

5th December 2023.

To: Cllrs: Vera Barnett, Alistair Bounds, Jayne French-Drayton, Nigel Foot, Roger Hunneman, Ian Jee, David Marsh, Vaughan Miller, Sarah Slack and Martha Vickers.

Substitutes: All the remaining members of the Council.

Also: All Members of the Full Council for information.

Dear Councillor(s)

You are required to attend a meeting of the Community Services Committee to be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury RG14 5AA, on **Monday 11th December 2023 at 7.30pm**. This meeting is open to the Press and Public.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Kavanagh

Services Delivery Manager

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
Services Delivery Manager
- 2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**
Services Delivery Manager
2.1 To receive any declarations of interest relating to business to be conducted in this meeting and confirmation of any relevant dispensations.
- 3. Approval of previous Meeting Minutes. (Appendix 1)**
Chairperson
3.1 To approve the minutes of a meeting of the Community Services Committee held on Monday 18th September 2023.
- 4. Questions and Petitions from Members of the Public**
Chairperson
(Questions must be submitted to the Services Delivery Manager by 2.00 pm on Friday 8th December 2023 latest).

5. Members' Questions and Petitions (Appendix 2)

Chairperson

5.1 To consider: the issue of ASB in City Recreational Ground

5.2 To consider: the provision of a bench seat on Elizabeth Avenue and improve signage at Barn Crescent community orchard.

(Questions must be submitted to the Services Delivery Manager by 2.00 pm on Friday 8th December 2023).

6. Services Delivery Manager's Report. (Appendix 3)

Services Delivery Manager

To note: the contents of the Services Delivery Manager's Report.

7. Community Services Committee 23/24 Forward Work Programme. (Appendix 5)

Chairperson

To note and invite members to raise any additional items for consideration for the next meeting.

8. Review of Community Services 2024/25 Budgets (Appendix 6)

Services Delivery Manager

To consider the Officers' proposal for the Community Services Budget for the 2024/25 financial year, as attached at Appendix 6 and in particular to consider any additions, amendments or deletions required, before inclusion in draft budget for Policy & Resources Committee consideration on 15th January 2024.

10 Services Revenues for 2024/25 Financial Year (Appendix 7)

Services Delivery Manager

To consider proposals for Service Revenues for 2024/25 and allotment for 2025/26 as attached at Appendix 7.

11 Victoria Park Café Project

Services Delivery Manager

Verbal update on Tender process.

12. Allotment Stewards Meeting (Appendix 8)

Services Delivery Manager

11.1 To note the minutes of the Allotment Stewards meeting of 22 October 2019

11.2 To resolve: the rule change request ref: Tree heights and canopy limits

13. Motion from Councillor Vaughan Miller (Appendix 9)

Chairperson

10.1 To note & discuss: the allotment consultation feedback as circulated on 27.11.23.

14. Motion from Councillor Vaughan Miller (Appendix 10)

Chairperson

To consider: a strategy review in light of planned new regulations and schedule of condition of playparks and its financial impact on this service delivery going forward.

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Chairperson

To move: 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 nature of the business to be transacted.

16. Provision of small Van for the Grounds and Open Spaces Team (Appendix 4)

Services Delivery Manager

To recommend: the request for the provision of an EV Van for the Grounds Team use.

If you would like a paper copy or large print copy of this agenda, please request this from the Reception Desk at the Town Hall.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY
ON MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT

Councillors: Jayne French-Drayton (Deputy Chairperson), Billy Drummond (sub), Nigel Foot, Roger Hunneman, David Marsh, Gary Norman (sub), Elizabeth O’Keeffe (sub), Sarah Slack and Martha Vickers.

In Attendance

Martin Kavanagh, Services Delivery Manager
Kym Heasman, Corporate Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillors Vaughan Miller (attended virtually), Vera Barnett (attended virtually), Alistair Bounds and Ian Jee.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The Services Delivery Manager declared that Councillors Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, David Marsh, and 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.

Councillor Jayne French-Drayton also declared an interest in agenda item 15 as she is a Newbury Allotment Tenant.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

PROPOSED: Councillor Martha Vickers

SECONDED: Councillor Roger Hunneman

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 10th July 2023 are approved and signed by the Chairperson.

4. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There are no questions or petitions from members of the Public for this meeting.

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

Question received from Councillor Vera Barnett through the Services Delivery Manager:

"Can a ramp be fitted to the band stand so any less abled person in a band or artist to access the performing space?"

Agreed to be added under the forward work programme for the committee to consider appropriate options and Officers to make recommendation to next sitting of this committee.

6. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN MILLER

Motion from Councillor Miller to resolve football facilities pricing and structure review deferred to next scheduled Community Services Committee Meeting. However, the meeting noted that further reviews of market pricing would be undertaken by Councillor Miller.

7. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MEG THOMAS

The update of the Wash Commons 'mounds' and surrounds by the Services Delivery Manager was noted.

It was requested that an invitation be extended to Heritage England for a site visit with key stakeholders and further extend the offer to include an opportunity to come and speak with the committee.

PROPOSED: Councillor Gary Norman

SECONDED: Councillor Sarah Slack

RESOLVED: To implement the essential works as recommended by the Services Delivery Managers report including and Interpretations boards to be updated following consultation with Dave Stubbs, the Battlefield Trust and National Trust and renew the clear Perspex covers. (**Note:** works to be added to the forward works programme)

8. GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

The Committee gave thanks to the Parks & Open Spaces Supervisor, James Heasman for the success of the Newbury in Bloom 2023 programme, and the recent presentation event.

The minutes of the Green Spaces Working Group meetings of 6th April 2023 and 20th July 2023 were noted.

PROPOSED: Cllr Nigel Foot

SECONDED: Cllr Sarah Slack

RESOLVED: Officers to prepare a formal proposal for Community Services budget preparation for entry into 2025 Britain in Bloom Awards and continue with the current Newbury in Bloom Awards both 2024 and 2025 noting the financial impact on the preparation of the 2024/2025 budget.

9. MARKET WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the Market Working Group of 20 July 2023 were noted with one exception to Item 7 to remove the word “only” from line three of this item.

PROPOSED: Councillor Gary Norman

SECONDED: Councillor Nigel Foot

RESOLVED: That Newbury Town Council requests from West Berkshire Council to explore a package of parking and travel charge incentives (including cost reductions) to encourage an increase in charter market visitors.

10. SERVICES DELIVERY MANAGERS REPORT

The Services Delivery Managers report was noted. Councillors raised the question of hedge cutting in particular at Blossoms Field needing attention now the next season is behind us. There was a consensus however the new grounds maintenance contractors have made a good start since they have partnered with us.

11. VICTORIA PARK MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The contents of the Green Flag reports for Victoria Park and City Recreation Ground were noted. Councillor Martha Vickers and the Council Leader Gary Norman asked if a proposed straight like for like replacement of the outdoor gym equipment could be reviewed.

RESOLVED: Officers to consider alternative gym equipment proposals to be brought to the December 2023 committee for members consideration.

The Committee conveyed thanks to the Grounds Maintenance Contractors and the positive relationship with Officers.

12. ARK REPORT

The contents of the ARK report were noted. Councillor Hunneman asked a question of tree works on the river Lambourne and the Service Delivery Manager agreed to resolve the question by the end of this week and advise the committee members by email.

13. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 2023/2024 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Forwards Works Programme for 2023/24 was noted and Members were invited to raise any additional items for consideration for the next meeting.

Agreed to addition of:

- The supplementation of a Ramp at the Bandstand, Victoria Park
- Phase 2 of the wash common consultation

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PROPOSED: Cllr Elizabeth O’Keeffe

SECONDED: Cllr Billy Drummond

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 nature of the business to be transacted.

PROPOSED: Councillor Sarah Slack

SECONDED: Councillor Billy Drummond

RESOLVED: that Councillor Gary Norman act as temporary chairperson for Agenda Item 15.

15. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN MILLER

PROPOSED: Cllr Elizabeth O’Keeffe

SECONDED: Cllr Martha Vickers

RESOLVED: A working group to be convened consisting of Councillors, French - Drayton, Miller and Slack, to scope out the new consultation document. Results of which to be presented at the December 2023 (next) Community Services Committee Meeting.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, THE CHAIRPERSON THANKED ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AND DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9:44 PM.

Please note: the next Community Services Committee Meeting is 11th December 2023, the agenda will include the FY 2024/25 Budget.

Newbury Town Council**Public Report****To:** Community Services Committee**Date of meeting:** 11th December 2023Agenda item No. 5: **Members' Questions and Petitions (Appendix 2)****To consider:** Question 1, from Councillor Andy Moore

Ref: Anti -Social Behaviour at City Recreation Ground.

