

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday 22nd September 2015 at 7.00 pm

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

Councillors Present: Ken Birch Chairman, Beryl Bunning, Kevin Abbott, Peter Bishop, Sue Hebborn, Stan Hebborn, Margaret Holmes, John Rogers.

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk and Michelle Craigie Administration Assistant

Others Present:

District Councillor Michael Wassell

1 member of the public

Prior to the start of the meeting a presentation was given by Emily Barnston from Feilden and Mawson regarding a proposed development at Watton Green.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Janet Brown, Richard Crabtree, Giselle Nind, Keith Gilbert and Emma Parker.

A vote was taken whether to accept apologies from Janet Brown, Giselle Nind and Emma Parker as their attendance record at previous meetings has been poor. It was agreed by 7 votes, with one abstention, not to accept the apologies.

2. INTERESTS

Beryl Bunning declared a personal interest in item 6 and Kevin Abbott in item 6.1.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 08.09.15

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 8th September 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended the following:

- 24.08.15 Radio Norfolk broadcast regarding removal and repair of the weather vane on the clock tower. A quote has been received to remove the vane at a cost of £60 provided no problems are encountered during removal.
- 14.09.15 Battle of Britain remembrance event Norwich Castle
- 20.09.15 Battle of Britain remembrance event Dereham

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman gave an update regarding plans for the 2015 Festive Market. The closure of the High Street for the event has been arranged, favourable discussion has been had with the Methodist Church regarding use of the Church for a refreshment base for the bands and for possible staging of entertainment by the

Junior School, consideration is being given as to where Santa's grotto can be located (likely to be at Wayland Hall) as the clock tower has been deemed out of action and transport has been booked for Santa.

It is felt a large marquee is needed to cover Chaston Place and provide shelter for the entertainers. This matter will be considered further after a resolution to exclude the public.

A request was made for volunteers to be part of the Town Council Team for the Watton Society Annual Quiz on October 14th.

4.3 Police Report

No Police present at the meeting.

4.4 County Councillor Report

Stan Hebborn informed the Council that as from earlier in the day he had resigned his position as County Councillor for Watton District.

4.5 District Councillors Report

Michael Wassell informed the meeting that Breckland Council is starting to look at the 2016/17 budget preparation and noted that Government grants continue to go down.

Breckland Local Plan is still being worked on. Breckland has been included as part of the Mid Norfolk Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which will form part of the evidence for the Local Plan regarding housing requirements.

Dereham, Attleborough and Swaffham are thought to be conducting Neighbourhood Plans and it was suggested that the referendum which is needed for a Neighbourhood Plan could be tied in with the elections for the Police & Crime Commissioner in May 2016 so the time is perhaps right for plans to be considered, especially as the Breckland Local Plan should be adopted by the end of 2016. The Local Plan Consultation will be undertaken very shortly.

4.6 Clerk's Update

Copy of written report presented to Councillors is filed.

To note:

- Breckland Council is suggesting bins throughout the Town be used as combined litter and dog waste bins and it is planned to place stickers on the bins to this effect. Breckland has asked for the Town Council's opinion of this and would like to know which bins are used most. It was **agreed** by 7 votes, with 1 abstention, **to request publication of this intention in the Wayland News.**
- Following request The Museum for Watton group will be invited to give a short presentation to the Town Council prior to the meeting on October 13th (from 6.45pm).

- Re-surfacing of the cross roads of the B1108 and A1075 is planned for November.
- Norfolk Association of Local Councils Autumn Conference – Nov. 12th
It was agreed by all that Michelle Craigie should attend (delegate fee of £40 to be paid by town Council) if she wishes to do so.
- The Audit for the year ending March 31st 2015 has been completed and notice has been displayed in line with statutory requirements. The External Auditor's report states that ".....the Council has been unable to provide evidence of a risk assessment during 2014/15 although a risk register has been approved.....In future the Council should ensure that it carries out a formal assessment of its risks annually.

It was agreed to switch Items 5 and 8 on the agenda.

5. FENCE AT MEMORIAL GARDEN

Background information presented in Clerk's Report.

It was decided to consider replacement of the damaged fence panels at the next meeting of the Town Council following further investigation of the cost to replace with like panels or with some other type of fencing. Three quotes are to be sought.

6. ACCOUNTS

Payments for September were approved as presented with 2 abstentions and with the proviso that other quotes will be sought for the insurance for the "ambulance" and that a report will be compiled regarding expenditure associated with the community car.

6.1 Donation to Watton Sports Centre

A request has been made for the Town Council to consider the allocation of the £10000 donation for Watton Sports Centre as allowed for in the 2015/16 budget. A copy of the Sports Centre accounts have been passed to the Town Council but it was felt further information should be requested before a decision is made. It was agreed by all that this matter should be an agenda item again for the next meeting.

6.2 IT package

It was agreed by 6 votes for (Margaret Holmes had left the room), with 1 abstention (Ken Birch), to upgrade the present Town Council e-mail hosting and IT support package for the office at a cost of £192 for hosting and set up with an ongoing monthly payment of £74.38.

6.3 Photocopier

It was agreed by 6 votes for (Margaret Holmes had left the room), with 1 abstention (Ken Birch) to best fulfil the needs of the Office a Konica Minolta copier (or equivalent) would be purchased up to an estimated cost of £3000, with a maintenance support package put in place as deemed appropriate.

7. TOWN COUNCIL MINIBUS

Report presented to Councillors is filed.

Much discussion took place regarding the continued subsidy of the Town Council Minibus which is seen as a valued service. It was noted that a Town Council decision had previously been made that once reserve money allocated to running of the bus had expired the service would end.

It was finally **agreed** by a majority (one against) **that:**

- a) the Mayor would initially informally speak with other local Mayor's regarding possible contribution towards the upkeep of the bus from other towns where residents use the bus**
- b) from this date it will be a condition of use that the cost of fuel for all journeys made in the bus will be required to be met by the users. Failure to meet the cost will mean that use of the bus will be curtailed.**

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The member of the public requested clarification of the donation which would be requested from Ashill Village Aid for use of the minibus.

9. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

It was generally felt the number of Town Council meetings held should remain as currently but that items on the agenda should be timed.

10. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

The grounds maintenance contract is due for renewal in October and three quotes have been obtained from contractors. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting of the Council as further quotes are to be sought.

11. TREE MANAGEMENT

Requests have been received from residents of Curlew Close regarding the size of trees at the Bridle Way play area as they overhang gardens in the Close. Quotes are being sought to undertake surveys of all the trees the Council has responsibility for.

12. PLANNING

12.1 3PL/2015/1027/F – Erection of conservatory at 262 Lovell Gardens, Watton
No objections

12.2 3PL/2015/0936/F – Erection of conservatory at 1 East Road, Watton
No objections

12.3 3PL/2015/0944/F – Erection of chalet bungalow with double garage in the grounds of existing house, including demolition - Green Acre, Chequers Lane, Saham Toney.

No Comment

12.4 3PL/2015/0920/F – proposed bungalow – 14 Vincent Place, Watton
No objections

13. It was **resolved** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted that the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

- It was agreed by all to hire the larger 9m x 9m marquee for the 2015 Festive Market.