



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 at 6.30 pm in New Milton Town Hall.

Chairman P D N Tungate
Vice-Chairman P R A Reid

Councillors: P J Adams P W Davies
G R Blunden P A D O'Sullivan
P S J Clarke P M Scott-Johns
P K E Craze

In Attendance:

Councillors: Cllr D Hawkins

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk

J Hayward - Communications & Community Engagement Officer

L Beardmore – Youth Services Co-ordinator

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers, 3 members of the public and a press representative.

There was no member of the public who wished to speak.

66. APOLOGIES

Cllr G Blunden

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R A Reid being a Trustee of New Milton Youth Trust

Cllr S J Clarke being a Trustee of New Milton Youth Trust

All members have a dispensation to discuss the budget and set a precept.

68. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

69. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th October 2023, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes were duly signed.

70. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON AGENDA

The Town Clerk confirmed all action points listed had been addressed, noting that Minute 60 - To Consider extra CCTV cameras was an Amenities Referred item, per Appendix 8.



Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
55 a)	Contact NFDC re Rec Toilets	13.11.23	Estates Manager
55 b)	Provide Cllr O’Sullivan with details	ASAP	Comms Officer
56 b)	NFDC FOC Car Parking dates	ASAP	Town Clerk
56 c)	Pay Election Fees of £27,416.81	13.11.23	Town Clerk
60	Consider extra CCTV cameras	27.11.23	Amenities
61	CANF – Grant Aid	13.11.23	Asst Town Clerk
62	Grant Aid applications	13.11.23	Asst Town Clerk

71. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) A thank-you letter from Parkinson’s UK, New Forest Branch, for £500 grant aid.
- b) Another thank-you letter from HOPE, Helping Older People, for £500 grant aid.
- c) An email from Andy Rogers referring to a 3.88% increase in NFDC members allowances. The Clerk mentioned it was normal practice to implement such increases locally.
- d) In relation to the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) confirmation that NMTC are responsible and cannot delegate responsibilities for assessing Risk Assessments and giving permission for land use requests.
- e) Correspondence from the Halifax regarding the branch closure in New Milton from April. Cllr Clarke said Cllr Jill Cleary, Leader of NFDC had written to New Forest MPs regarding banking difficulties in our rural areas. There were indications of new banking legislation to stop banks from closing branches if it would result in no banking facility in the town.

72. BUDGET PROPOSALS 2024/25

The Chairman referred to Annex B v.4 Committee Budgets, the F&GP budget in particular.

Cllr O’Sullivan pointed out the proposed increase in precept year-on-year was actually 9%, not 6.2%. Cllr O’Sullivan proposed a transfer from Reserves to make it 6.2%. There followed discussions between members regarding the proposed 6.2% increase indicating that the precept could be reduced again this year by a transfer from Reserves.

Cllrs Reid and Hawkins said that 6.2% was too high an increase and thought 5% was adequate. However, Cllrs Craze and Clarke responded that we need a budget that covers all our costs as we take on more services that the Police, NFDC and HCC relinquish. Cllr Reid proposed that £50k be taken from reserves to enable an overall 5% increase, but there was a majority show of hands against this proposal.

The Chairman proposed that £33,500 be taken from reserves to support the 6.2% increase. There was a majority show of hands in support of this proposal. (Revised figures attached)

It was then,

RECOMMENDED: That the 2024/25 budget of £1,358,929 be accepted and a precept of £1,325,429 be approved using £33,500 from Reserves.



73. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, Schedule of Payments for the period 1 October – 30 November in the sum of £354,249.14.

The Town Clerk highlighted items over £1,000.

