



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 22nd July 2024 at 6.30 pm in New Milton Town Hall.

Chairman p D N Tungate
Vice-Chairman p A D O'Sullivan

Councillors: p J Adams p W Davies
p G R Blunden p R A Reid
p S J Clarke p M Scott-Johns
p K E Craze

In Attendance:

Councillors: S Davies

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk
L Beardmore – Youth Services Manager
J Bean - Committee and Civic Administrator S Welch – Administration Officer

The Chairman welcomed Councillors and Officers. There was no public or press attendance.

20. APOLOGIES

None

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R A Reid declared an interest in the Lions Club grant application and abstained from discussing or voting on this matter, being a member of the Lions Club.

22. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10th June 2024, as previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes were duly signed.

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

The Town Clerk referred to F&GP Minute 16 the re-appointment of Auditing Solutions as our Internal Auditor. The Chairman had suggested they could be reconfirmed at this meeting.

The Town Clerk advised that we need to officially re-appoint Internal Auditors every year now, in accordance with best practice. Members agreed to Auditing Solutions appointment.

It was

RESOLVED: That Auditing Solutions be appointed Internal Auditors on annual basis.

25. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk shared a letter from the Safer New Forest Partnership about their “Enough Campaign” that District Councillors were already aware of.

The campaign is aimed at raising awareness about violence against women and girls. It offers “advice to anyone witnessing abuse, on the safe ways to intervene if they see an incident of violence against women or girls, ranging from sexual harassment (on the street, on public transport or at work), to sharing intimate images of someone without their consent, coercive control in a relationship or unwanted touching”.

The Partnership requested that the Town Council display their campaign posters in offices and community settings. Members agreed that this is an important cause to support.

26. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1 - Schedule of Payments for the period 1 May to 30 June 2024 in the sum of £275,395.75. The Town Clerk highlighted items over £1,000.

1	Lombard	Vehicle leasing x 3 BV71 ZJZ/BW21 NYH/BC21 NLU	£1,477.62
2	T Morrissey Building	General works site wide for 9 days at £150 per day	£1,350.00
3	Aish EMS	Fernhill Pump Station, High level alarm alert check, Health & Safety requirement, CAPEX	£3,578.52
4	Aqua Care	Monthly legionella checks + updates	£2,235.96
5	Ashley Family Hub	Total amount of fund-raising for the Mayors nominated charity	£1,400.00
6	Brewers	Ashley facility floor treatment CAPEX	£1,018.93
7	Concentrate Ltd	Website security updates for NMTC (1 yr) & Go NMTC (additional 9 months, to April 2024) 3x Posters for Indian memorial, Dementia allotment and D-Day	£1,128.00
8	DCK Accounting	Accounting support for March and year end, 2 visits on 22 & 30 April	£1,223.40
9	DH1 Consultancy Ltd	General works site wide - 10 days at £100 per day plus VAT	£1,200.00
10	Fireguard Services Ltd	Firefighting equipment at Ashely youth facility & New youth facility statutory requirement fire risk assessment CAPEX	£1,617.04
11	Flagmakers	Replacement NMTC & Union flags	£1,189.79
12	Fletcher European	Plastic benches for Fernhill changing room upgrade CAPEX	£3,169.20
13	G Farwell Ltd	Ashley project, mixed waste haulage CAPEX + 50% Recharged MTST	£6,267.12
14	Greenlock electrical	Ashley Project car park lighting Ashley Project CAPEX	£2,265.30
15	HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension contributions - April 2024	£11,095.87
16	HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC - April 2024	£11,356.40
17	J Shutler Tree services	4x High priority cyclical tree works as per survey, 4x callouts by G.S Team and felling of x1 cherry & x1 walnut tree for Ashley project	£7,440.92



