

17<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**To: All Members of Newbury Town Council**

Dear Councillor

Please note you are requested to attend on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 at 7.15pm for a briefing on the Freedom Parade.

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Newbury Town Council on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 at 7.30pm.

The meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury, RG14 5AA. The meeting is open to the press and public and will be streamed via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82147709333?pwd=G5dtbuzb4depUufEVfo8hatq2xZvkh.1>  
Meeting ID: 821 4770 9333      Passcode: 075605

Yours sincerely,

**Toby Miles-Mallowan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

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### AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 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 (Appendix 1).**  
**To approve** the minutes of a meeting of Extra Full Council held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- 4. Questions and petitions from members of the public**  
*Town Mayor / Chief Executive Officer*  
All questions for this meeting must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer by 14:00 on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury, RG14 5AA

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 @NewburyTC       NewburyTC

**5. Members' questions and petitions**

All questions for this meeting must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer by 14:00 on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**6. Christmas Lights Switch On**

To **receive** presentation from Newbury BID on Christmas lights switch on.

To **Discuss** proposal

To **Resolve** the location of the Charter Market for the Christmas Light Switch on event November 2025

**7. Town Mayor's Report (Appendix 2)**

To **receive** the first report of the Town Mayor

**8. Chief Executive Officer's Report (Appendix 3)**

To **receive** the Chief Executive Officer's report

**9. Committees**

To **receive** the minutes of meetings of the Town Council's Committees:

Planning & Highways: 19<sup>th</sup> May & 16<sup>th</sup> June (previously circulated)

CE Sub-committee: 21<sup>st</sup> May (previously circulated)

VP Sub-committee: 2<sup>nd</sup> June (previously circulated)

Policy & Resources: 9<sup>th</sup> June (previously circulated)

**10. Internal Audit – (Appendix 4a)**

To **note** the fourth and final report from the Internal Auditor for 2024/25 As recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee.

**11. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) – Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 (Appendix 4b)**

To **consider and approve** the Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25, signed by the Internal Auditor, for inclusion within the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for External Audit. As recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee.

**12. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (appendix 5)**

To **consider and approve** the Annual Governance Statements 2024/25. As recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee.

To **authorise** the Chairperson and Proper Officer to sign the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.

**13. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) – Accounting Statements 2024/25 (appendix 6a) and Supporting Papers**

To **consider and approve** the Accounting Statements 2024/25 and supporting papers. As recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee:

13.1. Year-End Reconciliation (**appendix 7**)

13.2. Reconciliation between Box 7 & 8 (**appendix 8**)

13.3. Explanation of Variances 2023-24 to 2024-25 (**appendix 9** is 4 sides):

13.4. Summary Sheet

13.5. Precept

13.6. Total Other Receipts

13.7. Fixed Assets

**13.8.** To **authorise** the Chairperson to sign the Accounting Statements 2024/25

- 14. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) – Making Provision for the Exercise of Public Rights (appendix 10)**  
To **approve** the publication of the ‘Notice of Public Rights’ for Accounts year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- 15. Mayor of Newbury’s Charitable Trust (appendix 11)**  
To **appoint** the nominated Trustees for Municipal Year 2025/26  
To **note** the governing document & constitution for the Mayor of Newbury’s Charitable Trust.  
To **receive** a copy of the Annual Report & Statement of Accounts for the Municipal Year 2024/25
- 16. Victoria Park Cafe Redevelopment**  
To **receive** an update on the cafe redevelopment.
- 17. Newbury Town Council Four-Year Strategy (Appendix 12)**  
To **receive** the Four-Year Council Review.
- 18. Forward Work Programme for Full Council meetings 2025/26 (Appendix 13)**  
To **note** and agree any other items that Members resolve to add to the Forward Work Programme
- 19. Exclusion of the Press and Public**  
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 financial business to be transacted.
- 20. IT Contract**  
To **consider and approve** the Managed Service IT contract for Newbury Town Council.  
To **authorise** Officers to sign the IT contract.

**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 FULL COUNCIL COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL, MARKET PLACE, NEWBURY ON  
WEDNESDAY 07 MAY 2025 AT 7:30 PM.**

**PRESENT**

Councillors Phil Barnett, Vera Barnett, Jo Day, Sam Dibas (19:32), Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, David Harman, Roger Hunneman, Ian Jee, Pam Lusby-Taylor, David Marsh, Stephen Masters, Andy Moore (Town Mayor), Gary Norman, Sarah Slack, Meg Thomas, and Tony Vickers.

**In Attendance**

Toby Miles-Mallowan, Chief Executive Officer

**1. APOLOGIES**

Councillors Alistair Bounds, Chris Hood, Vaughan Miller and Elizabeth O’Keeffe.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chief Executive Officer declared that Councillors, Phil Barnett, Billy Drummond, Nigel Foot, David Marsh, Martha Vickers and Tony Vickers who 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.

Note further declarations were received on agenda item 24.

**3. NOMINATION OF MAYOR ELECT FOR 2025/26 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

**PROPOSED:** Councillor Phil Barnett

**SECONDED:** Councillor Gary Norman

That Councillor David Harman be nominated as candidate for Mayor Elect

**4. ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR 2025/26 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

**Resolved** that Councillor Harman is elected as Mayor for 2025/26

**5. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Received** declaration of acceptance of office

**6. NOMINATION OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE 2025/26 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

**PROPOSED:** Councillor Pam Lusby-Taylor

**SECONDED:** Councillor Tony Vickers

**Received** nomination for Councillor Sarah Slack

**PROPOSED:** Councillor David Marsh

**SECONDED:** Councillor Graham Storey

**Received** nomination for Councillor Steve Masters

**7. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

Councillor Sarah Slack **received** 14 votes in favour, 3 Against and 1 Abstention

Councillor Steve Masters **received** 3 Votes in favour, 12 against and 3 Abstentions

**Resolved** that Councillor Sarah Slack elected as Deputy Mayor for municipal year of 2025/26.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council Committee held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025, be approved, and signed by the Town Mayor.

**8. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE AND DEPUTY MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Declarations were **received**

**9. MINUTES**

**PROPOSED:** Councillor Andy Moore

**SECONDED:** Councillor Martha Vickers

The minutes from the 23 March 2025 full Council were **approved**. There were 3 abstentions.

**10. QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions or petitions **received**.

**11. MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

Four questions were **received** from members of staff. Appendix A for questions and full response

**12. OUTGOING MAYORS REPORT**

The outgoing Mayor's report was **received**.

**13. CEO's REPORT**

Report **received**

**14. COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Council **received** minutes for the following:

Planning & Highways 23 March and 23 April 2025.

Policy and Resources 28 April 2025

Civic Pride, Arts and Culture 17 February 2025

**15. THE MAYORS CHARITY FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26**

**Proposed:** Councillor David Harman

**Seconded:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Resolved** that Berkshire Youth is the charity that the Mayors Charity will be supporting for 2025/26

**16. ELECTION OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR 2025/26**

**Proposed:** Councillor Roger Hunneman

**Seconded:** Councillor Sarah Slack

**Resolved** that Councillor Gary Norman is the Leader of Newbury Town Council for 2025/26.

**Proposed:** Councillor Meg Thomas

**Seconded:** Councillor Vera Barnett

**Resolved** that Councillor Jo Day is the Deputy Leader of Newbury Town Council for 2025/26

**17. COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

**Proposed:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Councillor Jo Day

Committee and sub-committee structure **approved** for municipal year 2025/26

**Proposed:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Councillor David Harman

Membership of committees and subcommittees **Resolved** for 2025/26

**18. COUNCILLOR SURGERY ROTA FOR 2025/26**

An **amended** rota was presented by Councillor Gary Norman from that in the agenda.

**Proposed:** Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Billy Drummond

**Agreed** to adopt the amended rota for 2025/26 (appendix B)

**19. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

**Proposed:** Councillor Steve Masters

**Seconded:** Councillor Billy Drummond

Council **approved** internal auditors third interim report for 2024/25

**20. NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL FOUR YEAR STRATEGY REVIEW**

Council **received** an update on the year 1 review of the Council's four year strategy from 2024-2028.

**21. DECLARATION OF MARKET POWERS**

**Proposed:** Councillor David Marsh

**Seconded:** Councillor Martha Vickers

**Resolved** that Newbury Town Council made the declaration of market powers (appendix ...)

Councillor Tony Vickers requested that the CEO continue to liaise with West Berkshire District Council regarding the declaration.

**22. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS 2025/26**

Council **noted** the forward work programme

**23. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Proposed:** Councillor Gary Norman

**Seconded:** Councillor Phil Barnett

**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 financial business to be transacted.

**24. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Councillors Sam Dibas Declared that he is a Parish Councillor for Enborne Parish Council, Councillors Phil Barnett and Billy Drummond declared that they are Parish Councillors for Greenham Parish Council.

**Proposed:** Councillor Andy Moore

**Seconded:** Councillor Martha Vickers

**Resolved** to provide dispensation for Councillors Phil Barnett, Sam Dibas and Billy Drummond to participate in the agenda.

**PROPOSED:** Councillor Andy Moore

**SECONDED:** Councillor Nigel Foot

**Against:** Councillor Billy Drummond

**Abstained:** Councillor Phil Barnett and Councillor Sam Dibas

**RESOLVED:** for CEO to approach West Berks District Council to request community governance review.

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRPERSON DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21:18 HRS**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A

### **Question from Councillor Phil Barnett Vickers**

*In view of the possibility of Government direct funding moving away from principal authorities to local level (as subjected in the white paper) "Can this Town Council make sure we are well prepared to bid for any monies available to fund specific proposals"?*

### **Response from Newbury Town Council:**

In light of the Government's White Paper indicating a possible shift in direct funding from principal authorities to more local levels, Newbury Town Council fully recognises the importance of being well-positioned to bid for any funding that becomes available.