a)	Staff/Members	Salaries/expenses - Sept 2023	£28,069.68
b)	Lombard	Vehicle leasing x 5 - DX67 UYD/DY20 HTT/BW21 NYH/BV71 ZJZ/BC21 NLU	£2,313.90
c)	Tom Morrissey	General works site wide - 10 days @ £150 per day	£1,500.00
d)	BDO LLP	Limited Assurance Review for year ended 31 March 2023	£2,520.00
e)	Coastal Asphalts Ltd	Ashley Project - new footway surfacing (S.106) CAPEX	£4,087.56
f)	Jerry Still Installations	Essential maintenance to protect the fabric of the Indoor Bowls building (new guttering downpipes etc)	£1,900.00
g)	HCC	Pension contributions	£10,324.11
h)	HMRC	Tax and NIC September 2023	£10,121.80
i)	Jewson	Ashley Project - Gabion cages for landscaping (S.106) CAPEX	£5,266.94
j)	L Kitcher Fencing	Fawcetts Yard/compound improvements	£1,620.00
k)	MTST Group	Ashley Project Youth Facility - part payment (S.106) CAPEX	£25,000.00
l)	NF Signs	Entrance sign enhancements at NMTC main sites	£3,360.00
m)	PFSS	Statutory Fire Door survey as per risk assessment	£2,484.00
n)	South Coast Social	Social media management - May to October 2023	£1,800.00
o)	WP Group	Fawcetts vehicle/machinery fuel	£3,145.20
p)	HeBlad	Two table tennis tables (paid for by donations)	£5,700.00
q)	Tom Morrissey	General works site wide - 10 days @ £150 per day	£1,350.00
r)	Natasha Beatty	To provide cookery education classes during November - lunch & evening classes (funded by SWR grant)	£1,600.00
s)	L Kitcher Fencing	Replace fencing and posts at Ballard Water Meadow (existing fencing & gates on west side replaced as beyond repair) HLS	£7,980.00
t)	Manor Grounds Maint	General works site wide - 12 days @ £100 per day	£1,200.00
u)	Staff/Members	Salaries/expenses - October 2023	£30,973.31
v)	Lombard	Vehicle leasing BW21 NYH/BC21 NLU/BV71 ZJZ/DY20HTT/DX67UYD	£2,341.78
w)	Tom Morrissey	General works site wide (10 days @ £150 per day)	£1,500.00



x)	Vitaplay Limited	Inspections at Doe Copse/Ashley Rec/New Milton Rec/Long Meadow play areas/ temporary fix to damaged MUGA /replacement cradle seat at Ashley Rec (caused by ASB)/replacement trampoline bounce mat (£2,120.40)	£2,909.52
y)	Auditing Solutions	Provision of first Interim Internal Audit service for 2023/24	£1,200.00
z)	Coastal Asphalts Ltd	Ashley Project - completion of footway base around new and existing facility (Section 106) CAPEX	£3,229.08
aa)	DCK Accounting	Provision of accounting/payroll services Oct 23	£1,019.52
ab)	Gristwood & Toms	Completed tree works - October 2023	£8,482.96
ac)	HCC	Pension contributions	£10,119.58
ad)	HMRC	Tax and NIC	£10,685.39
ae)	Hoare Banks	Clean War Memorial & Rev Kelsalls bench & monument stone	£1,488.00
af)	Juice	Christmas poster updates/website updates	£1,128.00
ag)	Manor Grounds Maint	General works site wide (12 days @ £100 per day)	£1,440.00
ah)	Tom Morrissey	General works site wide (12 days @ £150 per day)	£1,800.00
ai)	NMSB	Various - vegetation waste removal various locations/supplies Ashley project pavilion & new buildings footpath	£2,001.22
aj)	Northfield Nursery	Autumn/winter floral displays	£1,747.01
ak)	John Shutler Tree Ser	Tree works - October 2023	£1,620.00
al)	SparkX Ltd	Strip tree and redress trunk of Fire Station tree/ 50% of agreed festive lighting contract	£5,607.00
am)	Citizens Advice New Forest	£5,000 grant aid as approved by F & GP 30 October 2023	£5,000.00
an)	NFDC	Election expenses - Contested election fees 4 May 2023	£27,416.81
ao)	SparkX Ltd	Supply lights and install to 3 trees/icicles for Boots crossing	£2,732.40
ap)	Staff /Members	Salaries & expenses - November 2023	£38,877.21
aq)	MTST Group Ltd	Ashley Project Youth Facility -£10,000 external works/£15,000 internal fit out (CAPEX)	£25,000.00
ar)	Manor Grounds Maint	General works site wide (10 days @ £100 per day)	£1,200.00
as)	Tom Morrissey	General works site wide (10 days @ £150 per day)	£1,500.00

Cllr A O'Sullivan queried the payment to Pitney Bowes of £227.82 for ink cartridges.
[Post Meeting Note: The invoice was for 2 x franking machine ink cartridges].

