



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Tuesday 15 June 2021 at 6.30 pm at the Incuhive Centre.

Chairman p D N Tungate

Vice-Chairman p S P Davies

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

In Attendance: B Murrow

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk E Towler – Youth Services Organiser
H Ormerod – Admin Assistant

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Council Chairman, Cllr K E Craze in the Chair, called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Cllr D N Tungate was proposed by Cllr S Davies and seconded by Cllr J Ward.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Committee Chairman, Cllr N Tungate in the Chair, called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Cllr S Davies was proposed by Cllr A Reid and seconded by Cllr N Tungate.

Following the election of the Chair, and Vice-Chair, the Chairman extended a welcome to Councillors, Officers and members of the public.

3. APOLOGIES

Cllrs G R Blunden, M Brownsea, S J Clarke and A D O'Sullivan.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr A Reid, being a member of the Lions Club, declared an interest in agenda item 12, re Grant Aid and took no part in the discussion or voting on that matter.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

6. MINUTES

It was,

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2021, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes would be signed in due course.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES

All action points had been completed within the timescale indicated, except:

Min 260 Recording of meetings – A further meeting of the Working Party would be required prior to a final recommendation being made to the Committee.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

Citizens Advice New Forest had written to Parish Clerks seeking a grant for financial support. It was agreed that the Town Clerk ask Citizens Advice to provide details of what the grant would be used for and to ask that a formal application be submitted.

Thankyou letters had been received from Victim Support and New Forest Disability Services in respect of grants previously awarded.

9. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, Schedule of Payments for the period 1 April – 31 May 2021, in the sum of £240,676.19 as previously distributed.

The Town Clerk highlighted the following items over £1,000.00:

- a) Payment to Hitachi for Wessex mower deck 2020-21 contract hire totalling £1,094.88.
- b) Payment to Brewers for decorating supplies for Fawcetts CAPEX project £3,612.97
- c) Payment to DCK Accounting Solutions for payroll year end accounting total £1,112.91
- d) Payment to Juice for website hosting security updates for Go New Milton £1,116.00
- e) Payment to Lush Signs for Ballard Lake Info board / Eddie Serrani plaque £1,474.80
- f) Payment to Atech for air conditioning work for the Fawcetts CAPEX work £30,456.00
- g) Payment to Christchurch Garden Machinery for servicing and repairs total £1,848.27
- h) Payment to Edmat Gas Services as part of the Fawcetts CAPEX project £27,098.55
- i) Payment to staff / members for salaries and allowances for April totalling £30,592.54
- j) Payment to ASBOC for youth grant aid covering outreach work on the Rec £8,150.00
- k) Payment to Atech Electrical for statutory repair work to Fawcetts ext. toilets £1,761.50

- l) Payment to NFDC Green Loop work £7.6k (JC) and tree surveys £264. £7,864.00
- m) Payment to Turfleet Hire for the Blecavator hire ahead of hydroseeding £1,008.00.
- n) Payment to Christchurch Garden Machinery for servicing and repairs total £1,956.00
- o) Payment to DCK Accounting Solutions payroll/close down accounting total £1,716.53
- p) Payment to John Shutter Tree Services for tree clearance at Naish Estate £1,958.41
- q) Payment to NMS for materials for waste site at Fawcetts/Barton Common £2,156.32
- r) Payment to NFDC for Mixed Recycling Container weekly charges 2021-22. £1,605.00
- s) Payment to Rejuvenate in respect of IT monthly costs plus a new laptop £1,877.86
- t) Payment to Screwfix for guttering renewal, part of Fawcetts CAPEX project £1,049.36
- u) Payment to Turfleet hire for the John Deere Tractor and front loader hire £2,766.00
- v) Payment to Lamps & Tubes for Town centre / Rec Ground bunting display £3,616.18
- w) Payment to PDP Architecture architectural services Ashley youth building £1,185.00
- x) Payment to RMB Hydroseeding for wildflower displays in 12 different areas £5,640.00
- y) Payment to staff & members for salaries and allowances for May totalling £30,146.22

Post Meeting Notes:

Payment of £1,094.88 to Hitachi is the annual contract hire amount due for the Wessex mower.

In respect of payment to Juice of £1,116.00, their invoice covers 2 websites - NMTC and Go New Milton – for technical input and hosting. Website content is updated by NMTC staff. TDM updates the Go New Milton website, but security updates are undertaken by Juice.

In regard to payment of £1,761.50 to Atech for “statutory” repair work to Fawcetts Field external toilets, this included replacing light fittings with LED battens and supplying, wiring and fitting hand dryers to ladies, gents and disabled toilets.

Additionally, the payment of £332.40 to Smith of Derby was queried, and the Town Clerk was asked to provide details regarding the Homemill House Centenary Clock (as attached).

ENDORSED:

The Schedule of Payments covering the period 1 April – 31 May 2021, in the sum of £240,676.19 was duly ENDORSED for Council approval.

10. Management Accounts 2020/21

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2, Management Accounts for the year.

Bottom line, there was an underspend of circa £100k due mainly to reduced activity as a result of the pandemic and in particular “savings” in events expenditure, advertising, neighbourhood planning, youth co-ordination, communications & media, grant aid and election expenses.

Cllr Davies enquired as to why there had been an overspend on allotments. Members were reminded that Town Council has a statutory duty to provide secure allotments and during the year there were new gates, fencing, and some fly-tipping removal.

