NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER 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	p	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 2 police officers to the meeting.

Inspector Mark Lumley who has taken over from Inspector Darren Ord, and Sergeant Mark Attrill gave a presentation and answered councillors' questions before the meeting was formally opened.

Insp Lumley advised that the team now consists of 6 police officers and 2 PCSOs which is full capacity at present. He said that there is no more room in the office for any other officers at present.

He spoke about crime trends, advising that overall, the level of crime in New Milton is low. Violent crime and injuries from assaults are low. He said that burglaries have been low up until now, but the rate has been increasing from around 1 per month. He advised that there is a suspect for these. Shoplifting is also high in New Milton with one offender who had committed 30 offences having been released, he is now committing more offences.

The other area which is on the increase is Criminal Damage and Public Order offences. He said there are numerous investigations to be progressed. Some have already been offered Community Resolutions, and some are awaiting interviews. He said that the stats are only a part of the story and invited questions from the members.
Councillors asked the following questions:

Cllr Mrs Schooling asked about a leaflet she had received, with her Council Tax bill, from the Police and Crime Commisssioner Donna Jones with a map of Hampshire with larger towns indicated on it but New Milton did not appear, albeit with almost 27,000 residents we are deemed a large town. The Inspector had not seen the map before, but the PCC is a separate entity from the police themselves. Enquiring what a neighbourhood team is, the

Inspector advised all the local police based at New Milton represent the local neighbourhood team. They investigate local crimes, patterns of behaviour and local incidents. Emergencies are generally dealt with by patrol officers who are based at Lymington.

In respect to 101 he advised calls are routed to the same handlers as 999 calls but are accorded a lower level of priority.

There was some discussion concerning any plans to re-open a police station in New Milton, the Inspector advised there are none at present, but a front desk may be a possibility.

Cllr R Maynard asked about UKPAC the Inspector stated that this is an independent private firm which local businesses can sign up to. They can then report any incidences of shoplifting to UKPAC who investigate and look for patterns and repeat offenders. They obtain evidence to the standard required by Court and provide reports to the police force which then takes the matter forward. This can save a huge amount of police time.

There was some discussion about Community Resolutions, and whether they are effective, with the inspector concluding they sometimes are and sometimes are not. However, the police have strict guidelines to follow in all matters which leaves little room for variation.

The Inspector advised that Community Resolutions can take many forms but generally consist of interventions to divert criminals from continuing their criminal behaviour. It can involve victim awareness, drugs and alcohol courses or other activities. It is generally accepted that quick and early intervention can prevent further offences.

Cllr Maynard asked where people are now taken into custody and was advised that it's either Southampton, Portsmouth or Basingstoke with Southampton being the nearest.

The Chairman thanked the police for attending the meeting and invited any public participation at 7.10pm.

Julia Stamper spoke under public participation about town signage and policing. She also invited councillors to attend an open event at the Memorial Hall run by NMRA at 2.15pm on 10th November, Nigel Atkinson the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire is giving a talk and will be answering audience questions.

The Chairman thanked Julia for her contribution and formally opened the meeting at 7.12pm.

63. <u>APOLOGIES</u> - None

64. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

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

28 September 2026	Opened the Solent Mind Exhibition at the Station (Deputy Mayor)
6 October 2026	Judged FNMS poetry competition
20 October 2026	Opening of the Poetry Exhibition
7 November 2026	Opening the Kitchen Shop
8 November 2026	Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service
8 November 2026	Remembrance at the Indian Memorial in Barton on Sea

The Deputy Mayor reported that the event on 6th October had been well attended, and was very enjoyable.

The Mayor enjoyed his role as one of the judges of the poetry competition run by the FNMS and was very impressed by the standard of the poems. He then attended the event on 20th October when the top five poems were unveiled. He had been delighted to receive three copies of the poetry book featuring all of the poems which he had left with Officers at the Town Hall.

The Mayor opened the new kitchen shop on Station Road, on Saturday morning, saying it was a very good event, the shop is a franchise of a German kitchen company that employs local people. The range of kitchens was wide with prices varying from £5k to £35k.

Finally, the Mayor reported on the Remembrance Parade and the Service both of which had been very well attended, praising the school children who gave presentations and also readings at the service, as well as the Ballard choir. The event had been very moving.

He also attended the Act of Remembrance at the Indian Obelisk and mentioned that prior to the event when they were gathered in the cold the owner of Pebble Beach had invited all attendees into his restaurant for a free hot drink. The event itself was very meaningful, at this very special place in the town.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

66. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 28 September 2026.

It was

RESOLVED:
That Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 September 2026, having been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

67. CORRESPONDENCE

a) The Town Clerk read out a letter from Donna Jones, Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire, dated 6th November 2026. A copy of this is attached to these minutes. The Town Clerk had subsequently made contact with the ASB Fund Team who provided further information and an application form for a grant.

b) The Town Clerk then referred to an article in the New Milton Advertiser & Times which reported the New Milton Community Garden and Friends of New Milton Station successes in the South and Sout-East in Bloom Awards held at the Royal Horticultural Society Garden in Wisley. The Community Garden received an outstanding award in the category It's Your Neighbourhood, the Environmental Challenge and a gold award for the Community Engagement category. The Friends of New Milton Station won a gold award in the Celebrating Stations category.

c) Finally, the Town Clerk referred to an email from NFDC, that offered free parking on Remembrance Sunday in their local car parks.