Table / Benches in City Recreation GroundPre-amble

Councillors for West Fields Ward, which includes City Recreation Ground, have received representations and complaints from residents of Rectory Close about anti-social behaviour (ASB). On fine nights in particular, groups have gathered around the table/benches near the playground and have brought music players along. Loud voices and music until the early hours has disturbed the sleep of residents whose properties back on to the Recreation Ground. This last summer was at least the third that this has happened; the residents associate it with the placement of the table/benches during the refurbishment in early 2021.

The issue has been regularly discussed at the Newbury SW Community Forum. Warning notices about ASB have been posted, and police / PCSOs have promised to look into it; phone numbers have been shared so that residents can alert the police when the ASB is happening. The police, who accept their responsibility, comment that it is almost impossible to take action given the unpredictability of occurrence, their resources and the open nature of the Recreation Ground.

Very reluctantly, since they are such a benefit to those monitoring children on the playground and more generally, I have concluded that we should ask for the table/benches to be removed for the forthcoming "summer" season to test whether it discourages the ASB.

Question(s)

Will the Community Services Committee:

- a. Recognise the situation described above and empathise with the residents?
- b. Agree to the removal of the three table/benches in City Recreation Ground between 1 April and 30 September 2024 (or near convenient dates)?
- c. Agree to the placement of a prominent sign explaining the reason for the removal and appealing to the community to discourage anti-social behaviour?
- d. Ask the affected residents of Rectory Close to report the outcome of the temporary removal?
- e. Consider the outcome at its meeting in a year's time to determine a way forward?

To consider: Question 2 from Councillor Meg Thomas

Ref a two-part question as below:

“I have a couple of questions to be exact; both were raised by the same resident at the Wash Common Community Festival and judged by Vaughan to be valid.

1. There is a need for a bench on Elizabeth Ave about half way up. This would allow those wishing to walk to town (good for health and climate, of course) to have a little rest and thus be more likely to ditch the car keys. Likewise for cyclists. There are plenty of grass verges.
2. The community orchard on Barn Crescent is under-utilized, or so it is felt. This is leading to apples rotting on the ground. Please could signage be improved?

I'm wondering if CIL money could be used here?”

Photo's

 [BarnCrescent1 1.JPG](#)

 [BC2a.JPG](#)

 [BC2b.JPG](#)

 [BC2c.JPG](#)  [BC3.JPG](#)  [BC4.JPG](#)  [BC5.JPG](#)  [BC6.JPG](#)  [BCApples.jpg](#)

Comment from Service Delivery Manager

CIL funding can be allocated to new assets. These add value to the community. However, it cannot be used to carry our general maintenance activities such as replacing weather beaten signs.

Newbury Town Council

Public Report

To: Community Services Committee

Date of meeting: 11th December 2023

**Agenda item No.6: Appendix 3
Services Delivery Manager Report**

Grounds Maintenance Contract - update

The contractor continues to meet all Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and officers have regular monitoring meetings to ensure standards are consistently met.

Victoria Park - In addition, I am pleased to report that additional works were undertaken to ensure the football pitch was "at its best" for the showcase games on Sunday 3rd December 2023 to mark the "Return of Football to Victoria Park" following absence of more than eight years. This is a significant milestone for both the members and the officers of NTC.

Greenham House Gardens - Work continues in preparation of the 20% replanting schedule of perennials which, in addition to controlling costs more effectively, has environmental benefits regarding our carbon footprint.

Relocation of Samaritans (memorial) Rose bed, this is now scheduled for a spring planting, with provisions of roses from NTC. However as previously the bed once established, will be responsible of the family for the ongoing maintenance. This reminder of their responsibility needs to be communicated in writing to the family.

Victoria Park Bandstand Refurbishment – I am pleased to report the refurbishment works have been completed on budget and almost on time, the weather decided to impede progress on two occasions. We have plans for a grand re-opening of the Bandstand in spring 2024. There will be minor maintenance activities being undertaken in Q1 2024 by our in-house grounds team before the re-opening.

Newbury Town Hall, ongoing remedial works continue, and we recently completed repairs to the south facing aspect of the roof. Plasterwork and painting work to the Chamber and repairs to the curtain tracks and audio. There are further enhancements planned to the audio system to ensure we have a more inclusive offering including audio loop and clearer audio sound. We are waiting for these replacement parts to arrive.

Solar Panels, the installation process of the additional roof mounted PV solar panels has been delayed due to concerns regarding the friability of the roof tiles. (This could lead to water penetration once the PV panels are fitted). Possible alternative, less fragile roof space, being investigated 3rd week in December 2023.

Health and Safety, we have completed the H&S Policy review and officers have been updated.

Currently works are progressing on fire doors, Eco fire extinguishers, training of team members for First Aid, additional Fire Marshalls, and Evac Chair use. We are also reviewing the “time of day” for the fire alarm, routine testing and scheduling a Fire Evacuation Test in the coming weeks. Sadly our H & S Officer has been off work, with long term illnesses. In the short term we have a temporary resource assisting with H & S compliance starting w/c 4.12.23 initially for two days /week, her name is Joan Robinson.

Sept 23 Community Services Committee Update

Item 8: GSWG

Confirming, proposal for budget consideration for NIB & BIB 2024 & 2025 added to the budget list as requested.

Item 9: Market Working Group

Sadly, WBC decline our limited free parking request, however did indicate travel incentives may be the way forward for them.

Item 11: VP Gym Equipment Replacement

Costings can be advised verbally, and options will be available in time for the meeting.

Item 13: Forward works programme additional works

Confirming both Wash Common Phase 2 Consultation, and Bandstand ramp now added.

Item 15: Consultation document completed and the results to be shared at the next CS Committee meeting.

Newbury Town Council

Public Report

To: Community Services Committee

Date of meeting: 11th December 2023

Agenda Item 8 – Appendix 5

Projected additional Work Programme for Community Services for the Municipal Years 2023/24

Meeting Date	Subject
Community Services Meeting – Sept 2023	
Scheduled Committee Business	
July 10th 2023	<p>Election of Chair & Deputy Setting up of Working Groups & TORs</p> <p>Newbury in Bloom update Green Flag submission outcomes GM Contract update Samaritans Rose bed project</p> <p>GreenFest in Victoria Park update Update on Plastics Free Community Member nomination</p> <p>Wash Common Consultation update Phase1 - proposal phase 2. Nightingales project plan Playgrounds investment update – Post Annual Inspection Fencing Victoria Park play area.</p> <p>Hutton Close update – drawings for pathway & planting Peace Gardens / Wharf – Transfer arrangements with WBC</p> <p>Cafe update - Value engineering</p> <p>Wharf Toilets / Bandstand update</p> <p>Salt bin strategy going forward.</p> <p>Asset Management Draft plan (10-year strategy paper)</p> <p>Update Cemetery Regulations – Benches</p> <p>Memorial (sponsorship) Bench/ Asset Policy Document</p>
Suggested Forward Plan	
18th September 2023	<p>Working Groups update GM Contract progress Café progress Wharf Toilets / Bandstand progress Playgrounds investment plan update - Inc VP Play area 2023/24 Budget works programme update Adventure Golf update Newbury Tennis update Dog Bin survey / Grit Bin policy update 10-year Asset Management investment project plan VP Football Consultation Results update.</p>

Recommendation: To note and agree any other items that Members resolve to add to the Forward Work Programme

Meeting Date	Subject
Community Services Meeting – December 2023	
Scheduled Committee Business	
11th December 2023	FY 24/25 Complete Budget for P&R Review / Approval Strategy Review & Report
Suggested Forward Plan	
	Working Groups updates GM Contract progress Café progress Wharf Toilets / Bandstand progress minor works PV Solar Panels to Town Hall Roof project update 10-year Asset Management investment project plan (Ten year strategy paper) Community Services KPI's update Cemetery expansion – update Dog Bin survey / Grit Bin policy update Playgrounds investment plan update - Inc VP Play area Wash Common phase two works Tree works

Meeting Date	Subject
Community Services Meeting – March 2024	
Scheduled Committee business	
11th March 2024	TBA
Suggested Forward Plan	
	Working Groups update TBA

Martin Kavanagh
December 2023

Newbury Town Council

Public Report

To: Community Services Committee

Date of meeting: 11 December 2023

Agenda item No 8 : Appendix 6

To Recommend : Review of Community Services 2024/25 Budget

Budget 24/25 Exception items: expenditure proposals for consideration by CS Committee

Energy Conservation Projects
NTR Chapel

MK - Carbon capture - Does Council wish to install solar on the chapel - a project if yes, rather than a budget. Est. £9,000. Carbon Capture rather than income. Chapel is used for lectures, heritage of the site etc. If a choice between the chapels, MK indicates a preference for Shaw Cemetery Chapel first.

Energy Conservation Projects
Shaw Chapel

MK - Would like to replace the bottle gas heaters for electric panel heaters and install roof solar panel and remove hot guards and unchained gas bottles - Est £9,000 (a higher priority than NTR) £9 -11K. Value is consumption of part power energy generated and carbon capture value.

