

Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Tuesday 11 July 2023 at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton, BH25 6AS.

Chairman: G R Blunden

Vice-Chairman: p M Craze

Councillors: C Baker B Murrow
p J Baker p A O' Sullivan
D Rice-Mundy p V Schooling
D Hawkins

Councillors: S Clarke

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk M Jeffries – Estates & Facilities Manager
J Bean – Committee and Civic Administrator
L Beardmore – Youth Co-ordinator

The Chairman welcomed Councillors and 4 members of the public.

Period of Public Participation

Mandy Hayes

Mandy Hayes representing the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow spoke firstly about the reports of dog fouling on Barton Common. There were a lot of complaints on social media about it and she had reached out to offer her assistance in setting up a Working Party to address the issue, as the PUPS had done at Ballard. She said she would report back once this is up and running.

She gave Bob Lord's apologies and handed round an information sheet which he had prepared summarising his views on suitable grazing for Ballard Meadow which would be considered at Item 10. His conclusion is that cattle represent the best option.

Sue Conacher and Jackie Ibbotson

Sue Conacher is the Vice-chair of the Youth Trust she came to speak about a Land Use Request for an event called Story Quest. She introduced Jackie Ibbotson who works for Culture in Common one of the partners in the event who advised that Culture in Common is an Arts Council Project with funding for 3 years.

The focus is for arts in the New Forest which is seen as being deprived of the arts. The Culture in Common projects are driven by local residents, who are co-creators. In terms of the Story Quest project, Ballard Meadow has been identified as a good location to base such a project.

A handout relating to the Story Quest project in Gang Warily was shared with the committee and Jackie advised that the story and illustrations had been created by a local resident and that they were looking for a New Milton writer and illustrator to do something similar, perhaps incorporating the fairy doors and other landmarks at Ballard.



Town Council involvement is to grant permission to use the land. The aim of the project is to encourage families to get out together, explore and to read.

24. APOLOGIES

Cllrs C Baker, G Blunden, B Murrow, D E Hawkins and D A Rice-Mundy

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

26. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman thanked Mandy Hayes for all her help. She had recently had complaints about dog mess at Barton and was very glad to hear that is being addressed. She also thanked Mandy for providing Bob Lord's summary relating to grazing to be discussed under item 10.

The Chairman also thanked Sue and Jackie and said that the Story Quest project sounded brilliant and that she agreed Ballard Meadow would lend itself well to the project. This would be discussed under Land Use requests. Councillors spoke in support of this initiative.

27. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee minutes dated 30th May 2023.

It was

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 30 May 2023, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

28. MATTERS ARISING

The Town Clerk confirmed all action points listed had been addressed. The Working Party and Project Group Membership are back on the agenda today. The item relating to Local Nature Reserves has been deferred to the next meeting on 4th September.

Cllr S Clarke advised that he had been at a meeting this morning relating to Youth work and that there had been discussions about funding for outreach work over the summer.

The Town Clerk advised that this was covered by a Land Use request to be discussed at Item 9. There is also a Youth Grant Aid Application seeking a contribution of funds which would be considered by F&GP at their next meeting on 24th July.

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
10	Working Party Membership	11.07.23	All Councillors
11	Project Group Membership	11.07.23	All Councillors
13 a)	NFNPA Toddle Group 26/10/23	Asap	Comms Officer



13 b)	Decline Bowling Club Car Parking request	Already notified	Town Clerk
17	Barton Common Draft Management Plan	26.06.23	Town Council
19	Proposal for Local Nature Reserves	11.07.23	Amenities Committee Members
20	Carrick Way Woodland Management	Asap	NMTC / NFDC

29. WORKING PARTIES

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 1, List of Working Parties, previously circulated.

He advised that he was looking for expressions of interest in particular from the new Councillors, for both Working Parties and Project Groups, and a plan to set up a new Working Party relating to Play areas. The Chairman, Cllr M Craze expressed an interest in joining.

