

## NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 30 MARCH 2026 AT 6.30PM IN NEW MILTON TOWN HALL

Councillors:	P	J Adams	p	P Moores
	P	J Baker	p	R Murrow
	P	G Blunden	p	A D O' Sullivan
	p	S Clarke		RA Reid – Chairman
	p	D Rice-Mundy – Vice Chairman	p	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	p	R Maynard

In Attendance: G Flexman - Town Clerk

J Bean – Administrative Officer

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman took the chair. Cllr David Rice-Mundy welcomed Councillors, Officers and two members of the public to the meeting and invited Police Sgt Mark Atrill and PC Dan Tuckey to provide a crime update.

Sgt Atrill advised there had recently been a focus on drug related harm, a big operation had led to the seizure of hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of drugs locally. This had resulted in a couple of arrests, and he hoped there would be further arrests. There was also a focus on business burglaries in the High Street, particularly the attacks on Bradbeers. Police had received information, and an offender was arrested for some of those attacks. Investigations are continuing into the others. There is currently a lot of shoplifting in the town. Vehicle crime is down.

Regarding the homeless man he has now left the former Matthews Shoes shop front and Police are liaising with the landowner to remove his belongings which were still in the shop front until recently.

Cllr V Schooling asked about ASB, saying that NMTC had spent over £40k in one year clearing it up. She asked what is being done. She also asked if more officers are needed and if the officers are over stretched. Sgt Atrill said that numbers of officers have been in decline for many years, more officers would be beneficial, his view is that the service is like an elastic band with no more flex in it.

Sgt Atrill advised that officers consider all intelligence about ASB but had not been able to identify any trends. PC Tuckey said that ASB is sporadic, catching someone in the act relies on being in the right place at the right time, officers regularly visit open spaces where young people hang out such as the recreation ground and Fawcetts

Field. He said they engage positively with the young people as far as possible. Unfortunately, there are some people intent on vandalism. They are sly and sneaky; the police work hard to try to catch them but cannot be everywhere at once.

Cllr A O' Sullivan advised that he had seen that the homeless man's mattress and belongings have now been cleared from the shop front. He asked whether the shoplifters are local or visitors to the town. Sgt Atrill said that it's a mix of the two. The new Tesco close to the station has been particularly hard hit, with visitors hopping off the train, robbing the shop and hopping back on again. Many of the offenders do not have permanent addresses and so they are challenging to locate.

Cllr M Craze asked if there are any more officers joining the New Milton Team. Sgt Atrill said that a new PCSO is expected shortly as well as another PC.

The Chairman thanked the officers for attending the meeting and for their detailed report. Members gave a round of applause by way of thanks.

As no member of the public wished to speak during the Democratic Half Hour, the meeting was then formally opened at 6.50pm.

#### 111. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr R A Reid (ill health).

#### 112. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

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

The Chairman reported on events the Town Mayor had attended since the last Town Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, as follows:

21 <sup>st</sup> February	Mayor's Tea Party which raised <b>£917</b> With special thanks to Rejuvenate for the donation of the pizza oven which was auctioned.
7 <sup>th</sup> March	NMRA AGM that was attended by chairs of the standing committees and the Town Clerk.
7 <sup>th</sup> March	Mayor's Quiz which raised <b>£839</b>
11 <sup>th</sup> March	Civic Celebration at Arnewood School.
22 <sup>nd</sup> March	New Milton Music Festival which was attended by a number of councillors as well as the Town Clerk, and which was excellent as always.
30 <sup>th</sup> March	The Deputy Mayor reported that he had attended the unveiling of a plaque at the station commemorating the nine navvies who had lost their lives during the construction of the railway.

**114. MINUTES**

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026 having been circulated be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.***

The minutes of the meeting were duly signed.

