

7 September 2026

To: Councillors Phil Barnett, Vera Barnett, Jo Day (Chair), Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, David Harman, Chris Hood, Andy Moore, Gary Norman and Graham Storey.

Substitutes: All the remaining members of the Council.

Also to: All members of the Council for information.

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee** to be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury on **Monday 14th September 2026** at 7.30pm. The meeting is open to the press and public and will be streamed via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85997912685?pwd=Kn5YMomht3XZyRNGkzfXYgAGnKmvM.1>

Meeting ID: 859 9791 2685 Passcode: 654692

Yours sincerely,

Joanna Aylott
Civic Services Manager

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**
To receive any declarations of interest relating to business to be conducted in this meeting and confirmation of any relevant dispensations.
- 3. Minutes**
To approve the minutes of a meeting of the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee held on 29th June 2026 (Appendix 1).
To report on the actions from previous minutes (Appendix 2).
- 4. Questions and Petitions from Members of the Public**
Questions, in writing, must be with the Civic Services Manager by 2pm on Friday 11th September 2026.
- 5. Members' Questions and Petitions**
Questions, in writing, must be with the Civic Services Manager by 2pm on Friday 11th September 2026.

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- 6. Local Democracy Working Group**
To receive an update from the Chair on the actions from the Local Democracy Working Group.
- 7. Art on the Park**
To receive an update from the Chair regarding Art on the Park.
- 8. 30th Anniversary NTC Working Group**
To receive an update from the Chair on the 30th Anniversary Working Group.
- 9. Flag Flying Requests**
To consider a request from the Newbury United Nations Association for the UN flag to be flown on Friday 23rd October 2026, in recognition of UN Day (Appendix 3a).
To review the Council's current designated flag-flying days and to **consider** proposed amendments to the Flag Flying Policy, including the addition of Armed Forces Day as a default flag-flying date (Appendix 3b).
- 10. Grant Funding Requests**
To consider an application for Event Grant funding from Kairali UK West Berkshire in support of Symphony 2026 – A Celebration of Culture, Creativity & Community, to be held on Saturday 10 October 2026 (Appendix 4).
- 11. Future Strategic Options for Newbury Town Hall**
To review and **approve** the proposed Terms of Reference for the Newbury Town Hall Future Strategic Options Working Group (Appendix 5a).
To note the commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall, obtained to inform consideration of future strategic options, including potential divestment (Appendix 5b).
- 12. Civic Services Manager's Reports**
To note the following report:
-Raising the Profile of the Council in the Community (Appendix 6).
- 13. Civic Events (Appendix 7)**
To review civic events since the last meeting of the Committee.
To note the programme of civic events until the next meeting.
To receive ideas for potential future events or activities.
- 14. Forward Work Programme 2026/27 (Appendix 8)**
To note and **agree** any other items that Members resolve to add to the Forward Work Programme.

**Minutes of a meeting of the Civic Pride, Arts, & Culture Committee held in the
Council Chamber on Monday 29 June 2026 at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, David Harman, Chris Hood, Andy Moore, Sarah Slack (sub), Graham Storey and Meg Thomas (sub).

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

1. Apologies

Councillors Jo Day (substitute Sarah Slack) and Gary Norman (substitute Meg Thomas).

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

It was noted that Councillors Nigel Foot and Billy Drummond are also Members of West Berkshire Council. This is recorded as a standing general interest, and a dispensation is in place permitting them to participate in discussions relating to West Berkshire Council business.

3. Minutes

Proposed: Cllr David Harman

Seconded: Cllr Nigel Foot

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting of the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee held on 16 February 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Questions and Petitions from Members of the Public

There were none.

5. Members' Questions and Petitions

There were none.

6. Update from Local Democracy Working Group

The Committee received an update on recent activities undertaken by the Local Democracy Working Group. Members noted that invitations would shortly be issued to schools within the parish to participate in the "Meet the Town Council" sessions in October. The Working Group has also engaged in a range of community outreach activities, including attendance at youth group sessions at the Waterside Centre. Councillors were encouraged to respond positively to invitations to participate in Working Group activities as they are circulated.

Proposed: Cllr Andy Moore

Seconded: Cllr Graham Storey

Resolved: The Local Democracy Working Group Terms of Reference were approved.