Cllr S Clarke raised the question of the Neighbourhood Plan which needs to be reviewed as it is now 6 years old.

Cllr J Baker advised she will put out feelers for new Cllrs to join Working Parties.

30. PROJECT GROUPS

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 2, List of live and ongoing projects, previously circulated. Once more he had been seeking expressions of interest from the new councillors.

Cllr J Baker had confirmed that she would like to join the Youth Trust and Youth Work project, and again she will put out feelers for new Cllrs to join Project Groups.

31. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to:

- a) A request from NFDC for a Wayleave across Moore Close in order to dispose of foul sewage from their new development there. The Estates Manager advised that he had considered this request and could not see any problem with it, providing it is done correctly. There is a site meeting next Monday and he would have more information after that.

Cllr S Clarke asked if this would affect the planting of the community orchard, the Estates Manager advised that the planting season runs to next February, and therefore it should not, but he would look to ensure there is something in the agreement which guarantees the work will be done before Xmas.

- b) An update from HCC relating to the footbridge. The information came from Phil Yexley who advised that there had been a shuffling of personnel at Network Rail, but essentially there is no change in terms of action.

Cllr V Schooling advised that she is disappointed, this issue has been going on for a very long time, she asked if there is anything else we can do. In her view the bridge is unsafe and therefore should be replaced as a matter of urgency.

The Town Clerk advised that nothing will be done until HCC agree that the bridge is unsafe and that we have not yet reached this point. It is as though they are waiting for something to happen before moving forwards with it.

Cllr V Schooling asked if a meeting could be arranged with someone at HCC to press the point again.

The Town Clerk advised that Cllr Nick Adams-King deals with transport issues and also mentioned Tim Lawton who had previously been sympathetic to the cause had been promoted and could be approached again.

- c) An update from HCC relating to the Cango Service, stating that Decision Day was 10th July and the changes which had been proposed were
- That Cango becomes a fixed route service
 - That Cango ceases operating after 14:45
 - That Cango is renamed service 120 to reflect its fixed route status
 - That a contract is awarded to the existing operator for the above for one year

There was a possibility of supplementing the above service for a year from the Local Transport Fund, but after that there is a shortfall of around £14,000 per year, this sum well exceeds the current annual contribution of £5k made by the three Town Councils towards the booking service.

There was some discussion about the Cango Service, Cllr S Clarke said that it is a great service but was not being used enough to sustain it. Cllr V Schooling agreed, mentioning that she uses the buses but there are not enough people using them and the decision to end it is understandable.

(POST MEETING NOTE: A decision has now been made in relation to the future of the Cango Service as follows: A one-year contract is awarded to More Bus (the current operator of the service) from September 2023. Cango becomes a fixed service route which ceases operation at 14:45 each day. Cango is renumbered 120. This has been approved by Cllr Adams-King, Executive Lead Member for Universal Services. Further consideration will be given to this towards the end of the one-year contract.)

- d) A message from Goff Beck Chairman of the Friends of the Indian Soldiers Memorial...

“I take this opportunity on behalf of the “Friends of the Indian Soldiers Memorial” to thank you, Joanna, Mark, elected councillors and most importantly the ground workers team for all the support they gave to ensure the Service of Commemoration held at the Indian Obelisk on Monday 10th July was such a great success. I hope all those personnel named also enjoyed being part of this very prestigious event and long may this date remain in the Town’s diary.”

- e) A thank you card from Ted Horne addressed to the Town Clerk and Staff:
“Many thanks for an Old Git’s 102 Birthday Good Wishes – as the Arabs might say “May 1000 camels fertilise your lawns”.

32. LAND USE REQUESTS**a) Story Quest – October half term**

Permission is sought by the Youth Trust for the Story Quest event to take place at Ballard Water Meadow in October half term.

The Councillors agreed this would be an excellent use of the space.