**115. CORRESPONDENCE**

a) An email from Goff Beck

*“Thank you very much for your thoughtful invitation to the Civic Celebrations held at Arnewood School on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup>. I truly appreciated being a part of such a memorable occasion. I was truly impressed to see how the Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year awards, which I introduced some years ago, have evolved into something remarkable.*

*The combined dedication and hard work of all involved have truly made a significant difference to our town, not only driving tangible improvements but also nurturing a vibrant sense of community spirit. Their efforts have left a lasting impression, and it is clear that our town benefits immensely from such commitment and collaboration.”*

b) A letter from the Strategic Director at NFDC inviting Expressions of Interest in NFDC assets, which was sent to our solicitor Anthony Harris for his consideration. Anthony made the following observations:

*“I concur that the correspondence is rather inconsequential. Most of the “assets” with which you are involved with NFDC are more in the nature of liabilities for communal reasons – and you hold long leases at nominal rents, so NFDC will never derive an income. I have found the construction costs of the Recreation Ground toilets remarkable – I cannot think they will ever be an asset. If they are to be accepted by NMTC, then some capital sum could perhaps be added to reflect the anticipated future expenditure.”*

**116. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS****Cllr Mel Kendall**

Cllr Kendall apologised that he had been unable to attend the last few meetings due to holidays and illness. He did not have much to report with the upcoming elections, and the changes which LGR would be bringing further down the line.

He said that HCC is concerned about the 22,000 residents who use heating oil for their heating with the massive increase in oil prices due to the war in the Middle East. The government has given a grant of £500k to HCC so those suffering real deprivation will receive some help.

This was Cllr Kendall's final meeting; he is not standing for re-election in May after 29 years as a councillor. He thanked the members for their support, in particular Cllr A Reid, he had enjoyed working with NMTC and remembered projects they had worked on together.

He mentioned improvements to the High Street which at the time had been awarded the highest amount given to a town to effect improvements. He said that the money had been well spent as the High Street still looks good in part due to the floral displays and care of the Estates Team. He also mentioned implementing the "20 is Plenty" campaign.

Cllr B Murrow thanked Cllr Kendall for a grant which he had given when the dementia allotment was set up. After receiving a round of applause by way of thanks, Cllr Kendall left the meeting.

### **Cllr Fran Carpenter**

Cllr Carpenter mentioned that we are now in the pre-election period which started on 25<sup>th</sup> March. HCC is unable to make big decisions or announcements at present because of this. HCC have requested details from the government in relation to their LGR decision, she said it was difficult to match their decision to their own criteria.

She advised that the Mid Hants model presents unique problems, it will have the highest concentration of elderly people in Hampshire as well as the highest number of small village schools.

She mentioned an upcoming road closure on Sway Road, between Sammy Miller's and Tiptoe.

She attended the New Milton Music Festival it had been wonderful as usual.

Finally, she thanked everyone for their support over the years. She hoped to be back after the May elections. Members also applauded her contribution.

### **Cllr S P Davies**

Cllr Davies has two freeport meetings coming up this month in Portsmouth and Southampton, he said that the project is really beginning to take off. Next week he is visiting Totton for the opening of 20 properties on Salisbury Road near to the precinct. He is also attending Dibden shortly where 20 homes – the Orchard Gate Development will be opened.

**Cllr S Clarke**

Cllr Clarke reported that the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation has now gone through. He thanked all residents who had attended the various events, including the New Milton event which had been well attended. All in all, over 1,400 people had visited the events and there had been 800 responses to the consultation online. The NMTC response had been agreed by the Planning Committee. The consultation is meaningful and peoples' views will be considered, but the tendency is that while everyone sees the need for more housing, they don't like the proposed sites.

**Cllr G Blunden**

Cllr Blunden thanked the County Councillors again for their support saying that current challenges are tough. He felt particular concern for the waterside residents. He stated that NFDC will continue to serve all residents as best they could. He observed that the Town council is the bedrock of delivering locally.

**Cllr A O' Sullivan**

Cllr O' Sullivan had attended the Navvies event this afternoon. He had also been at a stakeholder's meeting at the Hub which is the name for the Memorial Centre building in its entirety, there is then the Memorial Hall and the Jubilee Room which form parts of it. A new manager has been appointed. They have managed to raise £20k of the £26k needed for a new heating boiler.

**Cllr D N Tungate**

Cllr Tungate stated that he had attended all his meetings as usual and added his thanks to Cllr Kendall for all his support comparing their periods of service as councillors.

**Cllr J Adams**

Cllr Adams had nothing to report.

