

## **NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 6.30PM IN NEW MILTON TOWN HALL**

Councillors:	P	J Adams	P	P Moores
	P	J Baker		R Murrow
	P	G Blunden	P	A D O' Sullivan
	P	S Clarke		R A Reid – Chairman
	P	D Rice-Mundy – Vice Chairman		D N Tungate
	P	M Craze	P	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 Officer

In the absence of the Chairman the Vice Chairman chaired the meeting. He welcomed Councillors, Officers, 2 members of the public and Rev Jon Westall. He asked if anyone wished to speak during public participation at the beginning of the meeting. Nobody wished to speak. The Chairman formally opened the meeting at 6.32pm.

#### **64. APOLOGIES**

Cllrs B Murrow (unwell), D N Tungate (annual leave), R Maynard (annual leave) and R A Reid (home emergency)

#### **65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members have a general dispensation to discuss budgets and set a precept.

#### **66. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

The Chairman reported on events the Mayor had attended since the last Town Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September as follows:

5 <sup>th</sup> October	Judged the Friends of New Milton Station Poetry competition
22 <sup>nd</sup> October	Attended the Poetry competition results event at the Station
10 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Parade on the Recreation Ground and Service afterwards led by Rev. Jon Westall

The Chairman took the opportunity to refer to the well-attended Remembrance Sunday event and thanked the participants, saying that it had been very successful. In particular, he thanked the Army Cadet force, Arnewood, Ballard and Durlston Schools, Christchurch Scout Band. The RBL Parade Marshall, our Estates Team, the Memorial Centre and Reverend Jon Westall for the service.

Vice-Chairman, Cllr D Rice-Mundy reported that he had attended the Remembrance event at the Indian Memorial later in the day and mentioned a little of the history of the monument and the fact that there are only two Indian War Memorials in the UK.

**67. MINUTES**

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

It was

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025 having been circulated be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.***

The minutes of the meeting were duly signed.

**68. CORRESPONDENCE**

A handwritten letter from pupils of Eco Club at Durlston Prep & Senior School

***“We are pupils from Durlston School, and we are writing to urge the council to consider putting up hedgehog signs in the local area near our school. We want things to change because too many hedgehogs are killed on our roads every year.”***

The letter also enclosed a petition with many signatures.

Councillors were keen to assist the children in their fight to save the hedgehogs, Cllr Trehorn mentioned that she had hand reared hedgehogs in the past and wondered whether we could provide boxes for the school.

Cllr V Schooling was keen to ensure that a positive response was sent to the school while deciding how NMTC can help them, Cllr S Clarke pointed out that that we may need permissions from HCC or NFDC to put up signs and this needs to be considered, Cllr G Blunden suggested that the matter could be given further consideration at the next Amenities Committee meeting.

It was then

**RESOLVED: *That the Town Clerk send a letter to the pupils advising them of our support with their endeavours and that the matter be referred to the Amenities Committee for further consideration, and practical support that may be provided to help protect the hedgehogs.***

**69. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS****Cllr G Blunden**

Cllr Blunden advised that the issues with the roll out of the new waste system in Phase 1 which includes New Milton are now settling down. It was inevitable that the odd bin or collection will get missed, but it is generally going well now.

As District Councillor he advised that he is supporting wreathmaking for young people at the Christmas event at the Ashley Youth and Family Hub via his NFDC community grant funding and is also supporting the Christmas lights in New Milton in the same way.

Cllr Blunden as NFDC Portfolio Holder was very pleased to sign off the decision for free parking over the Christmas period including 29<sup>th</sup> November for our Christmas festival, 6<sup>th</sup> December (Small Business Saturday) and the last weekend (20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December) before Christmas which will all help support local businesses.

**Cllr S Clarke**

Cllr Clarke reported that he had chaired the Task and Finish Group on Climate Change during the course of which a representative of the National Park had attended to give a presentation on the adaptations which the National Park is making in light of the changes to the climate.

He had been in touch with NFDC and the Safer New Forest team in relation to ball bearing incidents in Pleasance Way and was pleased to report that these had subsided.

**Cllr S P Davies**

Cllr Davies reported that on behalf of NFDC he is now a Director of the Freeport and as such had attended meetings in Portsmouth and Southampton. In a fortnight, Cllr Davies would be visiting the old A&T site for the opening of 16 new flats as the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

As part of his housing portfolio, he has been advised that the department is now due a govt review which could take place at any time which is likely to be at short notice.

Finally, he had visited Mount Avenue where residents expressed concern about a large, protected pine tree which is affecting the road surface, remedial action has been carried out, but he is unable to do any more, the matter will be referred to HCC once again.

**Cllr J Adams**

Cllr Adams advised that he had recently attended a meeting of the National Park Authority. They are pressing ahead with their Local Plan. He reported that 31 applications are currently being processed to carry out archaeological investigations within the park.