It was

RESOLVED: Agreed, subject to our usual terms and conditions of use.

b) ASBOC – Thursdays in August

Permission is sought by ASBOC to use the War Memorial Recreation Ground and Ashley Recreation Ground for outreach work on alternate Thursdays throughout August, the dates being: 3, 10, 17 and 24.

Cllr A O' Sullivan said that this is much needed in the summer.

The Town Clerk advised that there is a request for some funding towards this which will be addressed at the upcoming F&GP meeting.

It was

RESOLVED: Agreed, subject to our usual terms and conditions of use.

c) Highcliffe Charity Players – 27th August.

An application by the Highcliffe Charity Players to hold a Sports Day event on Fawcetts Field near the Old Barn. The group do a lot of charity work. There is nothing else going on at that end of Fawcetts Field on that day.

It was

RESOLVED: Agreed, subject to our usual terms and conditions of use.

d) New Milton Round Table – 28th October

An application by the Round Table to use Moore Close for the annual fireworks display.

There was some discussion about this event, last year there had been complaints when an ambulance had been blocked from its destination. There had been a lack of parking marshalls. There was also the issue of pets being upset, and the fact that there seem to be fireworks and bonfires for a whole month.

The event has grown over the years, Cllr S Clarke wondered whether it should be referred to SAG, who need to be consulted when an event has over 499 participants as that is likely on this occasion.

RESOLVED: Agreed, subject to our usual terms and conditions of use and subject to referral to SAG.

33. BALLARD MEADOW

The Town Clerk referred to the comments of Mandy Hayes at the beginning of the meeting, that it is now necessary to seek alternative grazing arrangements for Ballard Water Meadow. The preference is for cattle, if not Dexters perhaps Herefords. He stated that the document produced by Bob Lord is very useful and will help with further consideration. There is a need to get the cattle on in September, and therefore a decision will be required swiftly. Cllr S Clarke was sorry to see the current graziers Rich and Sarah Harvey go. He agreed only cattle would be appropriate as ponies and other animals graze in quite different ways.

34. CARRICK WAY/ASHINGTON PARK

The Estates Manager referred to the drawings which have been prepared. The works have been put out to tender, and the quotes will be back shortly. The works include a new circular footway, new benches, a native mixed hedge, 3 new footbridges and hoggin path.

Councillors asked about timescale. The Estates Manager advised that the works themselves will comprise a 6-week contract period. The tenders are due back in early August and once they have been considered a Management Plan will be drawn up. All in all, he would have more information at the next Amenities Committee meeting on 4th September.

35. HOLLANDS WOOD DRIVE

The Town Clerk advised that there is some concern that Hollands Wood Drive could be targeted by travellers and therefore measures to prevent this need to be considered.

He also advised that the town is not fulfilling its obligations to provide play areas and equipment. Totton and Eling council which is of a similar size in terms of population to New Milton has 18 play areas while New Milton has 4 plus the MUGA and the skate park.

The Estates Manager advised that this is something Jill Colclough has commented on and that it would be possible to add some play equipment to Hollands Wood Drive.

The Town Clerk stated that the new Play Areas working Party really need to look at this issue across the whole of the town. Some of the existing play equipment needs to be renewed, the Estates Manager stated that the equipment at Long Meadow was scraping through annual inspections. Further sites need to be identified.

36. ALLOTMENTS

The Town Clerk circulated a list setting out the current situation in relation to Allotments. The waiting list as at 13th June stood at 54. Letters were sent to applicants to re-register their interest with a cut-off date of 3rd July. At 5th July the list stood at 39.

There are a total of 130 allotments in all, including 10 full plots, 114 half plots and 6 quarter plots. The Town Clerk's suggestion is that as plots become vacant they could be divided up as the full plots are very large and even the half plots can prove difficult to maintain.