We are committed to ensuring that the Council has the necessary structures, capacity, and strategic readiness to take full advantage of such opportunities. This includes developing well-evidenced, community-led proposals aligned with local priorities, which can demonstrate strong value and impact.

To strengthen our capability, we will initiate a Community Governance Review. This review will allow us to assess whether our current governance arrangements, including our boundaries, representation, and powers, are sufficient to meet the evolving needs of Newbury's residents. A more robust governance framework will not only improve democratic accountability but also build our organisational resilience and capacity to deliver more services at a local level.

Additionally, we will enhance our internal readiness by:

- Developing a pipeline of potential projects that align with government funding priorities.
- Building partnerships with local stakeholders, community groups, and service providers.
- Reviewing and strengthening our financial and project management systems to meet the requirements of direct government funding.
- Ensuring officers and councillors have the appropriate skills and training to manage increased responsibilities effectively.

By taking these proactive steps, Newbury Town Council aims to be in a strong position to secure and deliver funding that brings tangible benefits to our community.

**Question from Councillor Tony Vickers**

*Is the Mayor aware of the proposal by the local body appropriately known by its acronym “NEWT”, which has secured a lease from Thames Water and significant grant funding to take responsibility for the wetland and scrubland area between Northcroft Park, the former Lambourn railway line, Hill Road and Speen Lane back gardens, to have managed access for the public including a new public footpath circuit? And would the Mayor agree that this Council should now work with West Berkshire District and Speen Parish Councils to help NEWT implement its plans?*

**Response from the Mayor of Newbury (or Newbury Town Council):**

Thank you for your question regarding the proposal put forward by the local body known as NEWT (Nature Enhancement for West-Thatcham and Newbury Town).

We are aware that NEWT has made significant progress in its efforts to enhance and open up access to the wetland and scrubland area bounded by Northcroft Park, the former Lambourn railway line, Hill Road, and the back gardens along Speen Lane. Notably, the group has successfully secured a lease from Thames Water and obtained substantial grant funding to begin the transformation of this ecologically sensitive area into a publicly accessible space that maintains biodiversity while providing managed access, including a new footpath circuit for walkers.

NEWT’s initiative is an excellent example of community-led environmental stewardship. The plans include:

- Ecological management to protect and enhance habitats,
- Improved public access through designated footpaths,
- Educational signage and features to raise awareness of local wildlife and habitats,
- Collaboration with local volunteers and conservation groups.

The Council fully recognises the environmental and recreational value of this project and strongly supports the principle of providing access to nature in a responsible, sustainable way.

However, at this stage, Newbury Town Council is not in a financial position to contribute to the implementation of NEWT’s plan during the current financial year without altering or deferring projects already agreed in our budget. That said, we are very supportive of the project in principle, and we will review the possibility of providing practical and/or financial support as part of our 2025–26 budget considerations.

Furthermore, we agree that there is a clear opportunity for joint working and will seek to engage with West Berkshire Council and Speen Parish Council to explore how best we can collectively support the successful delivery of this valuable local initiative.

We commend NEWT for its vision, organisation, and achievement so far, and we look forward to the positive impact this project will have on both the local environment and the wellbeing of residents.

**Question from Councillor Sam Dibas:**

*'can we get the survey results back to the town council and discuss what people have told us and how what we plan to do to monitor this and make sure we do the right thing to our residents?'*

**Response:** requested that Councillor Sam Dibas confirm which survey was being discussed.

**Clarification from Councillor Sam Dibas:** *'the pedestrianisation consultation'*

**Response:** this was a West Berkshire District Council consultation and that Councillor Dibas would be best served to discuss this directly with Councillor Stuart Gourlay who is the portfolio holder for Highways

**2<sup>nd</sup> question from Councillor Sam Dibas:**

*'I would like to pass a motion to investigate if we as NTC can take legal action against Thame Water for damaging our environment and health as they continue to pump raw sewage in our West Berkshire rivers.'*

**Response:** As per Standing Orders, Motions must be received a week prior to any committee meeting of Newbury Town Council.

However I am able to comment on the proposal: Newbury Town Council has limited legal powers, but there are some specific legal and regulatory avenues by which we could take action or support action against Thames Water for discharging raw sewage into the Rivers Kennet and Lambourn. Here's an outline of the possible bases and mechanisms:

**Public Nuisance (Common Law)**

Newbury Town Council could potentially bring a claim for public nuisance, if the raw sewage pollution interferes with the public's rights or use of land (e.g., use of public footpaths, access to nature, or enjoyment of public spaces near the rivers).

- **Basis:** Unlawful interference with a public right, such as the right to clean waterways or public health.
- **Challenge:** Usually brought by individuals or the Attorney General. Newbury Town Council would likely need to prove it has **special damage** beyond that suffered by the general public, or seek consent to act on behalf of residents. At this time there is no evidence of their being any damage that interferes with a public right

**Judicial Review (Environmental Law)**

While not directly against Thames Water, NTC may consider judicial review of a regulator's failure to enforce environmental laws (e.g., the Environment Agency's lack of action).

- **Basis:** Unlawful inaction by a public body failing to regulate illegal discharges under environmental regulations.
- **Challenge:** This is complex, expensive, and must be initiated promptly. The Council would need legal standing.

**Reporting and supporting prosecution under Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016**

Under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016, it is illegal to discharge pollutants into controlled waters without a permit, or in breach of that permit.

**Basis:** If Thames Water has breached its environmental permits, this is a criminal offence.

**Action:** Only the **Environment Agency** can bring prosecution, but NTC can:

- Collect and submit evidence, however we have no resources to do this
- Lobby for enforcement action,
- Support third-party legal efforts (e.g., by citizen or NGO lawsuits). We would need to identify a third part and support them to do this

**Supporting a Private Prosecution**

NTC could support residents or a group (e.g. Fish Legal, River Action, or a local angling association) to bring a private prosecution under environmental law.

- **Basis:** Breach of statutory duty or environmental permits.

- **Role:** Likely limited to financial or evidential support, as we lack the capacity to prosecute directly.

### **Representations to OFWAT and Environmental Regulators**

While not a court action, the Council can:

- **Submit formal complaints** to OFWAT and the Environment Agency,
- Demand investigations or reviews under **Water Industry Act 1991**,
- Join or initiate **public pressure campaigns** to trigger regulatory response.

### **Conclusion**

While Newbury Town Council cannot easily bring a case to court directly against Thames Water, it could potentially:

- **Support legal action** by affected individuals or groups,
- **Pressure regulators** to act or face judicial review,
- **Document and report violations** for enforcement,
- **Explore nuisance law** if specific harm to the community can be demonstrated.

However legal advice would be essential before proceeding with any action, furthermore NTC would have to reassess the budget before it could take any action.

## Mayor's Report

11/05/2025 to

15/06/2025

This report provides a summary of Mayoral engagement over the period indicated above. The report is intended as a summary, and whilst in most cases an engagement may address multiple Mayoral goals, and also support Newbury Town Council's goals, the primary themes are selected for each engagement below; this may include more than one goal.

Date	Name of Event	Organisation	Narrative	Mayor's Primary Themes		Other	Newbury Town Council's 2024-8 Strategic Goals			
				Youth	Environment	Other civic functions, Mayor representing Newbury	Help make Newbury a unique, welcoming, safe and well cared for town	To be the Voice of the communities in Newbury	Take actions to address the climate emergency	Provide focused support for young people, the elderly, minorities and the vulnerable
11/05/2025	Mayor Making	Newbury Town Council	Ceremony at Corn Exchange Theatre, Cllr Harman and Cllr Slack signed Declarations to Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively. Thanks given to outgoing Mayor, Cllr Moore OBE. An excellent musical performance by Trinity School which was very well received. West Berkshire Youth confirmed as Mayor's charity for 2025/26. Civic service at St. Nicholas Church.			Y		Y		
11/05/2025	Thatcham Mayor Making	Thatcham Town Council	Supported neighbouring council's civic event.			Y				
13/05/2025	Street Pastors AGM	Newbury Street Pastors c/o Newbury Baptist Church	A summary of the year's events, and voting in of committee members for the year ahead. Street Pastors provide well needed support to patrons of the night-time economy in the centre Newbury, providing assistance to those in need, whilst freeing up resources of our local police.			Y	Y			Y
14/05/2025	Wessex House, A Bridge for Young People	Wessex House, owned and converted by Greenham Trust	Deputy Mayor attended the opening of a new bridge in Newbury! Newbury's first A Bridge for Young People; Wessex House, Oxford Road. Wessex House provides a home for 13 young people, 6 within the beautiful Georgian House, and 7 more in the attached one bedroom flatlets. The service provides a home that is safe, fully furnished as a family home with vital practical, emotional and social support. The simple model means that young people aged 16 - 25 years, who are leaving care or who are homeless are provided with emotional and practical support as they transition into adulthood. They don't have to 'go it alone' before they are ready for full independence. The house was already fully occupied on the day of opening. There are three other such houses in Thatcham, West Berkshire; Cornerstone, Rebecca House and Hope House.	Y						Y
15/05/2025	Funeral of former Newbury Town Council Mayor, Ieuan Tuck	Tuck family, St. George the Martyr Church, Was Common	A touching ceremony, paying tribute to the life and community commitment from former Mayor Tuck.			Y				
17/05/2025	Surfers Against Sewage	National protest, locally organised by Ecofriends Plastic Free, Newbury.	Event centred on the Kennet & Avon Canal at Victoria Park, highlighting water quality pressures and impacts from sewage discharges.		Y		Y			
20/05/2025	Community Furniture Project	Newbury Community Resource Centre	Deputy Mayor attended the Newbury Community Resource Centre (NCRC), celebrating their 25 years of charitable work. Initially set up as a charity for women suffering domestic abuse, to today's evolving multi - faceted charity touching most people's lives in Newbury from donors, volunteers, learners, and recipients. The charity helps local people in need by reason of their youth, infirmity, disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances. NCRC promotes independent living by providing re-used furniture and household goods and opportunities for volunteering, training and work experience including making up Ikea flat packs, bicycle repairs, cooking skills and general repairs. In addition, they seek to promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the natural environment via their: Growing2Gether horticulture project and their Renewal Project in Newbury where members care for the River Lambourn in Newbury. The Deputy was impressed with the teaching concepts and methods; eg. learners absorb mathematical concepts and other skills unconsciously, through real-life scenarios and everyday experiences eg. sawing wood in half, learning to drive a forklift truck, road safety skills when collecting orders. Also, the community aspects was noted, where everyone stops work for a collective lunch break; to eat, mingle and chat together.		Y				Y	Y
22/05/2025	Meeting Newbury College	Newbury College	Deputy Mayor attended Newbury College. Students were selling their hanging baskets and vegetables they had nurtured at the College. The students clearly enjoyed interacting with buyers and were delighted to have buyers. Our Deputy bought a healthy looking courgette, cabbage, chilli and tomato plant!	Y						



