



Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 25th November 2024 at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

Present:

Chairman: p G R Blunden (Chair) M Craze (Vice Chair)

Councillors: p D Hawkins p R Murrow
 J Baker p A D O'Sullivan
 p D Rice-Mundy p V Schooling
 p K Trehorn

In attendance:

Councillors: S J Clarke, R A Reid and R D Maynard

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk
 M Jeffries - Estates and Facilities Manager
 S Welch – Administration Officer

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

Three members of the public spoke under Public Participation, as noted at Minute 66.

64. APOLOGIES

Cllr M Craze and Cllr J Baker.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members have a general dispensation to prepare budgets and set a precept.

66. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION –

Mandy Hayes of FBWM asked two questions. The first, on behalf of Julia Stamper, who lives nearby, whether the budget being used for the works at Ballard Lake would also be used to replace the gate at the West entrance to Ballard Water Meadow. The Chairman responded that the replacement of the gate and the tidying of the entrance will be addressed, but it would not be part of that budget.

The second question was about the timeline for return of Dexters to Ballard Water Meadow. The Chairman stated that the aim is to have these smaller-type cattle return to the meadow a couple of weeks before Christmas.



Brenda Talbot, a local resident spoke about the concrete tennis tables at the War Memorial Recreation Ground, noting their success and frequent use by the community. She mentioned that by the end of 2024, the special matting had started lifting and became soggy. After discussing the issue with the Estates & Facilities Manager, it was agreed that remedial works would be undertaken in the new financial year (2024/25). However, no work has started to date. The resident also inquired about the installation of plaques for the donors, which were originally proposed.

In regard to Table Tennis matting, the Chairman explained that the work has taken longer than expected but assured those present that these tasks would be addressed during the scheduled resurfacing works at the War Memorial Recreation Ground.

The Chairman also stated that the comment regarding plaques would be followed up as he was unaware of that proposal.

67. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee minutes of 15 October 2024.

It was

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

68. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman reviewed the action points from the previous committee meeting.

The Town Clerk confirmed that most action points had been addressed, except for the following:

- **Minute 57:** An update from Jill Colclough from NFDC regarding new seating at Ballard Lake is still pending. This will be followed up on.
- **Minute 58:** Negotiations regarding the Cricket Club's new lease are still ongoing.



Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
54b	FOC Parking Xmas Event	15.10.24	Town Clerk / NFDC
54d	Station Enquiry Officer	ASAP	Town Clerk / NFDC
55	Thai Land Use Request	20.10.24	Town Clerk /Buddhists
56	LCWIP Recommendation	04.11.24	Asst Town Clerk
57	Ballard New Seat Details	25.11.24	Jill Colclough NFDC
58	Cricket Club New Lease	25.11.24	Town Clerk / NMCC
60	CAPEX Projects 2025-26	01.11.24	Executive Committee

69. CORRESPONDENCE

a) An email from Jamie Burton, NFDC Health & Partnerships Manager, regarding a proposed Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and outdoor sports facility strategy as below
“NFDC and New Forest National Park Authority have appointed FMG Consulting to develop a supply and demand assessment for both indoor and outdoor sports facilities locally.

A central part of the Strategy is to develop evidence about the needs and opportunities to develop indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The two authorities want to ensure these facilities provide the maximum access and opportunities for residents to participate and develop a long-term Built Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies for the New Forest district.

This work will help to better understand the current supply of facilities locally and what may be required to meet future demand, it will also help to safeguard existing sites. It's important to consult with organisations that provide these types of facilities locally, so understand more about how they are used and any aspirations to enhance them or provide new facilities.”

Jamie Burton did ask for the strategy to include bowls and therefore there is a good opportunity to feed back the situation with (proposed) indoor bowls facility in our town. This should be seen as a subregional offer (ie. not having one in every town but that this new one could serve a number of areas). This may support funding from other developments (subject to the findings of the PPS).

b) A referred item from the Executive Meeting held on 15 November was read out, being a request made by New Milton Cricket Club to install an artificial pitch on the bottom square at Fernhill Sports Ground. The Chairman expressed his support, noting that it must comply with the terms of the original lease and cannot be for sole use. In other words, it would become part of the shared facilities available.

Cllr D Hawkins reiterated that the pitch can be used by anyone who wishes to use it. It was agreed that New Milton Cricket Club be permitted to install an artificial pitch on the bottom square at Fernhill Sports Ground, subject to the terms of the original lease and not for sole use.

Re the cricket club's proposed artificial pitch and inclusion in PPS, Jamie Burton said:

“I know that they have recently completed the Stage B of the Cricket element of the PPS. It may depend on whether the cricket club have returned all the data and information that was asked from the Hampshire Cricket Board. I will obviously also make Hampshire Cricket Board aware so that we can keep an eye out for other opportunities.”

70. LAND USE REQUESTSa) Lions Club of New Milton

An email was received from Alan Watson of The Lions Club of New Milton, requesting to stage a VE80 Commemoration Event on the 3rd and 4th of May 2025 at the War Memorial Recreation Ground.

It was,

RESOLVED: That The Lions Club of New Milton be permitted use of the War Memorial Recreation Ground on Saturday 3rd May and Sunday 4th May 2025, for a VE80 Commemoration Event, subject to terms and conditions of use.

b) New Life Church

An email was received from Tom Rothwell of the New Life Church, requesting use of the War Memorial Recreation Ground by the Churches in New Milton on Saturday, 7th December 2024, from 9am to 1:30pm for a Christmas Nativity Trail.

