

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 2 February 2026 at 6.30 pm in New Milton Town Hall.

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

Councillors: 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

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers and 5 members of the public.

Public Participation .

Richard Foulkes and Russell Crate representing Glossbrook Builders, who are the builders of houses for VIVID behind New Milton Barns along Gore Road, spoke about their application to connect into a manhole cover on NMTC land. They referred to the offer recently made to NMTC of £5K together with £3K improvement works and our legal costs. They are particularly keen to use our manhole updating it to Statutory Requirements as the one on Gore Road itself would involve closing the road for some time to complete such works. The costs involved in connecting to our manhole are being covered by them as the development has been through a range of difficulties to get to this point.

Julia Stamper Vice-chair of NMRA spoke about the new government initiative looking for UK Towns of Culture. She felt that New Milton had a lot to offer and encouraged the Town Council to consider putting in an expression of interest by 31 March deadline. She felt that there are many groups in the town who could work together to put forward a good case for New Milton.

83. APOLOGIES

Cllrs J Adams, R A Reid, and A O' Sullivan.



84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

85. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman invited Cllr S Clarke to speak about the **development off Gore Road**. Cllr Clarke said the development had come before the planning committee some time ago, and VIVID is a very active Housing Association house builder in the area facing many issues with the District Council in an effort to make the development happen. He mentioned also that if Glossbrook connect via our manhole and bring it up to the Statutory Requirements, it would help with our own HUB Community building.

The Chairman stated that no decision could be made at this stage although it would be considered further under Item 9 – Referred Matters.

The Chairman then invited comments on the **UK Town of Culture** proposal from Julia Stamper. Cllr W Davies advised that he had been involved when Hull was named as a City of Culture several years ago and said it had made an enormous difference to Hull in terms of tourism and investment.

The Chairman turned to the proposal made by Julia Stamper and advised that it would fall for discussion under Item 6 - Correspondence.

86. MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 8 December 2025, as previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Minutes were duly signed.

87. 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, commenting as follows:

Minute 72a

The response to the LGR Government consultation was submitted on 7 January 2026.

Minute 72b

An email had been received from the Friendly Dog Club to be discussed under Correspondence.

Minute 73

The Budget and precept had been approved at the Town Council meeting on 5th January.

Minute 77

The Youth Services Manager had reported on a very successful Christmas event at the Ashley Hub.

Minute 78

Cyber Security is back on the agenda for this evening.

Minute 79

The IT Server cabinet has now been fitted, over the weekend of 10/11 January.

Minute 80

Standing Orders will be reviewed in April in the usual way, including proposed amendment.

88. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to following items of correspondence:

- a) An email from Angela Horsley of the Friendly Dog Club:

“Thank you for talking to me this morning and below is a reminder of what we discussed to be put forward to the Finance Committee on Monday.

As you know we are now moving forward with the planning application and we are asking NMTC for help with the following:

a) As already discussed and noted at the last F&GP Committee Meeting. It would be a great help to us if NMTC would be able to waive our fees and charges for 2026. This would free up additional funds to help us with our new building.

b) Our Lease is up for renewal this year and is currently for 3 years (to 1 March 2026). It is essential for this to be extended to 15 to 20 years to make the cost of the project worthwhile and would also secure the future of the building for the community.

Currently with the inclusion of the NFDC CIL Grant we have £109,000. Our fundraising is ongoing and we would appreciate any help you are able to give us.”

Cllr G Blunden stated that the Friendly Dog Club should be granted a lease of a reasonable and realistic length and should not be expected to pay any rent whilst the building is not in use. Cllr R Maynard agreed there should be a period where rent is not paid, but it should be quite specific and capped, relating to the time when the building cannot be used.



- b) An email from Brian Coy in relation to the Saturday 119 bus from New Milton to Lymington.
- 1. The service works both ways bringing people into the town as well as out.**
 - 2. There are people in the estate on the route (Inglewood) with sight loss and mobility problems who use this bus. It is also used to and from Tesco and the town.**
 - 3. The issue of passenger numbers, yes sometimes they are low but for the ones who use it there is not any other means of getting about and our ratepayers who do not use other services that the council help with.**

On a separate point on lack of use on weekdays due to the change in timetable the first bus out of the town runs most of the route too early for passholders, and the one in runs the whole route.

The Chairman stated that this matter will fall for discussion under Item 9 Referred Matters.

- c) Annex A and Annex B are two articles about the UK Town of Culture initiative mentioned by Julia Stamper in Public Participation, the articles having previously been circulated. The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of the initiative, mentioning that there will be three different categories of small towns (up to 20,000) medium towns (20,000 -75,000) and large towns (over 75,000 residents).

The Chairman remarked that an expression of interest has to be made by the end of March which does not leave much time for this initial iteration.