**Meeting of Newbury Town Council, Wednesday 23 June 2025.  
Chief Executive Officer's Report.**

**A) Staff Matters:**

**1) Recruitment:** there was a lot of interest in the vacancies with over 100 applications. Unfortunately through shortlisting process we lost a significant number of applicants. Despite this week commencing 16 June 2025 was spent interviewing:

- **Town Hall Officers:**
- **Finance Apprentice**
- **Trainee Council Officer**
- **Trainee Parks and Open Spaces Officer**

**In addition** to the above positions we are advertising internally for a Parks and Open Spaces Assistant. This role will assist are parks and open spaces officer with day to day tasks.

**Committee Clerk:** in the process of making arrangements for Maternity Cover – focus on recruiting a Clerk on locum basis to cover Planning and Highways.

**B) Town Hall:** The repairs to the roof are ongoing, awaiting sign off for the repairs to the roof beams. Once signed off we will be able to close the ceiling and remove the internal scaffolding.

**C) Strategy Review:** metrics have been signed off by the Policy and Resources Committee.

**D) Civic Events:** the Town Council has successfully delivered a full calendar for celebrations, including VE Day and the Family Fun Day. At the Family Fun Day the Team provided caving and climbing activities for over 500 young people.

**E) Riparian Ownership:** we are awaiting on a report regarding the situation of the embankment on the Lambourn. Preliminary feedback has been positive around the situation on the Bank itself regarding flood defences.

**F) Upcoming Events:** It is still a busy time for officers over the next month over the next month with both Newbury in Bloom judging and Chilterns in Bloom (as part of the Britain in Bloom preliminary round). We are also reviewing the process and criteria for the Civic Awards to ensure that we are achieving community impact.



## **Newbury Town Council**

*Internal Audit Report 2024-25 (Final)*

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*Susan Cook*

*For and on behalf of  
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

## **Background**

Statute requires all town and parish councils to arrange for an independent Internal Audit (IA) examination of their accounting records and systems of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2024-25 financial year, during our interim reviews of the Council's records for the year, which were undertaken on site on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and remotely on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 at our offices. We wish to thank the Clerk, RFO and other staff for assisting the process, providing all necessary documentation in either hard copy or electronic format to facilitate this review.

## **Internal Audit Approach**

In commencing our review for the year, we have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts / AGAR. Our programme of cover is designed to afford assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Internal Audit Report' in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a series of internal control objectives.

## **Overall Conclusions**

We are pleased to advise that, based on the work undertaken to date, officers continue to maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements. We ask that the report be presented to members and a formal response be provided.

Based on the overall satisfactory conclusions drawn from our review programme for the year, we have signed off the IA Certificate in the year's AGAR assigning positive assertions in each relevant area.

We also take this opportunity to remind the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the requirements of the guidance notes in the preface to the year's AGAR in relation to the documentation that should be displayed on the Council's website.

## Review of Accounting Arrangements & Bank Reconciliations

The Council maintains its accounting systems using the RBS Rialtas Omega software, there are two bank accounts in place, the current account and instant access account for which cashbooks Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) and at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 there were two short term deposit accounts with Handelsbanken, both due to mature in April 2025.

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. Consequently, we have to date: -

- Verified the accurate carry forward of the 2023-24 closing balances in Omega to the current year opening Trial Balance;
- Ensured that an appropriate Cost and Nominal Account coding structure remains in place;
- Reviewed three sample months transactions (August 2024, December 2024 and March 2025) on the Current account cashbook and Instant Access account cashbook agreeing detail to supporting bank statements;
- Verified the year-to-date PSDF transactions and Term Deposit Interest receipts by reference to the underlying advice notices of interest earned; and
- Checked and agreed the software-based bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 to ensure that there are no long-standing, uncleared items or other anomalous entries arising.

### *Conclusions*

*No issues arise in this area currently to warrant formal comment or recommendation.*

## Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has robust corporate governance arrangements in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders (SOs) and that, as far as we are reasonably able to ascertain as we do not attend meetings, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation.

We have completed our examination of the minutes of Full Council and its extant Committee meetings (with the exception of Planning & Highways) for the year to date.

We have noted previously that the Council's extant SOs and Financial Regulations (FRs) are subject to periodic review and re-adoption, the latest NALC Model Finance Regulations were adopted by the Council in October 2024.

We note that the 2023-24 AGAR was signed off by the external auditors with the following comment.

'The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance Assertion in Section 1, Box 9, and it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for

non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified. This response is consistent with the internal auditor's response to internal control objection 'O'.

### **Conclusions**

*We are pleased to note the Council has provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights for the 2023-24 financial year in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and that the Charity Accounts for 2023-24 are on the Charity Commission Website.*

## **Review of Expenditure and VAT**

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate records, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- An official order has been raised for the acquisition of goods or service delivery, where one would be anticipated;
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have completed our review of procedures and physical payments in this area noting that, invoices are no longer physically signed by staff, but instead an email trail of approval is in place for all invoices, along with a register of invoice queries.

We have selected a sample of payments processed in the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 to ensure compliance with the above criteria including all those payments individually in excess of £3,500, together with a more random selection of every 40<sup>th</sup> cashbook transaction (irrespective of value). Our test sample includes 90 payments totalling £841,666 and equating to 63% by value of all non-pay expenditure for the year to date.

We note that VAT returns continue to be submitted electronically on a regular quarterly basis and have verified that the final 2023-24 quarters reclaim has been repaid by HMRC. The quarterly claims for June 2024, September 2024 and December 2024 have been submitted, with the totals agreeing to the relevant Omega nominal control account and all have been repaid by HMRC. The quarterly claim to March 2025 was submitted on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

### **Conclusions**

*We noted on our previous report that whilst the Council has good controls in place for the payment of invoices, there was one area where the full process was not complied with, which was the procedure for direct payments. The Financial Regulations have been amended to allow for urgent payments to be paid directly, and we are pleased to note that the agenda for*

*the April 2025 Policy & Resources committee meeting included an item for the retrospective approve of Direct Payments. We are pleased to note that the appendix to the agenda included a detailed list of these payments.*

## **Assessment and Management of Risk**

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks identified in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

A risk assessment has been completed for the financial year 2024-25, however the document is somewhat brief, and we understand that the risk assessment is due to be developed further in the 2025-26 financial year. As part of the review the Council should use the best practice model document produced by SLCC (Society for Local Council Clerks) as a guide to ensure it covers all risks.

The Council's insurance cover is provided by Zurich: we have examined the insurance schedule running from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 noting that the Council's premises, street furniture and other equipment are appropriately insured together with Public and Employer's Liability set at £12 million and £10 million respectively, Fidelity Guarantee cover at £2 million and "Business Interruption - Loss of Revenue" cover in place at £396,795 all of which we consider appropriate for the Council's present requirements.

The council has 16 different play areas, fitness areas and skate parks. The last annual report was carried out in May 2024, there were no very high or high-risk items identified, and all moderate risk items have now been completed. The next annual risk assessment has just been requested and will take place in the next two months.

In addition to the annual report, weekly risk assessments are carried out by ROSPA trained contractors and bi-monthly assessments by ROSPA trained staff. Staff renew their ROSPA training periodically.

### ***Conclusion***

*To further reduce the risk outlined in R.07 the council should perhaps consider whether all staff should complete an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring) on entering service.*

## **Precept Determination and Budgetary Control**

We aim in this review area to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the annual precept; that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

Since our last visit, the Council has met to approve the budget for 2025-26 and to approve the precept for 2025-26 at a value of £1,817,641.

We are pleased to record that members continue to be provided with sound, periodic and comprehensive management accounting information to provide an appropriate means for monitoring budgetary performance during the current year.

We have reviewed the latest available Omega budget report (to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) noting some variances, but with no issues requiring further investigation or comment.

We note that the Total Reserves as at 31st March 2025 have increased to £1,438,325 (1,314,283 at 31st March 2024) comprising specific Earmarked Reserves (EMRs) totalling £840,912 (£885,730 at the prior year-end) with an increased residual General Fund balance of £597,413 (£428,553 as 1st April 2024): the latter presents approximately four months revenue spending at 2024-25 levels and sits within the generally recognised range of three to six months revenue spending.