Football pitches improvements

Cllr VM - Treatments to maintain pitches to a higher standard. The airing/rolling machine could be used monthly. The areas of the pitches that were repaired in the summer are already showing signs of wear, with some of the goal areas having pot holes. We need to look at better solutions e.g. These areas were just filled in with top soil and reseeded, but were not rolled and compacted. JH- £2,000 allocated for basic maintenance over the JoC contract. Does not cover the level of provision requested by Cllr VM. For council consideration/costing.
Goal Posts and Nets for Wash Common, City Park and Victoria Park x 2 adult goal posts & nets for WC & CP x 1 Youth goal post for VP - £1,265. 2 Samba goal posts & nets for VP (& possibly CP) £217.80.* Up to 75% grants available from the football foundation.
Improvements to the changing rooms at WC and CP. Needs costing if agreed.

Playgrounds Upgrading

HP - Under resourced. Needs £50k per year towards replacing the play areas. Needs an audit and priorities as to where they are needed, not needed, condition and priority. If £10,000 used from the Play Area EMR for the Gym Equipment in 2023/24, this leaves £11,350 which can be spent in 2024/25. MK - Nightingales - 4 playgrounds which require £250,000 on them, including £20,000 on the walls. Kit removed as destroyed. Now the walls are being destroyed, which leads to work for H&S. JH - Digby Road requires about £120k kit over the next few years. A change in legislation requires woodchip surfacing, when replaced, to be replaced with wetpour. Applies to Digby. LM - Suggest a four-year plan to tie in with the strategy with a commitment of e.g. £50,000 per annum from the precept, £11,350 EMR and a % of the 2023/24 CIL funds if Council wishes to release them from VP Cafe.

Boules in VP

Cllr VM - Boules in the Park - the construction of at least 2 boules pitches adjacent to the mini-golf course. LM - offer of support re: boules, though not necessarily in the park, received via a Saturday Surgery - passed to MK.

Victoria & her Lions

MK - Est £15,000 to restore next year. £5k in EMR. £10,000 would be required from precept. For consideration by committee for the budget.

Grounds Maintenance Contract

Cllr VM - More frequent mowing of parks - suggest 2-weekly. Cost to follow verbally.

Floral displays

£21k next year for the same. JH - If perennials preferred, for the green agenda, an additional £10k is required, as they will need looking after, turning pot planters into gardeners. JH will provide additional information for the Community Services Committee.

Newbury In Bloom

JH - If Council would like to enter Britain in Bloom (Thames and Chiltern) in 2025 with a required year's involvement, next year, you need £8.5k. Includes the £1,250 entry. Entry for 2025, starting the process in Summer 2024. If stick with Newbury in Bloom the 4.5k is fine. Cllr VM - Could we do a cost/benefit analysis on NiB and BiB? Both can bring prestige to the town, but it would be good to review the benefits against the costs (in officers' time and money).

Allotments

Cllr VM - Drainage improvements at WC allotments. Clearing the trench around the site and dig further drainage/soak aways where it may help to alleviate.

Cllr VM - More frequent mowing of allotments - suggest 2-weekly. Raising fees to cover the additional costs.

Wharf Toilets Contactless Payments

MK - To cost, for inclusion in the 2024/25 budget. Est. £2,600.

Canal Corridor

Cllr VM - Lighting on the canal path from LSB to Monkey Bridge. Note: £5,000 in EMR 453 - Canal Corridor. awaiting estimate of cost

Newbury Town Council

Public Report

To: Community Services Committee

Date of meeting: 11 December 2023

Agenda item No.10 : Appendix 7

To Recommend : Service Revenues Proposal for FY 2024/25 (incl. Allotments FY 2025/26)

Cemetery Charges - Officers recommend a 6.3% increase across all charges in line with Consumer Price Inflation figures (CPI) (Release date: 18 October 2023). See table below.

