

**To: All Electors of Newbury**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Town Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Newbury from 7.00 pm on Monday 4 April 2022.**

The meeting is open to all registered voters in Newbury parish.

There will be a display of key moments during the Town Council's first 25 years, as well as the Council's Strategy, 2019-2024.

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available and Town Councillors will be in attendance to answer any questions you might have regarding any Council business.

**Councillor Billy Drummond**  
**Newbury Town Mayor**

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## **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AGENDA (from 7.30 pm)**

- 1. Welcome by the Town Mayor – Councillor Billy Drummond**
- 2. Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 22 March 2021 (attached)**  
To confirm the minutes as a correct record of the proceedings.
- 3. Newbury Town Council's Plans for the coming year.**  
Councillor Martin Colston, Leader of the Council, will outline the key priorities and objectives for the Council for the year ending 30 April 2023.
- 4. To discuss Town business**  
At this point of the meeting electors are invited to ask questions about any matter relating to Newbury.

**Note:** All items raised must relate to public matters in the town. Discussion of private matters or of matters so general that they would affect the town no more than any other area or parish in West Berkshire will not be allowed.

The Mayor, as Chair of this meeting, determines whether a matter may be discussed and their decision is final.

- 5. Closing remarks by the Town Mayor**

(Any queries regarding this meeting, please contact Hugh Peacocke, Chief Executive Officer, at 07399 117524 or email [CEO@newbury.gov.uk](mailto:CEO@newbury.gov.uk))

Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury, RG14 5AA

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Making Newbury a Town  
we can all be proud of.

## **NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting ( held by Virtual Meeting on Zoom 22/03/2021 at 7:00 pm.)**

#### **In Attendance**

David Ingram, Community Services Manager

Darius Zarazel, Democratic Services Officer

#### **1. Welcome by the Town Mayor – Councillor Elizabeth O’Keeffe**

The Mayor welcomed those present to the Annual Town Meeting of the Parish of Newbury.

The Minutes of the last Annual Town Meeting, held in 2019, was approved to be signed.

#### **2. Newbury Town Council Strategy 2019-2024**

A presentation about Newbury Town Council’s Strategy was given by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Martin Colston, and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Sarah Foot.

Key details included: NTC are making progress toward the opening of the Victoria Park café, are funding community youth projects, continuing to work on environmental and ecological standards, supporting key community groups, and lobbying West Berkshire Council for those ends. In addition, they continue to maintain their owned assets.

There were no questions raised on the presentation.

#### **3. WBC’s Newbury Town Centre Study/Vision**

A presentation was given by the Head of Development and Planning for West Berkshire District Council, Gary Lugg, about the Newbury Town Centre Vision and Masterplan.

Key details included: Hemingway Design are appointed to lead on the Newbury Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, they have received over 4,000 responses to the Masterplan survey of which the results indicated that 60% of people drive to the town Centre, average dwell time is 2/3 hours, 88% felt Newbury could be improved, around 50% felt there were not attractive routes into the Town Centre. The desire for independent shops, cafes, and restaurants was a consistent theme in the survey responses as well as better use of green and open spaces.

The Masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document, second only to the Local Plan and will take into consideration areas outside of the Town Centre.

To a question by an elector about if there was an opportunity for public comment on the Masterplan, Mr Lugg responded that there would be this opportunity.

On a question about how to use historic buildings, Mr Lugg responded by saying that protection of heritage is always the starting point. However, smaller independent shops or business could use these properties without changing the heritage of the building.

On attracting tourists, Mr Lugg believes in a whole town strategy, not just focusing on areas such as the Racecourse.

Finally, on a question about public and active transport, Mr Lugg stated that a new local transport plan is in development and will sit alongside the local plan, driving the active travel policy moving forward.

#### **4. Re-opening Newbury after Lockdown**

A presentation was given by the Chief Executive Officer of the Newbury Business Improvement District (BID), Melissa Hughes, about reopening Newbury after lockdown.

Key Details Included: The BID is the non-profit organisation behind the 'Visit Newbury' Brand. The vision is to make Newbury a local and international destination for business and tourism. The BID is focusing on recovery for existing business but also attracting new ones.

Before reopening, the BID is holding webinars to ensure businesses have proper safety measures in place, creating additional outdoor seating and pavement cafes, deep cleaning the Town Centre, and installing welcome signage.

They are creating a comprehensive list of when all the business are opening to the public. This will be on the new Visit Newbury website (launched on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April). This website, and social media accounts, will also promote events and community attractions in Newbury and strive for greater community involvement in the town. A specific target for this community involvement will be among the young groups in Newbury.

To a question about if WBC has agreed to the BIDs request for reopening (especially around increased hours for pedestrianisation), Ms Hughes confirmed that this request was not granted. However, WBC are looking to find spaces for more outside tables and chairs in public spaces.

When asked about if there is a need for a tourist information centre, Ms Hughes agreed that a destination management offering would indeed be a positive thing. The BID is considering this for their next five-year plan.

On a question about the suspension of car parking charges to encourage the post-lockdown recovery, Ms Hughes informed the Meeting that there was no consensus among the business on this issue. An 'early bird offer' is being discussed but there are no WBC incentives.

The BID will support and facilitate the opening of independent shops either in Parkway or elsewhere in the Town Centre as well as encouraging pop-up shops by speaking to commercial agents and landlords.

**5. Closing remarks by the Town Mayor**

The Mayor thanked the electors for their attendance at the Annual Town Meeting as well as all the speakers for their presentations. She concluded by encouraging the electors to have greater involvement in the Annual Town Meeting.

**There being no other business, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 20:28 hrs.**

**Chairperson**