



NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 6.30PM IN NEW MILTON TOWN HALL

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

In Attendance:

G Flexman – Town Clerk

J Bean – Administration Officer

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers, 2 members of the public and a member of the press to the meeting. The Chairman asked whether any members of the public wished to speak under public participation as nobody did, the Chairman formally opened the meeting at 6:32pm.

48. APOLOGIES

Cllr R Murrow (Away), Cllr S Clarke (Away) and Cllr R A Reid (funeral)

49. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

The Chairman reported on activities since the last Town Council meeting:

15 August 2026	Tea at the Community Garden to mark the end of the Arts Trail.
23 August 2026	New Milton Remembers (Deputy Mayor)
2 September 2026	Music on the Quay in Christchurch
5 September 2026	FONFA Remembrance event, Holmsley
6 September 2026	Guns of Navarone – final afternoon of music.



The Chairman advised that the Afternoon Tea had been a wonderful celebration of the Arts Trail which itself had been a great event for the community. He did not attend New Milton Remembers this year, with the Deputy Mayor attending in his place, being an important event in the town's calendar.

The Mayor enjoyed the music on the quay event in Christchurch and had received a note of thanks for his attendance from the Christchurch Mayor and they met again at the next event, the FONFA (Friends of the New Forest Airfields) remembrance, which was well attended and was very worthwhile.

The final Afternoon of Music was exceptionally well attended, with many residents enjoying the music of Guns of Navarone, with up to 100 people dancing at one point.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

51. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 10 August 2026 as he had not been at that meeting, he passed them over to the Vice-Chairman for review.

It was

RESOLVED:

That Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10 August 2026, having been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Vice-Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed by the Vice-Chairman.

52. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) An email from Christopher Evans of Hampshire Police.

"I have been asked to give you an update on reported ASB in an around New Milton since the Summer and what steps we have taken to address this. Sadly, we will not be able to attend the meeting later today.

Recreation Ground

The school summer holidays always see an increase in general ASB across the town. We have seen this particularly at the Recreation grounds.

Fawcetts Field

We have received reports of damage to council vehicles and depot including damage to goal posts and "dragon's teeth". Sadly, CCTV obtained does not identify the suspects and nor are there any forensic capabilities.



Graffiti

We have seen a rise in graffiti across the town in the last month, this includes a number of red crosses being painted on walls and buildings and “hate” based writing. As a team we have responded to some of these incidents when we have been on duty and this has led to the arrest of two youths, one of which will be issued a youth caution.

CCTV

We have been working with the NFDC CCTV team at Appletree Court to identify the perpetrators of this behaviour. Sadly, some of the areas being affected are not covered by CCTV and as such we are unable to identify the offenders.

ASB

We have identified a group of youths who we suspect are the ones causing this ASB particularly around the Recreation Ground and taking robust steps where possible.

Criminal Damage

We have been in discussion with NFDC housing team about issues relating to certain properties and individuals linked and what can be done to address these issues.”

The Town Clerk advised that he had invited the police to attend the next Amenities Committee meeting on Tuesday 13th October as the ASB had been raised at the last Amenities meeting on 24th August.

The Chairman advised that he had invited the police also to attend the next Town Council meeting on 9th November to provide updates on crime figures in the town and to make the comparison with previous years.

- b) The Town Clerk then referred to an email from Andy Rogers, Democratic Services Officer at NFDC.

“Just to advise you that following the National Local Government Pay Award for staff, a 3.30% increase has been applied to the basic and special responsibility allowances for Members of New Forest District Council. It is for your own council to decide what, if any, adjustments to make to its own scheme, having regard to the changes at NFDC.”

The Town Clerk suggested this be referred to F&GP for further discussion and this was agreed.



53. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr J Vigor

Cllr J Vigor advised she had been receiving messages of thanks from residents who were pleased to see that action had been taken on some of the potholes.

She then went on to discuss the cancellation of LGR and the Judicial Review although she was keen to point out that LGR has been cancelled for the time being and could be resurrected. She suspected that this had come about as several other counties have succeeded in their Judicial Reviews already. The Judicial Review is cancelled unless or until the decision is reinstated. She was pleased that the current administration will now have three years in office and can get on with the real work.