	2023/24	2024/25 Charges Rounded after CPI 6.3%	2023/24	2024/25 Charges Rounded after CPI 6.3%
Purchase of Rights	In-Parish		Out of Parish	
<i>Exclusive right of burial for the period of 100 years in an ordinary grave</i>	£495	£526	£1,425	£1515
<i>Exclusive right of burial for the period of 100 years in a selected grave</i>	£970	£1031	£2,850	£3030
<i>Purchase of plot 0.6m x 0.6m for Interment of cremated remains</i>	£170	£181	£500	£531
<i>Purchase of a plot 0.6m x 1.2m as a baby or child's grave</i>	£170	£181	£495	£526
Interments				
<i>In an 'Ordinary' grave of a body of a stillborn child</i>	£87	£92	£260	£276
<i>In an 'Ordinary' grave of a body of a Person exceeding one month but under 14 years</i>	£143	£152	£410	£436
<i>In an 'Ordinary' grave of a Person exceeding 14 years</i>	£310	£330	£960	£1020
<i>In a 'Selected' grave of a body of a stillborn child</i>	£170	£181	£495	£526
<i>In a 'Selected' grave of a body of a Person exceeding one month but under 14 years</i>	£264	£281	£785	£834
<i>In a 'Selected' grave of a body of a Person exceeding 14 years</i>	£400	£425	£1,150	£1222
<i>Interment of ashes</i>	£170	£181	£480	£510
<i>Ground work preparation by Council staff for the interment of ashes</i>	£100	£106	£100	£106
Ancillary / Other Charges				
<i>Use of Cemetery Chapel</i>	£90	£96	£240	£255
<i>Transferring deeds of rights of burial</i>	£50	£53	£50	£53

Cemetery Charges continued

<i>Memorials</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25 Charges Rounded after CPI 6.3%</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25 Charges Rounded after CPI 6.3%</i>
	<i>In-Parish</i>		<i>Out of Parish</i>	
<i>Right to erect a headstone, cross, Monument or any other memorial</i>	<i>£185</i>	<i>£197</i>	<i>£545</i>	<i>£579</i>
<i>Right to place an inscribed vase at the grave head position</i>	<i>£50</i>	<i>£53</i>	<i>£145</i>	<i>£154</i>
<i>Right to place a memorial on a cremated remains plot not exceeding 500mm (1' 8") in height above ground level</i>	<i>£50</i>	<i>£53</i>	<i>£145</i>	<i>£154</i>
<i>Additional inscription</i>	<i>£25</i>	<i>£27</i>	<i>£85</i>	<i>£90</i>

Market Charges – Officers recommend a 6.3% increase across all charges for example a 3m x 3m pitch on a casual basis will increase from £25.50 per day to £27 per day and for traders who pay monthly in advance the cost will increase from £16.50 per day to £17.50 per day for the standard daily rate.

Football Charges – Officers recommend a 6.3% increase (rounded to the nearest 50p) from £76.50 to £80 and continue with no charge for junior pitches. Please cross reference this a further proposal for football pitch pricing from Cllr Vaughan Miller as detailed here...

Proposed pricing from Cllr Vaughan Miller

	Current	2024/25
Adult Casual:	£91.80	N/A
Adult Block bookings:	£76.50	£75.00
I would also propose the following for under 18s:		
	Current	2024/25
Full pitch or two 5-a-side pitches	£0.00	£25.00
Single small pitch (7-a-side pitch)	£0.00	£15.00

Allotment Charges – In 2013 the Community Services Committee agreed that in line with most other allotment authorities, we should, from 2015-16 onwards, give a year's notice of any change in allotment service charges, as opposed to the previous 2 months' notice.

Therefore, Officers recommend an increase for 2025/26 for Newbury Parish Residents from 45p per sq. metre to **48p** per sq. metre (equivalent to **£12** per pole) rounded.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE NEWBURY ALLOTMENT STEWARDS
THURSDAY 26 OCTOBER 2023
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY**

In attendance:

Cllr Vaughan Miller, Chairperson of the NTC Community Services Committee.
Cllr Jayne French-Drayton, Vice Chairperson of the NTC Community Services Committee
Cllr David Marsh
Cllr Martha Vickers

Colin Dumelow (Dairy Farm Steward), Marion & David Fenn (Joint Stewards Wash Common), Shannon Carr (Joint Steward Southby's), Chris Lawrence (Joint Steward Southby's) James Taylor (Steward Parsons), Tereasa & Nick Bune (Joint Stewards West Mills), Dave Cole (Joint Steward One Tree Park), Terry Cook (Joint Steward One Tree Park)

Martin Kavanagh (Service Delivery Manager), Caroline Edmunds (Community Services Officer), James Heasman (Parks & Open Spaces Supervisor).

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTIONS

Everyone in the group introduced themselves.

2. ALLOTMENT OVERVIEW

Acknowledgement was given to the staff shortages that the Allotment team have experienced over the last year.

James gave an overview of the current allotment works including:

- New orchard planned for Parsons, funding agreed, and 30 sponsored trees will be planted this year.
- New orchard for Dairy Farm. 15 trees will be available.
- Trackwork at Southby's allotment repairs agreed for this year.
- Central trackway repairs at West Mills Allotment agreed for this year.
- Dairy Farm central track needs repairing – if budget allows the works will be done this year but may fall into the 2024/25 budget.

