

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 2nd September 2024 at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton, BH25 6AS.

Chairman:	p G R Blunden (Chair)	M Craze (Vice Chair)
Councillors:	D Hawkins	B Murrow
	p J Baker	p A O'Sullivan
	p D Rice-Mundy	p V Schooling
	p K Trehorn	

In attendance:

Councillors: Cllr S J Clarke

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk

M Jeffries - Estates and Facilities Manager

S Welch – Administrative Officer

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, Officers, and members of the public. The Chairman then addressed the passing of Councillor Keith Craze, expressing sadness at his loss and sending condolences to his family. A minute's silence was then held as a mark of respect.

There then followed a period of public participation.

Mandy Hayes, representing the Friends at Ballard Water Meadow & Friends of New Milton Station spoke on several topics as follows.

An update was provided on the Station's Master's House, The Steering Committee met with the Hampshire Community Rail Partnership (HCRP) and their architect on 28th August. The HCRP believe the New Milton project is viable and are supportive. Mandy Hayes noted that the HCRP could be willing to take on the lease, reducing the Town Council's involvement with the project, Mandy recommended that the steering group remain in place until further details are available to assess who might be best placed to work on the project.

The Friends of New Milton Station (FNMS) will hold their first work party on 10th September. Along with the New Milton Heritage Society, they will take over the planters with a design scheme titled 'Betwixt the Forest and the Sea'. The FNMS requested the Town Council's continued support in watering the planters and removing any large amounts of green waste.

Mandy Hayes asked that the council inform her of the schedule for the cows' return to Ballard Water Meadow so the usual signage regarding the gates can be put up. She said it would be useful to display contact numbers for emergencies.

Mandy Hayes then spoke on behalf of Bob Lord, representing Friends of Ballard Water Meadow.

On 18th August an email was sent to the council from the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) team about re-submitting a proposal for the Town Council to consider. It was suggested there should be a meeting to progress this initiative.

Could any members of the Neighbourhood Plan review panel explain how the plan will be addressing the District Council's declared Climate and Nature Emergency.

Julia Stamper spoke on behalf of Colin Hayes, an allotment tenant, requesting an update on the number of vacant plots and the current waiting list.

Julia Stamper noted that the Southwest entrance to Ballard Water Meadow does not blend with the surrounding area and fails to highlight its importance. She suggested that a wooden gate would be more fitting. Additionally, she mentioned two dead trees by this entrance that she would like removed and proposed planting a Hawthorn tree in their place.

Alan Watson, representing The Lions Club of New Milton & District, requested that the licensing committee revise its licensing hours to start at 11 am instead of the previous 12 noon.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.45pm.

35. APOLOGIES

Cllr M Craze, Cllr B Murrow and Cllr D Hawkins

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

37. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Regarding the Station Masters House, the Chairman expressed gratitude for the useful update, and members showed enthusiasm for the project, noting the future need for funding and public support. The Town Council will continue to assist with watering and green waste clearance at New Milton Station. Notification of the cows' arrival will be handled as usual with the grazier.

Councillor K Trehorn expressed concern for the safety of the cows when they are reintroduced to Ballard Water Meadow, suggesting that signage be put up. The Chairman noted the cattle graziers are aware of the risks. Councillor S. J Clarke added there have only been one or two incidents involving the cattle since their introduction, with most people respecting their presence. For those who prefer to avoid the cows, alternative walks are available.

Councillor S. J Clarke noted that two new policies related to the District Council's declared Climate and Nature Emergency will be explored in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Concerns about the Southwest entrance at Ballard Water Meadow will be referred to the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow for their opinion.

The Lions Club of New Milton's licensing query will be referred to the licensing working group.

38. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee minutes of 09 July 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 09 July 2024, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

39. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman acknowledged the presence of New Forest District Council's "Anthropogenic Nest" sculpture displayed on New Milton High Street from 9th to 14th August.

Mark Jeffries, the Town Council's Estates & Facilities Manager, informed attendees about the purchase of seven trees for November: four for Ashley Parade and three for the area outside the former Station Road KFC

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
20	Declarations of Interest	ASAP	Administrator
25	Land Use Requests	ASAP	Comms Officer
26	Ashley Parade Official Opening Details	ASAP	Comms Officer
27	Ashley Youth Facility Official Opening details	ASAP	Comms Officer
29	Ballard Lake Improvements	02/09/24	Jill Colclough
30	Order Cherry Trees x 3	ASAP	Estates Manager
31	Long Meadow Play Area WP	ASAP	Town Clerk
32	Litter Sculpture location	08/08/24	NFDC
34	Xmas Lights Contract	22/07/24	Town Clerk / F&GP

40. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) An appreciative email was received from a member of the public, thanking those involved in the cleanup of the open space at Hollands Wood after the travelling community left.

