

NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY 5 AUGUST 2025 AT 6.30PM IN NEW MILTON TOWN HALL**

Councillors: J Adams p P Moores
p J Baker R Murrow
p G Blunden p A D O'Sullivan
p S Clarke p R A Reid - Chairman
D Rice-Mundy- Vice Chairman p D N Tungate
p M Craze V Schooling
p S Davies p M Scott-Johns
p W Davies p K Trehorn
p D Hawkins R Maynard

In Attendance:

G Flexman - Town Clerk

J Bean – Administrative Office

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

33. APOLOGIES

Cllrs D Rice-Mundy (work commitments), V Schooling (unwell), R Murrow (away) and R Maynard (away) J Adams (no apology)

34. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported on the events he has attended since the last Town Council meeting on 23rd June as follows:

6 July	Afternoon of Music - Groovemeister
10 July	Indian Memorial
11 July	Durlston Speech Day
	Mens' Shed 1 st Anniversary

15 July	Dementia Allotment singalong
17 July	Ballard School Speech Day
3 August	Afternoon of Music Wise Guys

The Chairman took the opportunity to raise the possibility of moving public participation from the end of the Town Council meeting to the beginning of the meeting today and going forwards, giving people the chance to comment on agenda items before they are discussed. After a short discussion.

It was

RESOLVED:

That future Town Council meetings feature an opportunity for Public Participation at the start of the meeting, in line with the standing committees.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr A Reid is a member of the Lion's Club and did not participate in the discussion nor vote on Item 9.

36. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2025.

It was

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2025 having been circulated be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes from the meeting were duly signed.

37. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following:

- a) An email from Lulu Bowerman in response to an email sent to her raising concerns about the dangerous parking arrangements outside the new Tesco Express on Station Road.

“I have discussed with colleagues in the Safety Audit Team, who also appreciate the concerns. However, given this is a low-speed environment with a previous commercial use and no accident patterns related to parking, we do not feel any action is necessary. However, we will continue to monitor the situation and re-assess if necessary.”

Members noted the response.

- b) An email sent to Roxanne King at NFDC in relation to the toilets on the recreation ground, with a suggestion that NFDC and Town Council work together to ensure they are presentable at all times.

“We received several complaints yesterday regarding the state of the public toilets on our main recreation ground in the centre of New Milton, as below. We also received some verbal complaint during yesterday’s Afternoon of Music featuring the Wise Guys.

For the future, I wonder if we might reach out and come to some arrangement, whereby we enlist the service of NFDC on a formal basis for such events. Perhaps a Service Level Agreement (SLA) of some kind, to cover especially these one-off weekend events and Remembrance Sunday.

It's something we need to tackle jointly, and could adversely affect us both. You may well wish to contribute to some extra facilities in the form of Portaloos that have already been arranged for the 6th & 7th September.”

The Town Clerk reiterated that the final Afternoon of Music on 7th September falls the day after the Lions’ VJ day celebration so there will be extra Portaloos already available on that occasion.

- c) A letter from Sammy Miller bemoaning the utility works around New Milton.

“The ongoing chaos caused by gas, water, and roadworks in an around New Milton is nothing short of carnage. The traffic disruption is unacceptable, and the town is being brought to a standstill.

The prolonged closures – such as Gore Road being shut for months – are having a damaging knock-on effect on local businesses, many of which are already struggling to stay afloat in the current economic climate.”

There was a short discussion, concluding that the work being done is essential, and that the only answer is to try to keep disruption to a minimum.

- d) A notification from CHRGS (Council HR and Governance Support) confirming the NJC settlement of a 3.2% pay rise with effect from the 1 April 2025. The Town Clerk advised this also applies to Councillors’ allowances.

38. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillors

Cllr M Kendall

Cllr Kendall spoke about the proposal put forward by HCC in response to the LGR. Their preferred proposal links Southampton, Eastleigh and the New Forest. His main concerns relate to the potential fragmentation of Adult and Children’s Social Care. He is mindful that Barton and New Milton are on the edge of the proposed new authority. His view is that the commissioning authorities should join to ensure continuity of service for Social Care. He referenced Project Integra where Southampton, Portsmouth and Hampshire had jointly commissioned waste services around 15 years ago. This had been good for residents with continuity of service, and he felt a similar pattern should be followed for Social Care.

HCC had spent a lot of time and effort researching the options for LGR, he said and while not hugely enamoured with the proposed solution, there were limited options, LGR as a whole is being imposed on councils, by the government, with Councils having to work within strict parameters set out by central government.

Cllr D N Tungate asked why Hampshire were so keen to link the New Forest to Southampton.

Cllr Kendall said that before 1997 Portsmouth, Hampshire and Southampton had been part of a big authority with that era seeing the largest growth. He observed that many residents of the New Forest work in Southampton as many of the major employers in the region are based there - if the New Forest joins with Test Valley then workers resident in the New Forest will be subject to rules that they have no say in as far as Southampton employment is concerned.

F Carpenter

Cllr Carpenter had rescheduled the visit by Cllr Nick Adams-King, HCC Leader, to a local meeting which was cancelled unexpectedly. The revised date is 16th August at 2pm at Hordle Pavilion. All are welcome to attend this LGR update.

District Councillors

Cllr G Blunden

Cllr G Blunden had nothing specific to report.

Cllr S P Davies

Cllr S P Davies reiterated that LGR is being imposed by central government, causing a lot of additional work. Cllr Davies recently represented Cllr Jill Cleary the NFDC Leader at a local Leaders' Meeting of 12 district and borough councils. They spoke a lot about SEND and Care, and the concern that reorganisation would not ensure continuity of service for residents.

Local democracy is always an issue, currently 3,300 elect a district councillor, going forwards this number will increase significantly, probably doubling.

Last Thursday, Local Government Minister Baroness Taylor visited the New Forest Show, and also Penman House in Totton, being an NFDC housing development. She had been very impressed with what NFDC had achieved.

Also in attendance was Andy Parry Norton, Chair of the Commons Defence Association (CDA) who recently featured in an article in the Daily Telegraph.

The Commons are looking to secure minority status. Steve Davies spent a couple of hours with the Chair at his farm and was able to see the very special work that the Commons carry out. NFDC will be supporting them in their claim for special minority status.

Cllr S Clarke

Cllr S Clarke advised that he and Cllr S Davies had attended a Community Day at the Nedderman Centre. It was predominantly a day for council tenants, but youth services and financial services were also present.

There was good engagement with the tenants, and there is now a member representative of social housing tenants who will be the first point of call for tenants' issues.

Cllr Clarke continues to chair the Local Plan committee, not much to report right now, but some of the evidenced-based reports will be made available to the public soon and they will contain some challenging facts and figures.

Cllr D N Tungate

Cllr Tungate advised he had been approached by a resident of Avenue Road. The resident advised that many motorists have been speeding along the road, and there have been many noisy vehicles.

He suggested an SLR be deployed there and that residents be encouraged to report to the police via 101 in the hope that volume of complaints will lead to action.

Cllrs A D O'Sullivan had nothing to report.

39. COMMITTEE REPORTS**a) Planning Committee**

Cllr S Clarke, Chairman of the Planning Committee, submitted Minutes of Committee meetings held 17 June, 3 & 17 July 2025 and moved their adoption.

RESOLVED:

That Minutes 24 to 53 inclusive of the meetings held on 17 June, 3 and 17 July 2025 be received.

b) Amenities Committee

Cllr G Blunden, Chairman of the Amenities Committee submitted Minutes of the Committee meetings held on 7 July 2025 and moved their adoption.

Cllr S Clarke took the opportunity to ask about the works at Ballard Lake, he said that some of the grass has not yet grown back and that various areas are now very gravelly. He asked if there is a plan to re-grass those areas.

Cllr G Blunden advised that this is being monitored and that further work will be carried out if necessary.

RESOLVED:

That Minutes 18 to 30 inclusive of the meeting held on 7 July be received.

c) Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr D N Tungate, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee submitted Minutes of Committee meetings held on 21 July 2025 and moved their adoption.

