

Minutes of the virtual meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday September 22nd 2020 at 7.00pm

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

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

Representatives from Barratts Homes were in attendance prior to the start of the meeting to give an update on the development site at Thetford Road and answer any questions raised. Report of this part of the meeting is filed together with a copy of the report given verbally by Liz Witcher, Chairman of the Watton Neighbourhood Plan Drainage Group.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM

Tina Kiddell and Keith Prince

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:

Peter Bishop and Kathryn Stallard declared an interest in item 13.2

3. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2020 were accepted as a true record. The minutes will be physically signed by the Chairman as soon as possible.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

- Virtual Risk Management Training on 09.09.20, but found this not very informative.
- Virtual Regeneration Meeting with George Freeman MP on 10.09.20. At present there seems no movement forward with any plans but a further meeting is scheduled for October 2nd with Rob Walker, Breckland District Council Executive Director of Place.
- PPG meeting where it was reported that large numbers of patients book appointments at the Watton surgery but then fail to arrive for the appointment.
It was noted that the surgery is fully staffed at present and that those Councillors who have used the Practice on-line services felt them to be good.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman and Keith Gilbert attended a virtual meeting held by Susan Heinrich Breckland District Council Neighbourhood Planning Officer on the subject of the Planning White Paper.

4.3 District Councillors Report

Keith Gilbert will share the presentation slides from the White Paper meeting led by Susan Heinrich but a second meeting he has attended was for Breckland District Councillors and the slides from that meeting are not in the public domain.

4.4 County Councillors Report

No report received.

4.5 Police Report

No report received for the meeting but e-mail updates from the Safer Neighbourhood Team are forwarded to Councillors

4.6 Deputy Clerk's Report

- Poppies wreaths have been received.
- New Face Shields have been delivered.
- Thetford Road Allotment works
Hedge has been grubbed out and fenced. Water pipe has been laid, Just waiting on the tap. Shed has arrived, Contractor to erect.
- Official opening of Bridle Road new play equipment.
Due to the new Covid Guidelines and only 6 people meeting the TC unfortunately won't be able to make this a big event as hoped. The EDP and Hags had been invited to attend, along with the Mayor and Clerk.
An issue with one of the swings has been raised. The installer has been contacted as the equipment has not been signed off yet and is under guarantee.
- Royal British Legion
John and Helen Daly have now moved to Cumbria. They both wanted to say "It was nice working with everyone at the Council on various occasions so please thank them and say goodbye to anyone who knew us!"

Clerk's Report

- As one or two minor snags have been identified with the new equipment at Bridle Road the handover of the equipment has not yet taken place and it was suggested the official opening should be postponed until after the handover.
- The Clerk has spoken to the Chairman of the Watton Sports Association and it is hoped dialogue can be maintained with the Charity.
- Rubbish left in the car park at St Giles Road has not been removed by SERCO as the area is privately owned. A further request has been made to Breckland District Council for the waste sacks to be collected.
- The Clerk has also attended a webinar about the Planning White Paper and presentation slides will be shared once received.

5. FINANCE

5.1 The payments for September were presented and approved for payment with those marked as tbc to be confirmed and re-presented once invoices have been received.

6. ALLOTMENT RENT

It was agreed that the annual charge to hold an allotment should increase by £2.00 to £22.00 p.a. as from April 1st 2021.

7. MARKET CHARGES

It was agreed market charges would not increase at this time and the Finance Committee will be asked to establish a timescale to guide consideration of options for future charging.

8. TREE WORKS

It was agreed to accept the tree works as quoted by the preferred contractor:

- To grub out the hedge to the east of the Bridle Road play area £1680 plus VAT

- Removal of the Weeping Beech tree at the Cemetery £350 plus VAT
- Removal of the Horse Chestnut tree by the entrance to the Cemetery £150 plus VAT

It was also agreed that the Cemetery Working Group should meet to consider planting of replacement trees at Watton Cemetery.

9. FESTIVE MARKET

It was agreed that the 2020 Festive Market will be scheduled for November 29th and a road closure will be requested for Watton High Street. A meeting to consider plans for the 2020 Festive Market will be held on October 13th at 6.30pm prior to the Full Council meeting.

10. BIKE RACKS

It was agreed that a walk around meeting would be arranged between Don Saunders and the Breckland Officer looking at the provision of bike racks in the town and recommendations for locations will be reported to the Full Council.

11. PARISH PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Following works to the Watton Green junction last year the possibility of installing a new footway at the junction has been raised. Norfolk County Council has approached the Town Council to request the Town Council considers applying for Parish Partnership funding to help finance the estimated cost of £5900.

It was agreed not to apply for Parish Partnership funding, but to suggest to Norfolk County Council that an approach be made to the developer to contribute towards the cost of improvements felt necessary by Norfolk County Council.

12. PLANNING WHITE PAPER CONSULTATION

Councillors have been provided with information on the Planning White Paper and have been asked to respond to the consultation.

Councillors were asked to respond to the consultation as individuals should they wish but also to send their comments to the Clerk prior to October 9th so a letter can be compiled to George Freeman MP.

13. PLANNING

Noted that as a member of Breckland District Planning Committee Keith Gilbert made no comment on applications at the Town Council meeting.

13.1 Planning applications received since the agenda was issued were considered:

- i. [3PL/2020/0986/VAR variation of condition on 3PL/2020/0310/F Neaton Business Park North, Norwich Road, Watton](#)
No comments
 - ii. 3PL/2020/0969/F Change of Use from storage to industrial and extension to existing unit and erection of detached industrial unit Weco Engineering, Norwich Road, Watton
No comments
 - iii. 3PL/2020/1006/F Sales Cabin Land at Thetford Road, Watton
No comments
 - iv. 3OB/2020/0032/OB application to modify or discharge a planning obligation - approval of open space scheme land at Thetford Road
No comments
- 13.2 3OB/2020/0030/OB Modification of planning obligations on pp2011/1300 – to primarily set aside the 7 year lease obligation and the clause not to sell the annexe separately – 41 Dereham Road, Watton
No comments

Notification has been received that the Hare and Barrel Change of Use application 3PL/2020/0300/F is listed on the Planning Committee agenda for 28.09.20

District Councillors Keith Gilbert and Tina Kiddell are both to speak against this application at the Committee meeting and **it was agreed** that Stan Hebborn would speak to re-iterate the Town Council's concerns regarding the loss of the facility as a local pub.

Bennetts Homes

The Town Council has received a copy of correspondence from Bennetts Homes to Breckland District Council relating to the transfer of open space land as part of a s106 agreement associated with Bennetts development along Norwich Road.

The Town Clerk has arranged to meet with Simon Wood, Director of Planning and Building Control, Breckland District Council and it was agreed that the Chairman and Keith Gilbert should also be included in the Zoom meeting scheduled for September 30th.

14. **Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider staffing matters.**

14.1 NJC Pay Scales 2020-21

The National Joint Council (NJC) has announced agreement of the pay scales for 2020-21 for employees employed under the terms of the NJC model contract.

It was agreed that the changes will be implemented for Watton Town Council staff, to be backdated to April 2020.

It was acknowledged that the Deputy Clerk has been extremely competent managing the Town Council during the Clerk's leave.

Watton Sports Association Update

The Town Council has written to the Charity Commission regarding concerns of a "Serious Reportable Incident" relating to Watton Sports Association (WSA). An acknowledgment of receipt e-mail has been received in response. It was noted that the Town Council has received copies of the WSA accounts and that Tina Kiddell has resigned as acting as the Town Council representative at WSA meetings. A request was made that the WSA be an agenda item for the next Town Council meeting.