It was,

RESOLVED: That use of the War Memorial Recreation Ground be permitted for a Christmas Nativity Trail on Saturday 7th December 2024, between 9am and 1:30pm, subject to our usual terms and conditions of use.

c) New Milton Pétanque Club

An email was received from New Milton Pétanque Club requesting provision of a short stretch of DDA compliant footpath within the confines of their existing rink area.

The Estates & Facilities Manager explained that this would come at no cost to the Town Council and would not affect operations.

It was,

RESOLVED: That New Milton Pétanque Club be permitted to lay a short stretch of DDA-compliant footpath at Fawcetts Field within their existing rink area.

71. BALLARD WATER MEADOW

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1 and asked Bob Lord, Chairman of the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow (FBWM) to run members through the draft Ballard Meadow and Woodland 5-Year Management Plan for 2025-2030.

A period of discussion followed. Cllr D Hawkins expressed concern over the crown reduction of oak trees. Bob Lord explained that reducing the crowns allows light to penetrate the canopy, benefiting the habitat below. The Chairman noted that this practice is not new and is part of the original plan.

The Management Plan was then recommended for adoption by the Town Council.

It was

RECOMMENDED: *That the Management Plan for Ballard Water Meadow and Woodland for 2025-2030 be adopted by the Town Council.*

72. FEES & CHARGES 2025/26

The Chairman referred to Annex A (Version 2) Fees & Charges for 2025/2026.

The Town Clerk went through the proposed Fees & Charges for 2025-2026 page by page, explaining fees and charges are being increased by 2.5%, and /or rounded up.

There was some explanation regarding future plans of the Friendly Dog Club becoming a charity and building a replacement facility at Long Meadow next year. The Chairman and Town Clerk will meet with the proprietor to discuss matters further.

In addition, the Executive Committee had proposed that when leases are due for renewal, rents should be reviewed annually thereafter in line with CPI.

Subject to the above new policy regarding renewal of leases being implemented.

It was

RECOMMENDED: *That the Fees & Charges for 2025/2026 be endorsed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on Tuesday 10 December 2024.*

Cllr R A Reid excused himself from the meeting at this stage, the time being 7.30pm.

73. AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET 2025/26

The Chairman referred to Annex B (Version 3) Committee Budgets for 2025/2026.

The Town Clerk went through the proposed Amenities Budget for 2025-2026 page by page, explaining the implications of recent Govt changes to Employers' National Insurance contributions, increase in Estates staffing and reduced use of contractors.

It was agreed the budget of £3.5k Environmental Improvement Scheme (Code 4722) under central costs on the first page be transferred to Environmental Sustainability Plan (Code 4968) under Capex on the last page of the Amenities Committee budget.

Subject to the above transfer of costs within the overall Amenities Committee budget.

It was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Amenities Budget for 2025/2026 in the sum of £834.5k be endorsed by Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 10 December 2024.

Cllr R Murrow excused himself from the meeting at this stage, the time being 8.00pm.

74. FAWCETTS FIELD – TRIM TRAIL

The Estates and Facilities Manager provided an update on the condition of the Trim Trail at Fawcetts Field, explaining that immediate concerns had been addressed, with the lights being improved, the undergrowth cut back as much as possible, and reinstatement of the path where needed.

75. MOORE CLOSE

The Chairman referred to the previously circulated New Milton Community Garden Newsletter, which provided an update on the garden. Members were interested to receive this update, and noted Julia Stamper had stepped down as Chair in October.

Members requested the Town Clerk write and thank Julia Stamper for her services.

76. PLANT A TREE

The Chairman referred to the previously circulated report prepared by the Estates & Facilities Manager, who then provided an update on the Plant a Tree Initiative, explaining 14 trees have been purchased by residents so far this year, with more expected in the coming weeks. Since the initiative started, a total of 87 trees planted.

Regarding the on-going tree replacement program, this will see around 136 new trees planted this season to replace the 64 that were felled for safety, disease, or storm damage in 2024, exceeding the Town Council's two-for-one replacement policy.

As part of upcoming National Tree Week, 3 trees will be planted on the Recreation Ground on Thursday, 28th November. Two of these will commemorate VE & VJ 80th anniversaries next year. In addition, 7 flowering cherries will be planted in containers, with 4 going to Ashley Parade and 3 to Station Road adjacent to the former KFC.

Sixteen heritage apple trees will also be planted to create a community orchard alongside the Community Garden at Moore Close.

As part of the Carrick Wood Green Way Mitigation scheme the Estates team will plant 8 new trees and over 500 whips this season. Additionally, over 5,000 bulbs will be planted in Carrick Wood, fully funded by NFDC as part of the main mitigation project.

Cllr S Clarke expressed his desire for the heritage trees to become a destination for young people within the town, with the hope that they would be available for younger people to harvest.

77. BALLARD LAKE ENHANCEMENTS

The Estates & Facilities Manager provided an update on the Ballard Lake Enhancements, stating that dredging work, Nicospan installation, and land drainage are all now complete. Native aquatic planting is scheduled for Friday, 29th November, with the project expected to be completed by 8th December, weather permitting.

78. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 20th January 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:15 pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
66	Plaques for Tennis Tables	20.01.25	Chairman of Amenities
68	Details of Ballard seating	20.01.25	Jill Colclough, NFDC
68	New Cricket Club Lease	20.01.25	Town Clerk, Solicitor
70	Land Use requests x 3	ASAP	Comms / Estates Man
71	Ballard Water Meadow Management Plan 2025-30	10.12.24	F&GP
72	Fees & Charges 2025-26	10.12.24	F&GP
73	Amenities Committee Budget 2025-2026	10.12.24	F&GP

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