



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 20 July 2026 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

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers and 1 member of the public to the meeting. As nobody wished to speak under Public Participation, the Chairman formally opened the meeting at 6.30pm

19. APOLOGIES

Cllrs R A Reid and J Adams.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

21. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

22. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous F&GP Committee minutes of 15 June 2026.

It was,

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 June 2026, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

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

The Town Clerk confirmed that all items had been addressed, the previous meeting had focussed on financial matters including signing the AGAR which was submitted the following day. He had heard recently from the external auditors via email advising:

“We will undertake the audit between June and August. We cannot complete the audit until public rights has ended on 10th August.”

24. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following items of correspondence.

- a) An update regarding the future of the Post Office / Morrisons which had been shared with Execs at the meeting on Friday.

“Regarding the future of the main post office in New Milton, on Friday it was officially confirmed that Morrisons Daily on Station Road would close on Saturday 3 October 2026.

It had launched a vacancy advertisement via is www.runapostoffice.co.uk website on 28 June, with a 10 July deadline.

The advert sought a “successful retailer to incorporate a main post office into their existing or proposed business”.

They had received expressions of interest from some retailers.”

- b) An email from Joy advising of dates to be added to the Calendar of Meetings,

7th February 2027 Mayor’s Civic Service

20th February 2027 Mayor’s Tea Party

17th March 2027 Civic Celebration

There was also a change to the first Planning meeting in September which now takes place on Tuesday 1st September.

All dates have been added to the Calendar of Meetings and were noted.

25. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 1** - Schedule of Payments for the period 1 May to 30 June 2026 in the sum of £347,109.13. The Town Clerk highlighted the following:

Source for Business	Water/ Sewerage charges at Fawcetts Field 14/10/25 - 10/04/26	£1,410.21
Central Southern Security	Fire panel installation at Indoor Bowls (£606). Fire alarm, emergency lighting and/ or CCTV maintenance & services at Fawcetts Field, Indoor and Outdoor Bowls - Statutory requirement	£1,303.20
Christchurch Garden Machinery	Replacement Mower & batteries (£1271) Annual machinery services (3) & repairs	£1,668.60
DCK Accounting	Accounting support for March inc. 25/26 year-end	£1,331.70
Empire Industrial Doors	Statutory testing & service of roller shutters + fire doors at Outdoor Bowls & Empire Skate	£1,344.00
Glasdon	Donated Commemorative Benches x6 (£4380.48) Litter bins x4 (£1736.16)	£6,116.64
HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension Contributions - April 2026	£12,425.16
HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC - April 2026	£20,223.63
John Shutler Tree Services	Removal of fallen trees & roots blocking stream through Carrick Wood (£1500) Tree works including removal of stumps at Barton Common	£3,660.44

Lamps & Tubes	Supply & install Town centre bunting	£3,562.37
RMB Hydroseeding	Hydroseeding work for Town wide Wildflowers	£7,190.00
Grant Aid	Honeypot Children's Charity (£500), Artful Scribe (£250), New Milton Youth Trust (£15k), New Milton Music Festival (£400), HOPE New Forest (£450)	£16,600.00
Empire Industrial Doors	Roller Shutter works at Bowls Club	£1,080.00
Staff/ Members	Salaries and Expenses - May 2026	£37,645.42
Lombard	Vehicle hire x5	£2,452.61
NFDC	Commercial Service Charge for lease of Town Council offices - Town Hall utility charge 2025-26	£19,176.00
Hampshire & IOW Air Ambulance	Money raised for Mayors Charity	£2,166.41
Aquaculture Innovations	Replacement Solar Aerator for Ballard Lake (CapEx)	£1,918.80
Eco Sustainable Solutions	Eco Bark for open spaces shrub bed mulch	£1,053.12
Firefly Festivals	Deposit returned following Sham Rocks Music Festival	£1,200.00
Groovemeister	Performance at Afternoon of Music	£1,120.00
HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension Contributions - April 2026	£11,100.87
HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC - April 2026	£15,397.42
John Shutler Tree Services	Medium priority works at Carrick Way, Stem Lane and Ballard Lake	£8,068.50
Keffen Plant Hire	Long Meadow - Barton Common Paths (£19,927.98 - Funded by NFDC Becton Rough S.106) Fawcetts Pétanque DDA footpath (£1,483.80 Cap Ex)	£21,411.78
Kiwa	Inspection & testing of lamp columns for floral and festive displays	£3,078.00
NMSB	Open space planting supplies & waste clearance of arisings from Ballard Nature Reserve and Ashley Pitch	£1,273.78
npower	Electricity bills across 6 locations for April 2026	£1,162.02
Northfield Nursery	Open spaces general planting & Bedding plants for 'Summer' floral displays	£18,742.98
Travis Perkins	Various supplies for open spaces, including Pétanque DDA footpath (£735.75 – Cap Ex) & Barrier fencing (£350.80)	£1,441.34
Turfleet Hire	Hire of Ride on Mower (May: £1,110), Rotavator (£888) & Tractor (May: £828)	£2,826.00
Viking	Office Shredder (high security micro cut)	£1,105.20
rejuvenate	Provision of telephone service (£173.51), Cyber Essentials work (£1,217.48) and remote support (£126.52)	£1,517.51
Salt & Heather	Professional services relating to planning application to NFDC for proposed Youth & Family Hub	£2,100.00
Turfleet Hire	Hire of Tractor and Ride on Mower - April	£1,938.00
Wessex Sound	Audio for Afternoon of Music	£1,020.00
rejuvenate	9 x premium licences and 21 MS365 licences (incl members), 11 x Exchange On-line Archiving, 21 Security Awareness Training, Broadband, info@mailbox, Web Hosting and Disaster Recovery	£1,128.44

Auditing Solutions	Provision of final Internal Audit service 2025-26	£1,260.00
Keffen Plant Hire	Pétanque DDA footpath construction (£5,513.69 - CapEx) Arising Clearance	£5,933.09
Kompan	Play area inspections and repairs	£1,182.34
RMB Hydroseeding	Hydroseeding at Wessex Football pitch & Ashley Rugby pitch renovation	£7,776.00
rejuvenate	Cyber Essentials work including Core Certification (£838.80). Cyber Essentials Plus – Micro for 1-9 employees (£1,740.00) plus 16 hrs pre-paid time block paid in advance (£1,632.00)	£4,210.80
Staff/ Members	Salaries and Expenses - June 2026	£38,892.73
Total Energies	Gas invoices for Fawcetts Field (£8,856.67) & Ashley Pavilion (£1,305.90) - Back invoices	£9,794.28
WPGROUP	Fawcetts vehicle fuel	£5,342.86

Members raised the following queries:

a) £1,918 paid to Aquaculture Innovation in respect of a replacement solar aerator for Ballard Lake. Cllr Blunden asked if this was still necessary, given that there should not be any fish in the lake.

(Post Meeting Note: The aerator is still necessary to oxygenate the lake water to stop the build-up of algae and avoid the water stagnating in times of no incoming fresh water (the current pro-longed hot spell is a great example). The fish were only part of the problem.)

b) £1,668.50 to Christchurch Garden Machinery for a replacement mower and batteries. Cllr Blunden observed that very often batteries for garden machinery are covered by warranties for up to 5 years, and this might be borne in mind rather than buying replacements.

(Post Meeting Note: The majority of this sum (£1,270.80 including VAT) was to replace a high HAVS value (Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome) existing cut and collect mower with much lower HAVS value cordless one as part of our Low Noise/Low HAVS purchasing policy, this included the two required battery packs to power the mower. There were NO replacement batteries within this figure. All batteries for our cordless equipment are tested annually for efficiency and performance. The rest of the sum relating to the £1,668.50 was made up of general repairs and annual servicing.)

c) Cllrs Blunden, Maynard, Tungate and O' Sullivan then raised questions about the amount paid to Rejuvenate over the course of their involvement with the Cyber Essentials certificate, they noted several payments highlighted above. Cllr Tungate asked about monthly figures paid for licences and wanted to have more information. Cllr Blunden suggested a full audit of what Rejuvenate provide and whether they continue to offer best value. (The Assistant Clerk will provide further information).

(POST MEETING NOTE: The Town Clerk will refer to the Audit Report on this at Town Council)

d) Cllr R Maynard alluded to a quote he had obtained from Plan.com in relation to mobile phones. The information had been sent to the Town Clerk and the Estates Manager for their consideration in comparison to the current provider.

(Post Meeting Note: We are still under contract for another year with our current provider Grapevine, but we will explore options to reduce our monthly costs with them. As the contract draws to a close, we will of course consider all options with other providers (including the suggestion from Cllr Maynard), noting the Town Council always seek BEST VALUE and not necessarily the cheapest offering.)

It was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 May to 30 June 2026 in the sum of £347,109.13 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.



26. MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk referred to **Appendix 2** the monthly Management Accounts for May which show us breaking even overall.

He highlighted the expense on floral display summer planting in the town which falls under Public Open Spaces that exceeds the monthly budget but will fall back into line over the next few months. He also referred to an overspend in the F&GP budget relating to IT, being a new shredder.

The Chairman queried an overspend relating to Subs and Pubs and asked what that related to. The Town Clerk advised that it had become necessary to join NALC as well as HALC as they provide updates on Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which now change every year. As a larger Town Council, it is essential to keep on top of this, and joining NALC represents a sensible and cost-effective way of ensuring we continue to comply with annual changes and revisions. Again, the Auditor referred to this as a necessity.

