



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 30 January 2023 at 6.30 pm in New Milton Town Hall.

Chairman p D N Tungate
 Vice-Chairman S P Davies

Councillors: p K Craze p S J Clarke
 p R A Reid p A D O'Sullivan
 p J Ward p M Brownsea
 p G R Blunden

In Attendance:

Councillors: Cllr D Hawkins

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk
 H Ormerod – Committee Administrator

The Chairman welcomed members and officers, together with 5 members of the public.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Martin Medhurst of the Men's Shed thanked the Town Council for its support over the last four and a half years and was very pleased to see the lease had been signed. He looked forward to progressing with the new workshop as soon as possible.

84. APOLOGIES

Cllr S P Davies

85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

86. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman thanked Martin Medhurst for his comments and expressed relief that the lease had been finalised.

87. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2022, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes were duly signed.


88. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE

The Town Clerk confirmed all action points listed had been addressed.

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
74c)	Review Members' Allowances	30.01.23	Asst Town Clerk
74e)	Return Precept Claim form	13.01.23	Town Clerk
75a)	Endorse Amenities Budget	03.01.23	Town Council
75b)	Endorse F & GP Budget	03.01.23	Town Council
76)	Endorse Payments Schedule	03.01.23	Town Council
78a)	Compass Grant Aid £500	30.01.23	Asst Town Clerk
78b)	Community Garden Grant Aid £500	30.01.23	Asst Town Clerk
78c)	NFDIS Grant Aid £500	30.01.23	Asst Town Clerk
80)	Adopt Internal Audit Report	03.01.23	Town Council
81)	Town Clerk to write to consultant	ASAP	Town Clerk
82)	Oakhaven Hospice Donations	ASAP	Members

89. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following items of correspondence:

a) A thank you letter from New Forest Disability for £500 grant awarded by F & GP on 19 December 2022. This money meant the service would be able to continue to help clients in the New Milton area and across the New Forest with advice and support on a wide range of disability related topics including the completion of welfare benefit forms.

b) Correspondence via County Councillor Fran Carpenter from the County Council's Public Transport Manager Lisa Cook regarding the Cango bus service. The response followed an enquiry from a local resident who was a wheelchair user. Lisa outlined the County Council's requirement to reduce spending and in particular a reduction in the passenger transport budget from £1.5m down to £800,000. She provided a snapshot of the value for money of supported bus services regardless of whether it was pre or post covid, Cango offered the poorest value for money for the County Council.

Running a fixed route service was cheaper to operate due to fuel costs being lower than a variable service. Officers were instructed to work with the impacted communities to promote the County Council's New Forest Call and Go Community Transport Service which also offered door to door transport and help those passengers who find the journey to a bus stop difficult.

c) A letter from the Local Director of HSBC confirming that that New Milton branch would be closing on 27 June 2023. In total there would be 327 branches in the UK by the end of 2023.



90. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, being Schedule of Payments, for the period from 1 – 31 December 2022 in the sum of £104, 847.07, as previously distributed. The Town Clerk highlighted the following items over £1,000:

a)	A & T – Advertising and artwork re Christmas and Plant a Tree	£ 1,213.20
b)	Auditing Solutions – First interim Internal Audit Service 2022/23	£ 1,152.00
c)	HCC – Pension contributions November 22022	£14,665.40
d)	HMRC – Tax and NIC November 2022	£18,394.95
e)	Manor Grounds Maintenance – General works site wide (12 days)	£ 1,200.00
f)	Rejuvenate – Managed services and IT support & telephone services	£ 1,323.29
g)	Screwfix – Supplies re Christmas lights/hand tools/PPE/padlocks	£ 1,182.02
h)	Glasdon UK Ltd – Jubilee litter bins x 6/benches x 4/Lowther seats x 2	£ 4,285.04
i)	Lombard – Vehicle leasing x 5	£ 2,320.39
j)	SparkX – Repairs/replacement lights x 6 trees/replace faulty timers	£ 5,400.00
k)	Staff/members – Salaries/expenses/allowances	£27,735.55
l)	Total Energies – Gas supplied to Fawcetts/Ashley Sports Club	£ 1,038.46

The Town Clerk highlighted increased payments to HCC and HMRC in December – due to the backdated pay award for the 2022/23 financial year that was made in November.

