

From: Council Audits <councilaudits@bdo.co.uk>
Sent: 09 September 2025 23:22
To: Graham Flexman <clerk@newmiltontowncouncil.gov.uk>
Subject: New Milton Town Council - Conclusion of annual review 2024-25

Dear Mr Flexman

We have completed our review of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Please find attached the following documents:

- A copy of sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR on which our report is based along with our external auditor report and certificate (Final Report).
- Notice of conclusion of audit template

The external auditor report, and certificate, details any matters arising from the review. The smaller authority must consider these matters and decide what, if any, action is required.

Action you are required to take at the conclusion of the review

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) set out what you must do at the conclusion of the review. In summary, you are required to:

- Prepare a "Notice of conclusion of audit" which details the rights of inspection, in line with the statutory requirements. Attached is word template for you to use.
- Publish the Notice of conclusion along with the certified AGAR (sections 1, 2 and Final Report) which must include publication on the smaller authority's website.
- Keep copies of the AGAR available for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum.
- Ensure that sections 1, 2 and Final Report of the published AGAR remain available for public access for a period of not less than 5 years from the date of publication.

Timetable for 2025/26

We will contact you next year towards the end of March with regards the 2025-26 documentation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

LOUISE CAPLEN
Resource Manager / Business Assurance

louise.caplen@bdo.co.uk

For and on behalf of BDO LLP
Arcadia House
Maritime Walk
Ocean Village
Southampton
SO14 3TL
UNITED KINGDOM

All Correspondence to be sent to:
BDO (Southampton)
5 Temple Square
Temple Street
Liverpool
L2 5RH

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

New Milton Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

Except for the matters reported below on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Assertion 2 on the AGS was answered 'Yes' which is contradicted by the internal auditor's response 'No' to question B referring to tenders. The internal auditor explained that the standing orders and financial regulations were not followed with regards to a christmas light tender.

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

BDO LLP - Southampton

External Auditor Signature

DocuSigned by:
BDO LLP
467DFB746A8A428...

Date 09 September 2025

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

New Milton Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	750,857	381,300	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,246,391	1,325,429	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	192,824	357,186	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	-607,798	-690,070	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	-1,200,974	-969,260	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	381,300	404,585	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	393,655	475,781	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,241,526	6,475,556	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	✓			The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

23/06/2025

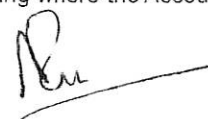
I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

23/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

Minute 26 b)

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

New Milton Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		Yes	No*	Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*			
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓				prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓				made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓				has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓				during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓				considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓				arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓				responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓				disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A		has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
	✓				

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

23/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

Minute 26 a)

www.newmiltontowncouncil.gov.uk/

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

Notice of Conclusion of Audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2025

In accordance with

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

	Notes
1. The audit of accounts for New Milton Town Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 has been completed and the accounts have been published.	This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. This must include publication on the smaller authority's website. The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.
2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of New Milton Town Council on application to:	
(a) Graham Flexman Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer New Milton Town Council Town Hall 2 Ashley Road New Milton Hants BH25 6AS	(a) Insert the names, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR.
(b) Monday to Friday 10.00am to 4.00pm	(b) Insert the hours during which the inspection rights may be exercised.
3. Copies will be provided to any person on payment of...	(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs.
(c) £5.00 for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.	
(d) Announcement made by: Graham Flexman, Town Clerk & RFO	(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice.
(e) Date of announcement: 30 September 2025	(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice.



New Milton Town Council
The Town Hall
2 Ashley Rd
New Milton
Hants, BH25 6BZ

21st August 2025

Dear Sirs

The purpose of this letter is to set out the basis on which we (are to) act as internal auditors of the Council and the respective areas of responsibility of the Council and of ourselves.

As Councillors of the above Council you are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records and preparing financial statements, which give a true and fair view and comply with the Local Government Act Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996, as amended periodically. You are also responsible for making available to us, as and when required, the Council's accounting records and all other necessary records and related information for us to undertake our review in accordance with the requirements of the "Governance and Accountability Manual – The Practitioner's Guide", including minutes of all Council and Committee meetings.

We have a responsibility to report to the members whether, in our view, the financial statements, as summarised at Section 2 of the statutory Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), are in accordance with the Council's accounting records, whether they are supported by appropriate systems of internal financial control in the areas specified in the Internal Audit Report embodied in the AGAR and whether they comply with the relevant legislation. In arriving at our view, we are required to consider the following matters, and to report on any in respect of which we are not satisfied:

- a. whether proper accounting records have been kept by the Council;
- b. whether the Council's Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account or Receipts and Payments Account and supporting statements are in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- c. whether we have obtained all the information and explanations which we think necessary for the purpose of our audit.

In addition, there are certain other matters, which, according to the circumstances, may need to be dealt with in our report.

We have a professional responsibility to report if the financial statements do not comply in any material respect with Statements of Standard Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting Standards, as applicable to local Councils, unless in our opinion the non-compliance is justified in the circumstances.