7. NTC 30th Anniversary Working Group

Proposed: Cllr Meg Thomas

Seconded: Cllr Nigel Foot

Resolved: The Terms of Reference for the NTC 30th Anniversary Working Group were approved. Councillors Jo Day and Billy Drummond were appointed to the Working Group. The Terms of Reference will be circulated to all Councillors to invite expressions of interest from any additional members wishing to join.

8. Flag Flying Requests

Proposed: Cllr David Harman

Seconded: Cllr Sarah Slack

Resolved: Request approved to fly the Inclusive Progressive Pride Flag on 11th July 2026.

Proposed: Cllr Meg Thomas

Seconded: Cllr Graham Storey

Resolved: Request approved to fly the Transgender Pride Flag on 20th November 2026.

9. Future Strategic Options for Newbury Town Hall

The Committee considered the report outlining three potential strategic options for the future of Newbury Town Hall (1 - Vision and Conservation, 2 - Business as Usual and 3 - Divestment and Relocation). Members discussed the options and whether a preferred approach could be identified at this stage.

Members noted that additional information would be required before an informed decision could be made. It was suggested that a Working Group be established to undertake further investigation, with a focus on Options 1 and 2. Members also requested that a commercial valuation of the Town Hall be obtained to provide a clearer understanding of Option 3 and enable a fully informed comparison.

Proposed: Cllr Graham Storey

Seconded: Cllr Andy Moore

Resolved: That a Working Group be established to investigate Options 1 (Vision and Conservation) and 2 (Business as Usual) further. A commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall be obtained to inform future consideration of Option 3 (Divestment and Relocation) by the Committee.

Councillors Meg Thomas, Graham Storey and Sarah Slack agreed to join the Working Group. It was further agreed that consideration be given to inviting members of the local community with relevant expertise to participate.

10. Civic Services Manager's Reports

The Committee noted the following report: Raising the Profile of the Council in the Community. Letters sent by the Mayor's Office were noted to be highly valued by recipients. Thanks were extended to the Civic Officer for their efforts in this regard.

11. Civic Events

Information regarding the Civic Awards (20 March) Mayor Making (10 May), Mayor's Charity Coffee Morning (30 May and 5 September), Bowls Match (9 September), Heritage Open Day (19 September) and Local Democracy Week (5-16 October) was received.

12. Forward Work Programme 2026/27

Members reviewed and noted items for inclusion in the Forward Work Programme for 2026/27.

-Consideration of the commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall in relation to Strategic Option 3 (Divestment and Relocation).

-Receipt of the Terms of Reference for a Working Group for future plans for the Town Hall.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 20:11pm.

Chairperson:

Date:

Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee

Date: 29 06 2026

ACTION SHEET

Item	Resolved	Actions	Who	When
Agenda Item 1 – Apologies	Apologies – Cllrs Jo Day and Gary Norman.	Write up attendance register.	CC	As soon as possible
Agenda Item 3 – Minutes	Approved and signed.	Send signed minutes to CC.	CSM	As soon as possible
Agenda Item 7 – NTC 30th Anniversary Working Group	Terms of Reference approved. Councillors Jo Day and Billy Drummond were appointed to the Working Group.	Circulate Terms of Reference to all Councillors to invite expressions of interest. Arrange first meeting.	CSM	As soon as possible
Agenda Item 8 – Flag Flying Requests	Request approved to fly the Inclusive Progressive Pride Flag on 11 th July 2026.	Inform the applicant and prepare flag.	CSM	As soon as possible
Agenda Item 8 – Flag Flying Requests	Request approved to fly the Transgender Pride Flag on 20 th November 2026.	Inform the applicant and prepare flag.	CSM	As soon as possible
Agenda Item 9 – Future Strategic Options for Newbury Town Hall	That a Working Group be established to investigate Options 1 (Vision and Conservation) and 2 (Business as Usual) further. Councillors Meg Thomas, Graham Storey and Sarah Slack agreed to join the Working Group.	Draft the Terms of Reference to review at a future meeting.	CEO/CSM	For next meeting
Agenda Item 9 – Future Strategic Options for Newbury Town Hall	A commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall be obtained to inform future consideration of Option 3 (Divestment and Relocation) by the Committee.	Obtain a commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall.	CEO/CSM	For next meeting
Agenda Item 12 – Forward Work Programme	Add the following: -Consideration of the commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall. -Receipt of the Terms of Reference for a Working Group for future plans for the Town Hall.	Add for September meeting.	CSM	For next meeting

CC = Committee Clerk

CSM = Civic Services Manager

Flag Flying Request Form

This form is to be used to request the flying of a flag from Newbury Town Hall's flagpole on the balcony of the Town Hall.