It was also noted that most sites now have 2 Stewards which helps with administration and continuity. Colin stated that at Dairy Farm there is an unofficial second Steward who is happy to help out.

After the outcome of the recent Allotment Survey, a second Steward at Parsons allotments may become available.

3. ALLOTMENT BUDGET/SECURITY

It was noted that there is no spare budget for the rest of this financial year for any extras.

Requests to put forward for the 24/25 Allotment Budget included:

- Parsons – deer fencing along the southern boundary.

James suggested that when the deer fencing is taken down which is currently at our land at Blossom's Field, it could be erected at Parsons allotments.

ACTION: James to investigate when the fencing becomes available.

- Southby's – there is an issue with a resident who lives adjacent to the site who has removed their fence, so deer often come onto the allotment site, causing issues. Could NTC do something regards to the fencing?

James noted that NTC are aware of the situation and is currently in talks with the resident to try and resolve. The fence is the responsibility of the resident.

- West Mills – there is a plot where the tenant has passed away recently. The plot holder used to live adjacent to the allotments and has a gate leading to the allotments. Stewards are concerned that any new resident would have access to the allotment site.

It was noted that there are a number of gates that lead from residents in Buckingham Road through to the allotment site. Local residents have been seen coming onto the site, with no authorisation, they appear not to be a plot holder. This security aspect is of concern as thefts have occurred from the site.

Suggestions included adding a sign at the entrance to each of these gates stating that the area is only accessible to allotment tenants.

- Stewards asked if a defibrillator on each site would be a possibility in the future.

As there is no electricity on site and after investigation, all public defibrillator cabinets have to be installed somewhere with a power supply. Whilst the AED itself does not require power, the cabinets have a heating element to keep the device at the correct temperature and a light inside when you open the door.

- West Mills – there is an issue with trees overhanging the site from Mallard Court.

James is meeting with the Mallard Court representative to discuss trees from our side and will bring this matter to their attention with a view to resolution.

All Stewards agreed that they do not currently have any major security issue on their site, (except, West Mills as noted above). Petty pilfering of produce continues to happen on all sites, however, it was agreed that this is very difficult to solve.

4. ALLOTMENT TENANT SURVEY

A recent communication was emailed or posted to all current allotment tenants which contain a link, or a paper copy, to an Allotment Survey.

It was noted that the survey was to explore ways of improving our allotment service and we would welcome allotment Tenants and Stewards feedback through this consultation, which is open until 19 November.

The results of the survey will be available for the December 11 Community Services Committee Meeting.

5. SUGGESTED RULE CHANGES

It was requested that the rules be amended so that tenants can keep fruit trees to a maximum height of 8ft instead of 5ft and to include to keep the canopy within the boundary of the tenant's plot.

The rule would then state:

- 2 (s) Not plant any trees without written consent from the Council (which will not be unreasonably withheld) to ensure that only miniature fruit trees and bushes are planted; and keep all trees to a maximum height of 8ft (1.53m), ensuring that the canopy of the tree is kept within the boundary of the tenant's allotment plot.

ACTION: Requested rule amendment to be taken forward to the Community Services Committee Meeting on 11 December 2023.

There was discussion regarding letting plots to new tenants and perhaps adding a note for new tenants to include: 'Progress will be checked and there is a potential to make a charge to clear the plot if it is left in an untidy state when vacated in the future' referring to the existing rule:

- 2 (y) When relinquishing their plot, or upon having their tenancy terminated by the Council, remove all belongings / arisings from their allotment plot or the Council will charge a fee for clearing the plot if it is left in an untidy state;

This would bring the rule to the forefront when initially letting a plot.

ACTION: Community Services Team to add this to correspondence when letting a plot to a new tenant.

6. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Everyone agreed that the grass cutting this year had been much better since the new Grounds Maintenance company had taken over.

It was requested that another grass cut was requested before the end of the season because of the unseasonably wet/warm weather this year.

ACTION: James to request this from contractors if possible?

It was noted that when NTC review the Grounds Maintenance Contract, the allotment grass cutting will be reviewed together with the grass cutting specifications for our Parks. Allotment Stewards agreed that every 2 weeks would be ideal as if the grass is cut after being too long, it creates mounds and clumps of grass which look unsightly but can also cause a safety issue.

James confirmed to Stewards that all hedges will be cut by the end of February.

7. QUESTIONS

Questions from Marion & David Fenn at Wash Common (summarised):

1) Can contractors be asked to clear completely after hedge cutting?

