

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Tuesday 14 April 2026 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

                                  p J Baker    p A D O’Sullivan

                                  p D Rice-Mundy                                      p V Schooling

                                  K Trehorn

In attendance:

Councillors: Cllr S J Clarke

Officers:            Graham Flexman - Town Clerk

                          Theresa Elliott – Assistant Town Clerk

                          Sam Welch - Administration Officer

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

The meeting went into session at 6:30pm.

107. APOLOGIES

NONE

108. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

109. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

NONE

110. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee minutes of 02 March 2026.

It was,

***RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 02 March 2026, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.***

The minutes were duly signed.



## 111. MATTERS ARISING

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

In relation to Minute 106 (Street Trading), the Town Clerk advised that further guidance had been received from the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA). This confirmed that business rates would apply, estimated at £5k per annum if an external operator was appointed to run the market. The Town Council is currently seeking professional quotations for a market operator to run the market, and should a suitable provider be identified, they will be invited to meet with the Working Party.

Referring to Minute 101 (Ballard Local Nature Reserve), the Chairman drew Members' attention to a certificate circulated declaring Ballard Meadow and Woodland as a Local Nature Reserve (Ballard Local Nature Reserve). The certificate will be printed on parchment and framed. The Chairman further noted that the official opening will take place to coincide with Meadow Day in July.

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Action by date</b>	<b>To be actioned by</b>
96	Land Use Requests	ASAP	Admin/ Comms
98	Open Access Policy	16.03.26	Town Clerk / F&GP
100	Long Meadow Play Opening	Easter	Admin/ Comms
101	Ballard LNR Opening	20.06.26	Friends Group/Comms
102	Grazing Licences	Autumn	Admin/ Comms
104	Tourist Signs WP	ASAP	Estates Manager
106	Street Trading WP	ASAP	Town Clerk

## 112. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following items of correspondence:

- a) An invitation from the Friends of New Milton Station to a Swifts pop-up exhibition by Hampshire Swifts, to be held at New Milton station on Monday 20 April at 5pm

- b) An email from the Bowling Club requesting an update on fencing/netting to the bowling green adjacent to the Skate Park, to prevent incidents involving objects being thrown.

The Chairman advised the Estates & Facilities Manager is progressing the matter and is hoping for installation to take place shortly, subject to agreement on the most appropriate form of netting. Members discussed temporary and permanent options, noting considerations including visual impact, maintenance and cost implications, potential planning permission requirements and the bowling season, which runs from April to September.

It was,

***RESOLVED: That options be investigated and a suitable structure installed, noting it is a CapEx item budgeted in the sum of 15.75k.***

- c) A thank you email from a local resident regarding the new Long Meadow Play Area. Members noted the many positive comments they have received about the new play area.

### 113. LAND USE REQUESTS

#### **1st Barton Sea Scout Group**

Permission sought to hold a St George's Day picnic at Long Meadow on Sunday 26 April with local Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, together with their parents, including the use of three small gazebos.

***RESOLVED: That 1st Barton Sea Scout Group be permitted to hold a St George's Day picnic at Long Meadow on Sunday 26 April, subject to usual terms and conditions of use.***

### 114. CIL PROJECTS

The Chairman referred Members to Appendix 1 , noting the Council is investigating suitable locations for a Modular BMX Pump Track at Fawcetts Field.

The appendix was noted by Members.



## 115. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2.

One Member sought clarification on the number of items of exercise equipment to be replaced at the Recreation Ground. It was noted that the existing equipment would be replaced, with the final number to be confirmed.

**[Post Meeting Note: There were originally six items of exercise equipment, one of which has since been removed. The proposal is to replace all six items, with the potential addition of a seventh multi-unit.]**

In relation to benches, the Chairman noted that, rather than fully replacing the benches as previously planned, the intention is to now replace the slats only. These would be similar to the existing slats but made from a plastic material to reduce ongoing maintenance. Contractors are currently being approached to explore available options. It was noted that the slats would need to be bespoke, but this approach would allow all benches to be refurbished at the same time.

The Chairman further advised that a meeting will be held shortly regarding the replacement of bins in the High Street, with discussions taking place with New Forest District Council.

