Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Tuesday 13 October 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		A D O'Sullivan
	p	D Rice-Mundy	p	V Schooling
		K Trehorn		

In attendance:
Councillors: R Maynard

Officers: Graham Flexman - Town Clerk
Mark Jeffries - Estates & Facilities Manager
Sam Welch - Administration Officer

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers, 6 Members of the public and a member of the press to the meeting.

Glad Rags Production Company

The Event Producer for the proposed ***Christmas Spectacular: A Festive Adventure*** at the Moore Close site spoke in support of their Land Use request (Item 7, Appendix 1) outlining the steps taken to ensure the event runs smoothly, safely and is well managed, explaining how feedback had been listened to, and incorporated to help shape the event around the needs of families and residents.

Julia Stamper

- On behalf of New Milton Residents' Association spoke on the need for a local emergency plan and asked whether the Town Council would take the lead in developing one.
- Commented on a recent media article regarding the public toilets at the War Memorial Recreation Ground and enquired whether the Town Council was still considering taking them over.
- Requested an update on the appointment of a new Town Development Manager.

Chair of Friends of Ballard Nature Reserve

The new Chair of the Friends of Ballard Nature Reserve introduced himself to Members, this being their first council meeting attended.

They expressed gratitude for the funding approved by Committee for works at Ballard Nature Reserve and commended the tree contractor for going above and beyond, noting the completed works had made a significant difference.

They also enquired as to when the cows would be returning to the meadow, with the Estates & Facilities Manager noting they would be returning shortly.

The meeting went into session at 6:40pm.

50. APOLOGIES - Cllr K Trehorn, A D O'Sullivan

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

52. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman thanked the representative from Glad Rags and noted the request would be discussed further under item 7, Land Use Requests.

In response to the query regarding emergency planning, the Chairman clarified that New Forest District Council (NFDC), working with Hampshire County Council (HCC), is the lead authority for emergency planning. He noted that emergency planning does not fall within the Town Council's responsibilities, but the Town Council works with NFDC and other partner organisations as appropriate.

(Post Meeting Note: New Milton Residents Association wish to draft a Local Community Resilience Plan, this is a practical action guide created by local residents, groups and organizations to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies or natural disasters. It bridges the gap between the official emergency services and daily community life. NMTC would welcome and support this NMRA initiative.)

In regard to the Recreation Ground toilets, the Chairman, who is also a Councillor at NFDC, clarified that NFDC is not proposing any toilet closures. He noted that NFDC has a £2 million investment programme for public toilets across the district, with two being completely rebuilt and a further 19 refurbished.

The Chairman added that what is being considered is working with town and parish councils that may wish to take responsibility for public toilets, which may in some circumstance be beneficial, although any such decision would be entirely a matter for the individual council.

The Town Clerk clarified that the Town Development role would be referred to the Executive Committee with a plan for an increased budget, with a view to making an appointment in the new year, working closely with NFDC Economic Development. Action Point: Town Clerk

The Chairman thanked the Chair of the Friends of Ballard Nature Reserve for their positive feedback and highlighted that he and all members recognised the hard work they do and the importance of the partnership between the Friends and the Council.

53. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee meeting minutes of 24 August 2026.

It was,

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 August 2026, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

54. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman reviewed the action points from the Committee Meeting held on 24 August 2026.

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
42	Fencing on the Rec	06.10.26	Planning Committee
43	PO Parcel Box Size	ASAP	Town Clerk
44	Signage Working Party	ASAP	Estates Manager
46	LGR/ Public Toilets	ASAP	Town Clerk
37	Rugby Club WP Meeting	ASAP	Town Clerk
48	Operational Matters x4	13.10.26	Estates Manager
48	Community Garden Strip	13.10.26	Estates Manager

The Town Clerk spoke on the following action points:

Minute 42: Planning permission, subject to conditions, had now been received from NFDC for the installation of a safety fence between the Bowling Club and the Recreation Ground.

Minute 43: The Post Office Parcel Box was found to be in order in respect to its installation.

Minute 46: The Police will attend a New Forest Safety Partnership meeting on 21 October with the Town Clerk, Estates & Facilities Manager, New Milton Youth Trust and NFDC Community Safety Manager to discuss anti-social behaviour in the town.

