

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday March 12th 2019 at 7.00pm

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

Councillors Present, Beryl Bunning, Peter Bishop, Tina Cruz, Jane Fountain, Colin Hay, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Alysha Houlder-Moat, Kathryn Stallard, Pat Warwick - acting as Chairman.

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk and Michelle Thompson Deputy Clerk

Also present: 3 members the public.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED FROM**

Tina Kiddell, Daniel Fishlock and Margaret Holmes

**2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS MADE**

**3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 26.02.19**

The minutes of the meeting held on February 26th 2019 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

**4. REPORTS**

**4.1 Chairman's Report**

Written report passed to Councillors.

**4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report**

Vice-Chairman has attended Civic Ceremony in Diss.

**4.3 Clerk's Report.**

Written report submitted in agenda pack.

Verbal update given:

- Clerk attended the Wayland Chamber of Trade AGM on 07.03.19. A New Chairman was appointed and members present at the meeting were positive for the future of the organisation and keen to keep links with the Town Council. A representative of the Town Council will continue to attend meetings.
- Agreement has been sought to spend remaining DC11 money on new fencing for the Sports Centre Play Area.
- PC Arbutnot gave apologies that he could not attend the Town Council meeting but reported that he has attended a meeting at Cranswick foods and that staff at the factory have been asked to be considerate to neighbours. It was noted that no further reports have been received by the Police relating to human faeces found along Brandon Road.
- PC Arbutnot also requested that the Town Council considers placing a litter bin along Brandon Road and pictorial signage to indicate no alcohol areas which are under the jurisdiction of the Town Council.
- A town walkabout organised by John Mullen Breckland Market Town Initiative Project Co-ordinator took place on 08.03.19. It was suggested that some form of Town Centre Plan and a signage audit is needed. Tracy Miller Breckland Council Regeneration Officer took part in the walk and has since reported that the owners of the building which has graffiti have been contacted and asked to remove the graffiti and redundant CCTV signs and other blank signs will be taken down. It was also noted by District Councillor Keith Gilbert that the



landlord adjacent to Belvoir letting agents in the High Street has been asked to clear the rubbish from his premises.

- Norfolk Association of Local Councils 08.03.19 Newsletter passed to Councillors.
- The Rev. Gerry Foster has requested that the Council confirms whether it intends to participate in the planning of the 2019 Town Carol Service.
- The Council has received notification of a s106 agreement relating to Abel Homes development at Watton Green. This will be an agenda item for the next Town Council meeting.

## **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- Two members of the public were present to voice their case for nominating the Hare and Barrel as an Asset of Community Value.
- Report that pot hole repairs on the Dereham Road appear to be of poor quality with a ripple effect having been created.
- Noted that manhole covers along the Thetford Road have sunk.

## **6. HARE AND BARREL**

**It was resolved that the Town Council would support the nomination of the Hare & Barrel as an Asset of Community Value**

## **7. FINANCE**

**7.1 It was resolved to request that payment of the 2019 precept be made into the Watton Town Council Unity Bank Account.**

7.2 The Town Council has received an invoice for £1065.00 from the External Auditor PKF Littlejohn for additional fees relating to the 2018-19 External Audit.

No formal objection to the accounts was made but the auditors did receive correspondence from a local elector, which was considered during the course of the audit. It is the additional time spent on the review, responding to emails received from the local elector (11 emails each requiring a response), and telephone calls received from the local elector, in addition to the time spent corresponding with the Council in respect of this matter and the actual consideration of the documents received in response to the matters raised which has resulted in the additional cost.

Following discussion, chiefly concerning the time taken by Littlejohn to conclude the audit, **it was resolved to ask the Finance Committee to formulate a complaint to the External Auditor.**

## **8. ELECTRICAL TESTING**

It was resolved to consider quotes received for electrical equipment testing at the end of the meeting after a resolution to exclude the public and press.

## **9. WINDOW CLEANING**

It was resolved to consider quotes received for window cleaning at the end of the meeting after a resolution to exclude the public and press.

## **10. HR**

10.1 Draft HR Committee minutes for the meeting held on February 25th 2019 were noted.

**10.2 (i) It was resolved that the Communications Policy be accepted as it stands but with the addition that Councillors will be asked, at the start of each Council year, whether they wish to receive a hard copy of agendas and minutes, as well as an electronic copy. This will also be confirmed in Standing Orders.**



10.2 (ii) **Councillors were reminded of point 3 of the Communications Policy which states any personal press releases should contain the statement “this is a personal statement and is not the view of the Town Council”.**

It was suggested the word “necessarily” be inserted into the statement after “not”.

