



Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 07 September 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	p	R A Reid
	p M Scott-Johns		

In Attendance:

Councillors: D E Hawkins

Officers: Graham Flexman - Town Clerk
Sam Welch – Administration Officer

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers and 3 members of the public to the meeting.

A representative of Parkinson's UK New Forest Branch spoke in support of the Grant Aid Request (Appendix 5).

The Chairman formally opened the meeting at 6.32pm.

35. APOLOGIES

Cllr J Adams

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

37. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Noted

38. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous F&GP Committee meeting minutes of 20 July 2026.

It was,

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 July 2026, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

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

The Town Clerk confirmed that all items had been addressed.

Cllr Maynard said the Vodafone payment had increased by £100 in one month and requested an explanation. The Town Clerk advised further information would be provided in the minutes.

(Post Meeting Note: July: £314.87; June: £305.66; May: £307.26; April: £291.97)

40. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following item of correspondence. The announcement that the Government had today withdrawn its LGR (Local Government Reorganisation) decision for Hampshire and launched a review of the wider programme.

41. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 1** - Schedule of Payments for the period 1 July to 31 July 2026 in the sum of £150,921.40. The Town Clerk highlighted the following:

Amberol	CapEx Renewals + Additional Planters (£10,328.16) Floral Displays (£4,800) Includes replacement of old planters and new Pantiles planters	£15,128.16
Geoff Kilbey	Maintenance of two Estates & Facilities vehicles	£1,524.97
HCC (Hants LGPS)	Pension Contributions – Monthly	£11,018.72
HMRC Cumbernauld	Tax and NIC – Monthly	£14,681.75
JSS Scaffolding	Temporary scaffolding erection and dismantling at New Milton Bowling Club - As agreed at Amenities (CapEx)	£6,600.00
L.Kitcher Fencing	New fencing for Pétanque area, Fawcetts Field (CapEx)	£3,240.00
Mandrake	Road closure and traffic marshals for New Milton Lions May event - As quote + agreed	£2,130.60
PL Group Consultants	Play inspection courses and exams (£1,600 in total recharged to non-NMTC attendees)	£2,568.00
Rejuvenate	See report attached and relevant invoices	£1,542.00
Turfleet Hire	Vehicle/ Machinery Hire for Ashley & Fawcetts end of season pitch renovations (£7,320) Ride on Mower & Tractor (June: £1,938) - As budget	£9,258.00
Wessex Sound	Audio for Afternoon of Music	£1,020.00
Wilson Scott	Estates & Facilities Team PPE and Uniform upgrade	£2,265.36
Autopa	Deposit for Station Road Street Furniture - CapEx + CIL	£4,752.00
LB Mechanical Solutions	Statutory remedials at NMTC facilities - Includes new TMV Valves at Ashley & Fawcetts Field	£12,036.00
L.Kitcher Fencing	Long Meadow Play Area boundary fence (S.106 & CapEx)	£2,100.00
Staff/ Members	Salaries and Expenses - July 2026	£44,327.96
Lombard	Vehicle Hire x5	£2,452.61

Members raised the following queries:

- a) £876.20 paid to AquaCare in respect of water hygiene monitoring. Cllr Maynard asked whether this was a monthly cost, and the Town Clerk confirmed it was for 6 sites. **The monthly cost covers all NMTC facilities (Ashley Pavilion, Ashley Hub, Fawcetts Field changing rooms & Workshop, Fernhill Pavilion, NM Outdoor Bowls & NM Indoor Bowls / Empire Skate Facility). NB: Legionella Monitoring is based on our Legionella Risk assessment and is a statutory duty.**
- b) £714 paid to Breakthrough Communications. Cllr Maynard requested further information. **We have to react responsibly and protect public trust. We also need to respond properly to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests including those relating to Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) handling personal data with care and meeting increasingly complex legal duties. A difficult complaint can lead to FOI / EIR request. A new project may require community engagement, careful messaging and sound data protection. A sensitive issue requiring a decision can quickly become a reputational issue. Breakthrough Communications & Strategies provides the council with access to practical advice, tools, resources and specialist support, all shaped around the realities of parish and town council life. www.breakthroughcomms.co.uk/**
- c) £1,542 paid to Rejuvenate. Having reviewed the invoices, Cllr Maynard noted the hourly rate increase and queried some of the charges, expressing the view that certain items should form part of day-to-day services. During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that the Town Council's contract with Rejuvenate is reviewed annually. **Members agreed that, to ensure the Town Council receives best value, quotations should be sought from alternative providers at the next review.**
- d) £12,036 paid to LB Mechanical Solutions for statutory remedials including TMV valves. Cllr Blunden requested further information and asked why the work was considered statutory.
- This sum (inclusive of VAT) covers the following:**
- **Fawcetts Field – Isolate and drain pipework on links to changing room cold water system, fit new isolation valve to stop cross contamination as part of our Legionella Risk Assessment. Cost: £498.00**
 - **The flues and condensate failed their Landlords Gas Safety checks and remedial works were required to comply – Indoor Bowls & Ashley Pavilions. Replace Fault Gas Valve at Ashley.**
 - **Both sites now have Gas & Landlords Safety Certificates issued. Cost: £2,388.00**
 - **Fawcetts & Ashley Pavilions: Both pavilion changing rooms main TMV's (Thermostatic Mixing Valves) feeding the hot water to the showers were failing and no longer mixing to the correct settings. There was a strong possibility the showers could have been running with scalding hot water. We have a legal duty of care under HSWA (Health & Safety at Work Act) 1974 to ensure Town Council provides a safe environment for those using our facilities. Cost: £9,150.00**
 - **It should also be noted that the TMV's were over 15 years old.**
- e) £314.87 to Vodafone was queried by Cllr Maynard as he thought it had recently gone up £100. **The Vodafone payments (including VAT) for April (£291.97), May (£307.26), June (£305.66) and July (£314.87) remain fairly consistent and in line with our contract. The cost per handset works out at around £13 per month. It is also worth noting we have a Tech Fund Credit of £2,130.00 to be used against renewals or upgrades. Our current contract runs to 30th June 2027.**