### ***Conclusion***

***No issues arise in this area currently to warrant formal comment or recommendation.***

## **Review of Income**

The Council receives income from a variety of sources in addition to the annual precept.

We note that the Community Services Committee had reviewed the various scales of fees and charges for 2025-26 and these were reviewed by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting in January 2025.

**Cemetery:** We have reviewed detail of burials as recorded in the formal Burial register maintained by the Community Services Officer (CSO) selecting a sample of 7 interments occurring in the year ensuring that each is supported by the relevant undertaker's application, together with the supporting legally required Burial / Cremation certificates. We have been able to confirm that the appropriate fees have been charged and recovered in accordance with the approved scales of fees and charges for all the samples.

**Allotments:** The Council operates several allotment sites with rents charged to tenants appropriately with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April annually, control being exercised through the RBS Allotments software package.

Whilst the rental year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April, invoices are generally issued early in the calendar year with a number of tenants paying their fees well in advance of 1<sup>st</sup> April. Consequently, income received in advance of 31<sup>st</sup> March is coded to a control account (Code 560) as "Receipts in Advance" which is then effectively "reversed" in the new financial year to show the allotment income appropriately in the relevant financial year's accounts.

**Market Rents:** The Council collects rent from stall holders, the majority of which are regulars with some ad hoc users. The majority of stall holders pay monthly in advance, others are collected on the day of use. All holders are required to complete a Pitch Application Form and hold Public Liability Insurance.

**Town Hall Room Hire:** Long term tenants renting space at the Town Hall do so under various leases, and rents are collected via a third party. Ad hoc use of council space is via a booking form, with invoices raised on a monthly basis. We reviewed a sample of 5 entries from the diary for October 2024, with no issues outstanding.

We reviewed the Debtors list as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, noting some £13k due to the Council, none of which was over 2 months old at the year-end.

### *Conclusions*

*No issues arise in this area currently to warrant formal comment or recommendation.*

## **Review of Staff Salaries**

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HMRC legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme as amended periodically with regard to employee percentage contribution bandings.

We have again examined the operative payroll procedures and consider them sound with payroll production outsourced to DCK Accounting using bespoke IRIS payroll software.

We have, consequently, acquired detail of salaries paid to staff in post in August 2024; their salary points on the national spinal scale and their basic weekly hours where not employed full time: we have also examined the months' payslips, undertaking the following specific work: -

- We have agreed the salary rate paid to each employee in August for each employee to the approved salary scales;
- We have verified the accuracy of tax and NI deductions in that month based on the gross salaries payable to each employee by reference to the relevant HMRC tables; and
- Finally, we have checked to ensure that the correct LG Pension Scheme percentage deductions rates have been applied.

### *Conclusion*

*We are pleased to report that no issues have arisen in this review area warranting comment or recommendation.*

## **Fixed Asset Registers**

Our objective in this area is to ensure that the Council is complying with the Accounts and Audit Regulations (as amended periodically) and maintaining a complete and accurate register of the assets owned and is also observing best practice in managing its stock of assets.

An appropriate formal fixed asset register continues to be in place: we have reviewed its content and consider that it generally meets the needs of a Council the size of Newbury.

We have confirmed the value of the asset register to Box 9 of Section two of the AGAR

### ***Conclusion***

***We are pleased to report that no issues have arisen in this review area, although we recommend as best practise that a photographic register of the assets is maintained for use in the event of an insurance claim.***

## **Investments and Loans**

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is “investing” surplus funds, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis in appropriate banking and investment institutions; that an appropriate investment policy is in place; that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made and that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records.

We also aim to ensure that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with appropriate loan agreements.

The Council currently has £557,387 invested in the CCLA PSDF which we have verified to their third-party advice note and confirmed to the capital investment sum in the Omega control account. We have duly, as indicated in the first section of this report, checked the accurate recording of the year-to-date dividends received and will complete a further check at our final visit.

The Council also currently has £500,000 in two short term deposit accounts with Handelsbanken, which were due to mature during April 2025 and which we have confirmed as part of our review of accounting arrangements and bank reconciliations.

### ***Conclusions and recommendations***

***Whilst the Council has an Investment Policy in place, this was last reviewed in 2023. To ensure the Council is making the best decisions regarding risk management and interest earning potential, it is good practise for the Investment Policy to be reviewed annually.***

## **Statement of Accounts and AGAR**

Our objective here is to ensure that the financial data to be reported in the AGAR Section 2 is consistent with the year-end detail in the Omega accounting software and complies with current legislation on local government accounting as it applies to a Council of this size.

### ***Conclusions***

***No matters arise from our work in this area and, based on the satisfactory conclusions drawn from our work programme during the year, we have duly signed off the IA Certificate in the Council’s AGAR assigning positive assurances in all relevant areas.***

## Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

EN Newbury Town Council

<https://www.newbury.gov.uk/> PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.		n/a	✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>		n/a	✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .	✓		
<b>O. (For local councils only)</b> Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
	✓		

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken 25/09/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

19/12/2024 19/02/2025 21/05/2025

Susan Cook for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

21/05/2025

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

We acknowledge as the members of:

### NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
	✓		

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

## NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,152,402	1,306,740	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,272,879	1,526,951	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	587,800	395,236	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	571,090	620,571	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	1,135,251	1,168,020	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,306,740	1,440,336	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,345,902	1,461,175	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,134,571	6,426,481	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			<i>The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval**

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

10/06/25

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

## Bank reconciliation – pro forma

Appendix 7

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It **must** agree to Box 8 in the column headed “Year ending 31 March 20xx” in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that unpresented cheques should be entered as negative figures.

Name of smaller authority: **Newbury Town Council**

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): **West Berkshire**

### Financial year ending 31 March 20xx

Prepared by (Name and Role): **Liz Manship, RFO**

Date: **19/05/25**

		£	£
<b>Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/25:</b>			
Current Account	account 1	17,999.92	
Instant Access Account	account 2	385,787.28	
CCLA Account	account 3	557,387.44	
Fixed Term Interest Account	account 4	500,000.00	
			1,461,174.64
Petty cash float (if applicable)			0.00
Less: any unpresented cheques as at 31/3/25 ( <b>enter these as negative numbers</b> )			
<b>None</b>	item 1		
	item 2		
	item 3		
	item 4		
			0.00
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/25			
<b>None</b>			
			0.00
<b>Net balances as at 31/3/25(Box 8)</b>			<b><u><u>1,461,174.64</u></u></b>

## Reconciliation between Box 7 and Box 8 in Section 2 - pro forma

Appendix 8

(applies to Accounting Statements prepared on an income and expenditure basis only)

Please complete the highlighted boxes.

Name of smaller authority:

Newbury Town Council

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

West Berkshire

There should only be a difference between Box 7 and Box 8 where the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR) have been prepared on an income and expenditure basis and there have been adjustments for debtors/prepayments and creditors/receipts in advance at the year end. Please provide details of the year end adjustments, showing how the net difference between them is equal to the difference between Boxes 7 and 8.

	£	£
<b>Box 7: Balances carried forward</b>		<b>1,440,336.00</b>
Deduct: Debtors <b>(enter these as negative numbers)</b>		
Debtors	(13,387.90)	
VAT Control	(48,128.59)	
	(61,516.49)	
Deduct: Payments made in advance (prepayments) <b>(enter these as negative numbers)</b>		
Prepayments	(19,146.73)	
Refundable Franking Machine Deposit	(300.00)	
	(19,446.73)	
<b>Total deductions</b>		(80,963.22)
Add:		
Creditors (must not include community infrastructure levy (CIL) receipts)		
Creditors	50,624.02	
Accruals	3,435.00	
Allotment Key Deposits	9,435.00	
Rent Deposits (Suites)	6,375.00	
Wedding Holding Deposits	166.66	
Changing Room Key Deposits	100.00	
	70,135.68	
Add:		
Receipts in advance (must not include deferred grants/loans received)		
Receipts in advance	3,164.79	
Allotment Receipts in Advance	28,501.61	
	31,666.40	
<b>Total additions</b>		101,802.08
<b>Box 8: Total cash and short term investments</b>		<b>1,461,174.86</b>

## Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: **Newbury Town Council**  
 County area (local councils and parish meetings only): **West Berkshire**

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue highlighted boxes**

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- **New from 2020/21 onwards:** variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year.

