



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 8 December 2025 at 6.30 pm in New Milton Town Hall.

Chairman	p	D N Tungate
Vice-Chairman	p	A D O'Sullivan

<u>Councillors:</u>	J Adams	p	W Davies
	p G R Blunden	p	R Maynard
	p S J Clarke		R A Reid
	p M Scott-Johns		

In Attendance:

Officers: Graham Flexman - Town Clerk
Joy Bean – Administration Officer
Louise Beardmore - Youth Services Manager (in respect of Agenda Item 11)
Theresa Elliott - Assistant Town Clerk (in respect of Agenda Items 12 and 13)

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers and 1 member of the public.

The member of the public praised the lighting display in the town.

67. APOLOGIES

Cllrs R A Reid and J Adams.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

69. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

70. MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 27 October 2025, as previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes were duly signed.

71. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON AGENDA

The Town Clerk reported that all Action Points from the previous meeting had been addressed, the Estates Manager is in the process of reviewing the Lombard Fleet and is considering alternative providers. The Rejuvenate written report is frontispiece to Appendix 5 about Cyber Security.

72. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to following items of correspondence:

- a) An email received from Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) in relation to the Government consultation relating to Local Government Re-organisation (LGR).

“Although HALC is a statutory consultee for this consultation we will not be responding as an organisation as we are aware that there are a range of strongly held but differing views amongst our members. The consultation period closes 11th January.”

They are, however, continuing to work with representatives of the principal authorities on Local (Town & Parish) Council representation within the new unitary authorities and HALC strongly encourage all Local Councils to respond to the consultation as a corporate body.

The Town Clerk suggested that any response to the LGR consultation on behalf of NMTC should be considered at the next full Town Council meeting on 5th January 2026.

- b) An email received from Anthony Harris following a request from the Friendly Dog Club that their rent be waived pending their new premises being built. The request was referred to Anthony Harris who advised as follows:

“Naturally any new “long” lease will need to have appropriate rent review provisions. Doubtless this is something for the relevant committee to consider, and (as before) I think that a planning permission and indeed detailed plans will be required to enable the Town Council to grant an appropriate lease/licence to alterations”.

Cllr G Blunden stated that it would be reasonable not to charge the Friendly Dog Club rent while they are without a building, and construction is taking place but the period for that can only be determined once the work has started.



73. BUDGET PROPOSALS 2026/27

- a) The Chairman referred to the Amenities Committee having already agreed Fees & Charges and their budget for 2026-27 in the sum of £963,341. Members endorsed it for council approval.
- b) The Chairman referred to Annex B F&GP Budget and following some discussion, members agreed the F&GP Budget in the sum of £668,325.

It was then

RECOMMENDED:

That 2026-2027 Budget and Precept of £1,631,666 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval on 5 January 2026.

74. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1 - Schedule of Payments for the period from 1 October to 31 October 2025 in the sum of £142,616.82. The Town Clerk highlighted the following:

October		
Christchurch Garden Machinery	Replacement Mower (£648), mower maintenance (£186), work on Barton Common chipping gate (£168) - Low HAVS purchasing	£1,002.00
Circus Ginnett	Deposit return	£1,200.00
Geoff Kilbey Plant & Commercial Ltd	General maintenance on all vehicles and MOT'S	£2,100.86
Greenlock Electrical	Electrical works at multiple sites including emergency light replacement at ASBOC, statutory remedials and time switch installation at Fernhill, lighting replacements and fuse board changes (statutory) at Ashley Rugby Club, and lighting head replacements (statutory) plus call out for faulty lighting at Fawcetts Field - Statutory works following inspections	£8,607.62
HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension Contributions - September 2025	£12,300.46
HMRC Cumberland	Tax and NIC - September 2025	£14,993.60
Keffen Plant Hire	Relocation of damaged cycle shelter (£292.20) & pitch watering due to dry period in August. (£1,684.80)	£1,977.00
L.Kitcher Fencing	Replacement fencing & gates at Fernhill Sports Ground - CAPEX as budget	£14,966.40
Lapwing	PPE, Cleaning & Consumable supplies	£1,044.31



NFDC	GIS Partnership contribution 01/10/25-30/09/26 (£643.75) and mixed waste bin servicing 01/10/25-31/03/26 (£1,134.76)	£1,778.51
Rejuvenate	Provision of managed services, including remote IT support and new office telephone	£2,248.57
South Coast Sports Academy	Holiday Activity days - HAF funded by HCC	£5,085.01
Stacey Miller Consultancy	Safeguarding workshops for Town Council Officers and Councillors - 4 sessions totalling 9 hours	£1,500.00
Turfleet Hire	Contract hire of Mower and John Deere 4066R Tractor & attachments	£4,158.00
Vita Play	Play Park repairs at Ashley, Doe Copse & Recreation Ground	£3,168.52
WELMedical	Defibrillators: 3 replacement batteries, 12 replacement pads	£1,495.01
WWCS	Ashley & Fawcetts end of season weed & feed	£3,600.72
Lombard	Vehicle leasing, DY20HTT, DX67UYD, BC21NLU, BV71ZJZ, BW21NYH - October 2025	£2,452.61
Staff/ Members	Salaries and Expenses - October 2025	£43,189.84

It was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 – 31 October 2025 in the sum of £142,616.82 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

75. **MONTHLY ACCOUNTS**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2 – Monthly Accounts for October.

The Town Clerk highlighted savings against the budget across both Amenities and F&GP.

