

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on
Tuesday August 24th 2021 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at
Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton IP25 6AG

Councillors Present: Jane Fountain - Chairman, Peter Bishop, Beryl Bunning, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Kris Moore, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Kathryn Stallard, Pat Warwick, James Wooler.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

1 member of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM

Keith Gilbert, Tina Kiddell and Tina Cruz

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:

Jane Fountain declared an interest in item 16.2 and Kathryn Stallard declared an interest in anything relating to the Museum4Watton.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 10th August 2021 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Written report presented updating on items from the meeting on 10.08.21

- Museum Working Group is set to meet on Sept 2nd to consider the Wayland Hall Building Survey Report.
- County Councillor approached regarding setting up a meeting with NCC Highways to discuss possible options for participation in the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that Les Waller has resigned as a Town Councillor. The Office will report this to Breckland District Council to begin the replacement process.

The Chairman has attended:

- 12.08.21 The unveiling of the sculpture at the new development at Hares Green.
- 14.08.21 Mayors Civic Service.
- 17.08.21 Opening of Bridle Road Pump. Joined by several Councillors and the Town Crier. The Town Crier was thanked for his service.
- 18.08.21 Future Breckland Walking Workshop.
- 19.08.19 Zoom meeting with Future Breckland consultants.
- 21.08.21 The annual Vicarage Walk fundraising event in aid of St. Mary's Church.
- 23.08.21 Blessing of the Tree of Hope and Perseverance and unveiling of dedication plaque at Loch Neaton. The tree has been planted as a memorial to those who lost their lives during the height of the Covid 19 pandemic and as a tribute to all the work by care staff during the crisis.

The Chairman informed Councillors of issues with the recent repair of the Mayor's Chain of Office. The concerns will be reported to the company that refurbished the chain.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman visited the Eaton Vale Guides and Scouts Activity Centre on 12.08.12. The Centre is well worth a visit but it was noted that there is currently no scouts group in Watton to make use of it.

The Vice-Chairman also attended the Mayors Civic Service and the opening of Bridle Road Pump Track.

4.3 District Councillors Report

Tina Kiddell submitted a written report – copy filed.

4.4 County Councillors Report

No report received.

4.5 Police Report

No Police attending the meeting.

4.6 Clerk's Report

Written report issued with the agenda pack.

A request was made that Lead Councillors be informed of issues relating to their area of interest.

5. **WORKS IN PROGRESS LIST**

The Works in progress list as presented was reviewed with agreement made that completed items will be removed from the list.

Agreed amendments to on-going matters:

- Noted that Councillors have recently been supplied with information relating to past and present signage for Watton.
- It was resolved that the contractor will be instructed to close the gap in the fencing at Jubilee Garden rather than fit a gate as previously decided.
- **It was resolved that** no further trees will be planted at Shire Horse due to the underlying drains.
- A report relating to the recycling banks will be presented at the next Town Council meeting.
- The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Retail Group will be asked to comment on the location of the planters in the High Street as part of the final NP consultation.
- Investigation will be made regarding clearing and tidying the area of the former fountain at Memorial Gardens.
- Items 11 and 14 on the list will be combined. It was noted that research is being undertaken to possibly locate proposed heritage signs in the High Street bus shelters as well as at the other agreed locations.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Liz Witcher as Secretary of the Watton Medical Practice Participation Group (PPG) and Chairman of the Watton and Saham Flood Action Group spoke to provide information relating to items 7 and 8.

7. MEDICAL PRACTICE MENTAL HEALTH PROVISION

The Secretary of the Watton Medical Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) had provided Councillors with an outline of an initiative to support mental health issues and asked the Council for support.

It was suggested that this work may sit better with the Charlotte Harvey Trust and the request will be passed to the Charity.

8. EMERGENCY PLAN FOR WATTON

It was resolved that members of the Town Council would attend a meeting on 26.08.21 to consider Emergency Planning for Watton. The meeting will be attended by a member of the Norfolk task force, being led Lord Dannatt, which is looking to establish Neighbourhood Resilience Plans.

9. FINANCE

9.1 Payments for August 2021 were approved as presented.

It was resolved that items 10-12 should be considered at the end of the meeting after the resolution to exclude the public and press (decisions made noted in original agenda order).

10. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR WAYLAND HALL

Quotes received for a Fire Risk Assessment of Wayland Hall were considered. **It was resolved that**, following due diligence and an assurance that sub-contracting will not be taking place, the quote of £450 plus VAT to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment of Wayland Hall would be accepted.

11. TREE WORKS

Resolved to consider the quote for tree works at a later date following a meeting with a representative from the Loch Neaton Charity.

Consideration will need to be given to the allocation for tree works within the 2021/22 budget.

12. CHRISTMAS LIGHTING 2021

Resolved to postpone any decision being made regarding appointing a contractor to supply the Christmas Lighting for 2021 until points relating to the contract have been clarified.

It is likely there is insufficient money allocated in the 2021/22 budget for the Christmas lights and money may need to be added to the budget line.

Debate took place regarding the due diligence undertaken when appointing contractors and procedure will be reviewed with any suggested changes to Standing Orders to be considered by the Finance Committee before presentation to Full Council. A clause will be added to any contracts to state work should not be sub-contracted.

It was resolved that the Finance Committee will compile a list of approved contractors which the Town Council will approach when quotes are being sought. The list to be in place by January 2022.

13. WALSINGHAM GATES and FLAGPOLE

It was resolved not to engage a consultant to assist with progressing works to Walsingham Gates but to approach English Heritage about possible grant funding for works and to include provision of a flagpole for the town within the Market Town Initiative if possible.

14. POLICIES/PROCEDURES

14.1 The Appraisal Policy was reviewed with amended staff appraisal forms accepted as presented.

14.2 The Disaster Plan was accepted as presented.

15. PLANNING

15.1 3PL/2021/1157/HOU – Proposed rear extension and internal alterations 54 Dereham Road, Watton

No comments

16. Resolution passed to exclude members of the public and press

16.1 Market gazebos and Church Walk benches

Concern was voiced that the company engaged to install the benches at Church Walk have used sub-contractors to undertake other work for the Town Council. As the benches at Church Walk have not yet been installed **it was resolved** that the company should be instructed to site the benches within the next fortnight or return them to the Town Council.

16.2 Charity Land Ownership

The Report commissioned by the Town Council to clarify ownership and responsibility for land for which the Town Council is Custodian Trustee was received and accepted as a helpful document.

The Loch Neaton Working Party will be re-convened to consider the Town Council's future input at the Loch. At present planned tree works will be put on hold and the Working Party will bring a proposal back to Full Council as to how to move forward.

It was noted a neighbour of Loch Neaton Recreation Ground has written a letter of concern regarding trees from the Loch which overhang his property.