

# MILFORD-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

The Old Clock House ~ 22 High Street ~ Milford-on-Sea ~ Hampshire ~ SO41 0QD



## THESE MINUTES WILL BE APPROVED AT THE NEXT FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON THE 19<sup>th</sup> OF MAY 2025.

Minutes of the 436<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Parish Council held **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**  
In the Village Hall, Park Road

### MEMBERS (p = present)

Mr. Bob Bishop	p	Mrs. Susan Pepper	p	Mr. Ian Bliss	
Mrs. Christine Hopkins	p	Mr. Peter Jennions	p	Ms. Anne Cullen	p
Mrs. Patricia Banks	p	Mr. Donald Darbshire		Mr. Bernard Bennett	p
Mr. David Royle					

### ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE

Graham Wells (Parish Clerk), District Cllrs Hawkins, Reid, Ward and County Cllr Carpenter  
Roz Water (Lymington Times) and three (3) members of the public.

Parish Chair, Cllr Bernie Bennett welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None received.
2. **APOLOGIES:** Cllr's Darbshire, Royle and Bliss.
3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.
4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE:**  
Cllr Jennions proposed Cllr Banks as Chair to the Planning Committee; Cllr Pepper seconded this proposal.  
Members voted unanimously in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Patricia Banks is elected as Chair of the Planning Committee until May 2026.

5. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE:**  
Cllr Banks proposed Cllr Hopkins as Vice-Chair to the Planning Committee; Cllr Cullen seconded this proposal.  
Members voted unanimously in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Christine Hopkins is elected as Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee until May 2026.

6. **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025:**  
Cllr Banks proposed the minutes be adopted; Cllr Hopkins seconded this proposal.  
Members voted unanimously in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **17<sup>th</sup> March 2025** was a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair of the meeting.

## **7. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

### **a) EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR MARCH 2025:**

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated copies of the Expenditure Report for the above period and highlighted some stand-alone expenditure items.

Cllr Cullen proposed the expenditure report be approved; Cllr Jennions seconded this proposal.

Members voted unanimously in favour that the Expenditure Report is accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Expenditure Report for **March 2025** was a true record of expenditure and was signed by the Chair.

### **b) INCOME REPORT FOR MARCH 2025:**

The Clerk had, prior to the meeting, circulated copies of the Income Report for the above period.

Cllr Cullen proposed the income reports be approved; Cllr Bishop seconded this proposal.

Members voted unanimously in favour that the Income Report is accepted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Income Report for **March 2025** was a true record of income and was signed by the Chair.

### **c) THE ENGAGEMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR:**

The Clerk/RFO reported that he had been in contact with Mr. Tim Light from Lightatouch Auditors to conduct the internal audit for financial year 2024/25.

Cllr Cullen proposed engaging Mr. Light to conduct the Audit. Cllr Bennett seconded this proposal.

Members voted unanimously in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** that Mr. Tim Light be appointed to conduct the 2024/25 internal audit on behalf of the Parish Council.

## **8. CHAIRS REPORT:**

The Parish Council Chair, Bernard Bennett, reported that the Parish Council's website was near to completion and thanked Niamh for all the work she had undertaken.

He also reported that NFDC were due to clear the wrecked boat stranded on Milford Beach.

Cllr Bennet reported that the Parish Council were awaiting a cost for work on a path from Grebe Close to Sturt Pond Close. Also, despite all the social media surrounding the old car wash site, the Parish Council had not received a planning application and were therefore unable to make any comments at present.

With the agreement of members, the chair invited reports from Councillors on any external meetings they had attended.

### Reorganisation meeting

Cllr Cullen reported that she, three other Councillors and the Clerk had attended NFDC's meeting on Local Government Reorganisation/Devolution which was also well attended by representatives of other Towns and Parishes.

She highlighted some of the current services NFDC provided that may be devolved to the new Unitary Councils or Towns and Parishes. Also, that NFDC were supporting the election of a regional mayor in May 2026. She reported that it was likely that the National Park will remain in existence providing the services it currently undertakes.

Cllr Cullen reported that NFDC were evaluating the assets it held and during the second half of the year and they would be entering into discussions with towns and parishes regarding these assets. Also, Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) would be available for advice, templates and support.

The Clerk reported that the above meeting also suggested the possibility that future recommendations on planning applications may not be required by Towns and Parishes and that there might be significant pressure placed on Towns and Parishes to keep certain services, land and facilities due to the fear of losing them.

### Youth Football Club meeting

The Clerk reported that he and Cllr Darbshire had recently met with the secretary of Milford Youth Football Club. He reported that the football club were in a healthy state with over 150 children of the club.

The Football Club were still receiving grant funding to maintain and improve the playing condition of Barnes Lane Recreation Ground and that it was widely acknowledged as one of the best facilities for youth football in the area.

