



Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Tuesday 14 October 2025 at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

Present:

Chairman:	p G R Blunden - Chairman	p M Craze - Vice Chair
Councillors:	p D E Hawkins	p R Murrow
	J Baker	p A D O'Sullivan
	p D Rice-Mundy	p V Schooling
	p K Trehorn	

In attendance:

Councillors:

Officers: Graham Flexman - Town Clerk
Mark Jeffries – Estates and Facilities Manager
Sam Welch – Administration Officer

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

One member of the public spoke under Public Participation.

Bob Lord, Chairman of the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow and Barton Common Volunteer Ranger, requested that appendices be published on the Town Council website before meetings. Regarding agenda Item 8, he hoped to hear that all infrastructure repairs, including fencing and gates, would be completed by the following week, and that a second trough at Barton Common would be installed in preparation for grazing at the end of October.

The meeting then went into session at 6:32pm.

44. APOLOGIES

Cllr J Baker

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

46. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In response, the Chairman referred the comment on the appendices to the Town Clerk, who advised that a delay in finalising one appendix had resulted in later than usual publication on the website. The Chairman noted comments on infrastructure and the second trough and advised that grazing licences were on the agenda.

47. MINUTES/ACTION POINTS

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee minutes of 01 September 2025.

It was,

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 01 September 2025, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

The Chairman reviewed the action points from the previous committee meeting.

The Town Clerk confirmed that all action points had been addressed. In relation to Minute 35c, the request for a croquet lawn on land surrounding the Cricket Club, he is awaiting further information and will provide an update at the next meeting.

Cllr V Schooling requested an update regarding town signage. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Development Manager (TDM) is currently finalising the Neighbourhood Plan review and will shortly address other matters, including signage.

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
36	Distribution of map of Green Loop extension	ASAP	Sam Welch
37	Land use request - NMRC	ASAP	Comms Officer
38	CIL Bids evaluation	21.10.25	NFDC
39	Advertising Policy	No Change	Amenities
40	Nature Reserve status	On-Going	Town Clerk
41	Long Meadow Play Area	23.09.25	Estates Manager
42	Official Ballard Lake "Enhancements Opening"	09.09.25	All

48. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following items of correspondence:

- a) An email from New Forest District Council announcing 4 x free car parking days (in NFDC car parks) in December: Small Business Saturday (6 December 2025), the last weekend before Christmas (20th and 21st December), and an additional day in support of a Christmas event (Saturday 29th November in New Milton).
- b) The Friends of New Milton Station are holding their first Annual General Meeting on 29 October 2025 at 7pm, at New Milton Community Centre.

49. LAND USE

- a) The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, relating to a request from the Youth Services Manager to hold a Christmas Fun Day at Ashley Family Hub on Friday 19 December 2025. Cllr D Hawkins queried whether the cost could be reduced considering cost of living pressures. The Chairman explained that he believes provisions have been made for this and requested that the Town Clerk bring the matter to the attention of the Youth Services Manager.

RESOLVED: That a Christmas Fun Day be permitted on Friday 19 December 2025 at Ashley Family Hub from 3.00 – 6.00pm, subject to usual terms and conditions including appropriate risk assessments.

- b) Two requests from New Milton Community Garden:

- 1) Pumpkin Carving & Decorating

“Friday, 31st October, 10:30 a.m. – 12 noon – Pumpkin Carving & Decorating. We will be providing the pumpkins, decorating materials and refreshments. SCARF children will be coming along with their Programme Coordinator and parents. We are also intending to publicise to the community and local schools with the proviso that under 16s are accompanied by their parents as we will not be allowing children to carve the pumpkins, only decorate. Some of our Trustees will be in attendance and volunteers to help with the morning. This is a free event and donations to the garden welcome.”

RESOLVED: That New Milton Community Garden be permitted to host a Pumpkin Carving & Decorating event at the Community Garden on Friday 31 October 2025 between 10:30am – 12 noon, subject to usual terms and conditions including risk assessments.



2) Carols in the Garden

“Saturday, 20th December, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Carols in the Garden. There will be a quartet playing music and accompanying the carols and we will provide carol sheets for members of the public. This is another free event with donations welcome and we intend advertising this out to the community. We are hoping to have a catering van in attendance for mince pies and non-alcoholic refreshments.”

RESOLVED: That New Milton Community Garden be permitted to host a “Carol in the Garden” event at the Community Garden on Saturday 20 December 2025 between 1:30 – 3:30pm, subject to usual terms and conditions including risk assessments.

The Chairman thanked the volunteers for all the hard work they’ve put into the garden, saying it was lovely to see how well the community garden is doing and how nice it is to see them organise these events.

- c) A request from TRAINEDBYAGIRL, a small business operating in New Milton:
“I’m getting in touch to ask who I can speak to regarding the possibility of running a group fitness class on the recreation ground every Sunday. The idea is to hold weekly sessions with the aim of raising funds for a local charity”.

