# **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY**

**ON MONDAY 21 OCTOBER 2024 AT 7.30 PM.**

## **PRESENT**

Councillors Phil Barnett, Vera Barnett, Alistair Bounds, Jo Day, Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, David Harman, Roger Hunneman, Chris Hood, Ian Jee, Pam Lusby-Taylor, David Marsh, Steve Masters, Andy Moore (Mayor), Gary Norman, Meg Thomas, Graham Storey.

**OFFICERS PRESENT**
 Toby Miles-Mallowan, Chief Executive Officer

**110.** **APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

Councillor Elizabeth O’Keefe, Martha Vickers, and Tony Vickers.

**111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chief Executive Officer declared that Councillors Phil Barnett, Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, 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.

**112.** **MINUTES**

**PROPOSED:** Councillor Roger Hunneman

**SECONDED:** Councillor Ian Jeed

**ABSTAINED:** Councillors David Marsh and David Harman

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of a meeting of Newbury Town Council held on Monday 22nd January 2024, be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Town Mayor.

**113.**  **PRESENTATION BY CITIZENS ADVICE**

Presentation by Citizens Advice was received by the Council

**114.**  **IMPACT REPORT FROM VOLUNTEER CENTRE WEST BERKSHIRE**

Impact report from the Volunteer Centre West Berks was received and noted. Councillor Moore thanked Volunteer Centre West Berks for the report.

**115.** **QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were 2 questions from members of the public.

*“There seems to be a strong demand for improved, more frequent, collection, especially in*  *places such as Victoria Park and Northbrook Street, with many students claiming bins*  *are often overflowing. Whether this is entirely the responsibility of the Newbury Town Council, or is partially managed by West Berkshire Council, I am uncertain, but there is a general consensus that most public places are not as clean as they once were, which I hope the Newbury Council will pass on to the relevant authorities to help deal with the issue.”*

Many thanks for your question. In and around Newbury Town Centre the bins are the responsibility of both Newbury Town Council and West Berkshire District Council. This can make it difficult for members of the public to know which council is responsible for which bin. Historically Newbury Town Council became aware of the issue around bin collections across our estates and ss a council we resolved to improve our collection of bins through a change of contractor. We changed provider 21 months ago and since that time there has only been one complaint regarding the state of Newbury Town Council dog poo and waste bins.

To continue to improve the service around waste bin collections we agreed to take on additional dog poo bins from West Berkshire District to ensure that they are emptied on a regular basis. On taking control of these additional bins we have replaced them all with brand new larger capacity bins.

With regards to the bins in and around Victoria Park, Newbury Town Council empties these on a daily basis. We are aware however that the public often sees the adjoining Faraday Road green space as part of Victoria Park. This is not the case and the boundary is effectively the A339, at which point the responsibility for emptying the bins becomes West Berkshire District Council, who empty the bins on a less frequent basis to us. When we are made aware of these issues we will report this to West Berks for them to take the necessary action.

*“Many people seem to be fond of the market in the town square and have asked that Newbury has markets more often. As such, it is likely that developing the markets to have more unique stands, another request made by a lot of students, and holding it more often would likely bring a lot more footfall into the square and lead to increased spending, especially from younger people.”*

Newbury Town Council, like the people of Newbury greatly appreciate the Market, we are an historic Market Town and have held a Royal Charter to hold Markets since 1596 to hold ‘4 markets a year.’ As such the Market has been around as long as Newbury has been a Borough. Currently there are 2 markets a week, Thursday and Saturdays, with additional monthly Artisan and Farmers Markets on Sundays.

Newbury Town Council are working closely with Newbury BID and with West Berks District Council to ensure that the Market remains an attractive proposition for businesses and shoppers alike. We have a regular Market Place Working Group where we are discussing opportunities to improve the market as a whole and to put on special ‘event markets’ one such proposition is the Charity and Community Market in partnership with Volunteer Centre West Berks, we will be inviting community groups and local charities to take up stalls. Additionally Newbury BID is holding a Night Market on the 13/14 December and we will be reviewing the outcomes of this market with a view to establishing more Night Markets in the future.

We are also looking, in partnership with Newbury BID around launching a dragons den initiative to encourage young, local entrepreneurs to pitch their business ideas. Where we as a council can award winners with business support and market pitches to help establish their businesses.

Newbury Town Council welcomes input and feedback from Customers of the Market to review and update our offer and will in the future are planning future consultations with the people of Newbury via social media.

**116.**  **MEMBERS’ QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

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

**117. TOWN MAYOR’S REPORT**

The Town Mayor’s report was received and noted by the Council.

**118.** **LEADERS REPORT**

The Leader of the Council presented his report.

**119.** **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT**

The Chief Executive Officer’s report was received and noted by the Council.

**120.** **COMMITTEES**

The Minutes of the following meetings were received and noted:

Planning & Highways Committee 15/07/24, 12/08/24, 02/09/24 & 08/10/24 (draft)

Policy & Resources Committee 29/07/24 & 14/10/24(draft)

Community Services Committee 22/07024 & 16/09/24 (draft)

Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee 01/07/24 & 02/09/24 (draft)

**121. LOCAL DEMOCRACY WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Day presented a verbal report about the impact of the Local Democracy project for 2024, the highlights are:

* 17 Sessions have been delivered over past 2 weeks
* 9 Primary Schools, 3 Secondary Schools and Newbury College have participated
* 3 more schools have requested sessions
* 600 Young People have attended Local Democracy with and additional 100 to attend

Councillor Moore thanked Councillor Day and the Civic Team for their efforts

**122. VICTORIA PARK CAFE UPDATE**

The Chief Executive gave an update about the Victoria Park Cafe project to Council. Councillors were able to ask questions regarding the project.

Councillor Masters asked whether there would be a communications strategy to keep the public updated as to the project. The Clerk confirmed that there would be a communications strategy utilising, Newbury Weekly News, the Penny Post and Newbury Town Council’s Social Media pages.

*Councillor Masters left the chamber at 20:52 and returned at 20:54.*

Councillor Foot made asked whether Newbury Town Council would be looking to reinstate the Town Centre Working Group. The Chief Executive confirmed that Newbury Town Council had been asked by West Berks District Council to take over the administration of the Newbury Master Plan as such the intention would be to merge the Town Centre Working group into the Master Plan working group.

Councillor Hunneman asked about the EPC rating requirement for the Cafe, the CEO confirmed that the requirement is to reach EPC Band B, however if this is not possible then NTC would apply for exemption.

Recommendation from the Services Delivery Manager to amend the project brief to include the addition of a bin storage in the old air raid shelter.

**Proposed:** Councillor Hunneman

**Seconded:** Councillor Thomas

**Resolved** to amend the cafe plans to add a bin storage in the old air raid shelter

**123.** **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Councillor Masters thanked all members and officers who were involved in the update of the financial regulations.

**Proposed:** Councillor Masters

**Seconded:** Councillor Hunneman

**Resolved** to adopt the new financial regulations

**124.** **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The first report from the internal auditor for 2024/25 was **received** and **noted.**

**125.** **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

The external audit certificate was **received** and the considerations from Policy and Resources Committee were **noted.**

Council **noted** the conclusion of the notice of conclusion of audit for the year ending 31 March 2024.

**126.** **STANDING ORDERS**

**Proposed:** Councillor Masters

**Seconded:** Councillor Norman

Council **approved** motion to **adopt** the standing orders, recommended to Council by the Policy and Resources Committee.

**127.** **BUDGET and STRATEGY REVIEW PROCESS 2025/26**

Council **noted** the time table presented by the Policy and Resources Committee

**128.** **NEWBURY TOWN BAND**

**Proposed:** Councillor Day

**Seconded:** Councillor Masters

**Resolved** to **approve** recommendation from Civic Pride, Arts and Culture committee to increase the annual retainer of the Newbury Town Band to £800 for 2025/26

**129.** **REQUEST TO FLY FLAGS FROM TOWN HALL**

To fly UN FLAG on 24 October 2024

**Proposed:** Councillor Moore

**Seconded:** Councillor Slack

**Approved**

To Fly Transgender Pride Flag on 20 November 2024

**Proposed:** Councillor Moore

**Seconded:** Councillor Norman

**Approved**

Request to suspend Standing Orders

**Proposed:** Councillor Masters

**Seconded:** Councillor Miller

**Resolved** to suspend standing orders

Verbal presentation was presented by the peace vigil in support of application to fly the Palestinian Flag on 29th November.

A debate was held regarding the application.

Request to Reinstate Standing Orders

**Proposed:** Councillor Master

**Seconded:** Councillor Miller

**Resolved** Standing Orders Reinstated

To Fly Palestinian Flag on 29 November 2024

**Proposed:** Councillor Masters

**Seconded:** Councillor Storey

**For:** 5

**Against:** 9

**Abstain:** 4

Motion failed

To fly UN Flag on 29 November 2024 and for a statement to be issued.

**Proposed:** Councillor Foot

**Seconded:** Councillor Norman

**For:** 15

**Abstain:** 4

**Resolved** to fly UN flag on 29 November 2024

Councillor Masters and Councillor Miller left the chamber at 21:44 and returned at 21:46

**130.** **MOTION TO EXTEND COUNCIL MEETING**

**Proposed:** Councillor P Barnett

**Seconded:** Councillor Harman

**Resolved:** to extend Council until 22:30.

**131.** **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Forward Work Programme was **noted** and other matters added to the

Forward work programme.

**132.** **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Motion to exclude the press and public under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

**Proposed:** Councillor Moore

**Seconded:** Councillor Norman

**Resolved** to exclude the press and public.

**133.** **STAFFING MATTERS**

The staffing structure update was **noted**.

**134.** **ENERGY SUPPLIES BUDGET**

Item was **removed** from council agenda as the information required for a decision was not available.

**135.** **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Council **approved** recommendation from Staffing subcommittee.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE TOWN MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 22:15**

**TOWN MAYOR: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** **DATE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**