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input. <b>DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES</b>	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	1,152,402	1,306,740					
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	1,272,879	1,526,951	254,072	19.96%	YES		
3 Total Other Receipts	592,352	395,236	-197,116	33.28%	YES		
4 Staff Costs	571,090	620,571	49,481	8.66%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	1,139,803	1,166,020	28,217	2.48%	NO		
7 Balances Carried Forward	1,306,740	1,440,336					
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	1,345,902	1,461,175					
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	6,134,571	6,426,481	291,910	4.76%	YES		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

**Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable**

**Variances of £200 or less are tolerable**

**2023-24 to 2024-25 - Precept Variance 19.96% Explained**

The following provides:

- Budgeted Expenditure against cost centres using NTC Income & the Precept to cover.
- Examples of additional 2024/25 budgeted expenditure where variance over 15%
- Variance without this additional expenditure

Cost Centre	2023/24	2024/25	% Variance
<b>Staff Costs - Salaries, Employers NI &amp; Pension</b>	512,624	591,744	15.43%
Staff Costs: Additional <b>£79,120</b> , not to support changes in 2024/25, but due to the predicted deficit in 2023/24. (2023/24 predicted actuals £570,392, £47,768 over budget due to maternity & long-term sickness cover, a f/t replacing a p/t post & a new post). The 2023/24 actual staff costs were £571,090. The 2024/25 budget of £591,744 against the predicted actuals of £570,392 gives a 5.59% variance.			
Variance without additional expenditure	512,624	512,624	0.00%
<b>Staff Expenses &amp; Agency/Locum Cover</b>	7,000	22,000	214.29%
Agency/Locum Cover: 2023/24: £0. 2024/25: <b>£15,000</b> in case of extended H&S support (£7,569 for 8 weeks self-employment contract) and/or unexpected staff cover. Agreed following unexpected costs in 2023/24 of £30,250 for 3 months locum CEO cover, plus self-employment H&S contract (£5,679 for initial 6-week period) to cover H&S work not covered due to sickness.			
Variance without additional expenditure	7,000	7,000	0.00%
<b>Central, P&amp;R, Grants &amp; Corporate Services</b>	209,600	232,700	11.02%
<b>Town Hall &amp; Weddings</b>	74,830	111,724	49.30%
Energy: Additional <b>£2,000</b> , 20% increase in 2024/25 for Energy Refurbishment: 2023/24: £0. 2024/25: <b>£25,200</b> set aside for required works. Weddings: 2024/25: <b>£1,300</b> EMR towards 3-yr wedding license.			
Variance without additional expenditure	74,830	83,224	11.22%
<b>Cemeteries</b>	120,260	124,037	3.14%
<b>Markets</b>	27,900	35,300	26.52%
Electric Pop-ups: 2024/25 <b>£7,500</b> set aside to undertake repairs & bring into safe operation.			
Variance without additional expenditure	27,900	27,800	-0.36%
<b>War Memorial</b>	3,500	4,300	22.86%
Cleaning: 2024-25 additional <b>£800</b> for increased cleaning.			
Variance without additional expenditure	3,500	3,500	0.00%
<b>Footway Lighting</b>	27,000	32,500	20.37%
Repairs: 2024-25 additional <b>£6,000</b> for repairs and upgrading lamps to LED.			
Variance without additional expenditure	27,000	26,500	-1.85%
<b>Clock House</b>	1,850	1,750	-5.41%
<b>Street Furniture</b>	73,400	75,600	3.00%
<b>Recreation Grounds &amp; Play Areas</b>	141,850	150,093	5.81%
<b>Victoria Park</b>	141,250	193,050	36.67%
Lime Trees: <b>£25,000</b> to pollard in 2024/25. Moving forward, annual budget towards an EMR. PWLb Loan: Whilst not taken up, <b>£15,750</b> set aside towards PWLB loan in 2024/25 budget for café. Repairs: Budget increased by <b>£8,000</b> in 2024/25 due to vandalism.			
Variance without additional expenditure	141,250	144,300	2.16%
<b>Open Spaces</b>	87,110	103,660	19.00%
Additional Land Maintenance & Dog Bin Collections: <b>£9,750</b> set aside in 2024/25 to maintain land taking over from West Berks.			
Variance without additional expenditure	87,110	93,910	7.81%
<b>Floral &amp; Trees</b>	49,450	73,400	48.43%
Tree Surveys: <b>£20,000</b> in 2024/25 for Tree Surveys (plus £5,000 from reserves). Required every 5 years, moving forward, annual budget towards an EMR.			
Variance without additional expenditure	49,450	53,400	7.99%
<b>Newbury in Bloom</b>	4,500	4,500	0.00%
<b>Allotments</b>	39,700	37,015	-6.76%
<b>Wharf Toilets</b>	17,000	17,750	4.41%
<b>Grounds Maintenance Vehicle</b>	0	9,774	
Grounds Maintenance Vehicle: 5-yr lease in 2024/25 at an estimated cost of <b>£9,744</b> per annum			
Variance without additional expenditure	0	9,774	0.00%
<b>CPAC &amp; Civic</b>	19,400	17,925	-7.60%
<b>Planning &amp; Highways</b>	17,000	19,000	11.76%
<b>Budgeted Expenditure from NTC Income &amp; Precept</b>	<b>1,575,224</b>	<b>1,857,822</b>	17.94%
NTC Income	302,345	330,870	
<b>Budgeted Expenditure - NTC Income = Precept</b>	<b>1,272,879</b>	<b>1,526,952</b>	<b>19.96%</b>
<b>Excluding these additional expenditures gives a precept variance of 1.47%</b>	<b>1,282,897</b>	<b>1,301,788</b>	<b>1.47%</b>

Explanation of Variances - Receipts - 2023-24 to 2024-25				
2023/24 (£)	2024/25 (£)	Variance (£)	Variance (%)	Reason
Income streams with a variance less than 15%				
203,779.45	200,735.70	-3,043.75	-1.49	<b>Income streams, each with a variance less than 15% :</b> E.g. suite lease income, market income, allotment income etc.
Income streams with a variance greater than 15%				
13,389.06	43,609.06	30,220.00	225.71	<b>Bank Accounts Interest:</b> Funds moved mid 2023/24 from Current Ac with £0.00 interest, to Instant Access and Fixed Term Interest Accounts with the purpose of generating interest.
20,415.41	27,072.74	6,657.33	32.61	<b>CCLA Interest:</b> Investment doubled from £250,000 to £500,000 mid 2023-24. Hence additional interest within 2024/25.
4.21	4.84	0.63	25.00	<b>Shares/Dividend Income:</b> High % due to sum being so small.
6,878.00	0.00	-6,878.00	-100.00	<b>Grants - NDP:</b> No grants requested in 2024/25
400.00	1,400.00	1,000.00	250.00	<b>Donations:</b> All funds, the £400 in 2023/24 & the £1,400 in 2024/25 were donations received towards D-Day commemorations - 6th June 2024.
2,205.00	3,523.33	1,318.33	59.77	<b>Weddings:</b> Increased Weddings year on year - a developing offer.
30.00	495.34	465.34	1,550.00	<b>Cemetery Income - New Town Road:</b> Closed Cemetery. 2023/24: Photography fee. 2023/24 interment of ashes in existing grave & associated fees.
72,387.18	60,907.93	-11,479.25	-15.86	<b>Cemetery Income - Shaw:</b> Open Cemetery. Request for burials and interments varies year-on-year. Variance also relates to an increased trend for the interment of ashes rather than burials (at a lower cost) .
0.00	3,139.85	3,139.85		<b>Grant:</b> One-off grant from West Berks to purchase new dog bins
4,354.00	0.00	-4,354.00	-100.00	<b>Café:</b> Not open in 2024/25 due to remodelling & refurbishment - No income.
266,952.53	54,113.44	-212,839.09	-79.73	<b>CIL:</b> Annual variance - West Berks planning related.
25.00	0.00	-25.00	-100.00	<b>Wayleave Income:</b> Usually sent to us automatically - substation on NTC land. Following up.
1,532.00	0.00	-1,532.00	-100.00	<b>Recreation Ground Bookings:</b> Little Kickers bookings in 2023/24 only.
0.00	234.00	234.00		<b>Receipt to cover professional fees:</b> Agreed receipt from contractor to cover contract amendment costs.
<b>592,351.84</b>	<b>395,236.23</b>	<b>-197,115.61</b>	<b>-33.28</b>	

## Fixed Assets - 2023-24 to 2024-25 Variance Explained

<b>Fixed Assets - 31/03/24</b>	<b>6,134,571</b>
<u>Assets - Added in 2024/25:</u>	
Office Equipment - Desk & Chairs	1,159
Office Printer/Copier	3,805
Town Hall Equipment	717
IT Equipment	4,287
Victoria Park - new surface & installation of new gym equipment	18,509
Victoria Park - Lime Tree Avenue Lights Upgrade	6,756
Civic Responsibility - Full Town Crier Livery	4,298
Grounds Maintenance Tools & Equipment	1,386
Footway Lighting Upgrades	13,010
Allotment Fencing	860
Shaw Cemetery - steel gas cage and metal gate	740
Rec Ground Changing Rooms - 2 steel doors, 2 steel mesh covers & steel electric box cover	2,022
2 x solar power duck food dispensers from The Ducks Initiative	1
Wharf Toilets - 2 new Nayex devices to enable card payments + flood light	2,805
Street Furniture - Dog, Waste & Recycle Bins	7,118
Grounds Maintenance Vehicle	36,330
Grounds Maintenance Vehicle - equipment	211
	<b>104,014</b>
<u>Assets - Removed 2024/25</u>	
Splash Park Maintenance Room - Equipment	-793
 <u>Assets Review 2024/25 - Added retrospectively</u>	
Victoria Park - Newbury Bowls Club - leased	1
Victoria Park - Bandstand - leased	1
Shaw Cemetery Office - leased	1
Shaw Cemetery Container	7,200
Town Hall - computer for screen in reception	250
Victoria Park - Splash Park Maintenance Room	30,000
Victoria Park - Pond - concrete with liner	150,000
Playgrounds - Play equipment new seats & handles	842
Wharf Toilets - Work Bench & Vice	394
	<b>188,689</b>
<b>Fixed Assets - 31/03/25</b>	<b>6,426,481</b>

## WHAT SMALLER AUTHORITIES NEED TO DO TO ADVERTISE THE PERIOD DURING WHICH ELECTORS AND INTERESTED PERSONS MAY EXERCISE RIGHTS RELATING TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) and the [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) require that:

- 1) The accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested, during a period of 30 working days set by the smaller authority and including the first 10 working days of July.
- 2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) starts with the day on which the period for the exercise of public rights is treated as having been commenced i.e. the day following the day on which all of the obligations in paragraph (3) below have been fulfilled.
- 3) The responsible financial officer for a relevant authority must, on behalf of that authority, publish (**which must include publication on the authority's website**):
  - a) the Accounting Statements (i.e. Section 2 of either Form 2 or 3, whichever is relevant, of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)), accompanied by:
    - i) a declaration, signed by that officer to the effect that the status of the Accounting Statements are unaudited and that the Accounting Statements as published may be subject to change;
    - ii) the Annual Governance Statement (i.e. Section 1 of either Form 2 or Form 3, whichever is relevant, of the AGAR); and
  - b) a statement that sets out—
    - i) the period for the exercise of public rights;
    - ii) details of the manner in which notice should be given of an intention to inspect the accounting records and other documents;
    - iii) the name and address of the local auditor;
    - iv) the provisions contained in section 26 (inspection of documents etc.) and section 27 (right to make objections at audit) of the Act, as they have effect in relation to the authority in question;

## HOW DO YOU DO IT?

- 1) You will meet statutory requirements if you fully and accurately complete the notice of public rights pro forma in this document, and publish (**including publication on the smaller authority's website**) the following documents, the day before the public rights period commences:
  - a) the approved Sections 1 and 2 of either Form 2 or 3, whichever is relevant to your smaller authority, of the AGAR; and
  - b) the completed Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return. Please note that we have pre-completed it with the following suggested dates: Tuesday 3 June – Monday 14 July 2025. (The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Tuesday 1 July – Monday 11 August 2025); and
  - c) the notes which accompany the Notice (Local authority accounts: a summary of your rights).

Where the authority has answered 'No' to any assertions on Section 1, as stated on the face of Section 1 of the AGAR, a sufficiently detailed explanation of the reasons must be published with the AGAR on the authority's website.

Smaller authority name: **\_Newbury Town Council**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION  
OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE &  
ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN**

**ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27  
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

NOTICE	NOTES
<p><b>1. Date of announcement (a) ___Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025_____</b></p> <p><b>2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.</b></p> <p><b>Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2025, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</b></p> <p>(b) Liz Manship - Responsible Financial Officer Newbury Town Council The Old Town Hall, Market Place. RG14 5AA Tel: 01635 35486 E-mail: <a href="mailto:towncouncil@newbury.gov.uk">towncouncil@newbury.gov.uk</a></p> <p>commencing on (c) ___Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025_____</p> <p>and ending on (d) ___Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2025_____</p> <p><b>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and</li><li>• The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority.</li></ul> <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p><b>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:</b></p> <p><b>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team)</b> <b>15 Westferry Circus</b> <b>Canary Wharf</b> <b>London E14 4HD</b> <a href="mailto:sba@pkf-l.com">sba@pkf-l.com</a></p> <p><b>5. This announcement is made by (e) Liz Manship</b> <b>Responsible Financial Officer.</b></p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

## LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.

### The basic position

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) (the Act) governs the work of auditors appointed to smaller authorities. This summary explains the provisions contained in Sections 26 and 27 of the Act. The Act and the [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) also cover the duties, responsibilities and rights of smaller authorities, other organisations and the public concerning the accounts being audited.

As a local elector, or an interested person, you have certain legal rights in respect of the accounting records of smaller authorities. As an interested person you can inspect accounting records and related documents. If you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them. You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the smaller authority form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.

### The right to inspect the accounting records

Any interested person can inspect the accounting records, which includes but is not limited to local electors. You can inspect the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records. You can copy all, or part, of these records or documents. Your inspection must be about the accounts, or relate to an item in the accounts. You cannot, for example, inspect or copy documents unrelated to the accounts, or that include personal information (Section 26 (6) – (10) of the Act explains what is meant by personal information). You cannot inspect information which is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is information which would prejudice commercial confidentiality if it was released to the public and there is not, set against this, a very strong reason in the public interest why it should nevertheless be disclosed.

When smaller authorities have finished preparing accounts for the financial year and approved them, they must publish them (including on a website). There must be a 30 working day period, called the 'period for the exercise of public rights', during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounting records. Smaller authorities must tell the public, including advertising this on their website, that the accounting records and related documents are available to inspect. By arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records. You may have to pay a copying charge. The 30 working day period must include a common period of inspection during which all smaller authorities' accounting records are available to inspect. This will be 1-14 July 2025 for 2024/25 accounts. The advertisement must set out the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, how you can communicate to the smaller authority that you wish to inspect the accounting records and related documents, the name and address of the auditor, and the relevant legislation that governs the inspection of accounts and objections.

### The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records

**You should first ask your smaller authority** about the accounting records, since they hold all the details. If you are a local elector, your right to ask questions of the external auditor is enshrined in law. However, while the auditor will answer your questions where possible, they are not always obliged to do so. For example, the question might be better answered by another organisation, require investigation beyond the auditor's remit, or involve disproportionate cost (which is borne by the local taxpayer). Give your smaller authority the opportunity first to explain anything in the accounting records that you are unsure about. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you can question the external auditor about the accounting records.

The law limits the time available for you formally to ask questions. This must be done in the period for the exercise of public rights, so let the external auditor know your concern as soon as possible. The advertisement or notice that tells you the accounting records are available to inspect will also give the period for the exercise of public rights during which you may ask the auditor questions, which here

means formally asking questions under the Act. You can ask someone to represent you when asking the external auditor questions.

Before you ask the external auditor any questions, inspect the accounting records fully, so you know what they contain. Please remember that you cannot formally ask questions, under the Act, after the end of the period for the exercise of public rights. You may ask your smaller authority other questions about their accounts for any year, at any time. But these are not questions under the Act.

You can ask the external auditor questions about an item in the accounting records for the financial year being audited. However, your right to ask the external auditor questions is limited. The external auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions. The external auditor cannot answer questions about policies, finances, procedures or anything else unless it is directly relevant to an item in the accounting records. Remember that your questions must always be about facts, not opinions. To avoid misunderstanding, we recommend that you always put your questions in writing.

### **The right to make objections at audit**

You have inspected the accounting records and asked your questions of the smaller authority. Now you may wish to object to the accounts on the basis that an item in them is in your view unlawful or there are matters of wider concern arising from the smaller authority's finances. A local government elector can ask the external auditor to apply to the High Court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, or to issue a report on matters which are in the public interest. You must tell the external auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you think the item is unlawful, or why you think that a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide the external auditor with the evidence you have to support your objection. Disagreeing with income or spending does not make it unlawful. To object to the accounts you must write to the external auditor stating you want to make an objection, including the information and evidence below and you must send a copy to the smaller authority. The notice must include:

- confirmation that you are an elector in the smaller authority's area;
- why you are objecting to the accounts and the facts on which you rely;
- details of any item in the accounts that you think is unlawful; and
- details of any matter about which you think the external auditor should make a public interest report.

Other than it must be in writing, there is no set format for objecting. You can only ask the external auditor to act within the powers available under the [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#).

### **A final word**

You may not use this 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor. Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved, they will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. They may also decide not to consider an objection if they think that it is frivolous or vexatious, or if it repeats an objection already considered. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision not to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, you will have to pay for the action yourself.

For more detailed guidance on public rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication [Local authority accounts: A guide to your rights](#) are available from the NAO website.

If you wish to contact your authority's appointed external auditor please write to the address in paragraph 4 of the *Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return*.

Mayor of Newbury's Benevolent Fund

Governing Document & Constitution

Date of Constitution (last amended): June 2024

### **1. Name**

The name of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation is The Mayor of Newbury's Charitable Trust

### **2. National location of principal office**

The principal office of the Mayor of Newbury's Charitable Trust is based at:

Mayor's Parlour, Newbury Town Hall, Market Place, Newbury, England, RG14 5AA

### **3. Purpose & Objectives**

The objective of the Mayor of Newbury's Charitable Trust is to:

- (1) Oversee the fundraising for a charitable organization, as decided by the Mayor of Newbury.
- (2) To act as a key link to ensure a joined up and co-ordinated working relationship between the Mayor of Newbury's Office and the Mayor's Charitable Trust for the Civic/Municipal Year.

The Civic Mayor may determine one organisation that he or she wishes to support during their mayoral year as agreed at the Annual Meeting of Newbury Town Council.

Organisations must be engaged in activities which benefit residents of Newbury

The Mayor's Charitable Trust shall not be used to provide financial support to:

- (1) Individuals
- (2) Political groups or organisations promoting political beliefs
- (3) Projects with no community or charitable element

### **4. Powers**

The CIO has power to do anything which is calculated to further its objectives or is conducive or incidental to doing so.

### **5. Application of income**

- (1) The income of the CIO must be applied solely towards the promotion of the charity objectives.
- (2) None of the income of the CIO may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividends, bonus or otherwise by way of profit to any member of the CIO.

### **6. Benefits and payments to charity trustees and connected persons**

- (1) General Provisions

No charity trustee or connected person may:

- a. Buy or receive any goods or services from the CIO on terms preferential to those applicable to members of the public
- b. Receive any remuneration from the CIO
- c. Receive and other financial benefit from the CIO

- (2) Scope and powers permitting trustees' or connected persons' benefits
  - a. A charity trustee or connected person may enter into a contract for the supply of services, or of goods that are supplied in connection with the provision of services to the CIO.
  - b. A charity trustee or connected person may take part in the normal trading and fundraising activities of the CIO on the same terms as members of the public.
- (3) Payment for the supply of goods only
  - a. A charity trustee may be reimbursed with charity funds if they use their personal funds to supply for the CIO's charitable activities

## **7. Conflicts of interest and conflicts of loyalty**

A charity trustee must:

- (1) Declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which they have in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the CIO, or in any transaction or agreement entered into by the CIO which has not previously been declared; and
- (2) Absent themselves from any discussions of the charity trustees in which it is possible that a conflict of interest will arise.