ENDORSED: That the Schedule of Payments No. 5/23/24 for the period 1 October - 30 November 2023 in the sum of £354,249.14 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.



74. OCTOBER ACCOUNTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2, Monthly Accounts for October 2023.

The Town Clerk provided an outline of the Accounts, that are £28.5k under budget overall.

The Ashley project costs are £400k which include the playpark, paths, and Youth Hub and we now need to arrange insurance for the building.

Having used Reserves to fund the £100k for the purchase of land off Gore Road, and £265k S.106 monies towards the Ashley Project, we will need to transfer £250k from CCLA in the New Year in order to cover reductions in our Business Reserve Account next quarter.

75. INTERNAL AUDIT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3, Interim Audit Report for 2023-24.

The Town Clerk referred to the last page of the Appendix and highlighted the Recommendations, in particular, in regard to Review of Assessment & Management of Risk.

The Town Clerk proposed the following responses under the six various headings.

Review of Assessment & Management of Risk

- R1 *Seeking quotations for such work, and training staff may also be appropriate.*
- R2 *Risk Assessments template will be issued for all events for due diligence purposes and will be independently assessed by New Milton Town Council.*
- R3 *Longer-term Budget item £80k CIL for replacement playpark at Long Meadow.*

Review of Income

- R4 *Agreed, some sales invoices that were emailed only showed email addresses.*
- R5 *Raising credit notes is best practice and provides an easy-to-follow audit trail.*
- R6 *Rent invoices start with an "R" for easy identification and are easy-to-follow.*

It was then,

RECOMMENDED: That the Interim Audit Report with recommendations and proposed responses be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

76. TRUSTEES REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Chairman referred to Appendix 4, the Annual Report for the Charity Commission, which members noted.

The Trustees Report for the War Memorial Recreation Ground Charity will be forwarded to the Charity Commission before the end of January 2024.



77. CIL REPORT 2022/23

The Chairman referred to Appendix 5, the Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Report for 2022/23. The Town Clerk provided a summary of the CIL receipts and expenditure which was noted by members.

78. YOUTH REPORT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 6, Youth Services Coordinator Report.

The Youth Services Coordinator summarised her report highlighting some of the issues and the plans to provide support in areas such as alternative education and mental health support.

Members thanked the Youth Services Coordinator for such a positive and forward-thinking report.

79. YOUTH GRANT AID

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 7 – Youth Grant Aid application from New Milton Youth Trust. There was unanimous support for the application.

It was,

RECOMMENDED: That £10k be awarded from the Youth Grant Aid budget to New Milton Youth Trust in order to undertake, from January – March 2024, youth work on the Recreation Ground previously carried out by ASBOC.

Cllrs Reid and Clarke abstained from the discussion and the vote.

80. REFERRED MATTERS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 8 - Referred Matters from Amenities Committee meeting held on 27th November 2023 - that were all endorsed for Town Council approval, as follows:

a) **Minute 74 - NEW FOREST LCWIP**

RECOMMENDED:

That NMTC support New Forest Local Cycling & Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP) concept recognising much work will be required to determine the actual safest cycling routes.

b) **Minute 79 - FEES & CHARGES 2024/25**

RECOMMENDED:

That the Fees & Charges (Version 2) for 2024/25 be endorsed by Town Council at its meeting on 2 January 2023.



c) Minute 80 - AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET 2024/25

RECOMMENDED: That the Amenities Budget for 2024/24 in the sum of £720k be endorsed by the Town Council Meeting on 2 January 2024.

d) Minute 83 - CCTV

The proposals are for five new cameras to be situated at:

1. Ashley Recreation Ground in the corner of the car park
2. Station Road opposite Morrisons
3. The area of the MUGA on the Rec
4. Fawcetts Field by our site depot
5. The entrance to the Arnewood School and Cemetery

RECOMMENDED:

That CCTV proposals be endorsed by Town Council Meeting on 2 January 2024.

e) Minute 84 - AUDIT REPORT

RECOMMENDED:

That proposals /quotes be sought for independent advice on risk assessments.

It was then,

RESOLVED: That all Amenities Referred Matters be ENDORSED for Council approval.

81. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES - None

82. NEXT MEETING – **Monday 29 January 2024** at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending, offering Season's Greetings for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____

Distribution:

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