James noted that contractors are instructed to clear all hedge cuttings when they do the hedges. Usually, the ditches are waterlogged when they are cut so some may be left. He will reiterate the importance of this to the contractors for future hedge cutting.

2) Some very effective french drains were put in alongside some allotments at Wash Common. It would be good if they could be reinstated.

If tenant's plots become unworkable for long periods during certain months would the Council consider compensation of some rent to tenants after it is verified as impossible to work?

Could topsoil be added to the low plots?

James noted that unfortunately there is no plan currently for the drains to be reinstated. It was noted that perhaps they could be rodded through but ultimately there is nowhere for the water to go. In the last couple of years, NTC reviewed the flooding situation at the allotments at Wash Common and the costs were extremely high. Purchasing and spreading topsoil is also very costly and would not alleviate the main issue.

With regards to compensation, this is something that will need to be discussed with Council in the future.

3) Central Path

In winter the path can become very churched up.

James and other allotment Stewards noted that NTC had worked with allotment sites to install a lockable central post that would be managed by the Steward. This could be an option at Wash Common.

ACTION: James to investigate

4) Bicycles

Some people ride speedily up the central track on their bicycles. As well as the risk to people, tenants have expressed their concern on the site.

This was discussed and this isn't a big problem on other sites. Most sensible people will ride with care, or dismount. Some sites are quite large and therefore a bicycle is very useful. It was agreed that this should be monitored by Stewards only at this stage.

5) Can it be added to the rules that tenants notify the steward when they are allowing unaccompanied people onto site?

This was discussed with the group. The Rules currently state that tenants are responsible for their guests. Tenants and their guests are able to be on site and look at other plots, so long as they do not cause a nuisance or go onto a plot that they are not responsible for.

There was a suggestion that the Council affix permanent signs on the gates of all allotment sites to state 'tenants and authorised persons only'.

ACTION: Costs to make and affix signage to be investigate by CS team.

6) Rents

Some tenants are asking whether rent increases will be frozen and consideration made to those on benefits, including pensions.

James stated that NTC are not in a position, and do not have the authority to 'means test' allotment tenants. It was agreed that our rates are reasonable and much lower than some other Parishes. Everyone was reminded that our Allotment Rents are set over a year in advance, so the 2024/25 rents were noted in the January 2023 invoices to all tenants. Any increase agreed by Council this year will be for the 2025/26 allotment year.

It was also noted that we are no longer issuing plots to residents who live out of the Newbury Parish.

7) Self-Management

All Stewards agreed that they would not be interested in Self-Management at this time.

Question from Chris Lawrence, Southby's:

We have a number of international speaking tenants on the site. It may be worth arranging for the Allotment Rules to be translated into other languages.

It was noted that this would need to be done by a professional translator as the Rules are part of a legal document. A system such as 'Google Translate' would not suffice.

It was agreed that this could be looked in to in the future.

Teressa & Nick Bune, West Mills:

Is it possible to increase the Car Park area at West Mills?

It was agreed this would be investigated and then perhaps be added to next year's budget.

ACTION: James to investigate.

There was general discussion regarding the process of inspecting allotment sites and issuing notice to tenants who are not cultivating in accordance with the Allotment Rules.

It was noted that this has been a very difficult year with the Services Team resource. Sites should be inspected during the growing season, every 4-6 weeks and if notices are given and followed up, then the process should work.

Stewards offered to help with the process going forward.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:05pm

Newbury Town Council

Public Report

To: Community Services Committee

Date of meeting: 11 December 2023

Agenda item No 13 : Appendix 9

To Note and Discuss: Allotment Consultation Feedback.

Please note a net response rate (NRR) of close to 23% was achieved, this is deemed a statistically valid result.

Result Overview

Split by site	NRR	No. Responses	No of Tenants on site
Dairy Farm:	18%	9	49
One Tree Park:	17%	8	47
Parsons:	25%	9	36
Southby's:	18%	30	167
West Mills:	27%	30	98
Wash Common	30%	29	112

Further detailed analysis may be undertaken by the members from this point.

MK 06.12

Newbury Town Council

Public Report

To: Community Services Committee

Date of meeting: 11 December 2023

Agenda item No 14 : Appendix 10

To Recommend: we undertake a strategic review of NTC Playpark provision, in light of new proposed regulation and provide a schedule of condition report and assessment of expected timeline for replacement/renewal of the assets. In addition, produce a summary of the financial impact of the outcomes over the next 6 and 12 years.