The Police will present a report at the next Town Council meeting on 09 November.
Action Point: Sgt Mark Atrill

All remaining action points had either been addressed or were on the agenda.

55. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following items of correspondence:

a) Letter of introduction noting the recent appointment of an **Economic Development Manager at NFDC**, and of a Market Consultant who will identify and deliver practical interventions to strengthen local enterprise, activate suitable vacant premises, improve market provision, increase useful town centre activity over the next 2 years.

b) An email from **NFDC Community Safety Manager** regarding anti-social behaviour in New Milton. A Partnership Action Group (PAG) meeting is scheduled for 21 October with the Town Clerk, Estates & Facilities Manager, New Milton Youth Trust, Youth Services Manager and the Police to discuss anti-social behaviour in the town.

c) A request from **New Milton Town Football Club to install 2 x Fixture Boards** at Fawcetts Field. Copies of the proposed boards had been circulated to members.

The Chairman noted the provision formed part of the Football Club's lease and was intended simply to identify who was playing and when, rather than advertising. One Member queried whether the boards would be magnetic, to avoid untidy handwritten updates.

The Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed they would be required to remain neat, in keeping and without handwritten updates. He assured members that this expectation would be communicated to the Football Club.

It was

RECOMMENDED:
That New Milton Town Football Club be permitted to install 2 fixture boards, subject to the above requirements.

56. LAND USE REQUESTS

a) **Carry on Costumes/ Glad Rags Production Company**

The Town Clerk referred to Appendix 1, a request from Carry on Costumes/ Glad Rags Production Co to hold **"Christmas Spectacular - A Festive Adventure"** at Moore Close between 14 - 23 December 2026, including set up and take down.

The Chairman explained the application had returned to Committee as the original application had been submitted in the name of a different organisation. He acknowledged that some residents had raised concerns following a previous event but clarified that the proposed event was unrelated.

A meeting was subsequently held between residents, the Town Clerk, Councillors G Blunden, V Schooling and A D O'Sullivan, and representatives of Glad Rags Production Company to discuss those concerns and consider comments raised. Following the meeting, the community group emailed to wish the event success.

It was

RESOLVED:

That Carry on Costumes/ Glad Rags Production Company be permitted to hold Christmas Spectacular - A Festive Adventure at Moore Close between 14 and 23 December 2026, subject to the usual terms and conditions of use.

b) **Ashley Family Hub**

A request from the Youth Services Manager at the Ashley Family Hub to host a "Family Christmas Event" at Ashley Recreation Ground on Friday 11 December 2026, from 2:30pm to 6:30pm.

Cllr D Hawkins noted, following his attendance at last year's event, that it had been a wonderful occasion and the young people assisting at the event had been brilliant. He commended the work of the Youth Services Manager, with Cllr J Baker echoing these comments.

It was

RESOLVED:

That Ashley Family Hub be permitted to hold a "Family Christmas Event" at Ashley Recreation Ground on Friday 11 December 2026, from 2:30pm to 6:30pm, subject to the usual terms and conditions of use.

57. FAWCETTS FIELD

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2, a request for a sewer connection to the rear of Milton Barns, highlighting the accompanying plan and noting the proposed route crossed youth pitches, suggesting an alternative route could be considered, connecting directly across New Milton Barns land instead.

The Chairman proposed referring this suggestion back to the applicant for consideration. One Member noted the alternative route appeared to be the most practical option, as it would follow the line of least resistance and avoid affecting pitches.

It was,

RECOMMENDED: That the alternate route be suggested to the applicant.

58. STREET MARKET

The Chairman deferred to the Town Clerk, who provided an update on the recent Street Market Working Party 3-month review meeting held on 23 September, noting the meeting had been positive, with market operators Southern Market Traders (SMT) being pleased with progress to date and agreeing to extend their arrangement on current terms and conditions until the end of the year.

Discussions included pavement usage, the installation of additional benches, and the current distribution of seating along the High Steet, with more benches on the south side than north. The Town Clerk noted a rearrangement of bench distribution was being considered.

The Town Clerk further reported that discussions had taken place regarding the use of lay-bys, car parking spaces and bus stops, with ongoing discussions taking place with HCC. He also highlighted increased footfall, support from the majority of local businesses, and discussions regarding future proposals and potential speciality markets. Finally, the Town Clerk advised that the next review meeting with SMT would be held in December.

