



**Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee of New Milton Town Council held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 6.30 pm at the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton, BH25 6AS.**

Chairman p G R Blunden  
 Vice Chairman p D E Hawkins

Councillors:  
 M Craze p C V Ward  
 p D A Rice-Mundy p A D O'Sullivan  
 P A W Rice p R Murrow  
 P V E Schooling

In Attendance :

Councillors: S Clarke, S Davies

Officers: G Flexman - Town Clerk M Jeffries – Estates Manager  
 J Hayward – Communications Officer J Bean – Committee Administrator

The Chairman welcomed 1 member of the public to the meeting.

**Public Participation**

Alan Watson thanked Mark and the team on behalf of the Lions' Club for all their hard work on Saturday. He congratulated them on a first-class job and said he was aware that Chris Clarke had already sent in a letter of thanks.

He then mentioned item 8 on the Agenda, the King's Coronation. He said that he is arranging a meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> December with the Lions' Club and several other community groups to discuss what form a celebration for the King's Coronation might take next year.

76. APOLOGIES

Cllr M Craze

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Councillors have a dispensation to discuss the Amenities Budget next year.

78. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman acknowledged Alan Watson's remarks regarding the Christmas Festival & Parade although there had been a few problems with the lights, and the weather.

It was good to know that various groups were taking an interest in the King's Coronation event and would consider this when we come to it on the agenda.

79. MINUTES

There were no amendments to the last Amenities Committee minutes and so it was

**RESOLVED:**

***That the Minutes of the meetings held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.***

The Minutes were duly signed.

80. MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES

The Town Clerk confirmed all action points listed had been addressed and that some appeared on this evening's agenda.

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
58 a	Community Garden Licence	31.10.22	Town Clerk/F&GP
58 b	New table tennis table for Recreation Ground	ASAP	Estates Manager
61 b	Highcliffe & Walkford query	ASAP	Estates Manager
62 a	King Charles III Coronation	06.05.23	Town Council
62 b	New Life Church	10.12.22	Comms Officer
62 c	Rugby Club Fun Day	10.06.23	Comms Officer
62 d	Highcliffe Hawks Tournament	10.06.23	Estates Manager
63	New Oakwood Ave Bus Shelter	ASAP	Estates Manager
64	Mencap Mural event	16.11.22	Comms Officer
66	Becton Lane WPS	ASAP	Estates Manager

81. CORRESPONDENCE

- a) An email from Julia Stamper in relation to the Community Garden and removal of pine trees along the boundary at Moore Close.

The Town Clerk confirmed he had contacted Tim Nathan at NFDC and asked if this could be expedited. The Chairman stated that if the trees are not felled this winter it will need to wait until next and will hold the project up.

- b) An enquiry from the Outdoor Bowling Club seeking permission to use the lower car park area occasionally for visiting teams. The Chairman said the use of the old skate park for car parking would only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, therefore we cannot accede to their request.
- c) A letter from the New Milton Indoor Bowling Club comparing their rent payments to those of the Outdoor Bowling Club seeking a reduction. The Town Clerk advised that the Outdoor Bowling Club previously paid a higher rent but that they had taken on the responsibility for maintaining their greens.
- d) A letter of complaint from residents of Cedar Gardens in relation to the Round Table Fireworks event on 29<sup>th</sup> October. Residents complained of uncontrolled car parking, and this led to an ambulance not being able to get through to a resident in Cedar Gardens. The letter contained a petition with signatures of 17 residents. The Town Clerk stated that the event should be referred to the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) next year as a large event, for their consideration.

- e) A monthly update from HCC advising that Network Rail has changed the way that possessions are booked for work to be done and it will now be the contractors who need to book it for themselves, rather than the County Council.
- f) A recommendation from the Planning Committee for the Town Council Solicitor to send a final letter to Apex Tree Surgeons threatening legal action on the basis they have failed to make good on their agreement to plant trees to replace those they damaged along Meadow Way earlier in the year.

82. LAND USE REQUESTS - None.

83. KING'S CORONATION

A meeting will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 to discuss this and to move it forward.

84. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Communications Officer referred to the Green Infrastructure slide presentation that had previously been circulated as Appendix 1, highlighting some of the main points made. NFDC had reviewed New Milton as a pilot study and considered some aspects relating to the green infrastructure. They had given recommendations based on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Jill Colclough from NFDC advised that so far as the GI is concerned New Milton is a test area and they will be bringing forward a strategy for the whole of the built-up area. The investigation is settlement based and ignores land ownership. Further, this is a rolling programme and there is now focus from Natural England on the need for actions to be taken in relation to climate change.

Cllr Clarke praised the report and the presentation as fabulous work. He was concerned about loss of hedgerows around the town with missing oak trees and wondered if there was any means of persuading people to replant them when they were gone.

The Chairman asked if there is a record of where trees have come down as this could drive the mechanism for encouraging replanting. Jill Colclough said that she thought there may be aerial photos which may help. The Chairman asked if she would be able to have a look at this and produce a report. Jill agreed she would put this to the Green Infrastructure group and consider if they could help with this.

There was further discussion about trees, Cllr V Schooling mentioned that during her time on the Planning Committee many trees were felled to make way for developments and were not replaced. Cllr D Hawkins asked if there was a tree register for the area. The Town Clerk advised that there is a list of the 20,000 trees on Town Council land, but Jill hopes to produce a further survey.

The Communications Officer advised that as a point of interest some of the hedgerow on the Recreation Ground was around 150 – 200 years old and formed part of the original hedgerow.

**85. FEES & CHARGES 2023/24**

The Town Clerk referred to the Schedule of Charge 2023/24, Annex A – version 2 which had previously been circulated and advised that the second version had been prepared with a 10% uplift due to inflation. The previous version featured a 5% uplift, but this was considered to be insufficient. Inflation is quite unpredictable at the moment.

The Town Clerk went through Fees & Charges highlighting the changes, he pointed out that there are certain anomalies, eg: Indoor Bowling Club paying more than the Outdoor Club, but as previously mentioned this reflected the difference in the agreements which had been reached with them in terms of maintenance.

The Town Clerk mentioned payments from the Football Club to clear outstanding debts and on-going indebtedness. They were adversely affected during covid. Cllr D Rice-Mundy advised caution about putting all the charges up as money is tight for everyone now. He said that he did not believe the football club could afford it.

The Chairman interjected to say that the expenditure and work done at the football club exceeded the income. The Estates Manager confirmed the Chairman's comment adding that the end of season re-seeding had particularly gone up, but they had suffered with loss of business with less teams playing now.

Cllr S Clarke said he was concerned at approaches from groups seeking reductions in rent. He said that the Town Council represents all the residents and not just those who are members of the football or bowling club. Acceding to their requests for reduction would lead to further similar requests.

The Chairman acknowledged this and said meetings would be arranged with the Indoor Bowling Club and the Football Club for a general discussion regarding their charges.

***RECOMMENDED:***

***That the Fees & Charges for 2023/24 be endorsed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 19 December 2022.***

**86. AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET 2023/24**

The Town Clerk referred to the Amenities Committee Budget, Annex B – version 3 which had previously been circulated, noting that the largest expenditure is staff salaries which had increased by £1,925 per head this year and a similar provision for next year's budget had been made.

Previously, a provision had been put in the accounts for potential bad debt of £11,500. There is also a provision in next year's budget for ash tree die back, noting this was not needed the last couple of years.

A sum of £45,000 has been budgeted for work at Ballard Lake which is to be drained and the fish removed and relocated elsewhere.

So far as the budget for grounds maintenance of open spaces is concerned, this remains the same as last year, as does floral expenditure of £20k.

Cllr Clarke mentioned that he had visited Hunstanton in Norfolk recently and they had a scheme where members of the public sponsored planters or pots and could have a small plaque on them in memory or celebration of someone. As we are unable to provide many benches anymore, particularly on the cliff top, maybe we could consider this as a possible source of income.

The Town Clerk advised that the budget for Xmas lights had been increased by 10% for next year, in line with inflation

***RECOMMENDED:***

***That the Amenities Budget for 2023/24 be endorsed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 19 December 2022.***

87. ENVIRONMENTAL SUTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

The Chairman referred to the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan which had previously been circulated as Appendix 2. Highlighting the reductions in emissions made by the installation of the solar panels at Fawcetts Field, the Estates Manager confirmed that this was around 10 tonnes of carbon dioxide saved.

88. QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY

The Chairman updated the Committee on the Queen's Green Canopy and the on-going issues relating to streetscene improvements at Ashley Parade and Old Milton.

