

Minutes of the virtual meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL Finance Committee

held on February 12th 2021

Councillors Present: Kathryn Stallard (KS) – Chairman of the Committee, Peter Bishop (PB), Don Saunders (DS), and Pat Warwick (PW).

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM:

Sue Hebborn

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3(i) The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29.01.21 were accepted as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman asap.

3(ii). Update from the meeting held on 29.01.21

- A Tree Report has been commissioned as agreed by Full Council on 08.12.20 and this will be undertaken w/b 15.02.21.
- Plans to possibly locate trees around the perimeter of the Bridle Road play area site will be followed up later in the year with a view to planting in the Autumn.
- It will be recommended to the Full Council that new computer hardware will be purchased for the Deputy Clerk and Clerk, with the money to cover the cost to be vired from the elections cost line within the 2020 budget.
It was suggested that if the old computers can be wiped clean, they could be donated to the local campaign to be used for children's education.
- The contract with Veoila for the Town Council waste disposal collection is to be cancelled as soon as possible. Arrangements are to be put in place for a larger waste bin to continue to be sited at the Youth & Community Centre but for it to be emptied fortnightly rather than weekly. The quoted costs for the new service, to be supplied through Breckland District Council, should result in substantial savings.
- Swaffham Town Council has apologised for implementing additional SLA costs for home working without first approaching Watton Town Council. No further action will be taken, and payment will continue to be made as invoiced.
- Norfolk County Council has indicated that the street lighting columns in the High Street are to finally be re-painted this year but there is a need to know the original colour before proceeding.
- Three-year financial planning will be an agenda item for the next Finance Committee meeting. Members of the Committee have been asked to send comments on the draft Financial Planning Discussion Document to the Clerk prior to the meeting on March 12th. Refurbishment of the Walsingham Gates is a matter that may need consideration soon and investigation will begin as to what maintenance may be needed.
- The contract for providing the Christmas lights in the town is to be an agenda item at the next Town Council meeting. To help facilitate discussion enquiries will be made with Norfolk Association of Local Councils for advice regarding the legal position of the current 'contract'.

4. RECENT EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET POSITION

- Noted that extra gardening work for Jubilee Garden was agreed at the Town Council meeting on 09.02.21.
- The Town Council is to investigate the cost of printing and delivering a leaflet to give advice how to deal with surface water flooding.
- The satnav system in the town van needs upgrading.
- It was accepted that the market trader who is temporarily using electricity from Wayland Hall has been asked to donate to the Mayors Charity to cover the cost of the electric used.
- Coaster and place mats will be purchased to protect the tables in the Council Chamber.
- A third quote is being sought to erect the market gazebos each week with a decision needed at the next Town Council meeting as to the future contractor to be engaged as from April 2021.

5. WAYLAND HALL ELECTRIC CONTRACT

The Wayland Hall electricity contract is up for renewal on April 5th 2021.

Renewal prices have been investigated including contacting green energy firm, Good Energy, as recommended by Norfolk ALC. This matter will be passed to the Full Council for consideration with Information to support this discussion to be provided prior to the meeting.

6. TOWN COUNCIL RESERVES

Following recommendation in the Interim Internal Audit Report the Finance Committee suggests that the Town Council invests £150000 of its general reserve funds in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

7. DATE OF NEXT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Friday Feb. 12th 2021 @ 12.30pm

Friday March 12th 2021 @ 12.30pm

For Town Council Agenda:

1. **Recommendation that** new computer hardware will be purchased for the Deputy Clerk and Clerk with the money to cover the cost to be vired from the elections cost line within the 2020 budget.
2. **Recommendation that** the Council invests £150000 of its general reserve funds in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.
3. **Wayland Hall Electric contract. Recommendation that** from the information supplied, the council agrees upon a contact for the supply of electricity from 5th April 2021