The Chairman expressed caution regarding the proposal, noting that the applicant was a commercial business. Two other members agreed, raising concerns that allowing this use could set a precedent, potentially encouraging other businesses to seek access to the Recreation Ground for commercial purposes.

One member noted that the event was intended to support a charitable cause. The Town Clerk advised that the business would need to apply to NFDC for a Street Collection License. Members agreed that further information was required before a decision could be made.

RESOLVED: That additional details be sought regarding the nature of the event and the acquisition of an NFDC Street Collection License.

50. CIL REPORT

The Chairman referred to the Town Clerk, who went through the CIL report shown at Appendix 2, explaining that the Town Council may only submit CIL project bids to NFDC if it can provide evidence that the Neighbourhood CIL element received by NMTC to date has either been spent or formally allocated. This requirement has been met, with the CIL Report for 2024-25. Members noted the contents of the report.

51. BALLARD NATURE RESERVE

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3. The Town Clerk reported that, following liaison with New Forest District Council, permission had been granted to proceed with an LNR application to Natural England, submitting the Management Plan, HBIC Habitats Survey, and other relevant documents relating to the Local Nature Reserve designation. As discussed at the previous meeting, it was suggested that the site be referred to as 'Ballard Nature Reserve.'

There is currently no update on the timescale. The Chairman noted that the matter is ongoing and emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum.

[Post Meeting Note: Natural England are a statutory consultee in the Local Nature Reserve designation process, and on 15 October, we heard from their Senior Officer, Louise Pickard, that they had received our application and are keen and willing to assist us with this consultation process].

52. ASHLEY FAMILY HUB

The Chairman referred to Appendix 4, Holiday Activity Days at Ashley Family Hub praising the work being done by the Youth Team as brilliant and noted that efforts are being made to ensure all activities are fully compliant and safe. Cllr K Trehorn commented that she would like to see some gardening related activities included. The Chairman advised the Town Clerk would pass this comment on to the Youth Services Manager.

53. COUNCIL PROJECTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 5 - Council Projects and invited the Estates and Facilities Manager to run members through the proposed capital expenditure items for 2026–27, as follows:

In relation to 'Station Road - Metropolis Benches', the Chairman noted that the litter bins would also need to be of high quality to match the new benches.

Cllr D Hawkins commented that the appearance of the town plays a very important role in drawing people in and commended the floral displays around the town.

Cllr V Schooling queried whether the £14k figure was just for half the benches, the Estates and Facilities Manager confirmed it was. She asked for an annual figure on the overall cost of ASB to the Council, noting that this is ultimately paid for by taxpayers. The Chairman advised that a rolling figure is kept (currently around £40k) and is reported to Committee on occasion.

He confirmed Police and Safer New Forest Partnership are informed of incidents and noted wider ASB issues across the town, including the public toilets and Ashley, with increased CCTV and other measures in place. Cllr V Schooling asked that police presence be raised again at upcoming meetings and noted that if high level fencing were not required, full seating could be funded in one go.

Cllr V Schooling also queried whether the fitness equipment was intended for adults and asked if images of the seating would be provided for Committee approval, both were confirmed by the Chairman, who also noted it would be helpful to collect data on usage of the fitness equipment.

All members were content with the Capex list. The Chairman suggested rounding up the proposed CAPEX by £17k contingency from £233k to £250k, which was agreed. It was

RECOMMENDED: That CAPEX budget for 2026-27 in the amount of £250k be included in forthcoming budget discussions.

54. GORE ROAD HUB

The Chairman referred to the Town Clerk, who ran members through a revised Business Plan being prepared for the proposed Youth & Family Hub at Gore Road.

Particular attention was drawn to the financial projections, which have shifted from a net operating surplus of £50k in the original version to a funding requirement of £150k in the latest revision in respect of the first year of operation.

The Chairman explained the project is still in its early stages but emphasised the importance of having robust business plan figures and understanding any potential implications for the Town Council budget. One member suggested exploring the possibility of a CIL Grant. The Chairman clarified that, at this stage, the purpose of the update is to inform members and ensure they are kept in the picture.

55. GRAZING LICENCES

The Chairman referred to the Estates & Facilities Manager, who provided an update explaining the aim was to reinstate grazing at Ballard Meadow by the end of October and noted that the infrastructure concerns raised during public participation are being addressed.

[Post Meeting Note: Grazing may be delayed until after the Ballard School bonfire and firework night on 7 November].

Regarding Barton Common, a second trough will be installed, shortly after a follow up with Bournemouth Water, who will carry out the final connection. A final update on this matter will be provided at the next meeting.

56. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

The Chairman had three items to share:

a) New Milton Dementia Allotment Update

The Chairman invited Cllr R Murrow to provide an update on the Dementia Allotment. Bob reported that the project enjoyed a successful summer, welcoming visitors on Tuesday mornings to the lovely site. The allotment is now closed to visitors for the season and will reopen next spring.

Bob expressed appreciation for the dedicated team of regular volunteers, as well as corporate volunteers from Innovus UK and GD Print. Generous donations were received from Cllr Neil Tungate and the New Milton Residents Association, with thanks extended to all supporters.

Cllr Murrow shared how much the project means to him and expressed his gratitude for its continued success, thanking Town Council staff, particularly Communications Officer Joanna Hayward and Estates & Facilities Manager Mark Jeffries for their hard work.

b) Plant a Tree Initiative

The Chairman drew attention to the Town Council's Plant a Tree Initiative, noting that it has been well publicised and is a successful project. He emphasised the importance of continuing the initiative and encouraged members to get involved if they wish to support it.

c) Long Meadow Play Area

The Chairman outlined that proposals for the Long Meadow Play Area would be discussed in private session. However, he referred to one potential plan shown on screen, highlighting various types of play equipment that may be included and said:

"The enhanced play area seeks to meet a recognised shortfall in play provision for a wider age group and abilities range in Barton on Sea, by providing within the existing footprint a range of equipment and surfaces for children of all ages, that is also accessible to disabled children & carers in accordance with current national guidelines."

The scheme seeks to not only replace an existing 15-year-old provision that is small in scale and limited to certain ages, but to address the recognised shortfall in provision for children in the local area. The design encourages users to come together and use the proposed play space regardless of age or ability, bringing the community together."

57. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 24 November 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the public session of the meeting at 7:18pm going into private session with the agreement of members.

PRIVATE SESSION***PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) Act 1960***

The Chairman moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business pursuant to section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission 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.

58. LONG MEADOW PLAY AREA

The Chairman referred to the Estates & Facilities Manager, who presented a report on the procurement process, accompanied by supporting plans for two proposed options. All documents were distributed to members.

The Estates & Facilities Manager explained that the process had been run through the Government's online Contract Finder. Two suitable contractors were identified, with several others failing to meet the required specifications. Both shortlisted proposals were inclusive, and access improvements are also planned as a second phase of the project, funded by local s.106 developers' contributions.

The Chairman commented that equipment plans appeared visually busy due to the level of graphic detail, but actual proposals would blend into the site. Fencing would be installed separately by the Council to reduce costs and would be in keeping with the rural setting, the same approach would be taken for benches. The robustness of the surface specification provided to contractors, including wet pour surfacing and drainage, and it was confirmed that both proposals include a five-year warranty on the wet pour surface.

The Chairman liked the plan from KOMPAN, citing a stronger overall offering, highlighting the inclusion of a meandering blue path representing the Becton Bunny as a thoughtful design element, before inviting member discussion.

The Estates & Facilities Manager noted that both proposals were similar, but KOMPAN offered a stronger junior/adventure play element. Members discussed the importance of the play area blending into its setting, with KOMPAN's design seen as more sensitive and appropriate.

Further questions were raised regarding measurements, safety compliance, the possibility of autism friendly colours, and bench provision. The Chairman clarified that the measurements and footprint would remain unchanged, all equipment would be safety compliant, and benches would be located within the perimeter with picnic style seating under the tree near the outer perimeter. The comment regarding autism friendly colours was noted and would be passed on to the successful supplier.

A suggestion was made for sensory boards to be double sided, with more than one included. Some members reiterated concerns about the overly detailed visuals. The Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed that the quoted cost included contingencies and that the project must be completed by 31 March 2026.

The Chairman and Estates & Facilities Manager stated that once members were satisfied with the core plan, further refinements could be made. Acknowledging concerns over the initial visual clutter of the plans, the Chairman proposed that simplified plans for KOMPAN's design be prepared and displayed on the Long Meadow noticeboard to seek public feedback ahead of the F&GP meeting. **[Post Meeting Note: The Estates & Facilities Manager is meeting with KOMPAN on 17 October 2025].**

A vote was held and with all members in agreement. It was:

RECOMMENDED: That KOMPAN be the appointed contractor in the sum of £89,992.51 with simplified plans to be drawn up, displayed on the Long Meadow noticeboard for public feedback, and brought to the next F&GP meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:48pm

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
47	Tourist Road Signs	On-going	TDM
48 a)	NFDC Free Car Parking	ASAP	Town Clerk
49	Land use requests	ASAP	Comms Officer
52	Ashley Family HUB	ASAP	YSM
58	Long Meadow Play Area	27.10.25	Estates Manager

Distribution:

Town Councillors
 Estates & Facilities Manager
 District Councillor J L Cleary
 County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter, and K Mans
 New Milton Police
 Press
 Sue Larking – NMRA