The Club were also pleased that solar panels were being fitted to the pavilion to help reduce their electric costs and that the boundary fence was being extended to the southern section of the facility.

There had been a number of changes on the Youth Football Club's Committee and it was hoped that the continued good relationship between the Parish Council and Club would continue.

#### Coastal meeting with NFDC

The Clerk reported that NFDC was not going to renew 46 hut licenses due to the instability of the land. The cost to remove the huts would be approximately £30k of which some of this cost would be sought from hut owners. Also, NFDC would now consider undertaking further work to Hurst Spit in the Autumn, but this would largely depend on additional funding coming forward.

He reported that there were going to be drop-in events every month up to September on the Hurst to Lymington coastal strategy. Also, those involved in the Christchurch Bay project were now looking at the funding options.

The Clerk reported that the seawall opposite the Lighthouse Café was going to be repaired over a two-year period.

#### Forest meetings

Cllr Banks reported that she had attended the New Forest Consultative Panel and Southwest Quadrant meetings. Minutes of these meetings are available on the organisation's website. She had also attended a training course on National Planning Strategy.

### **9. ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING BEING HELD ON 28<sup>th</sup> MAY:**

Cllr Bennett reported that publicity had started for this annual meeting and hoped that the attendance would be good this year.

Cllr Cullen agreed to make a short presentation on the implications of Local Government Reorganisation as this could have a major impact on the Parish.

Cllr Pepper suggested providing refreshments for the evening.

### **10. COMMUNITY MEADOW UPDATE AND "OPEN DAY":**

Cllr Pepper reported that a positive working group meeting had taken place on 26<sup>th</sup> March. The meeting had also been attended by representatives of the MCV, Meadow Gardeners and the Church/School. Agreements had been reached to undertake some light cutting back due to bird nesting season and the removal of low branches and earth mounds.

Following this meeting a task day had completed all the work suggested as well as the removal of the fence. Cllr Pepper thanks the MCV volunteers and Parish staff for all that had been completed.

Cllr Pepper reported that an "open day" would be held to celebrate the acquisition of the land and that this would coincide with an event being run at the church on the same day. The open day would be held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May between 2pm – 4pm and that she and the clerks would prepare and publicise the event over the coming weeks.

### **11. UPDATE ON THE VACANT GROUNDS OPERATIVE POSITION:**

The Clerk reported that Groundsman, Jonathan Rake, had recently resigned his position and that the staffing committee were currently considering the options going forward and they would report back to the full Parish Council on any recommendations.

### **12. INTERVIEWS FOR THE VACANT COUNCILLOR POSITIONS:**

Cllr Bennett reported that the interviews of the three candidates for the two vacant positions would take place the following week. This would ensure that the new councillors could attend the next parish meeting (AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> May) and the annual public meeting (28<sup>th</sup> May).

### **13. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS:**

County Councillor Carpenter reported that an appointment of a new female Fire Chief had been made for Hampshire. Also, on the 16<sup>th</sup> May a decision on how to take forward the parking issue at Keyhaven and Barton should be made, details of this decision would be available on Hampshire County Council's (HCC) website.

County Cllr Carpenter reported that there was no commitment from HCC on funding to undertake repairs to Hurst Spit due to a request for funding for many other projects.  
County Cllr Reid reported that District Councillor allocations of one thousand pounds were now available to be applied for and that NFDC were opening the next round of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the summer.

District Cllr Hawkins reported that NFDC were fully engrossed in discussions on Local Government Reorganisation. Also, he has awarded £600 towards Keyhaven Scouts.

District Cllr Ward reported that she had attended the 10-year anniversary of the community library and that there had been a good attendance at this celebration.

**14. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**A. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

To receive the planning minutes from **3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025** for adoption.  
Members voted unanimously in favour of adopting these minutes.

**B. FINANCE & FORWARD PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE:**

The next Finance meeting is scheduled for **9<sup>th</sup> June 2025**.

**C. AMENITIES, WOODLAND, COASTAL & ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE:**

The next Amenities meeting is scheduled for **14<sup>th</sup> October 2025**.

**D. TOURISM, TRADERS & TRAFFIC SUB-COMMITTEE:**

The next meeting is scheduled for **23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025**. It was noted that an earlier meeting could be arranged if required.

**15. CORRESPONDENCE:**

The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received regarding concerns about a camp in Sharvells Copse and a recent fire there. It was suggested that due to the amount of dry wood throughout Sharvells Copse it would be impossible to remove enough not to encourage the further building of a “camp”.

The Parish Council were aware that this area, mainly of pine trees, does pose the potential for fires and were aware of recent fires in Hampshire at similar locations.

The Parish Council will consider what signage might be erected in the area, but did not want this to have an adverse effect by encouraging the lighting of more fires.

**16. OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT:**

None.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and **CLOSED** the meeting at 7.45pm.

..... Chair                      .....Date