18	Kiwa	Lighting column test and inspection for floral and Christmas displays HCC requirement	£2,808.00
19	Luke Kitcher Fence & Gates	Becton Lane Dementia Allotments Taking down and removing existing sleeper beds. To supply and fit 42x oak sleepers. £3000 contribution from the NM Dementia Allotment	£5,910.00
20	NFDC	Cyclical tree survey & report 23/24	£2,112.00
21	NM District Twinning	Expenses for the 13 French visit in May	£1,068.10
23	Rejuvenate	Includes new laptop at £747.69, services and Microsoft 365	£1,866.17
24	T Morrissey Building	General works site wide - 9 days at £150 per day	£1,350.00
25	Turfleet hire	John Deere tractor and front loader monthly hire & Rotavator	£1,704.00
26	WPGGroup	Fawcetts vehicle & machinery fuel, Bulk supply Fawcetts depot	£4,756.61
27	DMW Glazing	Fernhill changing room upgrades, new fire door CAPEX	£1,488.00
28	MTST Structures	Final account for all remaining works carried out. Ashley CAPEX project	£12,000.00
29	DH1 Consultancy Ltd	General works site wide - 9 days at £100 per day plus VAT	£1,080.00
30	Staff/Members	Salaries and expenses - May 2024	£28,356.69
31	C'Church Gdn Mach	Annual servicing for Fernhill equipment	£1,494.32
32	Npower	Electricity supplied at Fawcetts Field main site/Moore Close/Talking Newspaper/Empire skates/Ashley Sports Pavilion/Mallard Court/Spencer Rd South from 1 April - 30 April 2024	£1,144.72
33	RMB Hydroseeding	Lymington Rd, Chewton Glen, Seafront & other areas hydroseeding	£7,056.00
34	T Morrissey Building	General works site wide for 9 days at £150 per day	£1,350.00
35	Lombard	Vehicle leasing x 3 BV71 ZJZ/BW21 NYH/BC21 NLU	£1,477.62
36	Amberol	Ashley Parade regeneration, Open space improvements, Floral Displays CIL + Levelling up funded	£14,760.24
37	HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension contributions - May 2024	£10,829.00
38	HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC - May 2024	£9,769.99
39	Kiwa	Inspection and testing of lamp columns Floral and at Ashley, Levelling up	£1,630.80
40	Lamps & Tubes Ltd	Town bunting, refix broken out catenary plate	£1,170.59
41	Source for Business	This is for historical back charges due to a long-standing query on return to sewer charges for irrigation. Having reviewed the readings since 2018 the 66% charges for RTS (Down from 95%) is a fair reflection for irrigation use. The sum is accounted for in budgets, and agreed by accountants & auditors	£15,790.29
42	Stannah	Ashley pavilion lift, 50% Recharge to NMRC	£1,029.31
43	T Morrissey Building	General works site wide - 4 days at £150/ 6 days at £160	£1,560.00

44	Auditing Solutions Ltd	Provision of end of year internal audit service for 2023-2024	£1,200.00
45	Barrie King Building Ltd	General works site wide	£1,050.00
46	C'Church Garden Mach	Various machine maintenance & fitting of flail to Kubota (£754)	£1,439.57
47	DCK Accounting Solu	Annual visit for end of financial year processing & Monthly accountancy visit	£1,595.70
48	Glasdon UK Limited	6x Topsy Jubilee litter bins, 6x Phoenix seat, General use various sites	£5,529.31
49	Lapwing	Estates & facilities uniform upgrades	£1,354.72
50	New Milton Rugby Club	Electricity charge for new Ashley facility, charges for March + April. Usage was higher than will be normally as heating being on full to dry facility out prior to painting	£1,036.12
51	Staff/Members	Salaries and expenses - June 2024	£32,083.75
52	Suna King	Website project 4 x days' work	£1,000.00
53	T Morrissey Building	General works site wide - 10 days at £160 per day	£1,600.00
54	Turfleet hire	John Deere tractor and front loader monthly hire & Rotavator for wildflower preparation	£1,584.00
55	Vita	Replacing of vandalised swing seats at Ashley recreation ground, installation of new seats and chains at New Milton recreation ground. Inspections & maintenance of playgrounds during November 2023	£2,926.14

Councillors queried some items as below including c), d) and f), as mentioned attached.

- a) The annual Zoom fee of £155.88. Members asked we could instead use Teams.
- b) The Concentrate Ltd (previously Juice) payment of £1,128. Members queried how many hits the Go New Milton page receives.
- c) The Empower Energy payment of £474.98. Members asked what savings were being made from the solar panels.
- d) The L Kitcher Fence & Gates payment of £5,910 was discussed. Members questioned the cost and sought a breakdown of parts and labour expenses.
- e) The NFDC payment of £2,112 was discussed. It was clarified that this payment, part of the tree inspection contract, is budgeted and monitored. It was noted that there is a £40k budget allocated for trees. There was a request for a more detailed analysis of costs.
- f) The payment of £814.74 to WEL Medical for defib batteries was discussed, noting the cost of £230 per battery was expensive, bearing in mind the bill was for 3 batteries.

RECOMMENDED: That Schedule of Payments No. 2/24/25 for the period 1 May to 30 June 2024 in the sum of £275,395.75 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.



POST MEETING NOTES

In response to some of the queries raised at Monday's F&GP Committee Meeting, please see the following:

The solar panels did generate some reasonable savings in the first two years of around 15% (a total of around £4,000) but over the last year or so, the feed-in tariff has reduced and is generating little or no savings now. It would be worth considering for the 2025/26 budget including a rechargeable battery which we could then use to run some of systems from time to time thus saving that way. The cost however is £12,000 including fitting.