This form must be completed and submitted to mayor@newbury.gov.uk or by post no later than 3 weeks before the date of the flag flying date.

Once the form has been submitted, Councillors will discuss the application at their next available meeting. We endeavour to notify you which meeting this may be, though this may not always be possible.

Please note that this form will be used as an accompanying Appendix item to be discussed at Town Council meetings, and will be in the public domain.

The flag you have requested to fly will be flown for one day. Requests for flying for longer can be considered with express permission from the Civic Pride, Arts and Culture Committee.

Once a decision has been made, we will contact you to confirm the outcome and further arrangements as required.

The Council reserves the right to refuse request for flag flying requests on the grounds that:

- The Union Flag will be flying on the same day.
- The request falls outside the government guidelines.
- The flag flying would be disruptive to the Council.
- The flag flying would affect community cohesion or relations.

Please give as much information as possible about your plans as this will support your request. Failure to provide such sufficient information may result in your request being denied.

Section 1: About You	
Name	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]
Telephone	[REDACTED]
Organisation	NEWBURY UN ASSOCIATION/UK BRANCH

Section 2: About Your Flag Flying	
What nationality, community or group is being celebrated?	U. N. DAY

What flag do you wish to fly?	U.N. FLAG	
What date would you like to fly this flag?	FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER 2026	
Do you already have a flag to provide?	Yes Held by NTC	No
Please confirm that you would be able to provide the flag the day before the date you wish to fly the flag. This is to ensure our staff can safely prepare the flag in advance of it being raised.		
This form is completed on the basis that the flag will be flown for 1 day.		

Section 3: Additional Information		
Will you require any rooms inside the Town Hall?	Yes	No
If 'yes' a room booking form will be required to be completed. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet your request if the room has already been booked by another party.		
Do you plan to host a flag raising ceremony on our Town Hall Steps? <i>Entrance</i>	Yes	No
If so, please outline full details regarding speeches, VIP guests and dignitaries in attendance, programme timings, speeches etc.	 12-00 to 12-30 including Flag Raising message Reflection	
Please provide any further information that you may feel is relevant for Council consideration to support your application.	Programme to be advised to Mayor	

Name: 

Date: 19 August 2026

Please return this form to mayor@newbury.gov.uk

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Public Report to Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee

14 September 2026

Agenda Item 7: Flag Flying Requests - Flag Flying Arrangements Review

Purpose of Report

To review the Council's current default flag-flying arrangements and consider whether any amendments should be made, including the addition of Armed Forces Day as a default flag-flying occasion.

Background

The Council's Flag Flying Policy states that Newbury Town Council will follow the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) guidance for flying the Union Flag from government buildings.

The current DCMS designated days for flying the Union Flag on UK Government buildings in 2026 are:

- 1 March – St David's Day (in Wales)
- 9 March – Commonwealth Day
- 17 March – St Patrick's Day (in Northern Ireland)
- 9 April – His Majesty The King's Wedding Anniversary
- 23 April – St George's Day (in England)
- 6 May – Coronation Day
- 13 June – Official Birthday of His Majesty The King
- 21 June – Birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales
- 17 July – Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen
- 8 September – His Majesty The King's Accession
- 8 November – Remembrance Day
- 14 November – Birthday of His Majesty The King
- 30 November – St Andrew's Day (in Scotland)

The Council will continue to have regard to DCMS guidance in relation to the flying of the Union Flag.

Review of Current Arrangements

The Council's current Flag Flying Policy also provides for a number of local default flag-flying arrangements, under which specific flags are flown on particular commemorative or cultural occasions. Section 5 of the policy currently identifies:

- 1 March – St David's Day – Welsh Flag
- Second Monday in March – Commonwealth Day – Commonwealth Flag
- 23 April – St George's Day – St George's Cross

- 17 May – International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Lesbophobia and Transphobia – Rainbow Flag
- 24 October – United Nations Day – United Nations Flag
- 30 November – St Andrew’s Day – St Andrew’s Cross

There is currently some ambiguity within the policy regarding the relationship between these local arrangements and the DCMS designated days for flying the Union Flag.

For example, 23 April is both a local default flag-flying date for the St George’s Cross and a DCMS designated day for the Union Flag. Section 7 of the current policy also states that where a request to fly another flag falls on a designated Union Flag flying day, the Union Flag takes precedence.

Members are therefore asked to consider whether the policy should be clarified to establish how the Council’s locally agreed flag-flying arrangements should operate where they coincide with a DCMS designated Union Flag day. A suggested policy wording amendment could be “The Council will follow DCMS guidance but retains discretion to fly a different appropriate flag on its own locally agreed commemorative dates”.

The intention would be to ensure that the policy accurately reflects the Council’s approach and provides a clear and consistent framework for officers when arranging flag flying from the Town Hall.

Ukrainian Flag

At its meeting on 1 July 2024, the Civic Pride, Arts and Culture Committee considered the future arrangements for the Ukrainian flag. Following consultation with the Ukrainian community, Members agreed that it would be more appropriate to retire the Ukrainian flag from continuous display and instead fly it annually on Ukraine Day.

The Committee resolved “The Ukraine Flag is flown on Ukraine Day, 24th August, each year from the Town Hall building.”

This arrangement should therefore be considered for formal inclusion within the Council’s Flag Flying Policy.

Armed Forces Day

Members are also asked to consider whether Armed Forces Day should be added to the Council’s list of default flag-flying occasions.

As Armed Forces Day takes place on a different date each year, it is recommended that the policy refers to the occasion rather than specifying a fixed calendar date.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. **Note** the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) guidance and designated days for flying the Union Flag in 2026, and confirm that the Council will continue to have regard to this guidance;
2. **Agree** that the Flag Flying Policy should be amended to clarify the relationship between the DCMS designated Union Flag flying days and the Council's locally agreed default flag-flying occasions, including where these coincide;
3. **Agree** that the annual flying of the Ukrainian flag on 24 August, Ukraine Independence Day, as previously resolved by the Committee on 1 July 2024, should be incorporated into the Flag Flying Policy on the list of locally agreed default flag-flying occasions;
4. **Agree** that Armed Forces Day should be added to the Council's locally agreed default flag-flying occasions, with the policy referring to Armed Forces Day rather than a fixed calendar date; and
5. **Recommend** that the amended Flag Flying Policy be brought back to the Committee for approval.

If Members agree any amendments to the current arrangements, officers will update the Flag Flying Policy and bring the revised policy forward for approval.

Newbury Town Council – Event Grant Funding

Application Process

Thank you for your interest in applying for grant funding for your event from Newbury Town Council. Please follow the process outlined below to submit your application.

Complete the Application Form

Fill in all required sections of the application form and email the completed form to:
towncouncil@newbury.gov.uk

Application Review

Your application will be considered by the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture (CPAC) Committee. The committee meets four times a year and will review and decide on grant applications for event funding.

Applicant Attendance

Short-listed applicants may be invited to attend a CPAC Committee meeting to make a brief presentation and answer any questions from committee members.

Notification of Outcome

All applicants will be informed of the committee's decision following the meeting.

Please ensure your application meets the criteria outlined in the accompanying documents. We look forward to receiving your application.

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Newbury Town Council – Event Grant Funding

Application Form

Completed forms should be emailed to: towncouncil@newbury.gov.uk

Name of organisation:	KAIRALI UK, West Berkshire
Name and role of the person submitting this application:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Contact Telephone Number:	[REDACTED]
Contact E-mail:	[REDACTED]
Contact Address:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Date of Application:	15/07/2026
Name and date of event:	Symphony 2026 A Celebration of Culture, Creativity & Community Saturday, 10th October 2026 St Bartholomew's School, Andover Road, Newbury, RG14 6JP
Is your event open to the public?	Yes
Please explain the purpose of the event for which you are seeking funding:	Symphony 2026 is the flagship annual cultural event organised by Kairali UK – West Berkshire, celebrating the rich heritage, traditions, and artistic excellence of the Indian community while promoting multicultural understanding within the wider community. The event aims to bring together people of all ages and backgrounds through a vibrant programme of music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and cultural performances. It provides a platform for local talent—including children, young people, and emerging artists—to showcase their skills, preserve cultural traditions, and foster creativity and confidence. Symphony 2026 will: • Celebrate cultural diversity through arts and community participation. • Encourage social inclusion, community cohesion, and intercultural dialogue. • Provide opportunities for local artists and young performers to develop and showcase their talents. • Strengthen community wellbeing by bringing people together through shared cultural experiences. • Enhance Newbury's cultural calendar by delivering one of the region's largest and most anticipated multicultural events. By supporting Symphony 2026, funders will help create a vibrant, inclusive celebration that strengthens community connections, promotes cultural

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	understanding, inspires the next generation, and leaves a lasting positive impact on the people of Newbury and the surrounding areas.
Amount of funding requested and a how it will be used for the event:	The amount we requested is £1500. Funding is sought to deliver an inclusive, high-quality event that is accessible to everyone, regardless of financial circumstances. The grant will help cover venue hire, stage and technical production, performer support, workshops, publicity, safeguarding, accessibility measures, and community engagement activities. It will also enable wider participation by families, young people, seniors, and underrepresented groups.
Charity registration number (if applicable):	NA
Is your organisation currently active and operational?	Kairali UK – West Berkshire Unit is an active and fully operational community organisation with a strong track record of delivering projects that benefit local residents throughout the year. The organisation is managed by an elected Executive Committee and supported by a dedicated team of volunteers who organise cultural, educational, environmental, and community-focused initiatives across West Berkshire. Recent activities include: ● Organising a Blood Donation Campaign to encourage community members to become regular blood donors and support the NHS blood supply. ● Coordinating a Food Donation Drive in support of Loose Ends Newbury, helping local individuals and families experiencing financial hardship. ● Delivering a Winter Coat Donation Campaign for Loose Ends Newbury, collecting and distributing warm clothing to support vulnerable members of the community during the winter months. ● Leading a Community Litter Picking Initiative at Greenham Common as part of World Environment Day, promoting environmental responsibility and community volunteering. ● Supporting the maintenance and improvement of the Wildlife Garden and Pond at John Rankin School, helping create an engaging outdoor learning environment for pupils while encouraging environmental awareness. ● Organising the Bytes & Build Coding and Robotics Workshop, a free 12-week programme for children and young people focused on coding, robotics, creativity, and problem-solving. The programme concluded with a public exhibition where participants showcased their projects to parents, community members, and local dignitaries. ● Launching an Online Community Library, providing members with access to a growing collection of books and resources to encourage reading habits, lifelong learning, and knowledge sharing within the community. Through these initiatives, Kairali UK – West Berkshire Unit promotes volunteering, education, environmental stewardship, wellbeing, and

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	community cohesion. The organisation regularly works with local schools, charities, volunteers, and community partners to deliver projects that create a positive and lasting impact.
How many Newbury residents are expected to attend or benefit from the event?	We expect 250–400 people to attend Symphony 2026, with the majority of attendees coming from Newbury and the wider West Berkshire area. Based on attendance at previous community events organised by Kairali UK – West Berkshire Unit, we anticipate that approximately 150–300 Newbury residents will attend the event directly. In addition to attendees, local residents will benefit through volunteering opportunities, participation in performances and cultural activities, and increased community engagement. The event will also support community groups and families by providing a free, inclusive, and accessible celebration of culture and community. The wider impact is expected to extend beyond those attending on the day through community networks, social media engagement, and strengthened relationships between local organisations and residents, benefiting many more people across Newbury and West Berkshire.
Are there particular groups of residents who will benefit from the event? (e.g., specific age groups, people with particular needs):	Yes. Symphony 2026 is designed to benefit a wide range of residents, with particular focus on: • Children and young people, who will have opportunities to participate in performances, develop confidence, showcase their talents, and engage in cultural and educational activities. • Families, who will benefit from a free, family-friendly event that encourages quality time together and community participation. • Volunteers, who will gain valuable experience in event management, teamwork, leadership, and community service. • People from diverse cultural backgrounds, who will have the opportunity to celebrate their heritage, share cultural traditions, and engage with the wider community. • Older residents, who may benefit from increased social interaction, cultural engagement, and opportunities to connect with others, helping to reduce social isolation. • Local community groups, which will benefit from greater community engagement, partnership opportunities, and participation in cultural and educational activities. As a completely free event, Symphony 2026 removes financial barriers to participation and ensures that residents from all backgrounds and income levels can attend. The event promotes inclusion, cultural understanding, wellbeing, and community cohesion, creating opportunities for meaningful interaction between people of different ages, cultures, and backgrounds across Newbury and West Berkshire.
What positive outcomes do you anticipate for both your organisation and the local community if this grant is awarded?	If the grant is awarded, it will enable Kairali UK – West Berkshire Unit to deliver Symphony 2026 as a high-quality, inclusive, and completely free community event, creating lasting benefits for both the organisation and the wider local community. For the local community, the grant will: • Enable 250–400 residents and visitors to attend a free cultural celebration, removing financial barriers to participation.