Any charity trustee absenting themselves from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the charity trustees on the matter.

## **8. Liability of members to contribute to the assets of the CIO if it is wound up.**

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

## **9. Charity Trustees**

### **(1) Functions and duties of charity trustees**

The charity trustees shall manage the affairs of the CIO and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of the CIO. It is the duty of each charity trustee:

- a. To exercise their powers and perform their functions in their capacity as a trustee of the CIO in the way they decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO; and
- b. To exercise, in the performance of those functions, such care and skills as is reasonable in the circumstances having regard in particular to:
  - (i) Any special knowledge or experience they hold themselves to having; and
  - (ii) If they act as a charity trustee of the CIO in the course of a business or profession, to any special knowledge or experience that it is reasonable to expect a person action in the course of that kind of business or profession.

### **(2) Eligibility for trusteeship**

- a. Every charity trustee must be a natural person
- b. No individual may be appointed as a charity trustee of the CIO if they are under the age of 18 years.

- c. No one is entitled to act as a charity trustee whether on appointment or on any re-appointment until they have expressly acknowledged their acceptance to the office of charity trustees for the CIO.

(3) Number of charity trustees

- a. There should be not less than 2 appointed trustees; and no more than one ex officio trustee
- b. There must be at least THREE charity trustees. If the number falls below this minimum, the remaining trustees may act only to call a meeting of the charity to appoint a new charity trustee.
- c. The maximum number of charity trustees that can be appointed is as provided in sub-clause (a) of this clause. No trustee appointment may be made in excess of these provisions.

(4) First charity trustees

The charity trustees are as follows:

- Mayor of Newbury
- Deputy Mayor of Newbury
- Civic Manager

## **10. Appointment of charity trustees**

(1) Ex Officio Trustee

- a. The Civic Manger shall automatically be an “ex-officio” trustee, for as long as they hold their employment with Newbury Town Council.

(2) Nominated Trustees

- a. Newbury Town Council will appoint two charity trustees in the form of the Mayor of Newbury and Deputy Mayor of Newbury.
- b. Any appointment must be made at a meeting held according to the ordinary practice of the appointing body. This is usually the Annual Meeting of Newbury Town Council.
- c. The appointment will be effective from the start of the Town Council’s municipal year to the end of the municipal year.

## **11. Information for new charity trustees**

The Civic Manger will make available to each new charity trustee, on or before their appointment:

- a. A copy of the current version of this constitution; and
- b. A copy of the CIO’s latest Annual Report and statement of accounts

These documents will be presented to the Full Council meeting taking place in Summer of the municipal year following the Annual Meeting of the Council.

## **12. Retirement and removal of charity trustees**

(1) A charity trustee ceases to hold office if he or she:

- a. retires by notifying the Town Council in writing;

- b. vacates their role at Newbury Town Council;
- c. dies;
- d. in the written opinion, given to the company, of a registered medical practitioner treating that person, has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a director and may remain so for more than three months;
- e. is disqualified from acting as a charity trustee by virtue of sections 178-180 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision).

Any person retiring as a charity trustee is eligible for reappointment.

### **13. Delegation by charity trustees**

The charity trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a parent committee (Civic Pride, Arts & Culture) or Full Council, and, if they do, they shall determine the terms and conditions on which the delegation is made. The charity trustees may at the time alter those terms and conditions, or revoke the delegation.

### **14. Associate Membership of the CIO**

(1) All elected members of Newbury Town Council are classed as associate members of the CIO.

(2) Associate membership does not count as legal membership of the CIO.

(3) Associate members do:

- a. Have admission to be a part of the delivery of CIO activities & events
- b. Have the right to take part in the normal trading and fundraising activities of the CIO on the same terms as members of the public.
- c. Have rights to voice their opinion when sitting on Council committees in which activities of the CIO have been delegated.

### **15. General Administration**

The Committee shall be supported administratively by the Civic Manger. The duties of the administrative aspects of the CIO in this respect include:

- (1) Agreement of events and activities for the municipal year
- (2) To raise the profile of the charity,
- (3) Act as a liaison between the CIO and the charity the Mayor has chosen to support.
- (4) To organise and execute fundraising events during the Mayor's municipal year.
- (5) Provide financial administration and oversee the CIO's bank account.

### **16. Financial Administration**

Financial administration will be provided by the Civic Manager.

All monies collected (cash or cheque) and donations will be recorded, independently verified, and banked within 3 working days.

Bank reconciliations will be undertaken every 6-8 weeks (minimum)

The Civic Mayor shall be responsible for authorising all expenditure from the Mayor's Charity Account of over £1000.00.

All trustees will act as signatories for the Mayor of Newbury's Charitable Trust bank account.

Financial statements providing details of all income received and all expenditure incurred shall be produced at the end of the Civic Mayor's term in office. This record shall be made available for inspection by any member of the Council or any member of the public.

The Mayor of Newbury's Charitable Trust Annual Accounts should be presented at a Newbury Town Council meeting of Full Council.

The Mayor of Newbury Charitable Trust shall be subject to the Council's internal audit arrangements.

#### **17. Accounting records, accounts, annual reports and returns, register maintenance**

(1) The charity trustees must comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 with regard to the keeping of accounting records, to the preparation and scrutiny of statements of account, and to the preparation of annual reports and returns. The statements of account, reports and returns must be sent to the Charity Commission, regardless of the income of the CIO, within 10 months of the financial year end.

(2) The charity trustees must comply with their obligation to inform the Commission within 28 days of any change in the particulars of the CIO entered on the Central Register of Charities.

#### **18. Voluntary winding up or dissolution**

(1) As provided by the Dissolution Regulations, the CIO may be dissolved by resolution of its members. Any decision by the members to wind up or dissolve the CIO can only be made:

a. By a resolution agreed in writing and recorded in the minutes at a meeting of Full Council.

(2) Subject to the payment of all the CIO's debts:

a. Any resolution for the winding up of the CIO, or for the dissolution of the CIO without winding up, may contain a provision directing how any remaining assets of the CIO shall be applied.

b. If the resolution does not contain such a provision, the charity trustees must decide how any remaining assets of the CIO shall be applied.

c. In either case, the remaining assets must be applied for charitable purposes the same as or similar to those of the CIO.

# Newbury Town Council Strategy Key Performance Indicators

## Section 1 – Help make Newbury a unique, welcoming, safe and well cared for town.

A. Provide outstanding parks, playgrounds and public spaces.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Use of frequent and mild exercise	Based on numbers of users of football pitches based on booked matches	Victoria Park: number of under 9's and number 7's. 14 players for home team plus 14 away players (additional players) 28 per match plus 3 match officials
		Wash Common: 14 Players (per home team), then 14 away players for each booking.
		City Recreation Park: 14 Players (per home team), then 14 away players for each booking.
	Park Run figures (once up and running)	Number of participants annually.
	Tennis Court	Number of Court Bookings – (2 individuals per booking)
	People playing bowls regularly	Number of members of Newbury Bowls Club
Number of games each season		
Victoria Park Café Development	Completion of Victoria Park Café redevelopment	Tendering for construction provider
Park improvements	Installation of gym facilities	Report on improvement
	Improvement of Play Park Equipment	Report on improvements – set target at CS committee for number of parks improved on.
	Other Park improvements	Report on improvements
Park Events	Band Stand Summer Music events	Number of bookings over summer
	Community events	Such as Fun day (number of participants) VE Day etc

B. Run vibrant markets.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Vibrant Market	Average proportion of market places	(agree capacity of market and monitor number of stalls quarterly basis)
Vibrant Market	Delivery of Charter Market that is cost neutral to the taxpayer.	Annual report on market place financial accounts
To coordinate market activities	Achieve market authority status	Creation of Newbury Markets Branding
Vibrant Markets	Deliver themed quarterly markets	Report on impact of themed markets
Vibrant Markets	Updating marketplace infrastructure	
Vibrant Markets	Number of Markets run each year	Figure of total number of markets – Charter, Farmers, Artisan etc.
Vibrant Markets	Encourage a circular Economy (see section 3B for details)	

C. Run thriving allotments.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Number of residents exercising through Regular Gardening	Numbers Regularly gardening from HACT Social Value Figures	Based on total number of allotment tenants.
Thriving allotments	Achieve 80% occupancy rate	Based on total number of available plots for let.
Allotment associations	Establishment of Allotment associations in each allotment site	NTC to establish an allotment association SLA. Each allotment to have its own association by end of 2025/26.
Feedback from allotment tenants	Feedback from associations	Conduct ... surveys per year.
	Annual Allotment tenant meetings	
	Annual Stewards Meeting	
	Councillor Site Visits	
Thriving Allotments	Annual Allotment awards	Four categories – report from annual report

D. Provide well-kept and peaceful cemeteries.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Extend the life span of Shaw Cemetery	Explore ground quality to estimate cemetery capacity	Report from Surveyors
Extend the life span of shaw cemetery	Review Cremation offer and use of Columbarium's as an alternative to interring	To produce NTC Cemetery Strategy Plan for next 10 years.
Ensure that cemeteries are safe and well kept	That H&S checks are made each quarter and that any issues are acted upon within a timely manner	Quarterly reports presented to Community Services Committee
Well Kept Cemeteries	Complaints received per quarter and complaints resolved within.	Ensure that 100% of complaints are resolved within target.
NTC remain a burial authority	Develop cemetery strategy	To produce NTC Cemetery Strategy Plan for next 10 years.
	Purchase additional land for use as cemetery	

