MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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

**ON MONDAY 12 DECEMBER 2022 AT 7.30PM**

# PRESENT

Councillors: Jeff Beck; Martin Colston; Nigel Foot; Chris Foster; Jon Gage; Roger Hunneman; Sarah Slack (Chair); and Martha Vickers (Vice Chair).

**In Attendance**

David Ingram, Community Services Manager

Caroline Edmunds, Community Services Officer

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr David Marsh

**Not in Attendance:** Cllr Olivia Lewis

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

The Community Services Manager declared that Councillors Jeff Beck 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.

1. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 18 July 2022 are approved and signed by the Chairperson.

**NOTE:** The meeting scheduled for 19 September 2022 was cancelled due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II

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

**Questions from Mrs Marion Fenn**

**Question 1** - Will the Council agree that the artificial grass, suppressing the brambles, on the small area underneath the new notice board at Wash Common Allotments is acceptable as a practical solution to enabling the notice board to be read?

**Response from Chairperson**: Not wishing to pre-empt Members discission on Item 2a, Cllr Jon Gage’s Motion for the use of Artificial Grass (Turf), the Council is of a view that while an acceptable in the short term to overcome a specific issue, a longer-term permanent solution should be found

**Question 2** - Please will you give specific permission for the small area of artificial grass under the notice board at Wash Common Allotments to be retained as an identified approved town council project?

**Response from Chairperson:** The Council, irrespective of the Motion in 2a below, will look at alternatives for the replacement of the small area of artificial grass with a more suitable solution.

**Question 3 -** If the council do not permit retention of this small area of artificial grass what alternative will they put in place if it is removed to ensure tenants, officers and stewards have access to the notice board?

**Councils’ response**: as expressed above, the Council will look at what alternative sustainable longer-term solutions are available to give safe & easy access to this area for the Allotments Tenants.

**Questions from Paula Saunderson**

**Question 1 -** It is my understanding that NTC is Riparian Owner of the stretch of the River Lambourn on the South side that is along River Walk, so what budget and plans does this Asset Management Committee have to re-instate the riverbanks to their previous state as a Spatial Flood Defence for Walton Way & River Walk?

**Response from Chairperson:** The Council has commissioned a study of this area of the water course over which it has some responsibility. Once that Study has been submitted the Council will consider what, if any, actions it needs to take to meet its Statutory liability.

**Question 2 -** The broken down un-managed Willows outside 1 & 2 River Walk, and a seat further down have caused a lowering of the banks and allow incursions by humans and dogs which allows further deterioration of the Spatial Flood Defence so how and with whose assistance will NTC tackle these important Flood Risk Management problems.

**Response from Chairperson**: thank you for raising these issues, the Council will investigate to see what, if any, actions are required. The Council has not had any representations from the Regulatory Bodies in respect of issues to be managed on its section of the water course.

**Question 3 -** The Banks are also designated as a BOA - Biodiversity Opportunity Area- so, again, what plans, and budget does this Asset Management Committee have to improve the strip, and how will it involve the residents of 1-6 River Walk?

**Response from Chairperson:** as stated above, the Council has commissioned a Report. Once submitted the Council will consider what, if any, actions it needs to take along its section of the water course. You will note in Item 7, Budget, Members will consider a request from Cllr S Gourley for a Budget provision in anticipation of a Report being submitted.

1. **MEMBERS’S QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

There were none

1. **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JON GAGE**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Jon Gage

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That Newbury Town Council resolve to prohibit the use of artificial grass (turf) on areas of land owned or managed by Newbury Town Council unless specific permission has been granted by this Committee on an identified approved Town Council project AND

**RESOLVED:** That Newbury Town Council approach West Berkshire Council to request that they follow a similar approach to prohibit the use of this artificial grass (turf).

1. **GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP – NEWBURY IN BLOOM**

**7.1** The minutes of the GSWG meetings of 7 April, 5 May, 9 June, 13 July, 18 August, 22 September, 13 October and 10 November were noted.

**7.2**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Jeff Beck

**SECONDED:** Cllr Jon Gage

**RESOLVED:** To approve the NiB (GSWG) Working Group Plan as set out in Appendix

3 of this meeting.

1. **HUTTON CLOSE PUBLIC CONSULTATION OUTCOME**

**8.1**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Chris Foster

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That Officers discuss with WBC the issue of enhanced cycle/pedestrian access around Shaw Road and ascertain the impact this may have on the land in Hutton Close

**8.2**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Chris Foster

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That Officers put forward a tree & bulb planting scheme to enhance the existing hedge/tree areas specifically seeking opportunities for carbon reduction planting.

**8.3**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Chris Foster

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED:** That Officers carry out a more in-depth analysis on other suggestion coming out of the Consultation event to put forward additional appropriate investment items for Committee consideration.

1. **COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER’S REPORT**

**9.1**

The Committee received an update from John Gardner of the Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery. Members welcomed John’s very interesting written report and verbal update and thanked him for his presentation.

**9.2**

The progress made by the Community Services Team on various Newbury Town projects was noted.

**9.3**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Jeff Beck

**RESOLVED:** That a sum not to exceed £8,500 out of the agreed budget of £10,000, as a contribution toward a new Waterless Toilet to be installed in Newtown road cemetery in agreement with the Friends of NRC.

**9.4**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**SECONDED:** Cllr Jeff Beck

**RESOLVED:** To make a budget request to Policy & Resources Committee as set out in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Item** | **Value** | **Approved** |
| Town Hall | Addl. Solar PV to roof | £10,000 | Yes |
| City Rec | Addl. Bench | £1,750 | Yes |
| Victoria Park | Petanque pitch | £14,000 | No |
| Newtown Rd Cemetery | Water supply | £3,120 | No |
| Peace Gardens. | Wharf Rose Beds | £500 | Yes |
| Greenham House Gardens. | Upgrade funds roll over balance | £10,500 | Yes |
| Victoria Park & City Rec | Green Flag submission | £1,550 | Yes |
| Various | Community planting events 2023/24 | £1,500 | Yes |
| Various | 3 new dog bins, new locations | £1,245 | No |
| Water Courses | Environmental improvements | £10,000 | Yes |
| Public Engagement | Green Space | £3,000 | Yes |

1. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 2022/23**

The Forwards Works Programme for 2022/23 was noted.

It was requested to add the River Lambourn Biodiversity study to the Forward Works Programme.

1. **BUDGETS FOR 2023/24 & 2024/25**

**11.1**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Chris Foster

**RESOLVED**: To present the Budget provision for 2023/24 as in Appendix 7a to the Policy & Resources Committee in January 2023.

**11.2**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Jeff Beck

**RESOLVED**: To approve the 2023/24 and 2024/25 (Allotments) Budget Services Income Provision and to present to the Policy & Resources Committee.

**Cllr Andy Moore Joined the meeting at 21:26**

1. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Jeff Beck

**SECONDED:** Cllr Martin Colston

## 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 (agenda items 18 and 19) because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

1. **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY MOORE**

**PROPOSED:** Cllr Martin Colston

**SECONDED:** Cllr Nigel Foot

**RESOLVED**: That a Working Group is formed, members agreed as David Ingram (CS Manager), Cllr Andy Moore and Cllr Sarah Slack to review the Council’s regulations for Shaw cemetery to include the “10 years rule” (currently custom and practice) and make any other amendments required.

Following the debate and the resolution passed above Cllr Andy Moore withdrew his Motion.

1. **CAFÉ PROJECT**

The Community Service Manager gave an update.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON THANKED ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21:50**

**CHAIRPERSON**