

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 29 November 2011 at 7.00 pm at the Council Offices in the Luncheon Club area, Wayland Hall, Watton**

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

Officers Present: J Seal - Town Clerk

Members of the Public Present: (19) Nineteen

**126 INTERESTS**

Item 128 Councillors Holmes, Crabtree, Gilbert, JP McCarthy and L McCarthy declared personal interests as members of the Twinning Association.

Item 139 Councillor Cooper declared a prejudicial interest as the Chairman of Loch Neaton

Item 136 Councillors Gilbert and Wassell declared prejudicial interests and Councillor Rogers declared a personal interest as Breckland Councillors.

**127 COMMUNITY REPORTS**

**127.1 Police**

The crime figures for October followed the County trend in that there had been a reduction in priority crimes such as burglary dwelling and vehicle crime. There was an increase in the category of violent crime which included crimes such as public order offences and harassment. This was expected and was due in part to the increased police presence and activity in relation to Operation Scope.

Operation Scope:

Due to the public concern regarding the perceived increase in anti-social behaviour and alcohol related offending in Watton which was expressed at the last SNT SNAP meeting, the SNT had successfully bid for additional resources and instigated Operation Scope.

This operation was essentially an increase in police foot patrols in Watton town centre and local housing estates to present a robust response to incidents of antisocial behaviour and alcohol related offending.

The result so far was that a number of arrests had been made (hence the increase in the violent crime category) for public order offences. A large quantity of alcohol had been seized from persons drinking in the street contrary to the DPP rules and from underage drinkers.

Where appropriate there had been follow up action from the Operational Partnership Team. The SNT has also worked closely with housing providers to deal with persistent offenders and some of these offenders had been “re homed”.

There had been a very positive response from the public and local businesses regarding the increased police presence. The operation was due to continue next month.

Since the last meeting there had been a change in legislation with regard to parking enforcement and the decriminalisation of parking regulations, which meant that police no longer had authority for enforcing yellow lines and parking bays. This was now the responsibility of local authorities who had employed County Wardens for the purpose. Parking was often a topical subject for Watton. The new arrangements did not affect the enforcement of obstruction offences which the police continued to be the enforcement body for.

The new non emergency telephone number of 101 was now operational, making it simpler for persons to contact the police. 999 should still be used in an emergency. Calls to 101 were charged at 15p per call, regardless of call time.

Once again it was my honour to lay the wreath on behalf of Watton police on Remembrance Day and I hope to do so again next year. My thanks go to some of our colleagues from the Special Constabulary who assisted with the policing of this event.

### **127.2 District Councillors**

Councillor Gilbert reported that he had attended a Scrutiny Committee meeting and advised that there were in excess of 4000 people on the Breckland housing waiting list.

He had also attended the planning meeting where the Saham Road development had been discussed and refused.

Councillor Wassell reported that he had attended a Health Reform Workshop at Mattishall concerning the changes to the way health services were delivered and the effects of these on district councils. He had attended the Youth Council Welcome evening, spoken at the public enquiry in Norwich on the changes to parliamentary boundaries and attended the planning meeting for the 69 houses on Saham Road.

He tabled a report entitled Watton Housing Market Report October 2011.

### **127.3 County Councillors**

County Councillor Rogers reported that over 16,000 names had already been collected in protest against the cuts for the concessionary bus scheme.

## **128 TWINNING HISTORY JP McCarthy**

Councillor J P McCarthy felt that there was a distance between the Council and the Twinning Association which had not existed before. In his research into the history he could not find any legal agreement of commitments between the Council other than the Charter which covered the social aspects of twinning.

He stated that as in previous years the Twinning Association was not asking for financial help but co-operation and goodwill from the Council and Councillors to make the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2012 a success.

Councillor Cooper reported that as instructed by Council he and the Clerk had visited the Norwich Records Office and having inspected the Minutes found that a formal declaration had not been recorded.

The Chairman opened the meeting for Members of the public to speak.

The twinning members expressed concerns that a letter which had been sent from the Mayor to Weeze had caused offence. The Mayor stated that he was unable to accept the invitation to Kermis as it had arrived just ten days prior to the event and his diary was full. He did not think that his letter was in any way offensive.

The Chairman of twinning stated that invitations had been sent out for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2012.

Members noted the concerns of the members of the Twinning Association and agreed that the Mayor write to Mayor Francken informing him that the Council fully supported the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.

It was proposed by Councillor Bunning, seconded by Councillor Blackmore and

**RESOLVED**

That the Council support the Twinning Association wholeheartedly including the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

The Mayor offered his help to apply for a grant from Breckland Council.

## **129 URGENT BUSINESS**

A request had been received from the owner of a piece of land on the Norwich Road to remove a bench which had become a point for anti-social behaviour.

It was agreed that the police be asked to have further discussion with the landowner with a view to this request being re-considered.

## **130 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman commended both Councillor Ivory and Osborn for their work on the Christmas lights. He reported that the cost to Attleborough was £25,000 and to Diss was £16,000 for their Christmas lights.

He also reminded Members to submit their questions for the forthcoming meeting with George Freeman MP.

The Chairman had attended the following events:-

Opening of the new Tesco extension.

£500 was given to both The Surge and Rotary

Remembrance Day services on 11, 12 and 13 November.

Presentation of prizes at the Wayland School Cluster Anti bullying evening.

Wayland prison to hear about the work of the Rehabilitation of Addicted Prisoners Trust.

