the next steps to bring this project to delivery.

We are collaborating with many organisations to make sure the facility is usable by various groups, and will be dementia friendly. This café will be a community hub and will not have air conditioning, due to environmental concerns.”

## 10. MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

Question received from Cllr Chris Foster:

*“Many of the posted invitations to participate in the Wash Common open spaces consultation appear not to have reached residents, presumably due to failings by the Royal Mail's subcontractor. Could the council provide an update on the investigation into this matter, and confirm that Newbury Town Council will not be required to pay for deliveries which were not made?”*

Response from the Chairperson:

“By way of clarity, Royal Mail were not engaged to deliver the Consultation documents. The Council were not able to agree the cost & delivery time scale for their engagement. The appointed Agent, who manages Resident's communications for several Councils including West Berkshire Council (for their Precept leaflet), has been written to formally and has opened an Enquiry into the Council's complaint of inconsistent of delivery. This is currently under way and the Council awaits the conclusions and actions to be taken as a result.”

Supplimentary question by Cllr Chris Foster:

“Given the consultation window will close soon, can residents who have not yet received these documents still submit their completed consultation documents?”.

Response from the Community Services Manager:

“Absolutely, the physical responses will continue to be put through data entry. Although this is a voluntary consultation, we will attempt to gain as many responses as possible.”

Question received from Cllr Martha Vickers:

*“In view of the unfortunate mix up over bench sponsorship in West Mills, can the Committee confirm it would be agreeable to add an extra bench being put in on the Land alongside the canal next to the existing 2 benches as recompense for Mrs Hodges lost bench.”*

The response from the Chairperson:

“The Council has apologised for the confusion over the sponsorship of the benches along West Mills. Officers do not believe that a third bench is warranted in this location. If the Council agrees to install a third bench along the grass bank at West Mills, this is subject to this Committee agreeing that the current budget provision for Street furniture should be increased. The Committee cannot approve this expenditure at this meeting, as this item was not specified on the agenda. Approval for this expenditure could go to the Policy & Resources Committee. The ownership of this land is not certain, Members will need to be mindful of any future liability should the Landowner object.

In due course, officers will present to the Committee a policy for sponsored benches, which should help to avoid this situation arising again in the future. This matter will be added to our forward Work Programme.”

There were no objections from the Committee to approve the bench and place it on the Agenda for the next Policy & Resources Committee meeting.

Question from Cllr Roger Hunneman:

*“As members realise there is much concern from residents about the current level of litter – in particular on the verges of the highway and in the adjoining hedgerows. I appreciate that the WBC contractors pick litter from the highways and pavements but there seems to be a problem with the removal of rubbish from the immediately adjoining areas. This has become a significant issue – is there anything we can do as a Town Council about it and what support can we give the public-spirited residents who undertake litter picking?”*

The response from the Chairperson:

“The Council is keen to support local Volunteers and Groups in Litter clearing over & above the Council own organised events. Where it is appropriate and funding is available, the Council can support organised Groups with the provision of equipment and or

Contacts at West Berkshire Council. The Council has recently provided equipment for use by the Friends Group at Speen Moor for example.”

## 11. GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP – NEWBURY IN BLOOM

- 11.1 The Minutes of the Green Spaces Working Group meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March were received and noted by members.
- 11.2 The annual update from the Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery was presented by Cllr Martha Vickers. The Chairperson thanked the Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery for all their work over the past year.
- 11.3 **PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston  
**SECONDED:** Cllr Chris Foster
- RESOLVED:** That the Newbury in Bloom (GSWG) Working Group Plan, as set out in Appendix 4.4 subject to content of Community Managers Report, Appendix 5, be approved.

## 12. COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGERS REPORT

- 12.1 Members noted the report presented by the Community Services Manager about the progress made by the Community Services Team on various Newbury Town projects.
- 12.2 **PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston  
**SECONDED:** Cllr Chris Foster
- RESOLVED:** To approve the inclusion of the following ammended clause in Allotment Tenancy Agreements:  
“Not light any bonfire, firepit, incinerator or anything that creates smoke, before 6pm or dusk (whichever is earlier) and not leave them unattended and be aware of wind direction to avoid causing a nuisance to neighbouring allotment tenants or local properties.”
- 12.3 **PROPOSED:** Cllr Martha Vickers  
**SECONDED:** Cllr Olivia Lewis
- RESOLVED:** To approve an additional £5,000 in contingency funding for 2020/21 trees works from the Councils unallocated reserve budget.
- 12.4 **PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston  
**SECONDED:** Cllr Roger Hunneman
- RESOLVED:** To approve the inclusion of the following amendment in the Market Traders Agreement:  
“Traders preparing and selling food to the public must be registered with their Local Authority: <https://www.gov.uk/food-business-registration> in

accordance with Government Guidelines. This includes traders selling for Charity. A food business is anyone preparing, cooking, storing, handling, distributing, supplying or selling food.”

### **13. WASH COMMON INVESTMENT CONSULTATION PROPOSAL UPDATE**

The members received and noted the consultation update from the Community Services Manager.

Key information included:

We have received around 250 responses in total.

It is hoped that the first batch of results will be presented at the next Community Services meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.

### **14. FIFTH ROAD PLAY AREA REPORT**

The replacement of the flooring was regarded as an urgent priority.

It is requested that funding be made available in next years budget for the total replacement of the childrens play area, including the installation of a new base rubber mulch flooring (£110,000 estimated cost).

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**SECONDED:** Cllr Roger Hunneman

**RESOLVED:** To approve the backfill of the Childrens play area with Play bark, just-in-time repairs across the whole play areas and to approve the expenditure to carry this out (£11,900 plus regular top up, £112 per 1,000 lts bag with regular investment until equipment is life expired & removed).

Cllr's Martha Vickers, Olivia Lewis, and Sarah Slack abstained.

### **15. VICTORIA PARK WHEELCHAIR SWING**

The members noted that existing conditions of the wheelchair swing.

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Olivia Lewis

**RESOLVED:** To consider the replacment of this facility during next years budgetary discussion.

### **16. VICTORIA PARK BANDSTAND**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Tony Vickers

**RESOLVED:** To approve funding for basic minimal repairs to make the Bandstand watertight for the remaining season and to conduct an in-depth strucutral survey. An allocation of a sum not to exceed £5,000 for this work.

A pre-application consultation was also approved, if Officers considered it necessary.

#### **17. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 2021/22**

17.1 The Forward Work Programme, subject to amendment following outcome of Councils new Strategy being adopted, was noted.

17.2 It was agreed to add the following item(s) to the Forward Work Programme:  
- To agree a policy on sponsored benches.

#### **18. NEW COMMUNITY CAFÉ FACILITY – VICTORIA PARK**

The members received and noted the current position of the Community Café Project.

#### **19. TENNIS IN NEWBURY**

An update on tennis in Newbury was received and noted by members.

A proposal will be presented to the next Community Services Committee meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September about the future of tennis in Newbury and how to work with fellow Parishes.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON THANKED ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21:57pm**

**CHAIRPERSON**