Amenities saw a substantial increase in the amount spent on Statutory Testing but there are savings on tree work with no expenditure on Ash Tree Dieback to date.

With F&GP an amount of £17,360 was received from HCC in respect of HAF funding secured by the Youth Services Manager and £2.5K more interest received than budget. Town Development and Neighbourhood Planning show overspends of £3K each to date.

Overall, savings of £21,306 to date, resulting from Amenities (£6k) and F&GP (£15k) above.

76. INTERNAL AUDIT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3 – Internal Audit Report (Interim Review) for 2025-26, previously circulated.

The Town Clerk went through the report highlighting its positive tone and the fact there are no action points arising from it in any of the areas examined, noting “the standard of Agendas and recorded Minutes of New Milton Town Council continues to be exemplary”.

The Town Clerk advised that the Quilter Cheviot investments have gone up £12k in the last 3 months, our investment now being valued at £344k.

Cllr S Clarke mentioned that the Town Council would soon receive a substantial amount of CIL money from the Brockhills Development, suggesting that some consideration be given to what the money should be used for. It is now an NFDC requirement that CIL money is allocated to particular projects, and that priorities could be revisited prior to the receipt of the monies, noting it is likely that the total amount of CIL will be c.£300k over the next 3 years.

Cllr G Blunden mentioned recent bids which had been made to NFDC for CIL money, but some had failed and will need to be funded from above. ***[Post Meeting Note: Fawcetts Field car park surfacing (£42,750); gravel paths at Barton Common (£66,018); Danesbury Meadow gravel path (£43,500) and Earlswood Park Multi-play unit (£31,700)]***

On-going costs associated with the Gore Road HUB were also mentioned by the Town Clerk.

77. YOUTH REPORT

The Youth Services Manager took the members through her report for November/December previously circulated as Appendix 4, highlighting the work with the local Early Help team and hopes this will lead to more effective interventions at an earlier stage. Christmas Activity Days funded by HCC, with 20 places available each day, will be offering a range of enriching activities including rugby, football, basketball and arts and crafts.

Upcoming Christmas event at the HUB on 19 December will see 50 funded spaces for Santa visits and 50 free spaces on a wreath making workshop, being fully funded by donations from NFDC Cllrs Jill Cleary and Geoff Blunden as well as NMRA and some local small businesses. As well as Santa and wreathmaking there will be a number of stalls selling jewellery and other items made by the young people, as well as food and drink. All are welcome to attend the Ashley Hub per the attached flyer for the event.



Cllr S Clarke stated that all the work being done is fabulous and praised the YSM. He was also pleased to advise that New Milton Youth Trust had recently won the Charity of the Year Award at the New Forest Brilliance in Business Awards.

78. CYBER SECURITY

The Assistant Town Clerk presented Appendix 5 – A report on Cyber Security prepared by Kalon Jaffray of Rejuvenate IT. The need for action has arisen from changes in the AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) which obligates local councils to put data and digital controls in place including IT based policies.

All staff and members have now been upgraded to Microsoft 365 Business or F3 licenses. These licenses include more advanced security features. The next step towards achieving full Cyber Essentials compliance is the completion/adoption of 5 essential IT security policies:

1. Acceptable Use Policy
2. Disaster Recovery Policy
3. Information Security Policy
4. Password Management Policy
5. Security Management Policy

The importance of each of the above policies was highlighted in helping NMTC accreditation.

Cllr S Clarke advised that he had encountered significant issues that had resulted in him consulting an outside agency, which had coincided with the update. Cllr G Blunden reported similar issues, with the Assistant Town Clerk ascertaining that these were isolated to the two members named. It was suggested that perhaps a Service Level Agreement should be sought with Rejuvenate to ensure continuity.

The report and policies were noted.

(Post meeting note – Rejuvenate have contacted both members and are progressing matters with each).

79. IT SERVER CABINET

The Chairman referred to Appendix 6, a proposal from Rejuvenate to supply a dedicated IT Server Cabinet for NMTC sole use, as previously circulated.

It was

RESOLVED:

That the quote from Rejuvenate to supply and fit a lockable IT Server Cabinet at a total cost of £2,397.08 be accepted.

80. STANDING ORDERS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 7, being a proposed addition to Standing Orders.

The Town Clerk advised that NALC's template Standing Orders have seen the role of Town Clerk diminish, separating the roles of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer which may be suitable for some local councils, but not for New Milton. The proposed amendment clarifies the role of Town Clerk at New Milton and should be incorporated in our Standing Orders rather than NALC imposing a "one size fits all" for all 10,000 local councils in the UK. It was agreed that this matter be referred to the next Town Council meeting. It was

RESOLVED: That the proposed new Standing Order 17 be referred to Town Council for consideration on 5th January 2026.

81. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

The Chairman praised the Mayor's Carol Service on 6th December stating it had been very well attended and was the best yet. The Town Clerk advised that over £500 had been raised for the Mayor's Charity being the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance.

82. NEXT MEETING **MONDAY 02 FEBRUARY 2026** at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked members for attending and wished them a Happy Christmas before closing the meeting at 7.45pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
72a)	Govt LGR Consultation	05.01.26	Town Council
72b)	Friendly Dog Club Lease	19.1.26	Amenities
73	Budget & Precept 26/27	05.01.26	Town Council
77	Christmas Event Ashley	19.12.25	YSM
78	Cyber Security Review	ASAP	Assistant Town Clerk
79	IT Server Cabinet	ASAP	Assistant Town Clerk
80	Standing Order 17	5.01.26	Town Council



Distribution:

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