The Luke Kitcher amount does include the VAT element (so just under £5k before VAT). The work involved completely dismantling the old, raised beds which included digging out the compost/soil. Disposing off-site the timber and some of the compost. There was a total of 60 oak sleepers used at a cost of £2,700, 12 concrete composite posts £480, other fixtures and fittings £200. A total of 12-man days @ £210 per day including vehicle and small mechanical plant, total £2,520. With other items that is around the ex-VAT cost. It should also be borne in mind it is a professional and high standard piece of work and there is also a £3,000 contribution from the Dementia Allotment Group, noting there was an earmarked reserve of £3,300 in last year's accounts.

The defib batteries have a lifespan of 5 years (depending on usage). These are specialist batteries (like electric vehicle batteries) and the correct ones have to be used for the specific type of defibs we have in town. The actual cost per battery is £230 and we always seek best value which is not always just about cost but who can offer best service and after sales assistance.

I hope this helps.

Thanks,

Mark

Mark Jeffries

Estates & Facilities Manager

New Milton Town Council



27. JUNE ACCOUNTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2 - Monthly Accounts for June. The Town Clerk reported that 74% of the overall budget (69% of the Amenities budget, and 80% of the F&GP budget) remain. This is in line with expectations and indicates that the budget is on track, as are the results, after the first quarter.

28. YOUTH REPORT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3 - Youth Report, which had been circulated previously.

The Youth Services Manager presented the report, which was well-received by the Members.

They expressed satisfaction with the Summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme, noting its significant benefits for children and low-income families. The successful launch of the Ashley Youth Centre on 20th July was acknowledged, with good attendance and participation from the youth. School attendance issues were discussed, with an emphasis on increasing fines and the widespread nature of truancy.

The Youth Services Manager highlighted the potential benefits of introducing a sexual health clinic and a breastfeeding group at the new youth centre.

29. STANDING ORDERS/FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Town Clerk informed members about the proposed changes to Standing Order 23. It was decided that this matter should be referred to the Town Council after further discussion with the Assistant Town Clerk about the precise wording of S/O 23.

30. GRANT AID

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 4 – Grant Aid application from New Milton Lions Club in support of the New Milton Town Show, an important annual event scheduled for Sunday 25th August on the Recreation Ground.

Following some discussion and a vote

It was,

RESOLVED: That £500 be awarded to Lions Club from the Events Budget under the General Power of Competence.

31. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Chairman referred to Appendix 5 – Draft strategy for 2024/25.

Members discussed the management and returns of the Town's current investments. The Town Clerk highlighted that funds might need to be withdrawn for future projects.

The proposal to form an Investment Working Group was discussed, with Chairman D N Tungate and Councillor K E Craze expressing interest in participating.

The working group would report back to the next F&GP Meeting.

32. TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 6, being a list of top national precepts.

The Town Clerk shared the findings of the document, with Members acknowledging New Milton's high-ranking position at 69, albeit it was higher in 2020/21 when at number 50.

It is interesting to note the rise of Hythe & Dibden, and Christchurch locally, being proactive local councils, and East Grinstead recently.

33. TRUSTEES REPORT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 7 – Annual Return for the War Memorial Recreation Ground. It was noted that the annual net cost for using the Recreation Ground was approximately £10,000. Members commended this was excellent value and approved the report for signature by the Town Clerk and Chairman of Council.

RESOLVED: That the Trustees Report for the War Memorial Recreation Ground for 2023/24 be signed off and forwarded to the Charity Commission.

34. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

The Chairman had no items.

35. NEXT MEETING- **Tuesday 17 September 2024** at 6.30pm in the Town Hall.

The Chairman closed the public session of the meeting at 7.30pm going into private session with the agreement of members.

PRIVATE SESSION

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS OF MEETINGS) ACT 1960: *The Chairman moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business 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:*

36. PENSION SCHEME

The Chairman referred to Appendix 8 – HCC Pension Employer Discretions Policies.

Following a brief discussion and vote

It was,

RESOLVED: That this matter be referred to the Town Council for further consideration.



37. AMENITIES REFERRED ITEM

The Chairman referred to Appendix 9 – Being a recommendation from Amenities that Merlin Electrical Services be appointed Christmas Lights contractor at an overall cost of £25,650 plus VAT for the 3-year contract period (ie. £8,550 per annum plus VAT).

Following a brief discussion and a vote in favour,

The appointment of Merlin Electrical Services was **ENDORSED** for Town Council approval.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.40pm

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
24	Appoint Internal Auditor	ASAP	Town Clerk
26	Schedule of Payments notes	ASAP	Town Clerk
28	Youth Report/ NMYT MOU	ASAP	Town Clerk
29	Standing Order Review	05.08.24	Town Council
30	Grant Aid - Lions	ASAP	Asst Town Clerk
31	Investment Working Party	17.09.24	Town Clerk
33	Trustees Charity Report	05.08.24	Town Clerk
36	Employer Pension Discretions	05.08.24	Town Clerk
37	Xmas Lights Contract	05.08.24	Town Council

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