

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28 February 2012 at 7.00 pm at the Council Chamber, Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6AG

Councillors Present: K Birch J P McCarthy
B Bunning L McCarthy
P Cooper – Vice Chairman A Osborn
R Crabtree J Rogers
K Gilbert R Rudling
M Holmes M Wassell - Chairman
R Ivory

Officers Present: J Seal - Town Clerk

Others Present: PC Reavy and PCSO Winsley-Norfolk Police, Jason Benham - May Gurney, Mary Osborn – Watton Doctors Practice Manager, Roger Margand – Citizens Advice Bureau, Norman Wilson – Wayland Chamber of Commerce and Harvey Woodyatt

184 APOLOGIES

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Blackmore, Turner and District Councillor Claire Bowes

185 INTERESTS

Councillors Wassell, Cooper and Rudling declared prejudicial interests in Item 199 as allotment holders and left the room.

186 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was agreed by Members that the Minutes be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

187 COMMUNITY REPORTS

187.1 Police

Crime report previously circulated.

Councillor Gilbert reported that both Merton Road and Brandon Road were litter hot spots and asked that they be looked at.

PC Reavy stated that it was very difficult to bring a prosecution unless the person was actually caught in the act.

187.2 District Councillors

Councillor Gilbert reported that he had attended the Planning meeting where Bennett Homes minor adjustments were given planning approval. He said it was good to see that the points, put forward by Watton Town Council, had been taken into account.

The Bull hotel planning application had also reduced the buildings to the rear to one and a half storey from two and a half storey which had been requested by the residents of Saxon House.

At the recent budget meeting he had asked why Wotton's, special expenses for Street lights, was twice as much as Dereham.

Councillor Wassell reported that he had attended his first Planning meeting and also appeals licensing and cabinet meetings. He had attended training on Localism and had a further course to attend on Neighbourhood planning next week.

There were a number of new initiatives including the Keep Warm and Well project involving the provision of packs to help the most vulnerable to keep warm, also changes to the Disabled Facilities Grants, to simplify the process of adapting properties to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

The Breckland British Film Festival would be launched on the 3 March in Shropham, with eight more events in villages across the district.

There had also been some changes to Breckland District Councils web site, including a facility to automatically offer updates, on selected topics to people who register.

187.3 County Councillors

County Councillor Rogers reported that the sequencing of the Traffic Lights and the Pedestrian lights by Tesco were to be looked at.

He was asked to look at the turning right from Thetford Road onto Norwich Road as this did not allow very many cars to turn and caused congestion.

He had attended a Sustains meeting and reported that they now own the lands for the cycleway.

187.4 Members of the Public

Harvey Woodyatt apologised to Members, for his outburst, at a recent planning Committee, and to the Clerk who had arranged the meeting in good faith.

188 MAY GURNEY PRESENTATION – JASON BENHAM

Jason Benham informed Members that an arrangement had been agreed, between May Gurney and local prisons, to allow prisoners to work in the community, by carrying out various jobs. May Gurney would provide the materials and transport.

The Scheme had been started in Norwich, and they now wanted to expand. Things that could be carried out were litter picking, tidying up, clearing an area and painting.

Members were asked to put forward suggestions to the Clerk, who would liaise with Mr Benham.

189 HEARING AID BATTERIES – MARY OSBORN – PRACTICE MANAGER

Mary Osborn reported The Watton Practise had not been informed that the Health Centre was closing, so it had taken some time to realise that people had to go to Norwich, to obtain their hearing aid batteries. She confirmed that the Watton Practice now supplied Hearing Aid Batteries.

She thought that it would be a good idea to arrange a meeting with Members, so that she could explain how the Watton Practise had to operate under their National Health contract.

It was agreed that the Clerk arrange a convenient time for the meeting.

190 CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU REPORT-ROGER MARGAND

Roger Margand tabled a report to Members giving statistics of the many types of help given to the public and, a general overview of the work that they perform.

At the Watton Branch there were two volunteers and one paid supervisor. This year had seen a large increase on issues and clients than the previous year.

In the present economic climate they were seeing more clients unable to pay their rents and, 60% of clients being migrant workers, with issues concerning employment rights, housing and utility problems.

Members asked for a better breakdown of their funding, so that they could clearly see where the funding source came from.

It was pointed out that the Council had previously offered the use of the Youth & Community Centre, which had been rejected for various reasons. It was suggested that this be looked at again.

191 URGENT BUSINESS

Councillor Cooper reported that the Jubilee Committee had decided to produce a brochure, banner and flags and, were waiting to see if they had been successful, in obtaining a grant from Norfolk County Council.

It was agreed that the Jubilee Committee apply to the Council for a grant, who would then consider underwriting the cost.

Councillor L McCarthy reported that she was obtaining quotes, for making a wood carving of the Town sign, with a visitor book holder, for the gift to Weeze to celebrate 25 years of Twinning.

192 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reminded Members who had not responded to the 25 Anniversary of Twinning invitation, to do so by 7 March, in order that catering arrangements can be made.

He had attended the following events:-

- Mayor of Swaffham Civic service
- Carbrooke School – to read a story from the Breckland Reading Chair, ass he had done at Ashill School

- Annual Dinner of the Twinning association.
- Meeting of the Griston – Watton Cycleway project.
- Memorial service in celebration of the life of Mr Ashley Bowes, formerly, of Bowes of Norfolk.

193 PAYMENTS

It was agreed that payments for February be approved

194 COMMITTEE REPORTS

It was agreed that the minutes of Tuesday 7 February 2012 be adopted

195 CHRISTMAS TREE

The Chairman reported that the Chamber of Commerce had agreed to pay half the cost for the removal and maintenance of the Christmas tree.

196 FORMER GASWORKS HOUSE

In response to a letter from a concerned Member of Public, relating to the former gas house being used for the community, Members agreed that the Clerk contact the owners to clarify, what they were intending to do with the house and the land.

197 OUTSTANDING/ON-GOING ITEMS

Previously circulated.

One Member questioned whether the owner of the land on Norwich Road, who had requested that the Council remove the seat, due to anti-social behaviour, would delay the removable and allow a CCTV camera to monitor it.

198 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO WAYLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Portas Review was tabled.

Norman Wilson explained that a Committee was being set up, headed by Chris Edwards and, invited the Council to elect one of the Members to sit on the Committee.

It was suggested that there be two Members, one of which could deputise. Mr Wilson stated that in his opinion Committees needed to be made up of a small team, as it had been proven that too many Members crowded the issues, and nothing got done.

It was proposed by Councillor Gilbert and seconded by Councillor Holmes and

RESOLVED

Voting: 8 for with 2 abstentions

That Councillor Bunning be elected as the Councils Representative on the Town Team Committee.

199 ALLOTMENT RENTS 2012/2013

Councillors Cooper, Rudling and Wassell left the meeting.

As the former Chairman, Councillor Ivory took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The Clerk informed Members that the current rent for the Allotments was £15.00 per year.

It was proposed by Councillor Gilbert and seconded by Councillor Holmes and

RESOLVED

That the Allotment rents be increased by 5% each year for the next five years.

The Meeting ended 8.30pm

JS