

**Minutes of a meeting of the Civic Pride, Arts, & Culture Committee held in the
Council Chamber on Monday 1 December 2025 at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors Phil Barnett, Vera Barnett, Jo Day, Billy Drummond, David Harman, Chris Hood, Andy Moore, Gary Norman and Graham Storey.

Officers Present: Joanna Aylott (Civic Services Manager) and Amy Xing (Civic Officer).

39. Apologies

There were none.

40. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

It was declared that Cllrs Phil Barnett and Billy Drummond are also Member 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. Cllrs David Harman, Phil Barnett and Vera Barnett also declared themselves as members of the Twin Town Association.

41. Minutes

Proposed: Cllr Andy Moore

Seconded: Cllr Graham Storey

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting of the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee held on 8th September were approved as a true and accurate record. The Committee noted that actions from the previous meeting had been either completed or are ongoing.

42. Questions and Petitions from Members of the Public

There were none.

43. Members' Questions and Petitions

There were none.

44. Committee Terms of Reference

Proposed: Cllr Billy Drummond

Seconded: Cllr Gary Norman

Resolved: The updated Terms of Reference for the Civic Pride, Arts and Culture Committee were approved with amendments. The current quorum of 5 to remain until the situation on substitutes has been decided. The word 'all' to be removed from flag flying requests.

45. Discretionary Events Grant Funding Applications

Consideration of the grant application from Watership Brass was deferred pending receipt of further information. Members express support for the application in principle and agreed that a decision be made either at the February meeting or under delegated authority by Cllrs Jo Day and Gary Norman once the information is received.

46. Update from Local Democracy Working Group

Members noted that both the children and Councillors had greatly enjoyed the recent visits, and thanks were recorded to Cllr Jo Day for her work in organising them. It was

further noted that updates to the Saturday Surgery will be launched in January, with reminders to be circulated to all Councillors.

47. Mayor's Festive Afternoon Tea

Members noted that the event this year will be held at the Baptist Church, the event continues to be popular, and most places have already been allocated. Cllr Billy Drummond offered to volunteer at the event.

48. Civic Awards

Members reviewed the current arrangements for the Civic Awards and noted that the event continues to be successful. It was acknowledged that other local award schemes may change in the future, and that the Council should keep these under review. Members were supportive of continuing the awards and may revisit the categories in due course. It was agreed that the Civic Awards will be launched at the end of January, close to nominations at the end of February, and the awards ceremony will take place in March. A review of the event will be undertaken afterwards to consider any potential improvements.

49. Welcome to Newbury Signage

Members received an update from the Working Group and noted that the project has been delayed. Consideration will be brought to a future meeting.

50. Twin Towns Visual Recognition in Town

Members received an update on ideas for recognising the town's Twin Towns. An initial concept was discussed involving plaques or signage in Victoria Park, potentially located on the café building. It was noted that a Cllr Harman is meeting with the NTTA on 8 January to explore ideas further. Members agreed to recommend a project proposal in the 2026/27 Committee budget.

51. LVEP Update

Members received an update noting that one workshop has taken place since the last meeting. Steady progress is being made, with ongoing updates currently being compiled for the Visit Newbury website.

52. Newbury Town Band Review

Members reviewed the agreement with Watership Brass, Newbury's Town Band.

Proposed: Cllr Gary Norman

Seconded: Cllr Andy Moore

Resolved: To recommend an increase of the annual retainer to £850 for 2026/27. It was noted that Council policy would normally be to apply a CPI-based uplift.

53. Budget 2026/2027

Members received recommendations for the 2026/27 Committee budget. A new project line for Twin Town Recognition, with an allocation of £1,500, was proposed, bringing the total budget increase to just over 4%.

Proposed: Cllr Gary Norman

Seconded: Cllr David Harman

Resolved: To approve the recommendations to the Committee 2026/2027 budget, including the amendments noted.

54. Civic Services Manager's Reports

Raising the Profile of the Council in the Community – letters sent by the Mayor's Office were highly valued by recipients; thanks were extended to the Civic Officer for their efforts.

Remembrance Sunday 2025 – the event was considered a meaningful and successful occasion. Thanks were extended to all who participated, and to the Mayoress for representing the Town on Armistice Day.

Heritage Open Day 2025 – appreciation was expressed to all volunteers and supporters; feedback was incredibly positive.

55. Civic Events

Information regarding Heritage Open Day (13 September) Local Democracy Events (from 6 October) and the Remembrance Sunday Parade & Service (9 November) held since the last meeting of this Committee was received and noted. Information relating to future Civic Events was noted including the Mayors Festive Afternoon Tea (12 December), Civic Carol Service (21 December), and Civic Awards (March 2026). Discussion was held regarding the Council's 30th Anniversary, with a suggestion to establish a working group in May/June 2026 to plan related activities.

56. Forward Work Programme 2025/26

Members noted the Forward Work Programme and agreed to add the Saturday Surgery refresh review to the February agenda.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 20:31pm.

Chairperson:

Date: