

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
ON MONDAY 07th SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 7.30PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL,
MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY, RG14 5AA.**

PRESENT

Councillors: Vera Barnett (Sub), Nigel Foot, Roger Hunneman, Ian Jee, David Marsh, Vaughan Miller (Chair), Sarah Slack, Meg Thomas and Martha Vickers.

IN ATTENDANCE

Toby Miles-Mallowan – Chief Executive Officer

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None Received

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

General Dispensations:

The Council noted that Councillors Nigel Foot, David Marsh and Martha Vickers, as members of West Berkshire Council, hold a general dispensation permitting them to participate in discussions and vote on matters relating to the business of West Berkshire Council where they would otherwise have a registrable interest.

16. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Withdrawn – to be approved at CS committee on 14th December 2026.

17. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None **received**.

18. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

2 Questions were **received** from Cllr Meg Thomas, appendix 1 for questions and response.

19. TREE INSPECTIONS

A verbal report from the CEO was **received**. Appendix 2 for more details.

20. PLAY PARK UPDATE

An update from the CEO was **received**. Appendix 3 for summary.

21. VICTORIA PARK PROJECTS SUB COMMITTEE

Chair of the VPPSC **provided** an update

22. GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

An update was **received** from the chair of the green spaces working group.

23. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Proposed: Cllr David Marsh

Seconded: Cllr Martha Vickers

Resolved that standing orders be suspended for the duration of consideration of items 24 and 25 of these minutes.

24. ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

Cllr Vaughan Miller gave an **update** on the progress of the allotment working group in reviewing the rules and producing a strategy.

25. MARKET WORKING GROUP

An update on the Market Working Group was **received** from Cllr David Marsh

26. REINSTATEMENT OF STANDING ORDERS

PROPOSED: Cllr Roger Hunneman

SECONDED: Cllr Vaughan Miller

RESOLVED that standing orders be reinstated with immediate effect.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 20.31 hrs.

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APPENDIX 1 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr Meg Thomas asked:

Over the time I have been a councillor, I have received frequent contacts from residents about the problem of discarded dog waste, both bagged and unbagged.

I have raised this issue previously in a number of settings and have also requested a publicity campaign, run by Newbury Town Council in conjunction with West Berkshire Council, to encourage responsible disposal of dog waste. To date, however, I have seen little progress.

I would therefore like to make two specific requests in relation to two persistent local “hot spots”: the grassed area beside the bus shelter at the Glendale Avenue terminus, and the top of Barn Crescent at its junction with Elizabeth Avenue.

Could the Council arrange for these two locations to be inspected and consider what practical steps can be taken, particularly in terms of the provision of dog waste bins?

1. Could the Council reconsider running a publicity campaign, ideally in conjunction with West Berkshire Council, reminding dog owners of their responsibility to pick up and properly dispose of dog waste?
2. Could the Council reconsider running a publicity campaign, ideally in conjunction with West Berkshire Council, reminding dog owners of their responsibility to pick up and properly dispose dog waste?

Response to questions:

Thank you for raising these concerns.

The Council recognises the nuisance and public health concerns caused by dog fouling and the improper disposal of bagged dog waste. However, street cleansing and enforcement relating to littering and dog fouling are responsibilities of West Berkshire Council rather than Newbury Town Council.

Officers will contact West Berkshire Council to report the concerns at:

- the grassed area beside the bus shelter at the Glendale Avenue terminus; and
- the top of Barn Crescent, at its junction with Elizabeth Avenue.

West Berkshire Council will be asked to inspect these locations and consider whether cleansing, monitoring, signage or enforcement action is appropriate.

Newbury Town Council does not have any budget allocated in the current financial year for the purchase, installation or ongoing servicing of additional dog-waste bins. If the Committee is minded to support their provision, these locations can be considered as part of the Council’s budget-setting process for 2027/28. This consideration would need to include land ownership, the suitability of each location, evidence of demand, installation costs and the ongoing arrangements and costs for emptying and maintaining the bins.

The Town Council will also raise with West Berkshire Council the possibility of renewed publicity reminding dog owners of their responsibility to pick up after their dogs and dispose of the waste properly. Subject to West Berkshire Council's response, the Town Council could support and share suitable campaign material through its own communications channels.

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APPENDIX 2: CEO TREE INSPECTIONS:

Newbury Town Council manages more than 1,700 trees through a regular, recorded and risk-based inspection cycle, with inspection frequency determined by each tree's condition, location and level of public use, supported by ongoing staff observations, responsive inspections and specialist arboricultural advice where required. Following the recent sudden limb failure from a mature beech tree in Victoria Park, the Council and its tree contractor attended promptly, removed the fallen limb and an adjacent damaged limb, made the area safe and reviewed the affected tree; the incident appears consistent with summer branch drop, a rare and not fully understood phenomenon that may occur without an obvious defect detectable during routine inspection. The Council's arrangements are consistent with its duties under the Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957 and 1984, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the National Tree Safety Group's proportionate risk-management guidance. The Council maintains appropriate insurance cover for its tree-management activities and potential public-liability claims, subject to the applicable policy terms, and the incident and supporting inspection and contractor records will be retained and notified to the insurer where required.

APPENDIX 3: CEO PLAY PARKS UPDATE:

Bodin Gardens and Dickens Walk play areas are scheduled for repair and improvement, with works at Dickens Walk planned for September and the main Bodin Gardens improvements for spring 2027. Bodin Gardens is currently closed following vandalism to safety equipment; however, the contractor working at Dickens Walk has also been secured to carry out interim patch repairs, enabling Bodin Gardens to reopen sooner. Hamilton Court play area will remain open and is not being closed. The works at Bodin Gardens and Dickens Walk will be funded from the Council's earmarked reserve for play parks. The new incidental play area at Hutton Close has now opened.

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