E. Ensure our public and historic buildings are properly cared for and well-used.

Goal	Metric	Figures
NTC to take active role in the protection of historic buildings	Number of properties removed from NTC's the Section 215 list	
Closer working relationship with West Berks Council	Explore potential to take on devolved powers	By end of 25/26 produce recommendations for council
NTC to develop a holistic approach to protecting historic buildings in Newbury	Development and adoption of strategy	By end of 25/26 adoption of heritage strategy linked to NDP/Town Plan documents
To ensure that the Town Hall is in a good state for the next 100 years	Development of town hall strategy	By mid-25/26 implementation of Town Hall Conservation Plan
	Development of schedule of works for the Town Hall focusing on repairs and improvements	

F. Help deliver a well-presented town with high quality public amenities that support well-being, safety and visitors.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Newbury is a safe and attractive destination	Achievement of accreditations such as Green Flags and <a href="#">Purple Flag</a>	Number of Parks with Green Flag Awards  Newbury in Bloom awards and outcome of Britain in Bloom entry
	Town Centre Working Groups	Number of meetings, outcome of meetings
Wharf Toilets	Wharf Toilet improvements	Installation of card reader – (monitor income compared to previous years)
Parks	Achievement of Green flag status	Number of parks with green flag status
Accessibility	Accessible toilets	Completion of accessible toilet in Victoria Park

## Section 2: To be the Voice of the communities in Newbury

A. Provide a strong voice for Newbury by lobbying and working with WBC, Newbury BID, Newbury Flood Forum and others.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Strong voice for lobbying	Supported the flood forum to become an established independent community organisation	
	.....	
Town Centre Partnerships	Attending Talk on town – Civic Services Manager and Councillors	
Newbury Developments	Planning and Highways Committee.	Annual report from P&H on applications. Number of planning applications commented on each quarter (object, support, no comment)
	Development of Neighbourhood Development Plan	
Newbury Heritage	Heritage Working Group – acts as a mechanism to recognise and protect Newbury’s Heritage	Number of blue plaques awarded.

B. To promote, represent and support the views of the communities in Newbury.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Local Democracy Week	Reach of local democracy events	Numbers of participants and number of educational establishments
Councillor engagements	On the Steps	Number of on the steps sessions achieved.
		Number of members of the public engagements on the steps
	Attendance at Community events	Number of Councillors and events attended
Berkshire Youth	Support to Berkshire Youth	Number of Councillors attending Berkshire Youth

C. Inspiring Civic events and Mayoral calendar

Goal	Metric	Figures
Mayoral engagements	Mayoral Engagements	Number of Mayoral Engagements on quarterly basis. Number of events linked to Strategy Goal areas
Civic events	NTC Led events	VE Day, Remembrance Day, Mayor Making, Family Fun Day

D. Enjoyable and inclusive community events

Goal	Metric	Figures
Inclusive events	Number of events	Family fun day, Fun Fair, VE Day Celebrations, etc.
Civic Events	Number of civic events	Remembrance Day, Mayor Making, Civic Awards, Newbury In Bloom, etc

E. Celebrate and recognise individual and community achievements.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Recognising Civic Involvement	Civic Awards Ceremony	Number of categories, number of nominations, list awards
	Newbury in Bloom/Thames and Chiltern in Bloom	

	Allotment awards	Number of categories, number of nominations, list awards
	Letters of Congratulations	Number and type of letter issued

F. Encourage and support contributions to our public and community life.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Recognising Civic Involvement	Civic Awards Ceremony	Number of categories and number of nominations.
Community Volunteering	Local businesses and community groups volunteering	Number of volunteering days on council projects

G. Celebrate and encourage appreciation of public art and Newbury's heritage.

Goal	Metric	Figures
Public art	Art in the Park	Number of Artists displaying
	Graffiti Art Festival	Establish an arts festival in Victoria Park
Heritage	Heritage Working Group	Number of Blue Plaques awarded.
		Successful section 215 interventions

H. Establish a Consultation Panel to hear the views of the diverse communities of Newbury.

Goal	Metric	Figures
To Establish a Consultation Panel	Engage with Community United to establish panel	Outcomes from consultation panel.
		Number of consultations per year

### Section 3: Take actions to address the climate emergency.

A. Ensure the activities of the Town Council are carbon neutral by 2030 or before.

Goal	Metric	Figure
NTC to achieve carbon reduction	Reduce Carbon footprint by 7 tonnes every year:	Figures presented at CS committee on ... basis

	Base Line 2018/19 – 68.12 tonnes 2022/23 – 38.43 tonnes	
Improving Energy Efficiency	Switching Street Lighting to LED lights.	Set target for proportion of lights to be switched each year
Reduce dependency on Gas	Elimination of Gas Supply to Council Facilities	By end of 2025/26 Town Hall to be gas free
Development of Climate Emergency Strategy.	Community initiatives	
	Community energy company	
Community Initiatives	NTC to explore feasibility to establish a Community Energy Company	Explore feasibility of an Archimedes Screw at West Mills
		Explore establishment of solar panels on council properties.
	The Climate Emergency Sub-Committee to establish a 10-year strategy	By end of 2025/26 strategy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of community energy company</li> <li>• Use of renewable energy provision across NTC facilities</li> <li>• Development of partnerships with research institutes</li> <li>• Development of circular economy initiatives.</li> </ul> Develop community initiatives

B. Actively encourage and support actions that will make Newbury as a whole more environmentally sustainable

Goal	Metric	Figures
To encourage biodiversity	Tree planting ratio	Progress against targets
Green Working Group		
Improve the energy efficiency of NTC Buildings	Complete range of measures to improve the	Replace ... radiators in Town Hall, with ... radiators in 2025/26

	energy ratings of council building	Implementation of solar panels across all NTC facilities
		Where improvements can be made link to Social Value figure
Supporting Green Initiatives	Green Grant Awards	Outcomes of grant awards
Community Initiatives	Encourage research projects	Partnership with Reading University
		Climate grants to community groups
Circular economy initiatives	Encourage local businesses to use the Market	Number of businesses using market stalls within ... miles of Newbury
		Businesses using produce developed within .... Miles of Newbury.

#### **Section 4: Provide focused support for young people, the elderly, minorities and the vulnerable**

- A. Provide funding and other support to organisations which support youth work in Newbury

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>Figures</b>
Supporting young people of Newbury	Grant Awards to Berkshire Youth	Annual report to NTC
	Volunteering at Berkshire Youth	Number of councillors volunteering and number of events
	Mayors Charity	Funds raised over the year

- B. Support initiatives to make Newbury a more inclusive town

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Metric</b>	<b>Figures</b>
Make Newbury more inclusive	Grant awards to Citizens Advice	Annual report to NTC
	Grant awards to Community Initiative	
Make Newbury More inclusive	Mayor's Fund	Support to local charities/community organisations

	Gay Pride	Flying of Gay Pride Flag outside Town Hall  Support for Gay Pride in Victoria Park
	Community United Cricket Festival	Impact report of festival

C. Work with local organisations which support the elderly and the homeless in Newbury

Goal	Metric	Figures
Supporting the elderly	Mayors Festive Tea Party	Numbers attending the Festive Tea Party
	Mayoral Engagements	Number of community groups engaged with
Accessibility	Ensuring that all Council Facilities are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments.	By 2025/26 ensure that audit of all Council facilities
		By end of 2025/26 have developed an action plan to ensure all facilities are accessible.

## Forward Works Programme

Work Programme for Full Council Meetings for the Municipal Year 2025/26.

Standing Items on each (ordinary meeting) agenda:

1. Apologies
2. Declarations and Dispensations
3. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting
4. Questions/ Petitions from members of the Public
5. Questions/ Petitions from Members of the Council
6. Town Mayor's Report
7. The Leader's Report
8. The Chief Executive Officer's Report
9. Minutes from Committees

Scheduled Council Business	
27 January 2025	<b>Berkshire Youth Presentation</b> Review of Town Council Strategy 2025/26 Precept Schedule of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2025/26 <b>Financial Regulations</b>
07 May 2025	Nomination and Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor Election of Leader and Deputy Leader To nominate the membership of each Committee/Sub Committee for 2025/26 Saturday Surgeries Review and Schedule for 25/26 Reports from Outside Bodies
Q2 2025/26	24 June End of Year Statutory Accounts To receive the Annual Return, Approve each section of the Annual Governance Statement and adopt the accounts and the Mayor to sign them, To note the date for the exercise of electors' rights Review terms of refence and memberships of any working groups that the council wishes to appoint To receive any reports from School Link Councillors

	<p>To receive any reports from the Council's representation on outside bodies</p> <p>To review the Council's Standing orders, if required</p>
Q3 2025/26	<p>Local Democracy Working Group: a verbal update on LDW from the Chair of the Local Democracy Working Group</p> <p>Budget for 2025/26 Councillors are invited to make the Leader of the Council and the RFO aware of any particular projects that may need to be undertaken in 2025/26, so that they may be considered for inclusion in the draft budget and / or service plans and / or project list.</p> <p>Climate Emergency grant</p> <p>Commence Review of Town Council Strategy</p> <p>Cricket Club/ Loose Ends</p>
Q4 2025/26	<p><b>Berkshire Youth Presentation</b></p> <p>Review of Town Council Strategy 2026/27 Precept</p> <p>Schedule of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2026/27</p> <p><b>Financial Regulations</b></p>
Q1 2026/27	<p>Nomination and Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor</p> <p>Election of Leader and Deputy Leader</p> <p>To nominate the membership of each Committee/Sub Committee for 2025/26</p> <p>Saturday Surgeries Review and Schedule for 25/26</p> <p>Reports from Outside Bodies</p> <p>Mayor of Newbury's Charitable Trust</p>