

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY
ON MONDAY 10 MARCH 2025 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT

Councillors: Vera Barnett, David Harman (sub), 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. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Nigel Foot (Cllr David Harman substitute)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The Services Delivery Manager declared that Councillors David Marsh & 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 Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Councillor Ian Jee

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on Monday 9 December 2024 are approved and signed by the Chairperson.

4. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question from a member of the public:

“Could you please consider lighting upgrades in Victoria Park and making it feel more lively, and also safer”.

Answer from Chairperson via our Parks & Open Spaces Supervisor:

Previous discussions on additional lighting in the park highlighted potential concerns regarding light pollution for nearby residents. However, the implementation of low-level lighting may be a viable solution.

It was agreed that the park's lighting will be reassessed following the refurbishment and reopening of the Victoria Park Community Café.

Cllr Chris Hood arrived at 19:36

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There are none.

6. NTC PLAYPARK STRATEGY

PROPOSED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Cllr Martha Vickers

1. That a meeting be arranged with the Leader, Deputy Leader, CEO, RFO, Services Delivery Manager, and Parks & Open Spaces Supervisor to review the proposed NTC Playpark Strategy, as outlined in Appendix 2 of this document, in greater detail, with the objective of establishing a Working Group.

2. **To recommend** to full council the permanent closure of the playparks at Christie Heights and Hamilton Court.

3. **To recommend** to full council we proceed with the planned improvement works for the playparks at Bodin Gardens and Dickens Walk at a cost of £7000.

7. SERVICES DELIVERY MANAGER'S REPORT

The contents of the Services Delivery Manager's report were noted.

It was agreed to create and install polite signage at Wash Common, Victoria Park, and City Recreation Ground, affixed to bins at these locations, requesting that dog walkers refrain from walking their dogs on the football pitch areas.

It was requested that NTC Officers liaise with West Berkshire Council Officers to request the installation of signage regarding dog waste at Glendale Avenue, opposite Holborne Close near the green space.

NTC will proceed with adding a polite sign to the bus shelter under its management in the area. However, permission will be sought from West Berkshire Council for any signage on bus stop posts or areas under their jurisdiction.

8. CEMETERY WORKING GROUP

PROPOSED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Cllr Meg Thomas

RESOLVED: To approve Officer support for the Cemetery Working Group.

Note: The Services Delivery Manager agreed his support.

9. MARKET WORKING GROUP

It was noted that the next meeting of the Market Working Group is on Thursday 27 March at 3:30pm at the Town Hall.

10. TEMPORARY EXTERNAL SPORTS PROVISION FOR FALKLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROPOSED: Cllr David Marsh

SECONDED: Cllr Roger Hunneman

RESOLVED: To approve the temporary use of a section of Wash Common Recreation Ground for external sports provision by Falkland Primary School during the 2025-2026 academic year.

A fee of £50 per month will be charged to the school, which will contribute to marking out the football pitch area for a small-sided football pitch.

11. VICTORIA PARK PLANNED ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS

The calendar of planned events during the summer season were noted.

12. GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the Green Spaces Working Group of 22 January 2025 & 26 February 2025 were noted.

The Newbury in Bloom 2025 campaign was officially launched today. The Town Council expressed its appreciation to the event sponsors and to John O'Conner, the Grounds Maintenance Contractor, for their continued support.

13. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 24/25 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Forward Works Programme was noted.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PROPOSED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

SECONDED: Cllr Martha Vickers

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 because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential financial business to be transacted.

15. VICTORIA PARK CAFÉ PROJECT UPDATE

The minutes of the Victoria Park Sub Committee and next steps of the project with estimated timescales were noted.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON THANKED ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21:11