In the run up to Christmas, NFDC has kindly agreed free car parking in NFDC car parks, on 5 different dates, as follows:

- Small Business Saturday 5 December 2026
- Saturday 12 December 2026
- 19 & 20 December 2026 (last weekend before Christmas)
- 29th November 2026 to support the Lions Christmas event.

Members appreciated NFDC free car parking arrangements.

68. REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr F Carpenter

Cllr Fran Carpenter reported that repairs have recently been carried out to Walkford Lane, and that work will be carried out on the path at Old Stem Lane to make it wider.

She had recently been to visit New Milton Youth Trust following an invitation from Laura who had attended an event in Hordle. Fran was very impressed by the work that NMYT carry out and was advised about a local rapper who had made videos in New Milton High Street wielding knives, explaining this had the potential to influence the youth of the town in a negative fashion. Fran had also been impressed by the fake drugs tray which NMYT use to warn young people about the dangers of such substances, and substance abuse generally.

Cllr Carpenter mentioned the YOT (Youth Offending Team) at HCC who work with the police and young people to persuade them away from a criminal life. YOT have won national recognition for their work.

Fran said HCC finances were not good. Last year, HCC had managed a £95m shortfall. This year the shortfall is likely to be £199m, and there is currently a consultation seeking residents' preferred options to achieve these savings. There was not much else to be cut, but HCC are also looking at generating income via Council Tax rises.

A final piece of good news is that the Adult Social Care team have recently won an award for an innovative use of AI which takes meeting notes on people in care. This had saved the authority around 3,000 staff days.

Cllr K Trehorn asked if it would be possible to see some of the stats from the YOT team. Cllr Carpenter said that she would provide these at a later date.

Cllr J Vigor

Cllr J Vigor said it was a privilege to attend Remembrance events in New Milton. The parade had been well attended, and she was impressed that so many young people involved. The Act of Remembrance at the Indian Obelisk had been very poignant.

Cllr Vigor went on to mention the costs of the abandoned LGR preparations which are thought to be between £130m and £180m. The true total would not be known until next February when she would report further, saying there would have been some saving on the Judicial Review which was abandoned. Costs were initially thought to be £500k but there should be savings of £200k as it did not proceed.

Work is continuing at HCC to implement the new SEND requirements.

Cllr Vigor had been helping local residents deal with issues about refunds from utility companies, exploring facilities and assistance available to residents without access to computers. She had been impressed by the facilities at the library in New Milton.

Cllr Vigor had heard from many residents about fallen branches and trees during the recent storm. Finally, hoping that the new Post Office would have been established by now, she was heartened to know that there are a couple of candidates still being considered to run a Post Office in the high street.

Cllr D N Tungate

Cllr Tungate had nothing to report.

Cllr G Blunden

Cllr Blunden was pleased to advise that he had been at the NFDC Cabinet meeting when the CIL applications were considered. Both the Gore Road Hub (subject to receipt of a Business Plan for £1.85m) and the plan tor cliff drainage at Barton on Sea are moving on to the next stage.

Further, he had used his Community Grant to make donations to New Milton Xmas Lights, the Dementia Allotment, NMYT and SCARF.

Cllr S Davies

Cllr Davies reported that the regulator's inspection of the NFDC Housing Dept had taken place on 7/8 October. The inspection had been kept short as the department had worked very hard to provide the regulator with a great deal of information up front. The results of the inspection will be made public on 25th November by the regulator.

Cllr A D O' Sullivan

Cllr O'Sullivan had nothing to report.

Cllr S Clarke

Cllr Clarke advised that the Local Plan will be starting up again and that on Friday 13 November there will be a briefing on all the new planning systems which need to be followed to comply with the new government algorithms.

He had recently visited the New Milton Men's Shed and praised the great set up and fantastic work they do.

Cllr Clarke also advised that he had recently spoken to one of the businesses in the running to host the Post Office counter and said that the process is still ongoing.

Cllr J Adams

Cllr J Adams advised that he had given his community grant to a new nursery setting up at St Mary Magdalene Church. He said that St John's Church in Bashley is currently closed due to a tree falling onto the roof.

Finally, he advised that the National Park are planning to visit local towns and parishes to discuss preparation for emergencies given the extreme conditions which have been experienced and are likely to continue.

54. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Planning Committee

Cllr S Clarke, Chairman of the Planning Committee, submitted the minutes of the Committee meetings held on 1, 15 and 29 October 2026 and moved their adoption.

RESOLVED:
That Minutes 94 to 123 inclusive of the meetings held on 1, 15 and 29 October 2026 be received.

b) Amenities Committee

Cllr G Blunden, Chairman of the Amenities Committee, submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2026 and moved their adoption.

Cllr Blunden referred to the Post Meeting Note at Minute 52 regarding a Local Community Resilience Plan meeting here on 20 November.