A report had been sent to HCC relating to paving and footpaths and their response has been that they have no money to make improvements but will carry out necessary reactive measures but can do no more than that at the present time.

Cllr V Schooling stated that she was disappointed but wondered if the Town Development Manager might be able to source some funds which could help with these two very run-down areas. She thought that Suna had found some money to apply for in the past. The Chairman said this was a good suggestion and would form an action point for the TDM.

Cllr Clarke advised that he had seen reports on social media about the drive for tree planting and suggestions that many of the new trees had died following a difficult drought filled summer.

The Estates Manager advised that in fact the new trees had done well and that more trees had been lost to vandalism than to drought, but overall, less than 10% had been lost. Cllr Clarke asked that this should be put into the public domain and the Communications Officer confirmed she would do so.

The Chairman went on to advise that National Tree Week began today and that two trees would be planted at the Arnewood School on Wednesday, a field maple and a silver birch. He invited the councillors to attend if they are available.

**89. MANOR ROAD/STATION ROAD**

The Chairman referred to the Report on Streetscene Enhancement on Station Road East & South or Manor Road Junction previously circulated as Appendix 3. A local resident felt that the northern entrance to the town could be enhanced as it currently appeared bland and neglected. An initial plan to plant several trees in front of the bed shop had been abandoned as this is private land. However, an area across the road had been identified and the Estates Manager had provided a picture of how this might look with two trees and a planter.

The resident had advised she would pay for the trees and the planter. There would be an additional cost of a licence fee to HCC of £454. Cllr Clarke asked if the Town Council could write to HCC on the basis that the licence fee should be unnecessary given that that Council would be improving HCC land. (We have a service level agreement with them for works in the Town Centre).

The Chairman mentioned that this had previously been addressed with HCC and had not provided a favourable result. It was always open to put the Town Council's objections to the fees in writing again (pointing to our SLA in the process).

**90. CANGO**

The Town Clerk advised that there will be an online meeting with Sway, Hordle and HCC on Wednesday morning about the future of CANGO and we will likely be asked if the Town Council will put the £2k they contribute to the booking service into a scheduled bus service (for example to extend its route where there are no pavements)

It was envisaged that the booking service is likely to cease at the financial year end.

The Town Clerk said that he will report back at the next F&GP meeting, or possibly via a post meeting note in the minutes of this meeting.

**[Post Meeting Note a) There will be 3 services a day Mon - Fri from June, with the last bus scheduled to return from Lymington at 2.25pm, but only as far as Sway Station where the service will terminate at 2.45pm. b) There will be no Saturday service. c) CANGO Booking will cease 30 May. d) The service will then be run as a fixed route / scheduled service.]**

The Committee were reminded that the town has lost the Yellow Bus service, that More Bus had not stepped in and therefore the bus routes which New Milton offers were diminished, with no Yellow Bus service to / from Christchurch anymore.

Cllr D Hawkins expressed his upset about the diminishment of the CANGO service and felt that the community, particularly the elderly who could not, or were no longer permitted to drive, were being poorly served.

Cllr V Schooling spoke about her experience with the X1 and Barton Loop services, saying there were not many buses, but they were regular and provide good service.

91. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman advised that Jill Colclough would return to the Amenities Meeting in January with her Ashington Park proposals and update, mainly woodland management. Jill stated that she would put together a similar proposal for the woodland at Carrick Way and bring that to the meeting as well.

92. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 18.30 hours** at the Town Council Offices, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending, wished them a Happy Christmas and closed the meeting at 7.55pm

CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
81 f	Council Solicitor to write to Apex	ASAP	Asst Town Clerk
85	Fees & Charges 2023/24	19.12.22	F&GP
86	Amenities Budget 2023/24	19.12.22	F&GP
88	Grants for Streetscene	On-going	TDM
88	Damage to trees – put on website	19.12.22	Comms Officer
89	Letter to HCC re SLA/ licence fees	ASAP	Estates Manager
90	Post Meeting Note: CANGO update	19.12.22	Town Clerk / F&GP
91	Attend next Amenities meeting	16.1.23	Jill Colclough, NFDC

Distribution:

Town Councillors

Estates & Facilities Manager

District Councillors J L Cleary

County Councillors M Kendal, F Carpenter and K Mans

New Milton Police

Press

Alan Watson – FOCUS & NMRA