

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday 27th October 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 – Vice-Chairman, Kevin Abbott, Peter Bishop, Richard Crabtree, Jennie Fishlock, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, John Rogers.

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

Claire Bowes – District Councillor

5 members of the public were in attendance. Representatives from Museum for Watton gave a presentation prior to the start of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Janet Brown, Margaret Holmes, Emma Parker, Stan Hebborn and Sue Hebborn.

It was agreed by all not to accept the apologies from Janet Brown and Emma Parker.

2. INTERESTS

Declaration of Interest declared by Richard Crabtree (item 5.5).

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 13.10.15

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 13th October 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 events:

- October 17th - Twinning Association Beer Festival
- October 18th – Dereham Civic Service
- October 18th - Swaffham Civic Service
- October 21st/22nd - Met Community Rehabilitation Groups

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended the following:

- October 14th – Breckland Safety Advisory Group Meeting – all plans for the 2015 Festive Market are proceeding.
- October 14th – Watton Society Quiz
- October 17th – Twinning Association Beer Festival

4.3 Police Report – Apologies received from the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

4.4 County Councillor Report – No county Councillor at present due to resignation. Election to be held November 19th.

4.5 District Councillors Report

District Councillor Claire Bowes suggested the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party contact planner Phil Mileham at Breckland District Council.

A Town and Parish Council Forum is to be held by Breckland in December and the Council should pass any agenda items to Community Services at Breckland.

District Councillor Keith Gilbert informed the meeting of Breckland Council's decision to remove the drainage related reason for refusal of planning permission from application 3PL/2015/0219/F.

4.6 Clerk's Report - copy filed

Councillors were presented with a written report with a verbal update also given:

- Breckland District Council Tree Consultant has identified a number of oak trees along Gilman's Drift which he hopes to obtain Tree Preservation Orders on as soon as possible.
- Two letters have been received regarding the clock tower and what action may be taken regarding getting the clock re-instated in the tower and working. The Heritage Lottery Fund has been contacted to make initial enquiries regarding any funding that may be available to assist with conducting a survey on the tower and undertaking any work that may be advised.
- A letter has been received from the local branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau advising that there remains a desire within the CAB to maintain links with the Harvey Street site in the town but that temporary premises are to be used at Unit 2, Ventura House, Norwich Road.

5. ACCOUNTS

5.1 Payments for October were accepted as presented.

5.2 2016/17 Budget

Councillors were presented with updated income and expenditure against the budget. The 2016/17 budget will be considered at future meetings. It is likely the Council Tax Support Grant will be reduced in future years and this could result in a need for the precept request to be raised accordingly.

5.3 Replacement Christmas Lights

It was agreed by all to purchase 10 new projecting lights for the 2015 display with the view to further purchases for 2016.

5.4 Service Agreement for printer

It was agreed by all to accept the full service agreement for a new printer as presented at a cost of 0.35p per mono copy and 3.5p per colour copy.

5.5 Grant for Watton Senior Citizens Party

It was agreed by all to grant £250 to the 2015 Watton Senior Citizens Party.

6. Reserve for Human Resources (HR) Committee

The Chairman offered to act as the reserve for the HR Committee.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Concern was raised regarding planning applications for consideration and how development will lead to increased traffic flow onto the Norwich Road.
- Questions were raised regarding Jubilee Garden and previous expenditure on the clock tower.

8. BRANDON ROAD

Following concern raised about the safety of children due to the hazard presented by vehicles perceived to be speeding along the Brandon Road communication has been received from the Safer Neighbourhood Team who are aware of issues around the Westfield Infant School involving parking problems also. A meeting of relevant agencies has been suggested.

9. PLANNING

Applications for consideration

As a possible member of Breckland Planning Committee Keith Gilbert took no part in decision making regarding the Town Councils planning recommendations.

9.1 3PL/2014/1378/F – Residential development for 80 dwellings with associated servicing and infrastructure – amended layout/access.

The Council expressed disappointment that the transfer of Community Land as part of the section 106 agreement made with Bennetts and relating to this development has not yet been fulfilled and therefore the Council believes no further permissions relating to this site should be granted.

9.2 3PL/2015/1191/O – Residential development off Town Green, Watton to provide 98 dwellings

Refusal recommended

The Council is not supportive of this development due to general concerns that more dwellings cannot be accommodated in the area as there is not the infrastructure to support greater numbers of dwellings and more specifically there is concern that this development will increase the volume of traffic joining the Norwich Road which is already heavily congested at certain times.

9.3 3PL/2015/1163/F – Timber framework single carport with polycarbonate roof sheets

No objections raised

Notifications of decisions

9.4 3PL/2015/0533/LB – Alterations and part demolition of listed building and demolition of outbuildings and convert property to 5 flats

Permission granted

9.5 3PL/2015/0219/F – Development comprising the erection of 73 dwellings together with associated open spaces, land west of Saham Road, Watton.

This application was refused by Breckland Council on the grounds of density, impact on the landscape character and appearance, overlooking and drainage. The Council has now withdrawn the drainage grounds for refusal.

10. 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.

10.1 The Clerks contract was accepted as presented.

10.2 It was agreed safety clothing for the Handyman should be purchased up to a cost of £200.

Expenditure to be from Health & Safety budget allocation.

10.3 Staff pensions

The Council has received notification that the date for automatic enrolment duties for the Council is November 1st 2016. Every employer in the UK must automatically enrol those who meet certain criteria into a workplace pension scheme and contribute towards it. Investigation will be made and a decision regarding which pension scheme will be used will need to be made before the automatic enrolment date.

Cemetery Rules and Fees

Councillors were presented with new draft rules for the Cemetery. The rules incorporate current agreed rules but give greater clarity. It was decided Councillors would review the rules presented and a decision will be made regarding acceptance of the rules at a future meeting.

Fees were also discussed and these will possibly be amended within budget discussions.

The application received for waived double burial fees for a long time past resident of the town was accepted.

Following a request for a larger ashes memorial tablet **it was agreed by all that the current rules relating to memorial and ashes tablet sizes would remain as they currently stand.**