

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL Finance Committee held on

Friday February 15th 2019 at

Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6AG

Councillors Present: Kathryn Stallard – Chairman of the Committee, Peter Bishop, Sue Hebborn and Pat Warwick.

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Tina Kiddell.

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3(i) The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11.01.19 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3(ii) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:

- The Christmas lighting contractor is still to advise on estimated costs for any replacement lights for 2019.
- The Town Council has agreed a small budget, as requested, by the Watton Neighbourhood Plan Drainage Group for printing costs of 168 letters and for the group to undertake land searches to the value of £60.
- Noted that Breckland District Council has released £12950 s106 funding to pay for replacement of the fencing at the Lovell Gardens Play Area. This is additional income which will be shown in the Town Council's accounts, but it does not form part of the budget figures.
- The replacement of litter bins in the High Street and the possible provision of extra bins is something which may be discussed as part of Breckland District Council Market Town Initiative funding.
- It was noted that there could be future expenses to consider around street lighting and road surfacing on Church Walk. It was noted also that responsibilities relating to Church Walk are difficult to ascertain, and there may be historical documentation which could shed light on these matters. *It was agreed it should be recommended to Full Council that a group be established to carry out research on matters relating to Church Walk.*

4. EXPENDITURE MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING AND CURRENT BUDGET POSITION

Finance Committee members had been provided with the current budget position prior to the meeting.

- Quote of £228 accepted by Full Council on 12.02.19 to replace lighting in the Council Chamber.
- Agreed at Full Council on 12.02.19 to fund three places (cost of £60 per delegate) at a Cemetery Management course on June 26th 2019.

- Agreed at Full Council 12.02.19 to accept quote of £1000 to grub out the hedge at Lovell Gardens Play Area.
- Noted that there will be work needed to the boiler at Wayland Hall but that at present no quotes have been received for the necessary work.
A recommendation will be made to Full Council that quotes be sought to possibly replace the boiler at Wayland Hall. This may include re-siting.
- Noted that legal expenses may be incurred to continue with registration of Wayland Hall.
- Noted that a quote has been requested to remove three dead lime trees in Church Walk.
- Concern was voiced that the donation of £7000 to Watton Sports Association may be benefitting the business side of the Sports & Social Club rather than the charitable Sports Association. There is also concern that the Sports Centre is currently one of the Mayor's Charities and money raised should be for the Charity and not the Social Club which is a members' organisation.
As it was felt that the Council should not be supporting a private enterprise, it was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the presentation given at the Council Meeting on 12th February 2019 re the donation made to the Sports Centre should be more fully discussed
- There is £2000 left from money received from Breckland DC11 funding to be spent on play equipment. This was originally given for the Sport Centre Play Area but consideration as to whether the money could be used elsewhere will be made before any final decision. Youth provision is to be considered before the next Town Council meeting on 26.02.19., and it was agreed this issue should be brought to the attention of this meeting.
- Investigation is ongoing regarding who manages the recycling bins which are located at the public toilets.

5. BANK RECONCILIATION

Councillors had previously been presented with a Bank Reconciliation dated 07.01.19. The reconciliation was checked and signed by Peter Bishop.

6. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT FUND (CIF)

Noted that there has been no movement of the Community Improvement Fund.

7. REVIEW OF CONTRACTS: ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SERVICES

- Quotes will be sought for future annual inspection of the boiler at Wayland Hall as this contract has not been reviewed for some time.
- The contract for emptying the sanitary bins is being re-negotiated with addition of emptying of the bins at the public toilets.

8. UNITY BANK FUNDS

A recommendation will be made to Full Council that the 2019 precept be paid into the Unity Bank account. This will assist with moving to greater use of electronic banking and, as there are more current Councillors set up as signatories to the Unity

account, it may be helpful following the Local Elections in May to hold funds in this account.

9. EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

It was agreed a response will be composed to the invoice received from External Auditors PKF Littlejohn, who have finally completed the review of the 2017/18 accounts. A request will be made for a breakdown of the additional work undertaken by PKF Littlejohn to complete the review, especially as the correspondence sent to the auditors was not a legal challenge. It was felt the auditors have taken an unreasonable length of time to complete their review and the Town Council will request to be informed of the process to make a complaint should the Council decide to do so.

10. DATE OF NEXT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING:

March 15th at 11.00am

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FULL COUNCIL:

- *That quotes be sought to possibly replace/re-site the boiler at Wayland Hall.*
- *That a group be established to carry out research on matters relating to Church Walk.*
- *That the presentation given at the Council Meeting on 12th February 2019 re the donation made to the Sports Centre should be more fully discussed.*
- *That the 2019 precept be paid into the Council's Unity Bank account.*