In response, the Chairman suggested introducing post and rail fencing with a secure gate and hedging behind to prevent future unauthorised access. This would be part of the Open Space improvement plan for next year.

- b) An email was received from Alan Watson, President of The Lions Club of New Milton & District, regarding the car boot sale held on Sunday, 1st September. He asked whether the Town Council would be willing to forego all or part of its revenue from the Lions Club for the car boot sale in support of BBC Children in Need.

In response, the Chairman said that although the Council supports the Children in Need cause, it must be mindful that by doing this, it would be a direct contribution to a charity with public funds, and on this basis, it would not be something the Council could agree to.

- c) An email was received from Julia Stamper regarding the anticipated construction of a fence at the Community Garden site. She reminded the Council of their agreement to liaise with the building company to ensure the fence is built at the level of the Community Garden, and not that of their site.

In response, a meeting will be arranged for the end of September. It was also suggested that the Town Council temporarily take over the community garden to prevent it from becoming unwieldy. Additionally, it was noted that something needed to be done about the footpath.

The Town Clerk stated that the Town Council will look to help wherever they can.

- d) An email was also received from Julia Stamper asking to be included in the No.1 Project Group due to her role as a key member of the working team on the Station Master's House.

The Chairman agreed to include her in the No.1 Project Group.



- e) Earlier in the week, two residents expressed their gratitude to the council for assisting efforts with the Lions Club Town Show and the Groovemeister musical performance held at the Recreation Ground. They commended the well-maintained grounds, the organisation of the events, and mentioned that they had a great time.

41. LAND USE REQUESTS

- a) A request from Alan Watson, President of The Lions Club of New Milton & District, to increase the number of Car Boot sales they hold in 2025. Members were happy with that.

It was,

RESOLVED: That The Lions Club of New Milton be permitted to increase the number of Car Boot Sales they plan to hold in 2025

- b) A request from Emer Druce of Firefly Festivals who would like to hold a music festival at the Moore Close site at Fawcetts Field between the 10th and 11th May 2025.

It was,

RESOLVED: That the Moore Close site be made available for Firefly Festivals to host a music festival there on the 10th and 11th May 2025, subject to usual terms and conditions of use.

42. WORKING PARTIES

The following Working Parties were determined to no longer be needed.

- Bus Routes & Shelters
- Pavement Facilities Working Group

Councillor A. O'Sullivan expressed interest in joining the Listed Buildings (Planning) and Long Meadow Play Area working parties, as well as Neighbourhood Planning that now comes under project groups.

Councillor K. Trehorn expressed interest in joining the Listed Buildings (planning) working party.

Councillor S. J Clarke expressed interest in joining the Long Meadow Play Area working party

The Chairman proposed creating a new working party for Nature Reserves to assess the suitability of sites in town and involve outside bodies to evaluate the locations and potential consequences. Councillor S. J Clarke expressed interest in joining this working party, together with Cllr J.Baker and the Chairman.

It was suggested New Forest Land Advice Service (NFLAS) and friends' groups join the Nature Reserves Working Party, together with Jill Colclough from NFDC.

43. COUNCIL PROJECTS

a) The following Project Groups were determined to no longer be needed.

- Ashley Project
- Well-Being Medical HUB

It was agreed to combine no.7 Fernhill Project with no.9 Fernhill Sports Ground – Vision Plan Project Group, and to make no.8, No.1 New Milton with SW Trains a Working Party to include Cllr A. O'Sullivan and Julia Stamper.

The Vision Plan for Fawcetts Field to include Gore Road HUB. The renamed Environmental Sustainability & Nature Emergency (Neighbourhood Plan) to include NFDC representation.

b) Youth Work Project Group was referred to F&GP for review to include Family HUB.

It was,

RECOMMENDED: That the work of this youth group be reviewed by F&GP.

44. BALLARD LAKE ENHANCEMENTS

It was advised that the improvements at Ballard Lake are due to commence 23rd September with the Environment Agency having now provided the license.

Jill Colclough from NFDC will attend the next Amenities Committee meeting on Tuesday 15th October and provide an update on behalf of NFDC.

