

Minutes of the Zoom online meeting of the Amenities Committee of the New Milton Town Council held on Monday 1 June 2020 at 6.30 pm.

Chairman	p	G R Blunden		
Vice Chairman	p	D E Hawkins		
<u>Councillors</u>	p	M Craze	p	C V Ward
		D A Rice-Mundy	p	A D O'Sullivan
		A W Rice	p	R Murrow
	p	V E Schooling		

In Attendance

Councillors: S Clarke, R Reid, H Wallis-Dowling

Officers:	G Flexman	Town Clerk
	M Jeffries	Estates & Facilities Manager
	J Hayward	Administrator
	S King	Town Development Manager
	S Ramsaywack	Youth Services Manager

The Chairman welcomed councillors, a press representative and three members of the public to the online meeting, together with five officers from the Town Council, and asked attendees to note the online meeting protocols.

Mr Bob Lord referred to recent incidences of ivy-banding and removal of ivy from Town Council trees and asked for consideration to be given to the benefits of ivy, especially as it is a source of shelter for invertebrates and small birds, as well as a food source for wildlife throughout the seasons.

Members noted that ivy is not a parasite and does not normally damage healthy trees.

Mr Lord was also concerned about the recent tree works undertaken by the Council's contractor during the bird-nesting season and a reminder that this is against the law and in contravention of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Mr Alan Watson spoke on behalf of the RNLI to ask about the decision to cancel car boot sales this year.

Representing NMRA, Mr Watson advised the meeting that the Focus Publication is available to view online <http://www.nmra.org.uk/focus-online-2020.html>

Mr Watson then spoke on behalf of New Milton Lions Club to thank the Estates Manager and his team for delivering local food parcels from the New Forest Basics Bank.

Speaking on behalf of the VE75 & VJ75 Steering Committee, Mr Watson confirmed the new date of the Victory Day celebrations on Saturday 5 June 2021 taking place on Barton clifftop.

Mr David Orme offered his services and input to the Green Loop and cycling initiatives.

154. APOLOGIES

Cllrs A Rice and D Rice-Mundy

155. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

156. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman thanked Mr Lord for his comments and confirmed that we do support our environment but the removal of ivy would only have been done on the advice of the tree inspectors and particularly in cases of health and safety risk to the trees. Often, ivy masks the tree's condition.

The Chairman responded to the timing of the tree works and said this would not normally happen but in these unprecedented times needs must.

Responding to Mr Watson, the Chairman confirmed that there is no change to the cancellation of this year's car boot sales, as safe social distancing could not be ensured.

157. MINUTES

The Town Clerk noted that Cllr A Rice was not present at the 14 April meeting.

It was

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 April, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.***

The Minutes would be duly signed in due course.

158. MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE

149 a) The Town Clerk referred to an email received regarding the container at Ballard Lake noting the container is required and would remain in place but possibly camouflaged.

159. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following correspondence received:

- a) An email from Sue Caswell, Chairman of New Milton Twinning Association, noting the French Twinning visitors now hoped to visit in November for Remembrance Day, or if not possible then they would visit in May 2021.
- b) An email from a local resident with concerns about the uneven pathways on the Recreation Ground which the Estates Manager would survey and advise further.
- c) An email from HCC Cllr Fran Carpenter regarding speeding issues on Fernhill Lane, and Becton Lane sent to new Police Sgt Katrina Smith.

Cllr S Clarke confirmed that discussions had taken place regarding speeding issues prior to lockdown and it was hoped that New Milton Speedwatch would soon be operating again with support from the Police and recruitment of volunteers being necessary to enable this to happen.

The Estates Manager added that the SID/SLR summer deployment programme was in place from the first week of June, noting Fernhill Lane is already on the list and Becton Lane will be added.

#### 160. LAND USE REQUESTS

The Town Clerk referred to an email from Cole's Funfair who had hoped to operate from 13-20 July this year but had now cancelled and were looking to visit in July 2021.

#### 161. CYCLING & WALKING IMPROVEMENTS

The Town Development Manager summarised the Green Loop Initiative, being part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman proposed that NFDC undertake the Project Plan and survey of the existing New Milton network with up to £10k funding from CIL monies.

It was then

***RECOMMENDED:***

***That the Town Council provide up to £10k CIL monies towards the Green Loop Project survey work.***

A working group would be set up and interested parties should inform the Town Clerk.

The Chairman confirmed that the consultation process should include all stakeholders in the community as a whole.

