

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday January 23rd 2018 at 7.00pm

at Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6AG in the Council Chamber

Councillors Present: Stan Hebborn Chairman, Beryl Bunning, Peter Bishop, Jane Fountain, Keith Gilbert, Sue Hebborn, Margaret Holmes, Alysha Houlder-Moat, Gavin Maby, Maureen Roy, Kathryn Stallard, Pat Warwick.

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk      Also present: 2 members of the public

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Tina Kiddell, Jake Tinsley and Daniel Fishlock.

## **2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS MADE**

## **3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 09.01.18**

The minutes of the meeting held on January 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 were unanimously agreed as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

## **4. REPORTS**

### **4.1 Chairman's Report**

- The Chairman, Jane Fountain, Tina Kiddell, Pat Warwick and the Deputy Clerk attended a meeting of the Swaffham and Watton Focus Group held on 19.01.18.
- The Chairman, Maureen Roy and Pat Warwick attended a seminar relating to Health & Safety and Human Resources. Further information is awaited from the company which ran the seminar before consideration is given to issues raised.

*It was reported that leaves are not being cleared from the pavement in Chaston Place which results in the area becoming slippery and with loose slabs this makes Chaston Place quite hazardous underfoot.*

*Serco has been asked to undertake maintenance of trees in East Road but has been slack to respond. Keith Gilbert is monitoring the situation.*

### **4.2 Vice-Councillors Report**

Due to personal circumstances the Vice-Chairman was not present at the meeting.

### **4.3 County Councillor's Report**

County Councillor Claire Bowes was not present at the meeting but had provided a written report a copy of which is filed.

*The Town Council is awaiting correspondence from the Highway Engineer regarding whether parish entrance gates can be made locally and erected by Norfolk County Council. Once this is established a decision can be made as to whether gates will be requested for all four main routes into Watton, rather than just along the Thetford Road as is presently being considered.*

#### **4.4 District Councillors Report**

District Councillor Mike Wassell was not present at the meeting but a written report received was considered and a copy is filed.

District Councillor Keith Gilbert informed the meeting that Breckland District Council has taken the decision to withdraw Breckland Customer Services in Watton, Swaffham and Attleborough. The Council felt a campaign is needed to try to keep the presence office open in Watton or to establish an alternative offer at Wayland Hall.

#### **4.5 Police Report**

No Police present at the meeting but it was noted that a Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel Meeting is scheduled for 24.01.18 and that Councillors will be attending.

#### **4.6 Clerk's Report**

A copy of the written report presented is filed.

With reference to the report it was proposed and **agreed by all that a training day will be provided to enable staff to update the Scribe financial software package to reflect changes to the headings within the Town Council budget for 2018.**

### **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**No matters raised.**

### **6. TOWN CRIER**

Mike Wabe was present at the meeting to offer his services to Watton as Town Crier. **It was agreed**, with one abstention, that this offer be accepted and that **Mr Wabe's £35 registration of The Loyal Company of Town Criers will be paid and 8 gold wired badges for his outfit will be purchased at an estimated cost of £13.75 each.** Consideration will also be given to supporting the Town Crier with a contribution towards his travel costs. Costs will be allocated from the Civic budget.

### **7. FINANCE**

#### **7.1 Re-alignment of 2018 budget**

The re-drafted budget proposed, with other slight amendments, that the contingency figures set be lowered to allow adequate provision to be identified for grounds maintenance.

Some discussion took place regarding the suggested drop in the amount allocated for the civic budget with the following proposal agreed by nine votes for and three against: **"the civic allowance should remain at £3000 (as in 2017/18) with £500 taken from contingency in that heading and that moving forward the civic allowance should be looked at over a three year period"**

**It was agreed to accept the amended 2018 budget.**

*Discussion regarding the cost of the tracker system for the town van led to a suggestion that a policy is needed relating to use of the tracker system and this will be considered by the HR Committee.*

## 7.2 Terms of Reference for Finance Committee

**It was agreed by all to accept the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee** as presented.

Members of the Finance Committee: Peter Bishop, Kathryn Stallard, Daniel Fishlock, Sue Hebborn and Par Warwick.

**It was agreed by all that Kathryn Stallard will be the initial Chairman of the Finance Committee.**

## 7.3 Paper Shredder

**It was agreed by all to purchase a new paper shredder** for the Town Council Office.

## 8. CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

How to recognise achievement will be considered further at a future meeting due to lack of time at this meeting. A suggestion was made that contributions which benefit the town should be acknowledged by an award which could be presented at the Annual Civic Reception.

## 9. 2018 REMEMBRANCE PARADE

Due to time restraints this item was postponed until the next meeting.

## 10. PIGEON CONTROL

It was agreed in principal, with three against, that the Council will explore the cost of culling pigeons in the High Street.

## 11. CLOCK MAINTENANCE

No maintenance felt to be needed at this time.

## 12. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP) UPDATE (moved up the agenda and considered after public participation).

Jane Fountain presented the following report:

"Members will have had sight of both the flood report on Watton from Norfolk County Council (NCC) and the draft Watton Action Group (WG) reply. I ask that the council agree to send a finalised version of this letter to NCC subject to a minor amendment. Some members may recall that following floods the Council was advised that a flood report would be compiled and submitted by NCC. To my recollection this was never forthcoming. It has taken pressure from the WG to finally get the report. For an organisation to be that sluggish and to only give 14 days for a response particularly on such a complex subject is unreasonable. I would like for us to add a paragraph stressing this unreasonableness.

Members will also recall that when we agreed to embark on the NP process, public engagement would reveal issues that would be fed into policies in the plan. I was also expected that other issues that would need action would require separate action independent of the plan.

As part of the public engagement process the NP group are holding workshops with students at the Wayland Academy. As expected a number of problems have been

brought up and in the main these can be fed into the plan. However there is one element that relates to young people in the town and this is something that I believe needs urgent attention.

It has emerged how unsafe young people in this town feel going out and about. To take this issue any further would require the support of the council, not in respect of expenditure but in examining possible options as this would fall outside of the remit if the NP process."

**It was agreed by all to endorse the response to the NCC Draft Flood Report as suggested.**

**It was agreed by all to further examine possibilities for providing facilities for young people in Watton.**

Breckland District Council will be approached again regarding the handover of open space land along the Norwich Road as part of the s106 agreement with Bennetts Homes.

**13. PLANNING: To consider planning applications received for consultation**

Plans received will be considered at the next meeting.

**14. A resolution was passed to exclude the press and public to update on matters relating to charities:**

Legal advice is being sought regarding the responsibilities the Town Council may have for charities within the parish.