Cllr K Trehorn asked if there is an indication of the amount of money which has been spent on LGR, Cllr Vigor said that has not yet been established but she would report back to Members once these calculations had been made.

Cllr F Carpenter

Cllr Fran Carpenter reported that there had been a full council meeting on Thursday, and that a funding gap of £138.6m remains. The shortfall can only come from government or from a rise in Council Tax which would require a referendum. She emphasised that HCC is still in a very difficult financial situation and there would be no indication of any changes until the Autumn budget on 28th October. She was unsure whether more information would be forthcoming about the potential Mayoral elections also at that time.

Cllr Carpenter stated that she and Cllr Vigor had both attended the first Special Needs Committee Meeting at HCC. Central government is making changes to the way that children with special needs are to be educated, and the committee has started the work to look at the changes and implementation. She was pleased to advise that following the amalgamation of Pennington Infant and Junior Schools, the old Pennington Infant School will become a 50 place Special Needs school.

Cllr Carpenter mentioned upcoming Halloween events at Lepe where there is a trail, and that Hampshire libraries will be hosting junk modelling sessions. She praised the New Milton Arts Trail and said she had enjoyed it a great deal, and had even bought some art.

Cllr A O' Sullivan asked if HCC had looked at selling land or other assets and cutting back on staff to save money.

Cllr Carpenter advised that HCC have already sold some assets, that the staff were down to a bare minimum and the authority provides no more than the statutory requirements in terms of services.



Cllr S Davies

Cllr Davies reported that the first six shared ownership properties on Danes Park came available recently and that there had been 27 viable applications. There would be more properties available soon.

Cllr Davies advised that the leader of NFDC is currently on jury duty and so he is having to take on more of her duties as her deputy.

He advised that the regulator will shortly be attending to inspect the Housing Department. He also reported that he had attended a finance meeting of the Freeport board in Portsmouth and was looking forward to another meeting in Portsmouth next month.

Cllr Davies made some donations from his Community Grant to Parkinson's New Forest, MHA and to the New Milton Men's Shed.

Cllr A D O' Sullivan

Cllr A D O'Sullivan advised that he too had recently donated to the Men's Shed. Since the last meeting, he had chaired the Resource and Transformation Committee where the proposed financial savings for 27/28 were presented to enable NFDC to offer a balanced budget next year. The final proposals will be endorsed by public consultation before the final budget is set early next year.

Cllr G Blunden

Cllr Blunden provided several updates relating to his portfolio of Environment and Sustainability. Firstly, the consultation on the Hurst Spit to Lymington strategy has now reached an end. He had attended several of the sessions and had been encouraged by the strong turn out and strong engagement.

He advised that the streetscene team had cleared litter along the A31 roadside, as part of the multi-agency response to the heathland fire, which started on Sunday 9 August. They removed potential hazards and combustible items, like glass and cans, and other litter exposed by the vegetation clearance and firebreak work. In total, 15 lorry loads.

Cllr Blunden mentioned the A35 litter reduction project launched in July to reduce litter and reduce fire risk and the Forest Guardians initiative which follows on from this. Residents can apply for a pack which gives information about how litter affects wildlife, landscapes and local areas.

Cllr Blunden also mentioned the Keep Britain Tidy "Fight Fly-Tipping" event in October which seeks to raise awareness that residents need to check the credentials of any waste management companies or people they employ to ensure they are registered to carry out the work.



Cllr Blunden further advised that two new officers have been appointed to the Environmental Crime team.

Finally, Cllr Blunden reported that the Scrutiny Panel had reviewed Project Integra's plans for 2026-35 and considered the climate change policy for 2025-2026 which will be reviewed by Full Council and Cabinet.

Cllr D N Tungate

Cllr D N Tungate advised that he had attended the Housing Scrutiny Panel and that he is always impressed with the officers working in the Housing Team. He stated that the feedback from tenants is generally very positive.

Cllr J Adams

Cllr J Adams advised that he had nothing to report from NFDC, but so far as the NPA is concerned, the panning season is starting, and that the horses are due to be rounded up. He said they would be holding their AGM shortly and he would report further after that. On behalf of the NPA he is on the Hurn Airport Consultative Committee aka the Airspace Strategy Committee at Bournemouth Airport and reported that changes to flight paths are proposed with considerable increases in the numbers of flights. He is hoping to provide further information at the next Town Council meeting.

54. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Planning Committee

Cllr P Moores, Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee, submitted the minutes of the Committee meetings held on 6 and 20 August, 1 and 17 September and moved their adoption.

RESOLVED:

That Minutes 54 to 93 inclusive of the meetings held on 6 and 20 August plus 1 and 17 September 2026 be received.

b) Amenities Committee

Cllr G Blunden, Chairman of the Amenities Committee, submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 24 August 2026 and moved their adoption.

He referred to Minute 40b) Land Use Request from Firefly Events which had been withdrawn.

RESOLVED:

That Minutes 34 to 49 inclusive of the meeting held on 24 August 2026 be received.



c) Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr D N Tungate, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee submitted Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2026 and moved their adoption.

It was

RESOLVED:

That minutes 35 to 50 inclusive of the meeting held on 7 September 2026 be received.

55. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Schedule of Payments covering 01 - 31 July 2026 previously endorsed by F&GP, was submitted for Council approval.

It was

RESOLVED:

That the Schedule of Payments No. 4/26/27 in the sum of £150,921.40 for the period 01 to 31 July 2026 be approved.

The Schedule was duly signed by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Town Clerk.

56. COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1 the Communications Officer's Report updating Members on the Summer Afternoons of Music and the Dementia Allotment. The Chairman mentioned that there is a link to a survey in the report.

The report was noted.

57. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Town Clerk alerted members to two Planning Meetings which had been changed from Tuesday to Thursday, one in December and the other in April next year, both highlighted on the calendar.

The changes were noted.

58. EXTERNAL AUDIT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3 being the External Audit Report and Certificate which had been received last Thursday providing a clean bill of health as far as last year's Report & Accounts are concerned.

The Auditor's Report and Certificate were noted.



59. PUBLICATION

The Chairman then referred to Appendix 4 being the AGAR / Notice of Conclusion of Audit.

This will be displayed in the window of the Town Hall for 3 months and on the website advising the public that they may obtain a copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return at a cost of £5 per copy.

RESOLVED:

That Notice of Conclusion of Audit and AGAR be published for 3 months to the end of the year.

60. INTERNAL AUDIT

The Chairman referred to Appendix 5 being the Letter re-appointing Auditing Solutions albeit with a different lead auditor. Stuart Pollard the Company Director will be attending to carry out the audit on 19th November, he will be accompanied and assisted by his wife Anne thereby enabling the audit to take place in one day.

RESOLVED:

That Auditing Solutions be reappointed with a new lead auditor.

61. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS SERVING ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr A O' Sullivan provided the following update as a representative on the *New Forest Community Rail Partnership* that he attended on behalf of the New Milton station friends group.

"Last Wednesday as the council representative on the station friends' group I attended the New Forest Community Rail Partnership in Brockenhurst which connects station adopters and Friends groups across the New Forest. New Milton is a new member. This is an umbrella organisation that brings together train and transport operators, local authorities, community organisations, businesses, schools, volunteers and station adopters. Their main aims are to:

Provide a voice for the community.

Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel

Bringing communities together

Supporting social and economic development

This can only be good for the forest with stations working together to help promote this area."



62. NEXT MEETING

Monday 9 November 2026 at 6.30 pm at the Town Hall in New Milton.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.15pm.

Chairman _____ Date _____

Distribution:

Town Councillors

District Councillors J L Cleary

County Councillors F Carpenter, D Poole and J Vigor

New Milton Police

Press

Sue Larking - NMRA

Mark Jeffries – Estates & Facilities Manager

Editor – Focus