Cllr J Ward asked for clarification of the payment to Bravo Benefits ***(Post Meeting Note: This payment relates to childcare vouchers deducted from the staff members salary and paid over to the provider later in the month. Vouchers don't attract NI contributions and is therefore beneficial to the Town Council, as well as employee.)***

Cllr A O'Sullivan asked the Town Clerk to investigate whether we were receiving value for money for both payroll and accounting services. Cllr M Browsea commented that he had some knowledge in this area and that the charges seemed reasonable. He suggested that shifting to quarterly Cllr payroll could result in savings. The Town Clerk would investigate this further.

Cllr A Reid asked why a new phone had been purchased for the Town Development Manager ***(Post Meeting Note: The previous TDM had been using her own phone with a NMTC sim card as her work mobile was broken)***

It was then

RECOMMENDED:

That the Schedule of Payments No. 06/22/23 covering the period 1-31 December 2022, in the sum of £104,847.07 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

91. MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2 being December 2022 Monthly Management Accounts.

The Town Clerk noted overall we are breaking even this year to date. Amenities was over budget by £62k due mainly to £84k extra CAPEX with £234,221 Capital expenditure in total - including £31,000 on Fawcetts Field upgrades, £158,000 on the Ashley Play area, £28,000 bus shelters and £20k "other" - compared to £150k Budget.

Elsewhere on Amenities, there were net savings of circa £20k.



Savings of £62k continued to be made on F & GP under the following budgets: Youth Co-ordination £8,500, Comms and Media £10,500, Town Development £7,000 and Youth grant aid £9,000. £25k had been transferred from reserves earlier in the year to cover Town Hall costs from last year. F&GP outturn will likely be a £50k underspend at the year end.

92. AMENITIES REFERRED MATTERS

The Town Clerk referred to the Amenities minute 111, regarding Phase 2 of the Ashley Recreation Project.

The project costs had increased following delays due to covid, changes to the original scheme and recent increases in the price of materials. In total the project was now likely to cost £395k in total as opposed to £265k originally allocated. This required additional funding of £130k and it was agreed that an additional sum of £10k be added for contingencies bringing a total shortfall of £140k. It was suggested this shortfall be funded via CIL monies of £80k and up to £60k from reserves.

The Estates Manager had obtained 3 quotes which varied in price and the recommendation was to accept the lowest quote from MTST Group for £186.5k, being best value for money.

It was

ENDORSED That the quote from MTST in the sum of £186.5k be accepted and that the £140k shortfall be funded from CIL monies in the sum of £80k and reserves in the sum of up to £60k.

This was **ENDORSED** for Town Council approval.

93. YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR

The Town Clerk reported that the position of part-time Youth Co-ordinator had been advertised with a closing date for applications of 17 February 2023. The Job Description and Person Specification had been produced with the assistance of the former Youth Services Manager and Councillor Helen Wallis-Dowling.

The Town Clerk had received an email from ASBOC confirming that from 3 February, the Empire Skate café would be closed on Friday evenings until further notice however lead worker Spencer and a colleague would be opening the café on Tuesday evenings. ASBOC trustees would be looking at future options and undertook to keep the Town Council updated.

A small number of young people continued to cause problems outside both the Memorial Centre and the Rugby Club (these youngsters were not invited to attend the youth club) and it had been suggested that they be invited to a one-off session to try to establish what services they would like to see provided in the Town.

There was a debate about the need for a multi-agency approach to youth service provision; the lack of suitably qualified youth workers; and the lack of outreach work generally.

Cllr K Craze had asked the Town Clerk to arrange a meeting of the Executive Committee specifically to discuss Youth Services, ASBOC and the Youth Trust and all Councillors would be welcome to attend.

(Post Meeting Note: Execs Meeting to be arranged for 17.02.23)

94. GRANT AID

None

95. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

None

96. NEXT MEETING – **Monday 13TH March 2023** at 6.30pm in Town Hall, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.05pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
90	Investigate quarterly Cllr payments	01.04.23	Town Clerk
92	Approve quote from MTST – Ashley Project	13.02.23	Town Council
92	Approve funding of shortfall for Ashley project from CIL monies and reserves	13.02.23	Town Council
93	Arrange Executive Committee meeting to discuss ASBOC, Youth Services, Youth Trust	17.02.23	Town Clerk

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