The Chairman commented the market had been a success and expressed his hope it would continue throughout the winter months. He further advised that proposals for new seating and bins within the High Street would be brought back to Committee for consideration and approval before any installation took place.

59. SIGNAGE

The Chairman explained the need for Member involvement in a Working Party to discuss town entrance and town centre signage, particularly in relation to budgets, noting that no funding was currently allocated for the project. The following members volunteered to join the Working Party:

- Cllr V Schooling
- Cllr J Baker
- Cllr R Maynard
- Cllr R Murrow

60. CIL PROJECTS

The Chairman referred to a handout circulated to Members containing updates on CIL Projects. The Estates & Facilities Manager presented the update as follows:

- Sports Wall, Ashley Recreation Ground: Completion by 31 October 2026
- Play Units, Hollands Wood Drive: Expected completion of 31 December 2026
- Carrick Wood: Completed by 9 October 2026
- BMX Pump Track: Final location to be agreed, with reference to Vision Plan

The Chairman noted that fencing at Hollands Wood had been installed, improving the appearance and security of the site; Hollands Wood would be included as a separate agenda item at the next meeting on 23 November 2026 to allow members to discuss proposals for the site.

Proposals related to provision of simple play equipment rather than a full play area.

61. LGR

The Town Clerk reported that Local Government Reorganisation had been paused, and so a degree of uncertainty remained. He explained the Town Council continued to consider whether it would be sensible to take over the public toilets on the Recreation Ground, there being advantages and disadvantages of doing so, and the matter would be considered further as part of the upcoming budget setting process.

The Chairman reiterated that NFDC had no proposals to close public toilets across the district. The Chairman added that further information from central Government was awaited regarding the future of Local Government Reorganisation.

62. RUGBY CLUB

The Town Clerk provided an update on the recent meeting of the Working Party, advising members that a letter had been sent to New Milton Rugby Football Club confirming the main pitch would be moved 5 metres ahead of the 2027/28 season, subject to planning permission for floodlights being granted by NFDC. The proposed completion date is July 2027 to meet RFU grant conditions. It was also noted that Ashely Recreation Ground may need to be redesignated as a Sports Field.

The Chairman reported that the Rugby Club had provided assurance regarding car parking arrangement with Ashley Junior School and would provide details of the number of spaces available. Assurance had also been given by the rugby club that the existing toilet facilities would be sufficient.

Members then discussed recent incidents of vandalism at Ashley Recreation Ground. The Chairman noted the Police would present a report at the next Town Council meeting on 09 November.

A Member suggested that the Town Clerk could write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to express the Council's concerns regarding anti-social behaviour.

The Chairman agreed and requested that a letter be sent. Action Point: Town Clerk

63. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

***Plant a Tree* Initiative 2026/27**

The Chairman, supported by the Estates & Facilities Manager, welcomed the return of the Town Council's *Plant a Tree* Initiative, noting National Tree Week runs from 21-29 November.

He emphasised that careful consideration had been given to both planting locations and tree species to ensure the long-term success of the initiative, with a focus on varieties that are resilient to changing climate condition and better able withstand periods of drought.

Barton Common: The Chairman noted that scrub and gorse clearance was currently taking place at Barton Common as part of the agreed management plan.

Grazing: The Chairman noted that grazing is expected to commence shortly and highlighted additional grazing intended at Barton Common.

Community Garden: The Chairman congratulated and thanked the Community Garden volunteers on achieving Gold in the South and South-East in Bloom Awards (Gold *Environmental Challenge* and Level 5 Outstanding in *Its Your Neighbourhood*)

64. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 23 November 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:28pm

CHAIRMAN _____DATE _____

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
52	Review budget for TDM post	31.12.26	Executives/Town Clerk
53	Police Sgt at Town Council mtg	09.11.26	Police Sgt Mark Atrill
55b)	PAG meeting to discuss ASB	21.10.26	NFDC / Town Clerk
55c)	Football Club Fixture Board	ASAP	Estates Manager
56	Land Use Requests x 2	ASAP	Comms Officer
57	Alternative route to sewer	ASAP	Town Clerk
62	ASB Letter to Donna Jones	ASAP	Town Clerk

Distribution:
Town Councillors
Estates & Facilities Manager
District Councillor J L Cleary
County Councillors J Vigor, D Poole, and F Carpenter
New Milton Police
Press
NMRA