

Minutes of the virtual meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on

Tuesday January 26th 2021 at 7.00pm

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

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

Also present: County/District Councillor Claire Bowes, 2 representatives from Abel Homes and 7 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM:

Tina Cruz

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

Tina Kiddell and Pat Warwick declared an interest in item 13.4.

3. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2021 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 virtually attended:

- 15th and 20th Jan. Watton Medical Practice PPG meetings
- Bridle Road Play Equipment presentations Jan. 20th and 25th

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has also attended the Bridle Road presentations, Chairmanship Training on Jan. 21st, a planning webinar on Jan. 25th and Breckland District Council 5 Market Towns meeting on Jan. 26th.

4.3 District Councillors Report

Neither Tina Kiddell nor Keith Gilbert had anything to report. Members of the public were reminded to register with Breckland District Council (BDC) online at 'my breckland' to receive updates relating to BDC services.

4.4 County Councillors Report

Updates from Claire Bowes:

- Latest advice re. Covid is still to 'Stay at home'. Cases remain high in Norfolk, which is currently related to spread within households, particularly around Norwich.
- Norfolk County Council (NCC) is creating a Flood Task Group to be headed by Lord Dannatt.
- Free school meals voucher scheme to be extended to next half term.
- NCC and The Norfolk Foundation (NCF) has launched The Every Child Online campaign to attempt to shorten the digital divide during the pandemic.
- NCC is working with The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to support businesses during the pandemic.

- Information about the Covid vaccine programme can be found on Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) website: <https://www.norfolkandwaveneyccg.nhs.uk/>

4.5 Police Report

No Police attending the meeting, but regular newsletters and other e-mail updates are received and passed to Councillors. Pat Warwick and Les Waller are registered to attend the next virtual Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP) meeting.

4.6 Clerk's Report

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

Any notes which are received from the BDC 5 Market Towns Meeting held earlier in the day, and which the Clerk and Deputy Chairman attended, will be passed to Councillors.

5. **WORKS IN PROGRESS LIST**

The Works in progress list was received as presented. It was noted much on the list has been placed on hold due the ongoing pandemic and lockdown.

However, it was suggested the NCC Kickstart Scheme should be passed to the HR Committee to compile a job description for a possible job placement with Watton Town Council and IT provision may need to be reviewed as current hardware needs updating.

The Council is also keen to explore moving to a green energy supplier when current energy contracts expire.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A member of the public raised concern that the planning proposal (item 13.4) on the agenda also includes plans to build 45 dwellings on the site. Opinion is that amenities need to be provided in Watton as the population continues to increase.

Representatives from developers Abel Homes were also present at the meeting to speak on this application and they will be invited to input at the appropriate time.

Craig Fowler, BDC Public Protection & Covid Support Manager was in attendance to introduce the work of the BDC Covid Team. The team are to assist with tracking and tracing and to offer support and advice. Officers will set good examples to gain public confidence and the hope is that good community relationships can be established. There are 10 Covid Officers employed within Breckland and usual working hours are between 8am and 8pm including weekends.

7. **FINANCE**

7.1 Payments for January 2021 were approved for payment as presented.

7.2 The Internal Auditors Interim Report was presented to Councillors and the Finance Committee was asked to consider responses to the 5 action points raised in the report.

8. **CCTV AND TRACKING POLICY**

The CCTV and Tracking Policy was reviewed with no changes to be made.

9. **CEMETERY FEES**

It was resolved not to increase the Cemetery Fees in 2021

10. **WAYLAND HOUSE DIGITAL AND CREATIVE MEDIA CENTRE**

It was resolved that Watton Town Council endorses the Wayland House Digital and Creative Media Centre Project.

11. **TOWN COUNCIL LOGO**

Some debate took place regarding the origins of the Town Council logo. It was noted there is no intention to replace the town sign and it is only the Town Council logo that is being considered for a possible review.

Neighbourhood Plan consultation raised the question as to whether the Town Council needs a distinct identity and perhaps a “new” logo.

It was resolved that those interested in possibly moving this forward would form a Working Group.

12. **BRIDLE ROAD PLAY AREA**

The two shortlisted quotes to provide a bike pump track at Bridle Road Play Area were considered (both companies had previously given virtual presentations) **with the resolution being that Proludic would be commissioned to provide a pump track as quoted, once confirmation has been received from BDC that the Town Council will receive a s106 funding contribution towards the project.**

13. **PLANNING**

Noted that Keith Gilbert, as a member of the Breckland Council Planning Committee, took no part in agreeing comments made.

13.1 3PL/2020/1491/F - Change of use from retail unit to 3 dwellings. - WATTON: 8 Thetford Road

No comments

13.2 3PL/2020/1496/HOU - Single storey rear extension. Alterations to wall separating access and secure parking areas. WATTON: Saint Marys House, 1A St Marys Close

No comments

13.3 3PL/2020/1367/HOU - Proposed single storey extensions. - WATTON: 55 Thetford Road

Duplicate from previous meeting –No comments

13.4 3PL/2021/0032/F - Development of single storey food store (Use Class E - retail) with associated car parking, and landscape works; and 45 dwellings (Class C3) with associated open space and highway infrastructure. - WATTON: Land North of Norwich Road

The Town Council welcomes this application for a food store on this site. It is regrettable that the information placed into the public domain prior to submission did not indicate the scope of the application as subsequently submitted.

The Town Council accepts that the principal of housing on this site was established in the district local plan, however it does feel that the number of homes proposed in addition to the store is excessive given the area involved. It would prefer to see a reduction in the number of units on the area not allocated for the store.

In addition, concerns were raised regarding the cramped nature of the delivery area for goods vehicles due to the close positioning of the residential units in the immediate locale. The proposed dwellings would be subject to noise and disturbance from delivery vehicles affecting residents amenity. In addition, the need for manoeuvring of delivery vehicles in such limited

space could lead to conflict between residents and customers of the store both pedestrian and vehicular.

Whether or not the former issue can partially be addressed by the removal of some of the units, the Town Council would ask that consideration be given to the limiting of deliveries to the site during projected busy times such as the period around school opening and closing times. Limits on delivery times outside of social hours could also reduce noise and disturbance impacting the residential amenity of new and existing nearby residences. Suggest hours could be deliveries only between 10am to 2pm and 5pm to 9pm.

Residents have expressed their concerns regarding the lack of local amenities and infrastructure in place to support the housing element of this application. It is therefore requested that concerted efforts are made to maximize local provision by way of a 106 agreement connected to this application.

The Town Council is aware that the Watton and Saham Toney Flood Action Group will be submitting comments on the application in relation to drainage matters on the site. Councillors consider that the group is well informed and has detailed knowledge of drainage issues in the area. They are therefore better able to respond in this regard and consequently no representation is made on this aspect and the council welcomes their comments.

It was noted during discussions that appendix M referred to in the application documents was not available to view on the District council's website.

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

No matters to discuss!

Meeting closed.