27. YOUTH REPORT

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 3** - Youth Report, which had been circulated previously.

The Youth Services Manager took the members through her report, advising that the HAFS sessions will begin on Thursday and the current cohort represent a wide age range between 8 and 16. She spoke about the success of the Food for Thought programme.

She went on to discuss NEETs. She stated that the stats are very worrying. And while Apprenticeships and training for the trades offer some assistance, the venues offering practical skills training are Bournemouth and Poole College at Parkstone and the campus for Brockenhurst college is Marchwood. Neither of these venues is easily accessible with trains being expensive, and potentially unreliable. Arnewood are planning to bring some job-based skills courses to the school, and this is a very positive development.

She had had met with a representative of the DWP who are currently setting up local hubs. She was advised that there is no plan for a hub in New Milton, however it is hoped that a representative from the Lymington Job Centre might be able to offer a weekly drop in to help job seekers to help signpost them to opportunities.

She went on to speak about Emotionally based School Avoidance. She said that this is now becoming a serious issue with many different causes. Cllr R Maynard asked if there is a particular pattern to it, and she said there is not, it is very subjective.

Cllr G Blunden advised that if she needs any funding she could reach out to the District Councillors who may be able to help.

Cllr A O' Sullivan asked if Eaglewood was not designed for just these pupils who did not thrive under the usual classroom conditions. The YSM stated Eaglewood had previously taken on a wider range of pupils, however their focus now is more behavioural, with most of their pupils having EHCIPs (Education, Health and Care Plans). Arnewood now have The Croft for children who need a calmer learning environment and are planning to set up an Autism Resourced Provision within the school.



28. REFERRED MATTERS

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 4**, three items referred by the Amenities Committee.

a) Recreation Ground Trees

Following a short discussion

It was

RECOMMENDED: *That £11k be allocated from CIL funding for the works.*

This was ENDORSED by F&GP for Town Council approval.

b) Fencing on the Recreation Ground

Following a short discussion about the urgent need for fencing.

It was

RECOMMENDED: *That subject to planning considerations the proposal be endorsed.*

This was ENDORSED by F&GP for Town Council approval.

c) Station Road Streetscene

Following some discussion

It was

RECOMMENDED: *That black litter bins/Stainless-Steel seats be ordered in sum of £45k.*

This was ENDORSED by F&GP for Town Council approval.

29. GRANT AID REQUESTS

The expected Grant Aid request from Lions Club had not materialised. Their event due to take place in September has been put on hold until next year.

30. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 6**, the New Milton Town Council Investment Strategy.

The Town Clerk advised that he had received a further update this morning in relation to last quarter Investments. The value of the Quilter Cheviot investment now stands at £374k which shows an increase of £28k in 3 months. The members agreed that this is proving to be an excellent investment at this point in time.

It was then

RECOMMENDED:

That the revised Investment Strategy be ENDORSED for Town Council approval



31. RISK STRATEGY

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 7**, the Annual Risk Strategy review report

The Town Clerk referred to the final page of the report where he had added two further risks to the table, namely LGR which will have a big influence on the work carried out by the Town Council, and HUB has also been added, encompassing the Ashley Hub which is already in operation, as well as work being done towards the Youth and Family Hub in Gore Road.

It was

RECOMMENDED:

That revised Risk Strategy be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.

32. YOUTH AND FAMILY HUB

The Town Clerk referred to **Appendix 8**, being the third Engagement Report prepared for NMYT by Seekers Create, previously circulated. The report was written following interviews and discussions with families and young people at the Lions Community Event on Saturday 23rd May. Cllr S Clarke stated that this report and the earlier two reports provided NMYT with a good basis to move forward with the plans for the Hub and a good idea of what the community needs and wants.

Cllr Clarke mentioned there should be a response in relation to CIL bids very shortly.

Cllr G Blunden opined that there is a great deal of uncertainty in relation to this project not least that nobody knows what will happen with the new unitary authority. He was also concerned about how the building would be maintained and how that would be paid for going forwards. Cllr Clarke stated the emphasis changes over time, but currently the need appears to be for an old-style Children and Family Centre, with outside agencies renting spaces thereby providing some income helping to keep the Hub running. He said that NMYT have been working towards this project for many years with other agencies as well.

33. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

The Chairman had no updates.

34. NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked members for attending before closing the meeting at 7.38pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____



Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
25 a) b) and c)	Post Meeting Notes / Info	ASAP	Town Clerk & Assistant Town Clerk
25d)	Mobile telephones	ASAP	Estates Manager
28a)	Recreation Ground Trees	10.08.26	Town Council
28b)	Fencing on the Rec	10.08.26	Town Council
28c)	Station Road Streetscene	10.08.26	Town Council
30	Investment Strategy	10.08.26	Town Council
31	Risk Strategy	10.08.26	Town Council

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