RECOMMENDED:

That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 July to 31 July 2026 in the sum of £150,921.40 be ENDORSED for Town Council approval.



42. MONTHLY ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 2, being the monthly Management Accounts for July. He highlighted an Amenities overspend of £3,711, noting that a John Deere tractor had been sold for £10,000 which helped defray some over budget costs. **With regard to the sale of the John Deere Compact Tractor HF58 GOX, we had offers locally of between £6 - £8k but Turfleet Hire, one of our main, large machinery suppliers, suggested that we approach Farol UK (who have supplied to the Town Council in the past). They offered us £10k which, given the age of the tractor, was considered to be a very good offer. Service records helped.**

Regarding F&GP, savings of £29,374 were highlighted, including savings on salaries and wages. A substantial amount of additional income had been received from Hampshire County Council through Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) funding secured by the Youth Services Manager. Members acknowledged and commended the Youth Services Manager's success in securing this funding, which was referred to in her report below.

43. YOUTH REPORT

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 3** - Youth Report, which had been circulated previously. Members noted the report and commended the work of the Youth Services Manager.

44. REFERRED MATTERS

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 4**, Station Road Streetscene, a matter referred to by the Amenities Committee. The Town Clerk reiterated the poor condition of the existing French benches, which are now 20 years old, and noted that replacement parts are no longer available. The Chairman highlighted the significant savings in maintenance costs that would result from their replacement. Cllr Blunden advised that comments and feedback regarding the proposed benches and bins had been considered and addressed at the Amenities Committee meeting held on 24 August, that commended the proposed replacements.

45. GRANT AID REQUESTS

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 5**, a Grant Aid request from Parkinson's UK New Forest Branch for £500 towards the purchase of a Group Laptop to help with its smooth running.

Cllr W Davies proposed £500, and Cllr S J Clarke seconded. All Members were in favour.

RESOLVED:

That Parkinson's UK New Forest Branch be granted £500 from the Grant Aid Budget under the General Power of Competence.

46. INTERNAL AUDIT – WORK PLAN

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 6**, being the Internal Audit Work Plan for 2026-27. Members noted the planned workstream for this coming year.

It was,

RESOLVED:

That proposed Work Plan for 2026-27 from Auditing Solutions be agreed and approved



47. INTERNAL AUDIT - APPOINTMENT

The Chairman referred to **Appendix 7**, being Internal Audit letter. The Town Clerk noted the Town Council had used Auditing Solutions for many years and the same internal auditor for the past 10 years and members queried whether a different auditor should be assigned.

It was,

RESOLVED:

That Auditing Solutions be reappointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditor, subject to change of individual auditor.

48. YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTRE

The Town Clerk referred to **Appendix 8**, noting that build costs were likely to be £1.85 million.

He drew Members' attention to a note at the end of the appendix stating that a further £500k for furnishings and equipment had not been included in the estimate.

Members noted the report was for information only and it was clarified that the Town Council had no financial involvement in the project itself.

49. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

The Chairman noted there was currently no public water fountain in the town.

Members recalled there had previously been a water fountain, but it had been vandalised. The Chairman suggested a new water fountain be installed near the public toilets on the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Blunden, Chairman of the Amenities Committee, advised he would bring the matter before the Amenities Committee for consideration.

50. NEXT MEETING

MONDAY 26 OCTOBER 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 7.01pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____



Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
39	Vodafone Queries	ASAP	Estates Manager
41	Schedule of Payments	ASAP	Town Clerk
45	Grant Aid Request - Parkinsons	ASAP	Assistant Town Clerk
46	Internal Audit - Work Plan	2026/27	Town Clerk
47	Appointment of Auditing Solutions	2026/27	Town Clerk
48	Youth & Family Centre Project	28.09.26	Town Council
49	Public Water Fountain for Rec	13.10.26	Amenities Committee

Distribution:

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