10.2 (iii) **It was resolved to accept the Social Media Policy as presented.**

10.2 (iv) The proposal that should any member of staff request time off for special constabulary, or Territorial Army training, paid leave would be granted was withdrawn. The HR Committee will consider an amended proposal to bring back to Full Council. Stan Hebborn offered to assist with this.

## **11. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

11.1 The report from the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was considered along with the suggested proposals.

After much discussion **it was resolved to speak to the Watton Working Together Group on how to go forward but at present the group is not a Town Council sanctioned body and cannot use the Town Council logo.**

The Council was presented with a report from the Neighbourhood Plan Project Consultant and a paper for thought relating to a possible Unique Selling Point (USP) for Watton.

Items 11.2, 11.3 and 11.4 to be deferred.

## **12. MARKET**

Noted that more investigation is needed relating to the cost to manage the pop up market stalls which have been purchased using Market Town Initiative money and this matter will be a future agenda item again when more information has been gained.

## **13. WATTON CARNIVAL**

**It was resolved that the Town Council would have a stall at the Watton Carnival on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September.** The Council will pay to site the Town Council gazebo.

## **14. CO-OPTION POLICY**

**It was resolved to adopt the co-option policy as presented.**

## **15. CHALLENGE TO TITLE NK116034**

**It was resolved not to challenge title NK116034 until more evidence can be found to prove ownership of the alleyway between Wayland Hall and the King’s Arms. If no further evidence is found within six months no challenge will be made.**

**16. PLANNING:** To consider consultation response to planning applications received since the last Full Council meeting

16.1 3PL/2018/1374/HOU - New Garage Block with ground floor home office and upstairs guest room. - Stone Cottage, Watton Green, Watton

No objections

16.2 3PL/2019/0224/F - Change of use from storage space to one bedroom flat - The Stable, New Inn, High Street, Watton

No objections

Councillors were reminded of the public consultation on Main Modifications to the Breckland Local; Plan which is running until April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019.



*Resolution to exclude the public and press to consider quotes received:*

- ***It was resolved to accept the quote of £576 for the 5 yearly electrical circuit testing at Wayland Hall.***
- ***It was resolved to investigate the possibility of conducting the PAT inspection in house.***
- ***It was resolved to accept the quotes for cleaning the two bus shelters in the High Street and for window cleaning at Wayland Hall as below:***
  - *External Monthly - £78.25 + VAT*
  - *Internal Monthly - £47.00 + VAT*
  - *High level cleaning 1st Floor - £47.00 + VAT per occasion*
  - *Removal of glue/graffiti will need to be completed first - £210.00 + VAT*
  - *Monthly - Wipe down with adhesive wipes - £128.50 + VAT*
  - *Annual Deep Clean - £190.00 + VAT*



## CHAIRMANS REPORT FOR THE 12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

2<sup>ND</sup> March I was privileged to be asked to open the first parkrun in Watton. This was an amazing success and I'd like to thank all those involved for putting Watton on the map, particularly Sarah Dagless and James Wooler who both worked tirelessly to make this happen. It truly is a fantastic community event.

3<sup>rd</sup> March I went to The High Sheriff of Norfolk Justice service at King's Lynn Minster, again, it was an honour to represent our town.

It has come to my attention from a few councillors that they are confused, to be honest I have to say that I am too. I know we will be talking about this later in the agenda, but I feel that I should explain a bit of background before we get to the item. The Watton Working Together group was a suggestion from George Freeman for us to involve the local businesses to help ourselves in areas that councils may not, by their restrictions be able to facilitate.

It was agreed at the first meeting that I would chair these gatherings as I over the course of being on the council have developed good working relationships with many of the people who came to the meeting, 38 in total.

The confusion has come about because of the neighbourhood plan. Now, I totally understand that we must use the plan to aid with funding etc, but and this is a huge but, we can not mix the two together, they are as separate as the Watton and Swaffham group. The idea is to share ideas and certain people go away and find out more information or indeed apply for funding themselves, it is a way of sharing, and as the name suggests, working together, not planning. That's not to say that the information gathered within the meetings could not be used and I would hope that a member of the neighbourhood plan team would come to the meetings to take part. In all honesty we have agreed to facilitate these meetings and anything that derived from them that needed to come to full council would obviously be an agenda item.

I'm going to quote a famous line from the infamous John Lennon 'life happens when others are making plans'

I'm not for one moment trying to undermine the neighbourhood plan, but the plan is a job and finish, the Watton working together group is something that I hope will have sustainability and longevity long after the plan has been done