45. NEW MILTON CYCLE ROUTES

The Chairman expressed support for New Forest Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) but noted that safety considerations are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council and individual cyclists, not New Milton Town Council.

The Town Clerk added that the Town Council cannot do much on its own without support from HCC, NFNPA, Forestry England and NFDC (LCWIP Partners).

Councillor A. O'Sullivan suggested supporting the plan without authorising it.

Councillor S. J Clarke pointed out that the tube map design was confusing.

Councillor D. A. Rice-Mundy raised concerns about the safety of routes where cars park on the side of the road and questioned how Hampshire County Council intends to keep these routes safe.

There is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow with representatives from Transition Lymington.

46. LONG MEADOW PLAY AREA

Mark Jeffries, the Estates & Facilities Manager, reported that a timber structure test revealed damage, but the timber is safe to use with stronger fixings. Another inspection is scheduled for this week, which may identify more issues. The fixings are being regularly checked by the council and outside bodies

Members noted the play area swings were now back in use at Long Meadow.

47. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

The Chairman acknowledged the incredible achievements of local Paralympian Alice Tai who won gold over the weekend in the S8 100m backstroke and bronze in the SM8 200m individual medley.

The Chairman noted the presence of Citizens Advice New Forest, which has now set up at the front of the Town Hall.

It was revealed that New Milton Station has been nominated for the Stations in Bloom award. Representatives were very impressed with the flowers and condition of the station. The award ceremony will be held on 16th October in Sherborne. Mandy Hayes, representing the Friends of New Milton Station, and Rob Stevens, the Estates & Facilities Supervisor for New Milton Town Council, will attend the ceremony.

The chairman celebrated the final musical event of the season at the Performance Pavilion on the Recreation Ground, noting the event's success with hundreds of attendees enjoying the music performance by "Groovemeister". He reflected on the popularity of the Performance Pavilion and community events since its construction 12 years ago, and extended gratitude to New Milton Town Council staff for their efforts in making these events possible.

Councillor A O'Sullivan expressed concern about the condition of some benches in the town. The Chairman responded that there is an ongoing programme in place, with the estates team currently repairing them on a rolling basis.

The Chairman informed members about the upcoming Plant A Tree initiative and asked them to spread the word.

48. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15th October at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.37pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
37	Licensing query - Lions Club	ASAP	Assistant Town Clerk
41a)	Land Use – Lions Club Car Boots 2025	ASAP	Comms Officer
41b)	Land Use – Firefly Festivals Music Festival 2025	ASAP	Comms Officer
42	Working Parties Amended	Attached	Town Clerk
43a)	Project Groups Amended	Attached	Town Clerk
43b)	Review Youth Project Group	17.09.25	F&GP
47	Station Road benches	On-going	Estates Manager

Distribution:

Town Councillors

Estates & Facilities Manager

District Councillor J L Cleary

County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter, and K Mans

New Milton Police

Press

Sue Larking – NMRA

WORKING GROUPS

Name	Membership	
Events Licensing To consider the process for large external events and licensing arrangements on New Milton Recreation Ground	Cllr G Blunden Cllr S Clarke	Theresa Elliott, Asst Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager
Local List To investigate certain sites with historical & aesthetic value for safeguarding measures	Cllr B Murrow Cllr S Clarke Cllr A O'Sullivan Cllr J Adams Cllr Mrs V Schooling Cll K Trehorn	Theresa Elliott, Asst Town Clerk Nick Saunders, NM Heritage Society Sue Larking, NM Residents Association Alan Beal, Parochial Church Council Cllr Wyn Davies
Long Meadow Play Area New play equipment and other play features for children up to 12 years with accessible equipment for those with DDA requirements and their carers	Cllr M Craze Cllr G Blunden Cllr S Clarke Cllr O'Sullivan	Jill Colclough, NFDC Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Graham Flexman, Town Clerk
No 1 New Milton with SW Trains Working Group To provide a community based project for residents and visitors of New Milton to learn and interact with local history by converting the derelict Station Masters House (1886) into a heritage centre.	Cllr G Blunden Cllr D Hawkins Cllr A O'Sullivan Cllr V Schooling	Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Nick Saunders, NM Heritage Society Mandy Hayes Julia Stamper
Nature Reserves To consider suitability of redesignating sites	Cllr S Clarke Cllr G Blunden Cllr J Baker	Jill Colclough, NFDC FBWM NFLAS Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Graham Flexman, Town Clerk
Pavilion Events To encourage use of the Performance Pavilion on the Recreation Ground by local bands and other organisations at no cost to users or public.	Cllr G Blunden Cllr N Tungate Cllr A Reid	Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Joanna Hayward, Comms Officer Cllr D Hawkins
Streetscene Enhancement To consider enhancements to the streetscene in Old Milton Road	Cllr G Blunden Cllr V Schooling Cllr D Hawkins	Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Chiara Rabbito, TDM
Street Trading To establish a larger weekly market for the local community, raise the profile and support local businesses with increased footfall and visitor numbers.	Cllr G Blunden Cllr D Hawkins Cllr Mrs V Schooling Cllr A O'Sullivan	Graham Flexman, Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Chiara Rabbito, TDM
Xmas Lights To enhance the town's Christmas lights displays, extending coverage by means of additional displays sponsored by local businesses and organisations and further investment.	Cllr G Blunden Cllr D Hawkins Cllr Mrs V Schooling Cllr A O'Sullivan	Theresa Elliott, Asst Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager



Council Projects

Name of Project	Membership	
<p>Community Hub Project</p> <p>Working collaboratively with Trustees of the Memorial Hall in realising a cultural & community hub to be achieved through redevelopment of the Memorial Centre site and adjacent Town Council land.</p>	<p>Cllr A O'Sullivan Cllr G Blunden Memorial Hall Trustees: David Luker Neil Stevenson</p>	<p>Graham Flexman Town Clerk Anthony Harris Solicitor Chiara Rabbito, TDM Alan Watson Julia Stamper</p>
<p>Environmental Sustainability & Nature Emergency (Neighbourhood Plan)</p> <p>To develop a local Environmental Sustainability Action Plan to assist NFDC and NMTC in achieving a carbon neutral position by 2050.</p>	<p>Cllr G Blunden Cllr A Reid Cllr S Clarke Cllr S Davies</p>	<p>Theresa Elliott, Asst Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Joanna Hayward, Comms Officer NFDC Representation</p>
<p>Fernhill Vision Plan</p> <p>To consider alternative sports & recreation uses for additional land north of Fernhill Sports Ground, including earmarked Fry's family estate land. To consider additional sports & recreation uses at Fernhill Sports Ground</p>	<p>Cllr G Blunden Cllr D Hawkins Cllr S Clarke Jamie Burton, NFDC Kevin Holland, NMBC Cllr B Murrow</p>	<p>Graham Flexman, Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Cllr A O'Sullivan Louise Beardmore, YSM Peter Wakefield, NMCC Jill Colclough NFDC</p>
<p>Green Routes</p> <p>To identify, survey, and promote walking routes from residential areas to town centre destinations, and consider proposed LCWIP cycling routes.</p>	<p>Cllr G Blunden Cllr M Craze Chiara Rabbito, TDM Sam Welch</p>	<p>Graham Flexman, Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Joanna Hayward, Comms Officer Jill Colclough, NFDC</p>
<p>Neighbourhood Planning</p> <p>To review the 2016-2036 Plan</p>	<p>Chiara Rabbito TDM Cllr S Clarke Cllr A O'Sullivan Cllr A Reid Cllr D Hawkins Cllr G Blunden</p>	<p>Sue Larking, NMRA Julia Stamper, Vice Chair NMRA Society Cllr Wyn Davies Cllr John Adams</p>
<p>Vision Plan for Fawcetts Field & Gore Road Hub</p> <p>Implementation of the Vision Plan for Fawcetts Field & Moore Close site including BMX track, new Play Areas, Community Garden and Orchard, enhancement of the Car Boot Sales area and extension to the Trim Trail.</p>	<p>Cllr G Blunden Cllr B Murrow Cllr A Reid Cllr D Hawkins Cllr M Craze</p>	<p>Graham Flexman, Town Clerk Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager Jill Colclough, Consultant Julia Stamper Alan Watson</p>
<p>Youth Work & Family Hub</p> <p>To address the needs and improve the life of young people in New Milton, through provision of activities for personal / social development, with the aim of providing a Youth Centre in the centre of town.</p>	<p>Cllr S Clarke Cllr A Reid Cllr Judith Baker NMYT Sue Larking Aaron Lawford Mark Jeffries, Estates Manager</p>	<p>Louise Beardmore, YSM Graham Flexman, Town Clerk Anthony Harris, Solicitor NMYT H Wallis-Dowling Sarah Connacher, Play & Youth Theresa Elliott, Asst Town Clerk</p>