RESOLVED:
That Minutes 50 to 64 inclusive of the meeting held on 13 October 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 26 October 2026 and moved their adoption.

It was

RESOLVED:
That minutes 51 to 64 inclusive of the meeting held on 26 October 2026 be received.

55. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Schedule of Payments covering 01 August - 30 September 2026 previously endorsed by F&GP, was submitted for Council approval.

It was

RESOLVED:

That the Schedule of Payments No. 05+06 /26/27 in the sum of £297,007.13 for the period 01 August to 30 September 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.

The Town Clerk highlighted the section on LGR:
"All the proposals previously submitted remain under consideration and will now be reassessed by the Minister, with an outcome expected early next year. It should not therefore be assumed that any particular proposal will be taken forward. The important point is that nothing changes as a result of last week's announcement in terms of our current working relationship with Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council or the services and support received from them. "

The report was noted.

57. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Town Clerk alerted members to a Planning Meeting date which was changed from Thursday 25 to Tuesday 23 February, as highlighted on the amended calendar.

The change was noted.

58. CAPEX BUDGET

The Chairman referred to Appendix 3 being proposed CAPEX Budget of £160k for 2027-28 which will be discussed further at the next Execs budget meeting on Friday.

The CAPEX budget was noted.

59. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS SERVING ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr B Murrow provided the following update on the Dementia Allotment.

We've had a great summer with lots of visitors this year at the Dementia Allotment. We are very grateful to our volunteers for working so hard during the heat, and for their friendly welcome to the dementia community.

We arranged 4 activities for our visitors, thanks to generous donations from NFDC Councillor Jill Cleary and New Milton Residents Association.

Local organisations have been very supportive, and our thanks go to Innovus UK, GD Print, Specsavers, Ashley Family Hub, and New Milton Men's Shed.

Our dementia allotment project celebrates its 10-year anniversary next year and we are now thinking about a celebration event for our dementia community.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

60. NEXT MEETING

Monday 4 January 2027 at 6.30 pm at the Town Hall in New Milton.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending and closed the public meeting at 7.50pm after taking the opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Christmas.

61. PRIVATE SESSION

There was a short private session concerning proposals for changes to flight paths at Bournemouth Airport that Cllr John Adams referred to as an NPA appointed member on the Airport Consultative Committee.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

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

DONNA JONES

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

Graham Flexman
New Milton Town Council Clerk
Via email: Clerk@newmiltontowncouncil.gov.uk

OPCC Case Reference: HA12488

Date: Friday 6th November 2026

Dear Graham,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding antisocial behaviour, vandalism and crime in New Milton, and for setting out the concerns raised by councillors following your recent council meeting.

I fully understand the frustration felt by councillors and residents when incidents of criminal damage and antisocial behaviour result in significant costs to the community, particularly when a number of offences occur in a short period of time. I appreciate the concerns you have raised about both the impact on local facilities and the perception that offending is taking place without sufficient consequences.

I have discussed these matters with Inspector Lumley from New Forest West Neighbourhoods policing team, and have been assured that the incidents referred to have been reported, recorded and investigated. I understand that, whilst several offences have been progressed, there have unfortunately been challenges in some investigations where evidence such as CCTV footage, witnesses or identifiable suspects has not been available.

I note that the offences seem to be in hot spot locations, and would be willing to consider an application to my ASB Fund for CCTV in this area. Please contact my team directly on ASBFund@hampshire.police.uk for further information and for an application form.

I am advised that three of the offences remain under investigation and that, in one case, two young people have been identified as suspects and are expected to be interviewed, with consideration being given to referral through the Youth Offending Team process. I also understand that other offences not listed in your correspondence have resulted in positive outcomes, including the identification of a suspect responsible for damage to Town Hall doors, who received a Community Resolution.

I know that councillors have concerns about police visibility and local policing resources. I have been reassured that the New Milton Neighbourhood Policing Team is fully staffed and that an additional police officer has recently been allocated to the team in response to ongoing concerns within the town. The team remains permanently based in New Milton and continues to work dedicated neighbourhood policing shifts focused on local priorities.

I also understand that Inspector Lumley and the local neighbourhood policing team are fully aware of the issues being raised and are committed to working closely with the Town Council. I welcome the fact that the Neighbourhood Sergeant will be attending the next Town Council meeting on 9 November to continue that dialogue, discuss current investigations and ensure councillors have the opportunity to raise concerns directly with local officers and provide an update on investigations.

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DONNA JONES

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

As Police and Crime Commissioner, I have been clear that tackling antisocial behaviour remains a priority. Through my Police & Crime Plan, I continue to hold the Constabulary to account for the service it provides to residents and communities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. I will continue to seek assurance that the concerns being raised in New Milton are being addressed appropriately and that all reported offences are investigated thoroughly.

Thank you for bringing these matters to my attention. I appreciate the impact these incidents have had on the town and its residents, and I hope the ongoing engagement between the Town Council and local policing team will help to address the issues identified.

Yours sincerely,

Donna Jones.

Donna Jones
Police and Crime Commissioner
Hampshire and Isle of Wight

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