

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY
ON MONDAY 8 APRIL 2024 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT

Councillors: Vera Barnett, Alistair Bounds, Nigel Foot, Roger Hunneman, Ian Jee, David Marsh, Vaughan Miller and Martha Vickers.

In Attendance

Martin Kavanagh, Services Delivery Manager
Caroline Edmunds Community Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Sarah Slack (attended virtually)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The Services Delivery Manager declared that Councillors Nigel Foot, David Marsh, 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. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

PROPOSED: Councillor Nigel Foot

SECONDED: Councillor Vera Barnett

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on Monday 11 December are approved and signed by the Chairperson.

There was discussion regarding the signage for Growing Newbury Green and Community Orchard at Barn Crescent – The Services Delivery Manager confirmed that this will be investigated.

4. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question from L Peake

Consideration be given to the provision of a Trim Trail.

“I have a proposal I would like to put forward for the next Community Service Committee. The proposal is for a trim trail to be installed either on the grass area between the Newbury football pitch and the canal or in Victoria Park.

I know there are exercise machines in Victoria Park currently, but with all due respect, these seem to be aimed at the older generation and I can count on the fingers on one hand the times I’ve actually seen anyone using them.

My suggestion is for a trim trail with pull up bars, parallel bars, step up beams etc similar to those at City Playground, Andover Road and Henwick, though some of this equipment has unfortunately been removed to make space for the pump track. I believe it would be a beneficial addition to the area in a time of an obesity crisis and trying to get people out and about and exercising more”.

Response from Chairperson:

“We have had to replace the gym equipment in Victoria Park as it is worn out. The equipment it is being replaced as we speak with includes some limited mechanical kit, but also static kit, including step ups, sit ups, parallel rails, and a multi-purpose fitness frame. Some of the equipment is also accessible. The new equipment is being installed, along with a new base, to make it compatible with impending legislation/regulation.

We are happy to take your suggestion about a trim trail further and would ask the Officers to evaluate and report back to the Committee in September 2024 with their cost and feasibility assessment.

Question from a resident:

Grit Bin

The Salt Grit box has been placed outside my house again for winter, and there is also another one at the Phoenix Centre. However, it has been misused as a bin and a dumping ground for all sorts of unwanted items. I am constantly clearing this area. I have even found a Grit Box lid dumped there which I have left because this is your property and I am tired of cleaning up the rubbish and litter. I believe that this location is unnecessary, as there is another grit box nearby that is more accessible. Could you please confirm that this issue will be resolved and that the box will not be returned?

Response from Chairperson:

Thank you for your questions. One of our Officers, James Heasman, is looking into this and has and will continue to correspond directly with you on this subject.

Please note any changes to the Grit Bin locations will be subject to a risk assessment before any changes (if any) are made.

Question from Alice at Community Hub

Community United

At one of the Council meetings, there was a mention about Victoria Park Café. Community United is interested in what your plans are as we are keen to put a proposal in setting up a community café/hub. Could we have an opportunity to meet you to get more understanding of your proposal.

Response from Chairperson:

Thank you for your question, Alice. We are happy to take any suggestions further and would ask the Services Delivery Manager to follow up.

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There are no questions or petitions from members for this meeting.

6. SERVICES DELIVERY MANAGERS REPORT

The contents of the Services Delivery Managers Report were noted.

There was a request to ensure that works on the trees at the River Lambourn are scheduled to minimise damage to the riverbank.

The Services Delivery Manager stated that we are hoping to have a store of 60 sandbags in readiness to use if required in the future.

Town Hall – there was a suggestion that the Town Council could contact the Architectural Heritage Fund. They can set up 'Heritage Development Trusts' for local qualifying properties in our Parish.

7. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 2024/25 WORK PROGRAMME

The Forwards Works Programme for 2024/25 was noted and Members were invited to raise any additional items for consideration for the next meeting.

It was agreed to add:

Officers to invite a representative from the Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery to the next CS Committee Meeting.

ARK & Environment Agency – add an item with regards to restoring the bank on the River Lambourn in co-operation with other parties (carried forward from financial year 23/24).

For the time being, remove GreenFest in Victoria Park for the July meeting. This however will be reviewed again in the near future.

Market Working Group – there was a request to update the Committee at the next Meeting with regards to the current resource for the Newbury Market and setting a date for the next Market Working Group meeting.

Town Hall Solar Panels - investigate adding a battery storage as Phase 2 of the project and costings.

8. LOCKDOWN WOODS WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

Members received a presentation from Susan Millington from the Lockdown Woods project. The Chairperson and Members thanked Susan for taking the time to attend with her very interesting and informative presentation.

9. SOLAR PANELS TO TOWN HALL ROOF & VP LIME TREE AVENUE LIGHTING

PROPOSED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Nigel Foot

RESOLVED: To approve the spend of £13,305 and proceed with the installation of solar panels to the Town Hall roof and to investigate adding a battery storage as Phase 2 of the project

(cost codes: solar panels Town Hall - EMR 316, & solar energy conservation projects - 4416/290)

PROPOSED: Councillor Nigel Foot

SECONDED: Councillor Ian Jee

RESOLVED: To approve the spend of £6,755.79 and proceed with the installation Lime Tree Avenue lighting upgrade

(cost code: 4518/345 EMR 454).

10. VICTORIA PARK CAFÉ PROJECT

The Services Delivery Manager gave an update on two new initial designs for the Café project, using the existing kiosk building.

PROPOSED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Roger Hunneman

RESOLVED: To submit the proposals to the Victoria Park Sub-Committee.

11. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN MILLER – ALLOTMENT SURVEY ANALYSIS

The task force allotment survey analysis was noted. The detailed analysis is a public document and is available on our website.

The Chairperson thanked all of those who took the time to complete the survey.

The Chairperson thanked Jayne French-Drayton for her original request to formulate the Allotment Survey in 2023 and assistance in putting it together.

The allotment Councillor visits will take place on Tuesday 11th June and Wednesday 26th June starting at 5pm, visiting three sites on each evening.

9:55pm

PROPOSED: Councillor Martha Vickers

SECONDED: Councillor Vera Barnett

RESOLVED: To extend the meeting to beyond 10pm.

12. GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the meeting of Green Spaces Working Group from 25 January and 29 February 2025 were noted.

The members of the Green Spaces Working Group were agreed.

PROPOSED: Councillor Martha Vickers

SECONDED: Councillor Ian Jee

RESOLVED: To add Cllr Vaughan Miller to the membership of the Green Spaces Working Group, and Cllr Billy Drummond as a substitute member of the Working Group.

PROPOSED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Ian Jee

RESOLVED: Following consideration of the GSWG recommendation to appoint a new lay member, it was resolved to leave the lay membership as it is currently.

13. WASH COMMON CONSULTATION PHASE TWO/GREEN FLAG STATUS

PROPOSED: Councillor Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Nigel Foot

RESOLVED: To approve the document, at Appendix 8, to form the basis for phase two of the consultation. Officers to provide a proposed Project Plan with guidelines costings at this stage.

The Chairperson thanked James Heasman, Parks and Open Spaces Supervisor for the presentation for the project.

Services Delivery Manager to send an update with regards to the footpath in Wash Common that runs alongside the allotments towards Meyrick Drive.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON THANKED ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10:10 PM.