USAF, Eve of Thanksgiving Service at Ely Cathedral.  
Launch of the Wayland Heritage event.  
Attleborough Xmas Fair.  
Wayland High School Year 11 annual Presentation evening.

He informed Members that the population figures between Watton and Swaffham had now changed. In the past Swaffham had 105 more people than Watton and 18 more houses.

The latest figures now showed that Watton has an estimated population of 7548 compared to Swaffham which had 16 less at 7532 and only 4 more houses than Watton.

The population of Watton had increased by 14.54% between 2001 and 2009. The population for the whole of Breckland had increased by 21% over the same period.

### **131 VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Vice-Chairman had attended:

Sunday 13 Remembrance Day  
Saturday 26 Fire Service 35 year Medal Award

### **132 CLERK'S REPORT**

An application had been put forward to Highways for VAS signs to be installed on Dereham Road and working in conjunction with Saham Parish Council, two on Saham Road.

Mrs Toulson had been contacted and was in full agreement that seats and rose beds be designed for the green open space adjacent to the allotments on the Thetford Road site. She was also extremely pleased to allow the Council to name the site Jubilee Gardens, in honour of the Queen's Jubilee next year.

The Memorial Garden fountain had been completed, the compost bin on Thetford Road Allotments had been emptied, the public toilets drainage system had been completed, Wayland hall decoration was now finished, curtains finished and hung and the platform finished, together with the boxing in of the electrics. The doors had been copied to reflect the balcony. Two local carpet suppliers had been contacted and Tables were to be sought.

### **133 PAYMENTS**

It was agreed that payments for November be approved

### **134 BUDGET 2012-2013**

Some Members felt that the increase of £25,000 in the salary budget was too high.

It was proposed by Councillor Rudling, seconded by Councillor L McCarthy and

RESOLVED

Voting: 12 for with 2 against

That the budgeted figure of £25,000 to be awarded to salaries be reduced to £12,500.

### **135 PARKING WARDEN – A Osborn**

One Member suggested that the Council look into the possibility of employing a Traffic Warden.

It was pointed out that there had been a Traffic Warden operating in Watton recently but confusion as to who was now responsible for the service.

It was agreed that this be investigated further.

### **136 PRECEPT CLAIM**

This was deferred until the next Full Council meeting in December.

### **137 PLAYING FIELDS TRANSFER**

The Chairman declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting. The Vice-Chairman took the chair.

Breckland Council had approved the transfer of the playgrounds with the commuted sum of £xxx at their recent Cabinet meeting.

It was unanimously agreed that the council accept the Transfer of the Lovell Garden playground subject to the fence being in a satisfactory condition.

It was proposed by Councillor Blackmore and seconded by Councillor L McCarthy and

RESOLVED

Voting: 13 for with 1 abstention

That the Council accept the transfer of the Bridle Road playground.

### **138 PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **138.1 Planning and Forward Development**

It was agreed that the minutes of Tuesday 22 November 2011 be adopted

### **139 FESTIVE CHRISTMAS MARKET UPDATE**

Sandra Osborn gave an update on the "Festive Christmas Market". She reported that confusion had occurred in relation to the shop window competition and that this was now not being carried out by the Chamber of Commerce due to lack of communication which the "Festive Christmas Market" Committee was not involved in.

Councillor Rudling made clear that the Chamber of Commerce had not wanted to be involved with the Christmas lights. There had not been a lights committee meeting and he felt that this should have been referred to the Office.

It was proposed by Councillor Osborn, seconded by Councillor Blackmore and  
RESOLVED

That the Council take back responsibility for the arrangements for the Shop Window Competition with a date being set for the judging.

## **140 GRANTS**

### **a. Loch Neaton**

It was proposed by Councillor Blackmore, seconded by Councillor Holmes and  
RESOLVED

That Loch Neaton be given a grant of £564 as requested.

### **b. Senior Citizens Christmas Party**

It was proposed by Councillor Holmes, seconded by Councillor L McCarthy and  
RESOLVED  
Voting: 13 for with 1 abstention

That the Senior Citizen Christmas Party be given a grant of £250.

## **141 OUTSTANDING/ON-GOING ITEMS**

Councillor Turner reported that the swimming pool project had been shelved.

## **142 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

Members discussed the Council structure with some preferring to go back to the Committee system and the majority preferring the new system of two full Council meetings a month with one being the business meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Osborn, seconded by Councillor Ivory and  
RESOLVED  
Voting: 9 for with 2 against

That no change be made to the present Council decision-making structure for another six months when it should be reviewed again.

## **143 REPRESENTATIVES ON ORGANISATIONS REPORTS**

### **143.1 Breckland CCTV**

It was agreed that Councillor Osborn be added as a Representative.

**143.3 Carnival Committee**

It was agreed that Councillor Ivory be appointed as the Council Representative.

**143.4 Citizens Advice Bureau**

It was agreed that Councillor Osborn be added as a Representative.

**143.5 Watton Sports Centre**

It was agreed that Councillor Turner be added as a Representative.

**143.6 Focus Group**

It was agreed that Councillor Crabtree be added as a Representative.

**143.7 Jubilee Committee**

It was agreed that Councillor Cooper be added as a Representative.

**144 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

It was Proposed by Councillor Holmes, seconded by Councillor Blackmore

in accordance with Standing Order No 66 and

RESOLVED

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw

It was proposed by Councillor Osborn, seconded by Councillor Ivory and

RESOLVED

That part one of the Minutes be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

The Meeting ended 10.35pm

JS