After some discussions, it was agreed that as this is the first year and nobody has any concrete idea about the criteria on which it will be judged, it would make sense to keep an eye on proceedings to gain more information on what the government criteria are. This information could be used in the future to help put together a meaningful bid as the initiative represents a great opportunity to learn more. There was also reference to Town Council employee input, the Town Clerk referring to a previous Levelling Up application that took time to complete, with the majority of funds going north.

89. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1 - Schedule of Payments for the period from 1 November to 31 December 2025 in the sum of £1276,997.83. The Town Clerk highlighted the following:

Autocross Euroshel	Replacement bus shelter panel Gore Road - ASB Insurance Claim	£1,554.00
Citizens Advice New Forest	Grant aid resolved at F&GP Committee Meeting 27/10/25 (Minute 61)	£5,000.00



Concentrate (Juice)	Website training and updates: video for visitor info pages, page updates, design refinements since Aug 2025 (categories, new pages, breadcrumbs, Do It Online, cookies, burger menu), development improvements (search, plug-ins, coding, testing).	£2,478.00
HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension Contributions - October 2025	£12,779.45
HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC - October 2025	£16,772.43
Hoare Banks	Cleaning of War Memorial, Benches and Stone monuments	£1,605.60
John Shutler	Tree works (£3025.68) Removal of Summer floral baskets from lamp columns (£360)	£3,385.68
Keffen Plant Hire	Annual hedge cutting with Flail site wide (£2997.30) Vegetation clearance at Ballard Meadow (£240) - As per usual annual	£3,237.30
Bryan J Pinchen	Insect survey and report of Barton Common and Ballard Meadow (50% donation from Friends of Ballard Water Meadow) between April & September.	£1,800.00
rCOH	September and October work on Submission Plan, Modification Proposal and Statement, Basic Condition Statement, Consultation Statement, Appendices, HRA/SEA and Website updates	£4,788.00
Rejuvenate	Provision of managed services, including remote IT support	£1,434.88
Source for Business	Water & Sewerage charges for Fawcetts Field 17/04/25 - 13/10/25 (£9,805.81) & Water charges for Moore Close 23/04/25 - 13/10/25 (£63.75) - Higher due to drought	£9,869.56
Turfleet Hire	Contract hire of John Deere 4066R Tractor & attachments in October (£828) Ride on Mower and Flail September & October (£2220)	£3,048.00
Woodman Trees	Large cut trees for Christmas display: 2 at 20 ft, 3 at 16 ft	£1,068.00
Auditing Solutions	Interim Audit	£1,260.00
Hillier	Trees for Replacement Policy and Plant a Tree Initiative, In line with previous years	£6,621.00
L.Kitcher Fencing & Gates	Long Meadow footbridge replacement, including removal of the existing bridge	£4,800.00
Lush Signs	St Mary Magdelene Churchyard signage project work - Remaining 50% payment following the 50% deposit paid in September (£3,649.20) Plaques (£330)	£3,979.20

NFDC	Contribution towards CCTV line rental 01/10/25 - 31/03/26 (£3,599) Cyclical Tree surveys 2025/26 (£2,880) Reactive Tree surveys (£720)	£7,199.00
New Milton Advertiser	Advertising for Remembrance Sunday, New Milton Christmas Days and Thank you to Christmas sponsors	£1,243.02
Staff/ Members	Salaries and Expenses - November 2025	£39,087.32
Lombard	Vehicle leasing, DY20HTT, DX67UYD, BC21NLU, BV71ZJZ, BW21NYH - November 2025	£2,373.48
Lions Club	Grant Aid as approved at the Town Council meeting on 05 August 2025	£3,200.00
Everton Nurseries	Christmas Trees & Town Centre Winter Planting	£2,533.41
HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension Contributions - November 2025	£13,073.51
HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC - November 2025	£15,721.63
Turfleet Hire	Contract hire of John Deere 4066R Tractor & attachments in November (£828) Ride on Mower and Flail November (£1110)	£1,938.00
WPGGroup	Fuel for Fawcetts Vehicles & Machinery	£4,377.48
Empire Industrial Doors	Empire Skate Annual Fire Doors Service (£288) & 6 Monthly Roller Shutter Door Service & Repairs at Bowls Club (£1,056) - Statutory Work	£1,344.00
Keffen Plant Hire	New Path along Western Edge of Carrick Wood (£29,868 - CIL 2025, CAPEX - Invoice NFDC) Hedge Cutting Middle Ashley Allotments (£120)	£29,988.00
Lisa Lee Photography	2.5 Days of on-site photography as per brief, including editing, minor retouching, and delivery via proofing website	£1,800.00
CGO Ecology	Land south of Gore Road (Youth Hub), Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Net Gain & Mitigation Advice	£2,772.00
Lombard	Vehicle leasing, DY20HTT, DX67UYD, BC21NLU, BV71ZJZ, BW21NYH - December 2025	£2,452.61
Staff/ Members	Salaries and Expenses - December 2025	£39,019.12

Members queried the following items:

- £1,800 paid to Lisa Lee in respect of 2.5 days photography for website photos.
- £2,478 paid to Concentrate (Juice) in respect of website training and updates including breadcrumbs and burger menus.