The Town Clerk advised of a proposed amendment to the Recommendation at the end of Minute 34, which should read ***That a non-council Trustee from New Milton Youth Trust update the members of F&GP on a regular basis.***

Members agreed the inclusion of “non-council” when F&GP review the minute.

RESOLVED:

That Minutes 19 to 34 inclusive of the meeting held on 21 July be received, subject to the above amendment being noted at F&GP.

d) Executive Committee

Cllr D N Tungate, a member of the Executive Committee submitted the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16th July 2025 and moved their adoption.

RESOLVED:

That Minutes 1 to 12 inclusive of the meeting held on 16 July be received.

40. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Schedule of Payments, covering 1 May – 30 June and previously endorsed by F&GP, was submitted for Council approval.

It was unanimously,

RESOLVED:

That the Schedule of Payments No 02/25/26 in the sum of £286,259.45 for the period 1 May – 30 June be approved.

The Schedule of Payments was duly signed by the Chair and Town Clerk.

41. LIONS CLUB – GRANT AID REQUEST

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1 being the Grant Aid Request submitted by the Lions Club that was referred from the F&GP Committee due to its late submission, and F&GP can only approve Grant Aid Requests up to £2,500.

Cllr G Blunden said that the event is so worthwhile and enjoyed by so many people in the town, he fully supported the request.

It was unanimously,

RESOLVED:

That Lion's Club of New Milton and District be granted £3,200 from the Event Budget under the General Power of Competence.

42. STANDING ORDERS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2, Standing Orders, were submitted for Council approval. F&GP having reviewed it page by page at their last meeting.

It was unanimously,

RESOLVED: *That the revised Standing Orders be approved and adopted.*

43. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3 being the revised Investment Strategy Report for 2025/26.

The Town Clerk drew attention to the highlighted areas on the report which compare the annual returns from Quilter Cheviot – 4.5% growth over the last year and CCLA (being acquired by Jupiter Investment Management Group) showing 4.7% growth over the year.

It was agreed the investments should be left where they are. Cllr G Blunden suggested further comparisons with other investment funds might be useful.

It was then

RESOLVED:

That revised Investment Strategy for 2025-26 be approved and adopted.

44. COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 4 the Communications Officer's Report, previously circulated. The Report was noted.

45. TOWN DEVELOPMENT MANAGERS REPORT

The Town Clerk referred to the Town Development Manager's Report which had been issued today following a Green Loop meeting this morning.

Cllr S Clarke who had been at the meeting advised that there had been a useful discussion and that the Loop has been extended and is now 16km long as opposed to the previous 10km. The plans are out for consultation and the spokes need to be produced. The Loop can be joined at any point.

Cllr G Blunden added that the Green Loop meeting had focussed on existing paths and routes that are available now, rather than any paths which need improvement. He said it would be a valuable asset encouraging people to walk safely around the town and it could encourage people to walk rather than drive.

Cllr S Clarke said that once it's approved, there will be a role for the Communications Officer in publicising the Green Loop and encouraging people to use it. Cllr D N Tungate offered to walk the route to try it out and requested a map. Cllr G Blunden rounded up by saying that several parts of the route are already being enhanced.

It was

RECOMMENDED:

That the extended Green Loop be referred to Amenities with a map.

46. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS SERVING ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Alan O' Sullivan had nothing to report in respect of Forest Arts.

47. NEXT MEETING

Monday 29 September 2025 at 6.30pm – Town Hall, New Milton.

The Chairman closed the Public Session to facilitate the Democratic Half Hour.

No members of the public wished to speak, however Cllr D Hawkins wished to speak about LGR following Mel Kendal's report saying it was ill-thought out and would cause havoc. Cllr Hawkins went on to say that he felt sympathy with anyone needing medical help and /or social care post LGR.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting at 7.25pm.

Distribution:

Town Councillors

District Councillors J L Cleary

County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter, K Mans

New Milton Police

Press

Alan Watson – NewMilton.net

Sue Larking - NMRA

Mark Jeffries – Estates & Facilities Manager

Editor - Focus