

Minutes of the virtual meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday August 25th 2020 at 7.00pm

Councillors Present: Pat Warwick - Chairman, Peter Bishop, John Chocqueel-Mangan, Jane Fountain, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Kathryn Stallard, Les Waller.

Officers present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk and Michelle Thompson Deputy Clerk.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM**

Tina Kiddell, Richard Hindley, Beryl Bunning.

2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE**

3. **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 were accepted as a true record. The minutes will be physically signed by the Chairman as soon as possible.

4. **FINANCE**

4.1 Payments for August were presented and accepted for payment. It was also agreed to accept an additional payment for £3056.25 to Future Environomics.

4.2 The draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 21.08.20 were presented and noted, with a verbal report of the meeting also given by the Kathryn Stallard as the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

A budget breakdown will be published on the Town Council website to give members of the public an indication of the Town Councils planned expenditure in this financial year.

There is some thought that the Council may want to consider engaging a consultant to assist with moving forward with regeneration plans for Watton but this can be an agenda item for a future town council meeting at the appropriate time, if and when decisions have been made as to how to investigate and implement any regeneration plans.

Regeneration needs to fit in with the Breckland District Local Plan but there is uncertainty with planning at present with the release of the Planning for the Future White Paper and the White Paper consultation will be an agenda item for the next Town Council meeting.

It had been agreed at the last full meeting of the Town Council to re-introduce charges for market traders as from Sept. 1st [suspended during the Covid-19 pandemic) and to review market charges at a future meeting in September.

However it was felt that it was not clear to Councillors at the time whether traders could continue to receive gazebos at no charge, and that if charging was introduced for the use of gazebos this would have to include a VAT payment. Therefore, it was recommended by the Finance Committee that the Town Council should revisit the decision regarding the reintroduction of charges for market pitches and gazebos. **It was agreed to** accept the further recommendation that the charge for market pitches should include the use of gazebos.

It was agreed that £1049 could be spent to purchase a mower for the Town Operative.

## 5. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Town Council has continued to meet informally each week via Zoom and thus Councillors remain regularly updated. It was however noted that further meetings have recently taken place with George Freeman MP regarding Watton Regeneration and with Sam Chapman-Allen, Leader of Breckland District Council, looking at how Watton can be supported post Covid.

There has also been a date set for charities within the town to informally meet with a view to discuss how groups might work closer together.

## 6. STANDING ORDERS

Councillors were reminded that Zoom meetings of the Council should be held in the same professional manner as are meetings held in the Council Chamber and that the agreed protocol for virtual meetings should be followed.

## 7. THETFORD ROAD ALLOTMENTS

It was agreed to accept the quotes received from the preferred contractor for works at Thetford Road Allotments:

- To grub out and remove waste from hedge to the Thetford Road side of the site and replace with 1.2-metre-high stock fencing. Cost £1125.00.
- To replace shed with a good quality wooden 6 x 8 ft. shed the cost will be £980.00. This to be bolted to the concrete slab with at least 8 raw bolts.
- To run a water pipe feed to a standpipe next to the shed  
To run a 25mm blue plastic feed, 750mm deep, to outside the shed with a lockable tap from the corner of the pavement near Tesco.  
Cost £1100.

## 8. EVENTS

8.1 **It was agreed** that no large gathering should be encouraged for Remembrance Sunday 2020 and that anything planned should be in line with national guidance relating to Covid-19. Poppies will be erected on the lamp posts as in past years.

8.2 **It was agreed** that a 2020 Festive Market will be held but that this should be a much smaller event than past years with only stalls selling goods and no street entertainment. The Town Council will not run a tombola stall to avoid people gathering in one place around the stall. TTSR has offered to donate a Christmas Tree for the town and plans are for the Christmas lighting to be enhanced this year, as money will be available which was originally budgeted for the Festive Market.

## 9. LITTER BIN FOR NORWICH ROAD

**It was agreed** that the Town Council would contribute half the quoted cost of £150 to Carbrooke Parish Council towards purchase of a litter bin to be sited by the bus shelter opposite Blenheim Grange on the Norwich Road.

## 10. LAND AT SOUTH ROAD

Breckland District Council has consulted the Town Council regarding plans for the proposed sale of two parcels of land at South Road, Watton. Town Councillors will be re-sent the original consultation papers and this matter will be a future agenda item again.

**11. PLANNING**

11.1 3/PL/2020/0702/F. Jewsons Builders Merchant, Norwich Road Industrial Estate IP25  
6DRretrospective 5.8m cantilever racking.

**Recommend Objection**

The Town Council resolved to recommend objection to this application on several grounds, it was felt that the imposing appearance of the racking so close to residential properties adversely affects the amenities of those properties, as does the loss of light. The generation of noise by lifting equipment should also be considered so close the site boundary. Concerns were also raised regarding the noise created not only by the wrapping of the product stored on the racks but by the impact of wind on the racks themselves. Given the changing climate and the resultant increased frequency of storms with accompanying high winds there is also a risk posed to persons and property given the close proximity to residential properties.

The Town Council was surprised by this retrospective application, the company is well known for being community minded and the current situation is unfortunate. It is hoped that this application will be refused and that a compromise resolution to the matter can be negotiated. Should this not be possible the Town Council would support enforcement action.

**12. DATE OF NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**September 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 @7.00pm**