The Estates Manager stated that some tenants are not fulfilling their obligations and they should be evicted. The tenancy rules need to be enforced more strictly. If all the 10 full plots were to be vacated at the same time they could be quartered and this would mean that there would be enough allotments for everyone waiting. Unfortunately, this is unlikely to happen, but dividing them as they become vacant should speed up the process.

Cllr V Schooling mentioned that interest in allotments has surged. The Town Clerk agreed, saying there is more of a leisure aspect to their use these days especially by flat dwellers. Cllr A O' Sullivan asked if there was no way that more plots could be created around the edges, the Estates Manager advised that this was not really a possibility on any of the sites.

37. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

a) TRAVELLERS

The Town Clerk advised that travellers remain on Fawcetts Field and that the police have spoken to them about their speeding across council land. Nikki Swift has carried out a welfare check and Brian Byrne is now issuing notice to them under s77 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. This is not a route available to the Town Council, solely for use by a principal authority.

(POST MEETING NOTE: Brian Byrne has advised that he has instructed the legal department to seek a court date so he can issue a summons for a hearing. This can only be done once the authorised section 78 notice has been returned which should be on Thursday 13th. It is then for the court to set the timescale for the hearing.)

The Estates Manager advised that Brian Byrne of NFDC has been on site and that there has been a small amount of fly tipping there. Also, a new vehicle has arrived. SIA trained security guards have been employed from 8pm to 7am for the past few nights. This is because of the proximity of the Travellers to the compound and the value of items in the compound as well as the need to access them on a daily basis for operational purposes.

This obviously comes at a cost but is necessary. As yet, no damage has been done to the pitches. But to access the site they smashed two locks.

The Town Clerk mentioned that this year the travellers seem to be targeting recreation grounds, last year it was car parks. Lymington, and Ringwood have been similarly targeted.

There was a general discussion about increasing security on all council sites. The Estates Manager is very keen that the sites do not start to look like fortresses as they should remain welcoming to the public, but he acknowledged more security may be required.

b) ASB

The Estates Manager stated that the new table tennis tables on the recreation ground have already been graffitied and that generally the team is spending at least two man-days a week due to anti-social behaviour and vandalism in the town.

Cllr V Schooling suggested that there should be further discussion about anti-social behaviour and vandalism at the next full Town Council meeting with consideration of the financial costs of the lost man hours.



The Estates Manager advised that any and all anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police via the 101 service. The Town Clerk advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner is looking to employ some new tactics for dealing with anti-social behaviour. He has invited the PCC and/or the new Chief Constable Scott Chilton to come along and speak to the Town Council about the latest initiative to drive down crime rates.

Cllr S Clarke mentioned that he had been made aware of a little used police power, namely a Community Protection Notice which comes under the Crime and Disorder Bill 2014. The power can be used to ban people doing particular things in particular places. Failure to follow such a notice can result in criminal sanctions. The Notices can be issued to people aged 16 and over. Cllr S Clarke said he would bring this up with the Police & Crime Commissioner.

The Youth Co-ordinator said that she had recently attended a multi-agency meeting at Arnewood School and advised that the conclusion is that the interventions which work tend to be expensive, but a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach would be for the best.

38. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 4 September 2023 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8 pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
29	Working Parties	04.09.23	All Cllrs
30	Project Groups	04.09.23	All Cllrs
31b	Contact HCC - New footbridge	04.09.23	Town Clerk
31c	CANGO Bus Service	04.09.23	Town Clerk
32	Land Use Requests	ASAP	Administrator
33	Ballard Meadow grazing	04.09.23	Amenities
34	Carrick Way/Ashington Park	04.09.23	Estates Manager
35	Hollands Wood Drive	04.09.23	Play Area WP
36	Allotments Waiting List	04.09.23	Administrator
37b	Travellers Eviction	ASAP	Town Clerk
37c	ASB and PCC / Police visit	ASAP	Town Clerk



Distribution:

Town Councillors

Estates & Facilities Manager

District Councillor J L Cleary

County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter, and K Mans

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