Our audit will be conducted in accordance with Part 2, Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations as set out in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (amended) and the Auditing Standards issued by the accountancy bodies and will have regard to relevant Auditing Guidelines. Furthermore, it will be conducted in such a manner as we consider necessary to fulfil our responsibilities and will include such tests of transactions and of ownership and valuation of assets and liabilities as we consider necessary.

We shall expect to obtain such relevant and reliable evidence as we consider sufficient to enable us to draw reasonable conclusions therefrom. The nature and extent of our tests will vary according to our assessment of the Council's accounting systems, and where we may wish to place reliance on the systems of internal control and may cover any aspect of the Council's business operations.

We shall report to you any significant weaknesses in or observations on, the Council's systems which come to our notice and which we consider should be brought to your attention. We will also examine annually the Council's approach to the assessment and formal adoption of the risks associated with the various financial and related systems in the Council.

We shall obtain an understanding of the accounting systems in order to assess their adequacy as a basis for the preparation of the financial statements and to establish whether proper accounting records have been maintained.

All evidence obtained, whether in electronic or hard copy format, will be retained in accordance with the General Data Protection Legislation, Auditing Solution's GDPR, and Document & Data retention policies, and the General Data Protection Regulation Non-Disclosure Agreement issued in concert with this Agreement.

As part of our normal audit procedures, we may request you to provide written confirmation of oral representations, which we have received from you during the course of the audit.

In order to assist us with the examination of your financial statements, as summarised in the AGAR, we shall request sight of all relevant supporting documents, including those relating to the chairman's certification of the AGAR, which are due to be issued with the financial statements. We reserve the right to attend relevant meetings of the Council and to receive notice of all meetings.

We may ask, additionally, for confirmation in writing that all the transactions undertaken by the Council have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records, and our audit report on your Council's financial statements may refer to this confirmation.


The responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud rests with the Council. Notwithstanding this, we shall endeavour to plan our audit so that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting material misstatements in the financial statements or accounting records resulting from irregularities or fraud, but our examination should not be relied upon to disclose irregularities and frauds that may exist. We also require that, in the event of any suspected irregularity being identified by members or the Council's Clerk, we are advised immediately and, if appropriate, consulted on the appropriate courses of action that should be applied to examine the position further.

We shall not be treated as having notice, for the purposes of our audit responsibilities, of information provided to members of our firm other than those engaged on the audit (e.g. information provided in connection with accounting and other services).

Agreement of terms

Once it has been agreed, this letter and contract will remain effective for future years, until it is either cancelled by the Council or ourselves. We respectively ask that, should the Council wish to cancel the contract, due notice is given by 30th September latest in the financial year under review, as work on the year's review will have either commenced prior to or shortly after that date. We shall be grateful if you could confirm in writing your agreement of the terms of this letter or let us know if they are not in accordance with your understanding of our terms of appointment.

Please indicate your agreement by signing this letter and returning to this office.

On behalf of Auditing Solutions Ltd	Signature	New Milton Town Council	Signature
Stuart J Pollard Director	<i>Stuart Pollard</i>	Dated:	 G. FLEXMAN

NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS for 2025-2026

Month & Year	Town Council	Amenities Committee	F & GP Committee	Planning Committee
	Monday	Monday	Monday	Fortnightly Tue / Thu
May 2025	13 (Tue) Annual	27 (Tue)	-	6 (Tue) & 22
June 2025	23	-	9	5 & 17 (Tue)
July 2025 10 Indian Obelisk	-	7	21	3, 17 & 31
August 2025 23 WWII Clock	5 (Tue)	-	-	14 & 28
September 2025 02 VJ Day (80 th)	29	1	16 (Tue)	9 (Tue) & 25
October 2025 20 Annual Allots	-	14 (Tue)	27	7 (Tue) & 23
November 2025 9 Remembrance	10	24	-	6 & 18 (Tue)
December 2025 6 Carol Service	-	-	8	4 & 18
January 2026	5	19	-	TBA
February 2026 21 Mayor's Tea	16	-	2	TBA
March 2026 11 Civic Celebration	30	2	16	TBA
April 2026 20 Towns Assembly	-	14 (Tue)	27	TBA
May 2026	11 Annual Meeting	26 (Tue)	-	TBA

- a) If time permits, Town Council meetings will be adjourned for a 'DEMOCRATIC HALF HOUR' during which members of the Public, with the approval of the Chairman, may initiate discussion on matters of relevant community interest and which fall within the responsibility of the Town Council.
- b) Prior to the commencement of other meetings, and at the discretion of the Chairman, a short period of Public Participation may take place. Members of the public may speak on any item(s) appearing on the public agenda, or on any other matter that falls within the Committee's terms of reference.

Annual Assembly (Town's Meeting) - Is a public meeting required by statute to be held between 1 March and 1 June (inclusive) each year. Note: It is not a Town Council meeting.

Annual Meeting of the Council - In a year of ordinary elections of parish councillors, the annual meeting shall be held within 14 days of the councillors elected at that election taking office.