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- Strengthen community cohesion by bringing together people of different ages, cultures, and backgrounds in a welcoming environment.
- Provide children and young people with opportunities to perform, develop confidence, showcase their talents, and build valuable life skills.
- Promote wellbeing by encouraging social interaction, reducing isolation, and creating a sense of belonging.
- Foster greater understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity across Newbury and West Berkshire.
- Support local partnerships between community groups, charities, volunteers, and local businesses.

For Kairali UK – West Berkshire Unit, the grant will:

- Increase community participation and engagement with our activities.
- Build stronger partnerships with local organisations, schools, charities, and civic leaders.
- Enhance our reputation as an active and trusted community organisation committed to serving local residents.
- Create a sustainable foundation for future community, educational, environmental, and cultural initiatives.

Ultimately, the grant will help create a vibrant celebration that not only showcases culture and creativity but also leaves a lasting legacy of stronger community connections, increased participation, and greater opportunities for residents across Newbury and West Berkshire.

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Newbury Town Council – Event Grant Funding

Criteria For Grant Aid

Priority will be given to events which:

- Are based within the boundary of Newbury Town Council, or which primarily benefit residents of Newbury.
- Provide benefit to the greatest number and broadest range of Newbury residents.
- Deliver a positive impact to the wider community beyond serving the direct interests of the organising group.
- Demonstrate efforts to raise funds independently and are not solely reliant on external grants or donations to finance the event.
- Show a clear commitment to sustainability and environmentally responsible practices.
- Actively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in their planning and delivery.

In addition:

- Grants will not be awarded for activities that are the statutory responsibility of another authority or organisation.
- Priority will be given to those organisations whose objectives meet the priorities and targets laid down in the Council's Strategy.
- Preference will be given to applications for capital items or one-off event costs, rather than for ongoing or recurring funding needs.

Applications will be assessed against the above criteria.

Short-listed applicants may be invited to attend the scheduled Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee meeting to make a short presentation and answer questions from Members of the Committee.

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Newbury Town Hall Future Strategic Options Working Group**Draft Terms of Reference**

Background: At the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee meeting of Newbury Town Council on 29 June 2026, the Committee considered a report on future strategic options for Newbury Town Hall and noted that further information was required before an informed decision could be made. The Committee resolved that a Working Group be established to investigate Option 1 'Refurbishment' (previously described as 'Vision and Conservation'); Option 2 'Patch Repair' (previously described as 'Business as Usual'). It was also resolved that a commercial valuation of Newbury Town Hall be obtained to provide a clearer understanding of Option 3 'Sale' (previously described as 'Divestment and Relocation') and inform future consideration.

Membership: Cllrs Meg Thomas, Graham Storey and Sarah Slack. The Working Group may invite other Councillors, Council Officers and members of the local community with relevant expertise to participate as required. Any community or external participants will provide advice and expertise but will not have voting rights.

Administrative/Officer Support: TBC

Quorum: 2 Members and 1 Officer.

Goal: To investigate and compare the three long-term strategic options for Newbury Town Hall and to provide the Policy & Resources Committee with sufficient evidence and a clear recommendation to enable it to review and adopt a preferred option, or make a recommendation to Full Council where the decision falls outside the Committee's authority.

Deliverables: The Working Group is tasked with delivering to the Policy & Resources Committee:

- An assessment of the opportunities, advantages, disadvantages, capital and revenue costs, risks and implications associated with Option 1 'Refurbishment', including the scope and intended outcomes of a comprehensive refurbishment.
- An assessment of the opportunities, advantages, disadvantages, capital and revenue costs, risks, liabilities and implications associated with Option 2 'Patch Repair', including the minimum works required to keep the Town Hall safe, operational and in reasonable condition, and the likely timing of future repairs.
- An assessment of the opportunities, advantages, disadvantages, costs, risks and implications associated with Option 3 'Sale', including the commercial valuation, disposal considerations, relocation requirements and costs, service continuity, heritage implications and any relevant legal or governance requirements.