There are plans for Forestry England (FE) to charge for parking at their car parks in the forest to raise money stating it would be spent on the forest. The New Forest is the only Crown property which does not yet levy car parking charges. In terms of administration, there will be 9 new parking wardens to enforce the new charges.

Joining Forestry England as a member would allow people to have access for £95 pa to parking in all the FE car parks, and that for regular users might be a cheaper option. Cllr Adams agreed that there is a lot to iron out before this can be fully implemented.

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

Cllr S Clarke, Chairman of the Planning Committee, submitted Minutes of Committee meetings held on 7 and 23 October and moved their adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Minutes 105 to 124 inclusive of the meetings held on 7 and 23 October 2025 be received.***

**b) Amenities Committee**

Cllr G Blunden Chairman of the Amenities Committee submitted Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 14 October 2025 and moved their adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Minutes 44 to 58 inclusive of the meeting held on 14 October 2025 be received.***

**c) Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Cllr A O' Sullivan, Vice-Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee submitted Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 27 October 2025 and moved their adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Minutes 51 to 66 inclusive of the meeting held on 27 October be received.***

**71. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

The Schedule of Payments, covering the period from 1 August – 30 September 2025 previously endorsed by F&GP, was submitted for Council approval.

It was

**RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments No 05-06/25/26 in the sum of £324,638.36 for the period 1 August – 30 September 2025 be approved.**

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

**72. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS SERVING ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

In the absence of Cllr B Murrow who serves on the Twinning Group, Cllr S Clarke advised that the dates for the next twinning visit are being arranged for early June next year (4-8 June 2026). Cllr A O' Sullivan advised that Forest Arts now has a new manager who is settling in well. He also advised that the Friends of New Milton Station had won a Category Gold Award in South & South-East England in Bloom Celebration and awarded Winner in the Best Community Engagement Category and Highly Commended in the Best Community Creative award for their station mural.

**73. CAPEX BUDGET**

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 1 being the proposed Capital Expenditure for 2026/27. He advised that the proposed CAPEX budget is one of the items to be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting on Friday. The total budget amounts to £250k which includes £17k for contingencies. The Chairman agreed that with prices for labour and materials fluctuating and increasing all the time the £17k contingency (7.3%) is very wise, and a prudent move.

**74. LONG MEADOW**

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 2 being the play park proposal submitted by Kompan to carry out the works at Long Meadow, recommended by the F&GP Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025. The contract with Kompan valued at £90k represents a long overdue upgrade of the play park. The footprint will remain the same, with wooden fencing in keeping with the rural setting, plus picnic tables and benches. Cllr Blunden said simplified plans of proposed works displayed at Long Meadow had not attracted any negative comments.

It was then

**RESOLVED: That KOMPAN be the officially appointed contractor to upgrade the Long Meadow play area in the sum of £89,992.51.**

**75. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3 Calendar of Meetings for 2026 which now contains all meeting dates together with the dates of civic events. The list of meetings was noted by members.

**76. TDM REPORT**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 4 Town Development Manager Report previously circulated. The Town Clerk drew attention to the final 2 paragraphs as follows:

“The NFDC Local Plan pause for Local Government reorganisation (LGR) consultation could well result in an even longer wait for a Local Plan. There would appear to be little point now in NFDC holding a briefing for Town Cllrs here on 11 November.

New Milton Town Council are hoping that the NFDC Green Belt study will still be released so we will know which parcels of land have been assessed as Grey Belt; sites looking to come forward through the Local Plan may well come through as speculative now.”

Cllr Clarke advised that the NFDC pause has come about because there was a worry that the public would be confused if two public consultations were run concurrently. He thought it likely that the pause on the Local Plan will be lifted early in the New Year.

Cllr W Davies asked Cllr Clarke whether there were any plans to reinvigorate the “market” in the town now that the Neighbourhood Plan is almost done. Cllr Blunden said that is definitely something which needs to be revisited by Amenities, and the working party will likely be reconvened to consider its Street Trading status.

Cllr V Schooling was pleased to hear review work on the Neighbourhood Plan is coming to an end and would free up time for the Town Development Manager to deal with other matters.

Cllr S Clarke advised that there are ongoing discussions about what the TDM will focus on when having more time going forwards.

Cllr Clarke noted that when AECOM had come to New Milton to give support with the Neighbourhood Plan, they had been very complimentary about the town and impressed with how busy it was. He said it is up to us all to support the local businesses and mentioned M&S, the new Lounge and a recent visit to the new deli on Station Road which had impressed both he and Cllr S Davies.

**77. NEXT MEETING**

**Monday 5 January 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, New Milton.**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and then closed the meeting at 7.16pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**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

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