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

Cllr S Clarke, Chairman of the Planning Committee, submitted Minutes of Committee meetings held on 17 February and 5 and 19 March and moved their adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Minutes 196 to 227 inclusive of the meetings held on 17 February and 5 and 19 March 2026 be received.***

**b) Amenities Committee**

Cllr G Blunden, Chairman of the Amenities Committee, submitted Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 2 March 2026 and moved their adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Minutes 90 to 106 inclusive of the meeting held on 2 March 2026 be received.***

Cllr S Clarke referred to Minute 101 relating to Ballard Nature Reserve. He observed that there had been some recent vandalism where signage and poo bag boxes had been torn down and battered, bluebells and foxgloves which had been roped off for protection had been ripped out and torn. He said that this was very unfair as the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow work so very hard to look after it and the thoughtless and unpleasant behaviour was spoiling their efforts. Cllr G Blunden said that he agreed with all that Cllr Clarke had said but was loath to give the vandals publicity.

**c) Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Cllr D N Tungate, Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee, submitted Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16 March 2026 and moved their adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

***That Minutes 97 to 109 inclusive of the meeting held on 16 March 2026 be received.***

**118. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

The Schedule of Payments, covering the period from 1 – 31 January 2026 previously endorsed by F&GP, was submitted for Council approval.  
It was

***RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments No 10/25/26 in the sum of £110,463.53 for the period 1 – 31 January 2026 be approved.***

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

**119. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS SERVING ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS  
Cllr R Murrow**

Cllr Murrow advised:

“Our key group of volunteers are looking forward to opening to visitors towards the end of April, depending on the weather. We’ll arrange some

specific events this summer like music and ice-creams and will provide further details once they are confirmed. The shed needs an application of wood preservative which Mark's team will deal with and also apply to both of the gazebo roofs. Thank you to Cllr Jill Cleary for her NFDC grant of £400 which will go towards funding the activities this year. And thank you to NMTC for continuing to support the coordination of the allotment activities."

Cllr Murrow also updated members in relation to the Twinning visit taking place between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> June. On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June they will be at the Guide Hut between 12.30 and 5pm - the Town Mayor and all council members would be very welcome to attend that event.

### **Cllr D Hawkins**

Cllr Hawkins took the opportunity to mention three young lads who had found a dead cat on Osborne Road. They acquired a box from a nearby care home and put the cat inside, they then visited the houses on Osborne Road to find the owner which happened to be Cllr Hawkins' family. He wanted to commend this behaviour, young people often get a bad press, but these boys had really stepped up and been responsible. His family was very sad, of course, but grateful to the young boys.

### **120. REFERRED MATTER**

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 1 being the Open Access Policy endorsed for approval by F&GP. He mentioned two amendments to the first paragraph "You can walk freely on all types of access land. Within New Milton there are many public spaces with streams and muddy areas, so you should take care if you are walking in an unfamiliar area. You must always keep dogs under close control."

**RESOLVED: *That the Open Access Policy, as amended, be adopted.***

### **121. GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT RISKS**

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 2 a list of Governance and Management Risks for the upcoming year which is provided purely for information at this time.

The list has been growing annually as more risks are identified, for instance the new focus on Cyber Security and the demands of the new AGAR Assertion 10. It is now being looked at afresh. The new format is similar to one NFDC follows.

At the same, the Estates Manager has been preparing Risk Assessments which are covered under the next item.

**122. RISK ASSESSMENTS 2026-27**

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 3 being a screenshot list of NMTC Risk Assessments, this too is just for information at present. When they come before the Amenities Committee there will be more detail to consider.

Cllr D N Tungate asked if the Government and Management risks list could be considered at the next F&GP meeting as many of the risks relate directly to Councillors.

**123. COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 4 being the Communication Officer's Report, mentioning the changes which had been implemented to the website to ensure it is the first result for internet searches. The report was noted.

**124. NEXT MEETING**

**The Annual Meeting of the Council (AGM) Monday 11 May 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, New Milton.**

**Annual Towns Meeting (residents' assembly) will be held on Monday 20 April at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, New Milton**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed at 7.38pm.

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

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