- A consistent comparison of all three options, including capital and revenue costs, whole-life financial implications, maintenance liabilities, income-generating opportunities, heritage and conservation, accessibility, sustainability, operational requirements, relocation implications, deliverability, timescales and potential funding opportunities.
- Identification of any further surveys, professional advice, financial information or investigation required to support the recommendation or before the preferred option can be implemented.
- A final report setting out the Working Group's findings, its evaluation of all three options and a clear, reasoned recommendation on the preferred option for the Policy & Resources Committee to review and adopt, or recommend to Full Council where required.

The Working Group should clearly distinguish between: expenditure required for short-term patch repairs and to maintain the Town Hall in its current use; investment required for comprehensive refurbishment; and the one-off and ongoing financial implications of sale and relocation.

Guidance from the Council: The Working Group will provide progress reports to the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee as the originating committee and, where appropriate, to the Policy & Resources Committee. Its final report and recommendation will be submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee for review and adoption. Any matter reserved to Full Council, or otherwise beyond the Committee's authority, will be referred to Full Council with an appropriate recommendation.

Resources and Budget: The Working Group is authorised to use Town Council meeting rooms, administration resources and officer time as reasonably required. Any expenditure or commissioning of professional advice must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, procurement procedures and relevant delegated authority. The Working Group has no authority to commit expenditure beyond any budget or authority specifically approved by the Council.

Governance: Decisions will be agreed by consensus. Where necessary, a majority vote of those present will apply, with the Chairperson holding a casting vote if required. The Chairperson must be an elected Town Councillor.

Additional Notes:

- Methods of work, including consultations, engagement with relevant experts, site visits, research and requests for further information, are to be decided by the Working Group and must follow the Council's agreed procedures and policies.

- The Working Group may invite members of the local community or external professionals with relevant expertise in areas such as heritage, conservation, architecture, building surveying, property, sustainability, accessibility, energy efficiency or commercial property to provide advice and information.
- Any external or community participants will participate in an advisory capacity only and will not have voting rights or decision-making authority.
- Communications between members will generally be informal and conducted via email.
- Relevant documentation will be stored on the Town Council IT data store.
- The group will meet at regular intervals to ensure satisfactory progress as required.
- Sub-groups can be created as necessary to progress specific areas of investigation, subject to the agreement of the Working Group.
- The Chairperson will report back on progress to the Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee as required, particularly where further information, expenditure or authority is required.
- The Working Group will not make any decision regarding the future disposal, alteration or major investment in Newbury Town Hall. Its role is to investigate the options and make recommendations to the parent Committee.
- The Working Group's work is complete when it has achieved all deliverables to the satisfaction of the parent Committee, after which the group will be dissolved.

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed and amended as necessary by the Working Group in light of additional information. Any significant changes will require formal authorisation by the parent Committee.

Public Report to Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee

14 September 2026

Agenda Item 11: Future Strategic Options for Newbury Town Hall – Commercial Valuation

Valuation

To inform the Council's consideration of the future strategic options for Newbury Town Hall, an indicative commercial valuation was sought from a local agent. The agent has advised the value of the property would be in the region of:

£750,000 – £850,000

The indicative valuation has been obtained to provide Members and the Newbury Town Hall Working Group with an understanding of the potential financial value of the asset. It is intended to inform consideration of the range of strategic options available to the Council and should not be interpreted as a recommendation to dispose of the Town Hall.

Potential Divestment

If, following consideration by the Working Group and the Council, divestment is identified as a preferred option, further work would be required before any disposal could proceed.

This would include consideration of the Council's statutory powers and duties, the heritage and historic significance of the building, the Council's future operational and civic requirements, alternative accommodation, financial implications, planning and conservation matters, and the appropriate disposal process.

Given the civic, historic and community significance of Newbury Town Hall, public and stakeholder consultation would also need to be considered as part of any potential divestment process. The nature, scope and timing of any consultation would need to be determined once the Council had identified a preferred option and established the relevant legal and procedural requirements.

No decision to dispose of Newbury Town Hall is being sought as part of this report. The valuation is being presented solely to inform the Council's ongoing consideration of the building's future.