## 116. RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Chairman referred Members to Appendix 3, being operational risk assessments, noting that these are required as part of a Risk Register to be presented at the next F&GP Committee meeting on 27 April 2026.

The Appendix was noted by Members.

The Assistant Town Clerk joined the meeting at 6.42 pm.

## 117. TREE WORK POLICY

The Chairman asked the Assistant Town Clerk, to run through Appendix 4, the revised Tree Work Policy Guide for residents, with changes highlighted in red. It was explained that the main amendments relate to the table detailing cyclical inspections, where annual areas receiving detailed inspection are now clearly specified.

**RESOLVED: That the revised Tree Work Policy be adopted.**

118. XMAS LIGHTS REPORT

The Chairman asked the Assistant Town Clerk to run through Appendix 5. She noted, in relation to the financial breakdown, that an invoice is being held back as works not completed, and would lessen the £1,800 surplus once paid.

Members noted how lovely the lights were and have been for many years, specifically thanking the Assistant Town Clerk and all Sponsors.

119. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

a) Cllr R Murrow provided an update on the dementia allotment.

***"We are aiming to open officially to visitors on Tuesday 28 April from 11am – 2pm. And then weekly thereafter throughout the summer. Our volunteers are currently working on getting the site ready – weeding and tidying up.***

***Last year we received additional volunteer help from local company Innovus and they have expressed an interest in joining us again this year.***

***Dementia Awareness Week takes place from 18 – 24 May and we will have an open session on Tuesday 19 May. We'll invite our dementia community to join us to enjoy "The Chatty Caravan" from Beaulieu Motor Museum.***

***The Chatty Caravan is 1970's styled Sprite Caravan and as part of the community initiative it aims to invoke summer holiday memories and encourage conversations with visitors***

***A programme of confirmed activities will be shared with the community shortly."***

Members were pleased with the positive update and expressed their thanks to the Communications Officer, volunteers, and visitors.

b) Cllr S J Clarke advised members that Bob Lord has resigned as Chairman of the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow. Members discussed ways to thank him for his significant contribution to the town's open spaces, including a thank you letter from the Town Council. It was noted that his knowledge and time have greatly benefitted the town, its open spaces biodiversity and wildlife, noting a workable management plan is in place for the next two years.

c) The Chairman thanked all members of the committee for their input, as this was the last meeting of the municipal year.



120. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**Tuesday 26 May 2026** at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

The Chairman closed the public session of the meeting at 7.02pm 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.***

121. XMAS LIGHTS

The Chairman referred to the Assistant Town Clerk, who drew members' attention to the circulated draft amended Christmas Lights Contract, which had been prepared in conjunction with the Working Party, noting the amended contract would operate on a rolling basis, with either party able to give six months' notice, as opposed to the current three-year contract.

The Assistant Town Clerk explained the challenges experienced with the current contractor with one year remaining. One member asked whether terminating the contract early would lead to any legal issues, to which the Assistant Town Clerk confirmed that it would not, noting that the contractor had previously offered to withdraw.

An alternative contractor was proposed, and the contract terms were reviewed, with particular note taken of call-out fees. The Assistant Town Clerk advised that safeguards were in place to prevent issues and would be closely monitored, with positive testimonials available. It was further noted that, should issues arise, the new contract would allow the Council to withdraw more easily.

It was,

***RECOMMENDED: That the amended Christmas Lights Contract be endorsed by F&GP with the discussed contractor being appointed on a rolling contract.***

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:27pm.



CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Action by date</b>	<b>To be actioned by</b>
111	Street Market Meeting	On-going	Town Clerk
112a)	Swifts Pop Up Exhibition	20.04.26	Comms Officer
112b)	Fencing/ Netting Bowls Club	ASAP	Estates Manager
113)	Sea Scouts – St. George’s	26.04.26	Comms Officer
117)	Tree Work Policy	ASAP	Asst Town Clerk
119a)	Dementia Allotment Event	19.05.26	Comms Officer
121)	Xmas Lights Contract	27.04.26	F&GP

**Distribution:**

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