The Youth Services Manager referred to the plans for the BMX track and the Youth Club facility. The Chairman said this was still on our agenda for review in the future.

Cllr M Craze referred to the £250m grants available from government for pop-up cycleways and the Chairman suggested the Town Council write to HCC to seek their assistance in achieving this in New Milton.

The Chairman went out of session at 7.09 pm to allow David Orme to confirm his availability to support cycling initiatives in the town and back into session at 7.11 pm.

#### 162. SPORTS SITES ACCESS

The Chairman confirmed that following proposals received from the New Milton Bowls Club together with their Risk Assessments, and following government guidelines and advice from the Bowls England Association, that permission for playing bowls on a restricted basis be granted. The clubhouse would not be open.

Referring to Cricket, Football and Rugby, we would await further government guidance and formal advice from those relevant sports associations in the coming weeks.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Tennis Courts were open with bookings of one court only by telephone.

163. SKATEPARK / PLAYPARKS / MUGA

The Chairman referred to the potential opening of the Skatepark dependant on the public toilets being opened later in the week. This situation would continue to be reviewed to ensure that the appropriate social distancing was in effect.

The playparks and MUGA would remain closed for the time being, until further government advice was received and reviewed.

164. ASHLEY PLAYPARK PROJECT

The Chairman confirmed that use of s.106 contributions had been approved. The working party would meet again soon to confirm the vision and consult with stakeholders. NFDC Planning were supportive of outline plans for the facility, subject to certain caveats.

165. FAWCETTS FIELD

The Estates Manager provided a verbal update on the proposed all electrical heating system together with solar panels noting that this project was in this year's budget.

166. MARKET LAYOUT

The Chairman referred to the street trading operation and the intention for further stalls to be on site from Wednesday 3 June. The Estates Manager confirmed that social distancing measures were in place and activity would be reviewed on the day.

The Chairman referred to shops in Station Road being opened in due course and that NMTC were drafting a plan to enable social distancing on the pavements and allow shoppers and pedestrians safe access. This plan to be agreed with NFDC and HCC.

It was also noted that HCC are enabling social distancing at the bus-stops.

Cllr Murrow passed on a comment from a shop-owner who had noted the "shabby footpaths in the town". *[Note: The NFDC Street Cleaner has been temporarily reassigned to other duties during the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic].*

167. AFTERNOONS OF MUSIC

There were two Afternoons of Music on 2 August and 6 September and the War Memorial Centenary event on 27 September to consider, and in the absence of government guidance at this time on holding outside events, these would be reviewed at the end of June.

168. OTHER UPDATES

The Chairman referred to the New Forest Basics Bank deliveries being undertaken by the Estates Team and thanked them for their enthusiasm for undertaking this task. The Estates Manager said the deliveries were to local schools to support about 50/60 local families and considered it to be very worthwhile and the efforts of the team had been outstanding. Members commended their actions.



Cllr R Reid read out comments from the Basics Bank Chairman, Oliver Stanley, thanking the team for being great ambassadors for the town and doing an excellent job. The meeting gave a round of applause for our key workers.

Cllr H Wallis-Dowling provided an update on the activity of the New Milton Covid Support Group with 300 acts of help carried out by 269 volunteers which included collecting prescriptions, shopping, dog-walking and phone chats with those who were self-isolating and shielding. The meeting gave a round of applause for their efforts.

The Chairman said the two wildflower areas had recently been hydro-seeded and the floral displays would shortly be evident in the town. A general clean-up of the town would be completed, noting that new bunting had recently been put up.

The Administrator referred to the Indian Memorial Event that had been cancelled on 10 July but there were plans to put a “virtual” ceremony online and further details would be provided in due course.

Cllr Mrs V Schooling asked about the bus shelters and the Chairman said this would be included on the agenda for the next Amenities meeting. Other projects had been put on hold during the Coronavirus Covid-19 Pandemic.

Press Representative, Mr Chris March, asked for clarification about the number of stalls attending street trading during lockdown which was 2-4 on site. He also asked about the Ashley Playpark project which included car park works, landscaping improvements, plus new storage area and a youth club building.

#### 169. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13 July 2020 at 6.30 pm. Location will be confirmed on the Agenda.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked members, officers, and the public for attending and closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

#### Distribution:

Town Councillors

Estates & Facilities Manager

District Councillors J L Cleary

County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter and K Mans

New Milton Police

Press

Alan Watson – FOCUS & NMRA