

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday February 4th 2020 at 6.30pm

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

Councillors Present: Pat Warwick - Chairman, Peter Bishop, Beryl Bunning, John Chocqueel-Mangan, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tina Kiddell, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Kathryn Stallard, Les Waller.

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED:

Richard Hindley and Jane Fountain

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS MADE:

3. REFURBISHMENT AND FUTURE USE OF THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

Discussion took place regarding the proposal received from the Museum 4 Watton to make use of the Council Chamber. Following an initial meeting with Councillors Chocqueel- Mangan, Stallard, Bunning, Hebborn and Chris Hutchings from the Museum for Watton, Councillors had been presented with written comments from some councillors and a comprehensive report from John Chocqueel-Mangan.

Points raised at the meeting:

- The Chamber should be used more
- Compromises could be suggested to reach a proposal which would suit both the Museum and the Council
- A Council does not need a purpose built building to produce dignity
- The civic home of the Council should not be lost
- Should the stage be kept or removed?
- Could the TC Office be moved to provide Museum space downstairs at Wayland Hall?
- Could the TC refurbish the Chamber itself to be used to generate income?
- The Chamber is used by the Council more than just for two monthly meetings
- The Museum is good for Watton and the Council should support it, but what is the Museum proposal offering the Council?
- Will the Chamber be improved for the benefit of the Council?
- If a working group is formed to look at the museum proposal then the TC should establish what outcomes it wants
- Will the TC need to ask to use its own room?
- Is a café appropriate for the Chamber?
- Memorabilia relating to the Council could be displayed in the Chamber
- Keeping the stage keeps dignity
- A working group could look at scaling down the original proposal
- Would the acoustics in the Chamber be improved should the proposal go ahead?
- Council Chamber was not built as a council meeting room and is not fit for purpose

- Room has not remained static and it should not
- The Council could benefit if the Museum is to fund refurbishment of the Chamber
- Chamber should be used by more people
- Main Council business happens in the TC Office
- People are interested to view the Council Chamber
- Chamber would benefit from re-decoration, new lighting and flooring
- Proposal is only a sketch to see if there is an appetite to pursue and support the ideas presented
- The Council, if interested in principal, could shape the project moving forward via input from a working party
- Museum should be encouraged to enlarge
- Museum is for the community and is an attractive commodity for the town
- Room stands idle most of the time.
- Nothing is forever! The Chamber could always be taken back.
- Will the TC make more use of the Chamber if the Museum does not?
- New civic centre is needed which is fit for purpose
- Civic head does not need to be raised on stage
- An oval table could be used by the Council, to be sited where the present stage sits

Having listened to all comments Council **resolved to form a Working Party to continue discussion with the Museum 4 Watton.**

The Chairman and the Clerk will talk to the Museum 4 Watton regarding Terms of Reference for a Working Party and draft Terms will be presented to the Council.

Councillors who have volunteered to be part of the Working Party: John Chocqueel-Mangan, Beryl Bunning, Kathryn Stallard, Stan Hebborn and Tina Kiddell.

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11/02/2020