Members noted the underspend for 2020/21 was revised to £99,903, as anticipated following accountants’ year-end adjustments.

11. Referred Matters

No items were referred from Amenities, but Community Garden was referred back.

12. GRANT AID

The Chairman referred to Appendix 12, Grant Aid requests from The Lions Club of New Milton and the New Milton Residents' Association (NMRA).

a) A Lions Club request for £3,000.00 was considered and supported by members.

RESOLVED:

That the Lions Club be granted £3,000 from the 2021-22 Grant Aid Budget.

b) A NMRA request for £500 was considered by members. The Town Clerk reported that a meeting of the Community Garden Working Party had taken place earlier at which the NMRA had expressed a preference for the Garden to be located at the Moore Close site. Members could not immediately agree to this location due to existing/future demands on this site and as a result, the issue regarding location would need to be referred back to Amenities for further consideration.

RESOLVED:

That NMRA request for £500 grant aid be deferred and the issue regarding location be referred back to Amenities Committee for further consideration.

13. YOUTH WORK

The YSM submitted a report covering the support and facilities provided by the Youth Team. In addition to the update, the Youth Services Co-ordinator reported that the Youth Club had been extremely well attended in recent weeks. Outreach work had been undertaken with Recreation ground users who were keen to be involved in future consultations and discussions regarding facilities. Members noted the report and thanked the YSM for the update.

14. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2020/21

The Chairman referred to Appendix 4, being the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2021, which was noted by members. Town Clerk went through the statement, highlighting some minor changes required.

It was,

RECOMMENDED:

That the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2021 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

15. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020/21

The Chairman referred to the Final Internal Audit Report, which had just been received from the Auditor. Members noted the draft report.

It was,

RECOMMENDED:

That the Internal Audit Report for 2020/21 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

16. ANNUAL RETURN 2020/21

The Chairman referred to Appendix 5, Annual Return, which was noted by members. Once signed off by the Town Council on 28 June 2021 this would be displayed on the front window of the Town Hall for exercise of Public Rights.

It was,

RECOMMENDED:

That the Annual Return for 2020/21 be received and ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

17. ANY OTHER MATTERS

None.

18. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 26 July 2021 at 6.30pm - Venue to be agreed.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending and closed the public part of the meeting at 7.30pm.

The Chairman moved to go into private session, as follows:

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.

19. INVESTMENT

The Internal Auditor had raised concerns about the use of just one bank to hold the Council's reserves and it was reported that the Council did not qualify for the Financial Services Compensation Scheme for any amount held in any bank accounts as its annual income was in excess of £1m.

As a result, the F&GP Committee had set up an Investments Working Party comprising Cllrs A D O'Sullivan, K E Craze, M Brownsea, with the Town Clerk reporting to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of F&GP.

Members considered the report previously circulated to members.

It was then,

RECOMMENDED:

- a) That the Working Party meet regularly approximately 2 weeks prior to each F&GP meeting to determine how much money should move between the business bank account and a CCLA money market fund, and report back to F&GP after each Working Party meeting to confirm movement of money.***
- b) That the Town Clerk closes the 35-day and 95-day accounts with NatWest and liaise with other main banks to find suitable, alternatives accounts.***
- c) That Town Council consider investing via CCLA and Quilter, as appropriate.***

20. PLANNING APPEAL AT BROCKWOOD, 42 BARTON COMMON LANE

Anthony Harris, Town Council solicitor, reported on a planning application appeal in respect of Brockwood, 42 Barton Common Lane. Anthony Harris explained this is a house with large garden, for which a developer is applying for planning permission for redevelopment into four plots. The gravel track to the house is fairly narrow, passing over the Common and it is reckoned that builder's lorries and materials will cause damage to the Common, either in relation to the track or trees on the Common.

It was reiterated that the planning application is currently under appeal – an Injunction may well be required to prevent the developer causing damage IF their appeal succeeds, for which damages as such are likely to be modest.

Members noted works would require access to the site over Barton Common land that we have a duty to protect and maintain. If planning permission were granted, there would be potential for damage to our common land (being the responsibility of the Town Council) including trees and tracks and to ensure its preservation, it was recommended that Counsel advice be sought, and Injunction Proceedings instigated.



With that in mind

It was,

RECOMMENDED:

That Anthony Harris be instructed to seek advice on this case from Anne Williams, Barrister on the basis that a fee estimate is provided in advance.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
8	CANF – Grant aid request	26 July 2021	F&GP Committee
9	Endorse Schedule of Payments covering the period 1 April – 31 May 2021	28 June 2021	Town Council
9 a)	Wessex mower purchase cost	26 July 2021	Town Clerk
9 d)	Go New Milton website changes	26 July 2021	Town Clerk
12 b)	NMRA Community Garden	13 July 2021	Amenities Committee
14	Endorse Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2021	28 June 2021	Town Council
15	Endorse Internal Audit Report for 2020/21	28 June 2021	Town Council
16	Endorse Annual Return for 2020/21	28 June 2021	Town Council
19	Endorse investment proposals	28 June 2021	Town Council
20	Seek Counsel Advice Planning Appeal	28 June 2021	Town Council

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

Homemill House



A block of retirement flats, centrally located above the shops and pavement of the main Station Road north. It was built by McCarthy & Stone retirement living builders, all of whose many retirement homes nationwide are called Home-something: Homelands, Homeleigh, Homethwaite, Homequay etc.

Projecting from it is [New Milton centenary clock](#), marking New Milton's centenary in 1996.