Post Meeting Note

Website breadcrumbs are a hierarchical, text-based navigation aid, usually found at the top of a page (e.g., Home > Blog > Article), that allow users to track their location and easily navigate back to higher-level pages. They improve user experience (UX), reduce bounce rates, and boost SEO by outlining site structure for search engines.

A **"burger menu"** is a user interface element that consists of an icon with three horizontal lines stacked on top of each other. It is typically located in the top corner of a website or mobile application. When clicked or tapped, this icon toggles a hidden, collapsible navigation menu, allowing the user to view a list of menu items or settings.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 November to 31 December 2025 in the sum of £276,997.83 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

90. **MONTHLY ACCOUNTS**

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

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

Amenities saw considerable savings in respect of Tree Work of £10K and Ash Tree Die Back £9K and a £3K insurance payment is due so all in all a saving of £22K to date.

F&GP shows savings on Town Hall rent and utilities which fall to be paid at the end of the year but are budgeted across the year. Bottom line is looking favourable at the present time.

91. **REFERRED MATTERS**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 6 being three matters referred from the Amenities Committee.

a) Minute 79c) – Amenities Correspondence

Minute 82 c) of the Town Council meeting held on 05 January 2026, which was referred to the F&GP via Amenities meeting on 19 January 2026:

“An email from Russell Crate of Glossbrook Builders, the developers behind New Milton Barns along Gore Road, requesting permission to connect into a manhole cover on NMTC land off Gore Road. Our solicitor advised that this should attract a fee of up to £10k. The builder has now offered £5k together with £3k works to improve the manhole connection plus our legal costs.”



Having heard from the representatives of Glossbrook Builders at the beginning of the meeting and noting their comments and those of our solicitors.

It was

RECOMMENDED: That this matter be referred to Town Council.

b) Minute 79f) - Amenities Correspondence

An email from Lymington & Pennington Town Council enquiring whether New Milton Town Council (NMTC) and Hordle Parish Council (including Everton) would contribute towards the existing annual funding (£23k) that Lymington & Pennington Town Council currently makes, in order to ensure the continuance of the 119 Saturday Bus Service between New Milton and Lymington.

Following a discussion, at Amenities Committee on 15 January 2026, it was recommended that Town Council does not contribute.

Cllr S Clarke said that the cost of the bus service could not be justified with so few people using it, the cost per person per journey was working out at £15, which is too much unfortunately.

Following a discussion and a vote

It was,

RESOLVED: That the Town Council does not contribute any funding.

c) Minute 80 – Amenities Land Use Request

A request from The Lions Club of New Milton & District to hold a Whit Sunday “Christmas in the Spring” event on Sunday 24 May 2026, including use of the Recreation Ground and permission to carry forward most of the £3,200 previously allocated for the Christmas Festival asking for Town Council support with road closures, barriers, and stewards.

The Chairman of Amenities noted that additional toilets, specifically Portaloos, may be required for use on the Recreation Ground and it was recommended that the Lions Club retain the £3,200 already granted for use on the Whit event now earmarked for Saturday 23 May 2026 (rather than Sunday 24 May).



Following a discussion and a vote it was

RESOLVED: That the Lions Club of New Milton & District be permitted to hold a Whit event on the Recreation Ground and surrounding roads on Saturday 23 May 2026, with Town Council support for road closures and provision of Portaloos as required, Lions retaining the £3,200 grant previously provided.

92. GRANT AID

None

93. YOUTH REPORT

The Youth Services Manager's report was noted.

94. CYBER SECURITY

The Town Clerk advised that the five IT policies which had previously been noted, now fall to be endorsed for Town Council Approval.

It was

RECOMMENDED: That cyber security policies be endorsed for Town Council approval.

The Town Clerk circulated a recent article from Public Sector Network highlighting the importance of a Cyber Security Action Plan and possible Insurance Cover if appropriate.

95. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES - None

96. NEXT MEETING **MONDAY 16 MARCH 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 New Year before closing the meeting at 7.27pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
79c	Referred Matter – Offer from Glossbrook Builders	16.02.26	Town Council
79f	Decline Bus subsidy request.	16.02.26	Town Council
79c	Lions Club Whit Event Sat 23 May	16.02.26	Town Council
94	Cyber Security Policies	16.02.26	Town Council
94	Cyber Security Insurance Quote	16.02.26	Zurich Insurance



Distribution:

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County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter and K Mans

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