Public Report to Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee

14 September 2026

Agenda Item 12: Civic Services Manager's Reports - Raising the Profile of the Council in the Community

In line with the objectives set out in the Newbury Town Council Strategy, the Mayor of Newbury's office issues letters of congratulations to celebrate and acknowledge individual and community achievements. This initiative helps to strengthen community engagement and enhance the Council's profile within the town.

Below is a list of letters sent since the last meeting of this committee (as of 08/09/2026):

2026 07 02 – Newbury Athletic Club athletes selected for the England team at the 2026 Commonwealth Games
2026 07 02 – Newbury Auto Service on their grand opening
2026 07 06 – Cromwell Singers celebrating 50 years
2026 07 09 – Educafe on its 5th anniversary
2026 07 16 – Delphic Brewing Company on the success of Picklefest 2026
2026 07 16 – St Bartholomew's School on winning the Dorothy Morley Conservation Awards
2026 07 17 – HSS UK Newbury Hindu Community on raising £1,133 for Newbury Police Cadets
2026 07 30 – Speenhamland School for the Trodon the Dragon Project
2026 07 30 – Kairali UK West Berkshire for the Bytes & Build Robotics Expo
2026 07 30 – Mr Richard Farley on his appointment as Newbury BID Manager
2026 08 06 – City Arts Newbury for the annual Chalkfest event
2026 08 06 – Full Power Studios for organising the 5th Newbury Tattoo Convention
2026 08 20 – Greenham Trust on the appointment of their new Chief Executive
2026 08 20 – Indulge Hairdressing on its success at the British Hair & Beauty Awards
2026 08 22 – Newbury Mosaic's 21st anniversary
2026 08 27 – Newbury students at all local schools on their examination results
2026 08 27 – Rocket Propelled Games on its first anniversary

Public Report to Civic Pride, Arts and Culture Committee

14 September 2026

Agenda Item 13: Civic Events

- a. To review civic events since the last meeting of the Committee
 - b. To note the programme of civic events until the next meeting
 - c. To receive ideas for suggested or potential future events or activities.
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- a. **To review** civic events since the last meeting of the Committee:
 - 100 Days of Victoria Park Community Café – Friday 4 September 2026
 - Mayor’s Charity Coffee Morning – Saturday 5 September 2026
 - Annual Bowls Match – Wednesday 9 September 2026 (CANCELLED)
 - b. **To note** the programme of civic events until the next meeting:
 - Heritage Open Day – Saturday 19 September 2026
 - Unveiling of New Interpretation Panel for the First Battle of Newbury – Sunday 20 September 2026
 - Local Democracy School Visits – 5-16 October 2026
 - Remembrance Sunday – 8 November 2026
 - Mayor's Festive Afternoon Tea – December TBC
 - Civic Carol Service at St Nicolas – December TBC
 - c. **To receive** ideas for suggested or potential future events or activities.

Public Report to Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee**14 September 2026****Work Programme for Civic Pride, Arts & Culture Committee Meetings****Standing Items on each (ordinary meeting) Agenda:**

1. Apologies
2. Declarations and Dispensation
3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting & Update on Actions
4. Questions/ Petitions from Members of the Public
5. Questions/ Petitions from Members of the Council
6. Flag Flying Requests
7. Event Grant Funding Applications
8. Civic Services Manager's Reports
9. Civic Events
10. Work Programme and Future Business

June 2026	Local Democracy Working Group TOR Review NTC 30 th Anniversary Working Group TOR Review & Membership Civic Awards Report Mayor Making Report Heritage Open Day Planning
September 2026	Local Democracy Working Group Update Art on the Park Update NTC 30 th Anniversary Planning Future Plans for the Town Hall Working Group TOR Review Commercial Valuation of Newbury Town Hall Heritage Open Day Update Remembrance Sunday Update
December 2026	Budget Recommendations 2027/28 Local Democracy Events Report NTC 30 th Anniversary Planning Newbury Town Band Review Heritage Open Day Report Remembrance Sunday Report Mayor's Festive Afternoon Tea Update Civic Awards Planning
February 2027	Future Plans for the Town Hall Working Group Update NTC 30 th Anniversary Planning Local Democracy Working Group Update NTTA Report Festive Afternoon Tea Report Civic Awards Planning Mayor Making Planning