

Minutes of the Watton Annual Town Meeting

held at Watton Sports Centre on April 18th 2017

Present: Mayor Mrs Beryl Bunning (Chairman of Watton Town Council), District Councillors Mr K Gilbert (also a Town Councillor), Mr M Wassell and Miss C Bowes (also County Councillor), 9 other members of Watton Town Council and 84 members of the public.

Also present Watton Town Council Clerk.

The Mayor welcomed attendees and confirmed the order for the meeting.

1. The minutes of the 2016 Annual Town Meeting were presented and signed as correct.

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a brief report of Town Council activities over the past year.

3. District Councillors' Report

District Councillors Claire Bowes, Keith Gilbert and Michael Wassell all submitted written reports. Hard copies were available at the meeting and are available on the Town Council website www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk Councillors were present and willing to answer queries directed to them.

4. County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Claire Bowes had submitted a written report. Hard copies were available at the meeting and are available on the Town Council website www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk

5. Police Report

No Police present but a reminder given of the date of the next Safer Neighbourhood Team Meeting.

6. Wayland Chamber of Commerce

Debbie Muller presented a report on behalf of the Chamber of Trade.

7. Wayland Partnership Report

Apologies received that the Wayland Partnership was not represented at the meeting. Written report made available at the meeting and on the Town Council website.

8. Citizens Advice Bureau Report

Verbal report given by John Constance, Director of CAB. A copy is filed and available on the Town Council website.

9. Reports from other groups and organisations within the Town, including those which have received grants from the Town Council during the last financial year.

Written reports received from:

- The Wayland Festival Committee
- Loch Neaton Trustees
- Watton Twinning Association
- Stevens Almhouses

Verbal reports given by:

- Museum4Watton
- St Mary's Church Café Outreach Project
- "Looking at Watton" Watton U3A

Copies of all written reports received are filed and available on the Town Council website.

Mr R Crabtree spoke about the Watton Carnival and the Senior Citizens Christmas Party.

A verbal thanks was given by Mr K Jones, Manager of Watton Sports and Social Club for the support the Town Council has given the Sports Centre.

10. Future Plans for Watton

The Town Council has decided to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan and a presentation was given briefly outlining the Neighbourhood Planning process and what it is hoped will be achieved from the engagement with the community which this project will bring. A copy of the presentation given will be made available.

A second presentation was given to launch thoughts for the initial idea which is being investigated to provide facilities within the town fit for the 21st Century. It is hoped by organisations already consulted that partnership working may lead to enhanced facilities being provided. A copy of the presentation will be made available.

11. Questions submitted by attendees

- What is the Town Council actively doing to highlight the facts of unsustainability of agreed new builds and further applications for development in Watton?
- What steps are the Town Council taking to promote new businesses to the town to create jobs?
- What plans have the town council got to create a proper park in the town where families can have barbecues, have picnics, kick a ball about, just sit and enjoy what is going on?
- What are the TC doing to promote the high street and revitalise it?

- What is the result of the various meetings the TC have had to overcome the worrisome floods within the town and the meeting with our illustrious MP, George Freeman?
- What is the TC doing to promote proper facilities for the youth of the town?
- What plans have the TC got to stop adults riding cycles on the pavements that are not cycle paths and getting them to ride in the road where they should be?
- "We were not informed of Tesni's intention to build 177 homes in the fields at the end of Woodpecker Drive and Mallard Road when we bought our bungalow!!! The field touches our fence!!

We are therefore very keen to know what Watton's Council's attitude is towards this APPLICATION, i.e. are you in favour of this Application for 177 homes bearing in mind it will bring a minimum of 500+ more people into Watton and they could use our few shops we have in Watton and the GP surgery will be struggling more than ever to work efficiently to mention but a few issues, and Watton roads could not cope with the extra traffic
or

will you be against the APPLICATION bearing in mind that Watton could not cope with another 500 PLUS people arriving in Watton - not to mention possibly another 350 cars plus on our busy, narrow, congested roads in Watton No jobs, not enough shops, facilities, no full time active police station, a GP surgery struggling to cope now, the drainage system in Woodpecker Drive is now supposed to be dealt with before the drains collapse. The problems being encountered by this Application are unbearable!"

- Has any action been taken in relation to surface water flooding within the town?

The Town Council answered the above questions through the provision of updated information supplied in packs available at the meeting.

Watton Town Council has voiced concerns regarding the lack of Infrastructure within the town and has made representations to Breckland Council against large scale development within Watton.

Information available on the Town Council website