

Minutes of the virtual meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday October 27th 2020 at 7.00pm

Councillors Present: Pat Warwick - Chairman, Peter Bishop, Beryl Bunning, Jane Fountain, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Richard Hindley, Tina Kiddell, Don Saunders, Kathryn Stallard.

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

District/County Councillor Claire Bowes also present and 1 member of the public.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM**

Les Waller

Item 10 considered at this point:

Breckland District Council (BDC) Office Emma Crampton was present to address the meeting regarding the locations for bike racks within Watton Town Centre. The proposals to accept the two positions suggested was agreed. A rack to accommodate two bikes will be located on Town Council land outside the public toilets in St Giles Road (rack will be responsibility of Town Council). A second rack for two bikes will be the responsibility of BDC and is to be positioned on the pavement outside Corals in the High Street, between the pedestrian crossing and the town sign.

2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE**

3. **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th October 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**

October 21st - The Chairman visited Watton resident Stan Bull, to wish him a Happy 100th Birthday and also attended a virtual Regeneration Meeting with Neil Featherstone, David Dent, Jane Fountain and the Clerk.

This meeting reiterated the need for Watton to move forward with plans for regeneration. Neil had previously sent a report following the recent New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership initiative, which formed part of the Restart programme to explore the future of High Streets.

The Town Council needs a plan, that can be all encompassing, but in which priorities can be identified, as and when. Watton should be looking for long term viability and a lot of evidence can be obtained from the existing Neighbourhood Plan (NP) to help determine any Regeneration Plan.

The time is now, for Watton to engage in the process with other authorities and local organisations to help deliver projects for community benefit.

At this time, all organisations need to consider 'shock resilience' and a regeneration plan would provide proposals for the future.

Any plan, should present opportunities for all organisations, including providing a picture that residents can engage with, for instance, Watton wants a Sports Centre and wants to see it grow.

The Town Council could perhaps ask Breckland District Council, as part of its commitment, to help match fund the costs of a consultant, to provide concrete proposals.

As a start Locality has been asked to attend a meeting, to explain opportunities and how plans could be delivered, as they have elsewhere. It is possible that financial support for Locality to assist with the process, could be obtained through the NP.

Following the meeting we had, Neil has spoken to Debbie Wildridge from Locality, who would be happy to address the Town Council at a separate meeting on Monday 16th November, at 7pm. The Clerk will make George Freeman and Rob Walker aware that the meeting will be taking place, to keep them in loop.

Debbie could give examples of regeneration etc., elsewhere. Following the presentation, the Town Council could be left to discuss possibilities for a way forward. This could then be an agenda item, with any proposals for the TC meeting on 24th November.

October 26th – Officially opened new play equipment at Bridle Road play area.

October 27th - The Chairman has spoken to BBC Radio Norfolk, about the Covid 19 outbreak at the Cranswick Factory in Watton.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended the Regeneration meeting and an HR meeting on October 22nd.

4.3 District Councillors Report

Copy of the written report from Tina Kiddell sent to Councillors prior to the meeting is filed.

Keith Gilbert has spoken on Look East regarding the Covid-19 outbreak at the Cranswick factory within the town and emphasised that BDC and Norfolk County Council are doing whatever they can to contain the outbreak and support those affected.

4.4 County Councillors Report

Claire Bowes reiterated that all agencies are working hard to contain the Covid-19 outbreak in Watton and that leaflets are being distributed informing residents how to access help if needed. Norfolk Resilience Forum is involved and a mobile testing station has been set up in the town.

4.5 Police Report

No Police attending the meeting but regular newsletters and other e-mail updates are received and passed to Councillors.

4.6 Clerk's Report

Copy of the written report included within the agenda pack is filed.

Update presented prior to meeting:

- BDC response to Planning White Paper forwarded to Councillors 27.10.20
- Agenda Item 11.

If the Town Council is to give a book to each year 6 child and under in Watton this will be in the region of 700 books. The Head Teacher has been helpful in providing numbers of pupils and suggesting possible books.

- From Barratt Homes:

As of Monday November 2nd Anglia Water will be carrying out mains work on the Thetford Road. The mains comes from the junction of Byfords Way across Thetford Road and heading

south in the verge of the Barratt site. Three way traffic lights will be in place as of Monday morning for 5 days.

Barratts are still working with Norfolk Highways and the chosen contractor on dates for when the works will start on the Thetford Road roundabout. Barratt Homes have said they are trying everything to avoid a full 14 week closure but at the moment cannot confirm what will be the result.

- **Carbon Footprint and Sustainability**

Norfolk ALC has strong links to GIKI, Water Resources East and other organisations and could possibly put a team together to help undertake a sustainability audit for the TC without the TC having to pay a consultant.

They can also help develop a plan to implement any recommendations.

To start this of it has been suggested the TC should invite Tim O'Riordan from the UEA to speak to the Council.

- Noted that the Town Council is looking to use s106 funding to support development of the Bridle Road play area with suggestions of siting either climbing boulders or a scooter/bike ramp for use by the older age group of youngsters. Providers are being approached for quotes.

5. **FINANCE**

5.1 Payments for October were approved for payment as presented.

6. **WORKS IN PROGRESS LIST**

The Works in Progress List was accepted as presented. It was acknowledged several items on the list have been actioned since the list was produced and can be removed moving forward.

7. **PRIVACY NOTICE**

The Privacy Notice was reviewed with no changes to be made.

8. **GATE AT JUBILEE GARDEN**

It has been requested by allotment holders that a gate should be installed to close the newly created entrance from Jubilee Garden to the Thetford Road allotments.

Keith Gilbert offered to take a look at this and will report back to the Council at the next meeting when a decision will be made whether or not to install a gate.

9. **PUBLIC TOILETS OPENING TIMES**

It was agreed that during the winter months the public toilets will be opened at 9.00am and closed at 4.00pm. Opening times will be reviewed again in the Spring when evenings are lighter again.

10. **BIKE RACKS**

Breckland District Council has offered to install two bike racks in Watton High Street and locations were agreed as:

- outside the public toilets in St Giles Road
- outside Corals in the High Street, between the pedestrian crossing and the town sign.

11. **EVENTS BUDGET**

Some discussion took place regarding how money allocated in the 2020/21 budget for events may be used as events are not taking place due to the Covid pandemic.

It was agreed that £3000 plus VAT would be allocated to donate a book, as a Christmas gift, to each child in year 6 and below at Westfield School and at the nurseries in Watton.

12. LIDL WATTON STORE

It was noted that the Town Council would support the proposed location of a Lidl store along the Norwich Road in Watton.

13. NORFOLK ALC REP

Pat Warwick volunteered to be the Watton Town Council Rep. at meetings of Norfolk Association of Local Councils.

14. GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHEME

If a Good Neighbourhood Scheme were to be established in Watton it would be an independent scheme which the Town Council would be willing to support and be involved with and thus it would be useful for the Council to nominate a Councillor to liaise with the group and report back to the Town Council. If no more is expected then a volunteer may come forward as rep. but no further action is needed at this time.

15. PLANNING

15.1 To consult on Planning applications received since the last meeting

15.2 3PL/2020/1062/HOU - Demolition of conservatory to be replaced with two storey extension to the side of the house. - WATTON: 12 Edinburgh Close

No comments made

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

Staffing matters will be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting.