

NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 15.00 HRS AT THE TOWN HALL.

Councillors:	p K E Craze – Chairman p G R Blunden p S J Clarke	p B Murrow – Vice Chairman D N Tungate
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In attendance: Cllr D Hawkins

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk

The Chairman welcomed Alan Watson to this first pre-budget meeting of the Executives. Mr Watson asked for an update on the new Co-Op at Barton on Sea, and for re-assurance regarding posters remaining in-situ when advertising local community events.

13. APOLOGIES - Cllr D N Tungate

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members have a general dispensation to discuss budgets and set a precept for 2023-24.

15. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman provided an update on the new Co-Op building that should be ready to open in the Spring, and in regard to advertising posters, the Town Clerk would liaise with NFDC.

16. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 July 2022.

It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of 22 July 2022 be signed as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

17. MATTERS ARISING

Reference was made to Minute 10 – Land East of Caird Avenue and the possibility of a Health & Wellbeing centre on a two-acre parcel of land. TDM is looking to meet with Don Woodward before having a wider meeting with the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Coastal Medical Partnership (CMP).

Reference was also made to Minute 11 – Land to the North of Fernhill with the latest communication from the owner of some 6 acres of land copied into Claire Upton-Brown of NFDC who thought there was not much we could do right now pending further negotiations, the town council having made an appropriate offer, based on current land use constraints.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk referred to a communication from the Small Claims Court in Southampton regarding a claim of £300 insurance excess that a local resident is claiming as a result of tree damage following Storm Eunice that wreaked havoc on the Naish Estate in February.

19. YOUTH STRATEGY

Cllr Clarke explained potential use of the land would be to construct a Youth & Family HUB on the land adjacent to Milton Barns. The site is currently empty and has direct access on to Fawcetts Field with close proximity to Eaglewood School and the former Phoenix Centre. The housing stock in the direct locality is increasing and spatial characteristics are already changing. With new affordable homes planned for the area, the proposed amenity will be well placed to serve those newly settled families. There is clear need for this facility locally.

It was agreed the Town Council should facilitate this, and it was unanimously

RECOMMENDED: That Outline Planning Permission be applied for this HUB building.

It was also agreed a Working Group be set up to look at the council's future Youth Strategy, including the Ashley Community building, future direction of youth services within the town, coordinating with other organisations, and how best to facilitate this over the next 6 months.

RECOMMENDED: That a Working Group be set up to look at NMTC Youth Strategy.

20. COUNCIL BUDGETS 2023-24

Discussion centred on likely inflation rates, payroll costs and utility costs for next year. Key issues around payroll costs of circa £600k were considered, including likely increase of £2k per employee currently being considered nationally, that would result in an increase of £28k plus on-costs of around a third. Total increase likely to be in the order of £37k (6%).

In regard to the cost of utilities, fortuitously from 2016 the Town Council signed up to long-term contracts with HCC via LASER agreements covering gas and electricity at all our sites, except Fernhill where the cricket club is now responsible for their own utility provision, and likewise the Bowling Club. Jane Abbott, Supplies Officer, HCC Infrastructure & Community - Hampshire Joint Procurement Team has recently written on 28 September as follows:

"Following the Government's announcement on the Energy Bill Relief Scheme and final verification with Laser, we can confirm that the Scheme will not impact our energy prices as the prices secured by the Energy Team for the Hampshire contracts are actually lower than the Government's caps. The cap is applied to the wholesale element of the bill, which excludes any network charges, taxes and levies. We have also secured our volumes to September 2024 at lower prices than 2022-23 financial year, therefore protecting Hampshire and its Energy Customers from tens of millions of potential increased charges at current market rates. We are looking to provide indicative pricing for April 2023 later this year and these will be confirmed early next year in readiness for 01.04.23."

General inflation rates were also discussed with 10–20% likely on a lot of consumable items and it was agreed the Executive Committee should meet before the end of October and early November before proposing mid-November a precept for consideration by Amenities on 28 November and F&GP on 19 December, prior to full Town Council on 3 January 2023.

RECOMMENDED: Executives meet in Oct/Nov to agree precept proposal by mid-Nov.

21. PROJECT PROGRESS

The Town Clerk distributed a list of Working Parties for review prior to discussing future strategic direction and Capital projects. It was agreed the council needs to prioritise projects next year, and with this in mind a Working Group would be set up for this purpose. It was

RECOMMENDED: That a Working Group be set up to consider Project Progress.

22. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, being Calendar of Meetings showing purdah period and a date change for next Town Council that will be held on Tuesday 15 November as NFDC are now holding their own meeting on Monday 14 November. Members agreed this.

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TBA

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the public session of the meeting at 4.00 pm in order to discuss Succession Planning in private session.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

The Chairman moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for item(s) of business below pursuant to section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

24. SUCCESSION PLANNING

Town Clerk announced that the Youth Services Manager is retiring on 23 November 2022 and former Town Development Manager will be retiring a week later on 30 November 2022.

As noted above, it was recommended that a Working Group be set up to look at NMTC Youth Strategy including the future direction of youth services within the town, coordinating with other organisations, and how best to facilitate this over the next 6 months with the YSM continuing to help one day a week on a consultancy basis until the end of March 2023.

The postholders of Town Clerk / RFO & Proper Officer and Estates & Facilities Manager have signalled a willingness to continue in their respective capacities.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 4.20 pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

Distribution:

Members of the Executive Committee
Town Councillors – For Information
District Councillors C V Ward, J L Cleary
County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter and K Mans
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