

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on
Tuesday October 12th 2021 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at
Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton IP25 6AG

Councillors Present: Jane Fountain - Chairman, Peter Bishop, 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

Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Tina Kiddell and Beryl Bunning

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:

As a Trustee, Kathryn Stallard declared an interest in anything relating to the Museum4Watton.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on September 28th 2021 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Written report updating on items from the meeting on 28.09.21 was included within the agenda pack with updated verbal report given at the meeting:

- Loch Neaton Working Party meeting scheduled for October 25th @2pm
- Parish Partnerships will be an agenda item again once a meeting has been held between the Highway Engineer and County Councillor Claire Bowes
- A virtual meeting has been scheduled for November 8th @2pm with the Manager of Parking Operations West
- An upgraded webcam is to be installed in the Council Chamber on October 21st

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

29.09.21 Future Breckland virtual meeting

04.10.21 Meeting with Christmas Lights contractor

06.10.21 Virtual meeting with Simon Wood, Breckland District Council Director of Planning and Building Control

07.10.21 As a trustee of Loch Neaton - Meeting with HATCH as part of Future Breckland engaging with charities in Watton. Meeting also attended by the Pat Warwick as Chairman of the Loch Neaton Committee.

10.10.21 Dereham Civic Service, accompanied by an Air Cadet acting as the Mayors consort.

11.10.21 Festive Market meeting

The Chairman has undertaken a visual survey of buildings within the High Street and Middle Street in order to compile a report to be submitted to Breckland District Council outlining planning matters that Breckland District Council could issue enforcement procedures against. This would include dealing with what could be classed as untidy land and unauthorised signage. Members of the public who raised concerns will be informed of the action taken.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman attended the Finance Committee meeting held on 01.10.21.

4.3 Clerk's/Deputy Clerk's Report

Written report issued with the agenda pack and further update e-mailed 11.10.21.

Verbal report given:

Skip Hire

A skip has been hired for the week beginning Oct. 18th. The skip will be sited at the Linmore Unit and the intention is to clear anything no longer needed from Wayland Hall, ready for the work in the Chamber, and to throw away any accumulated rubbish which has been collected and stored in the Unit. The Museum 4 Watton has provided information about the Chamber Refurbishment Project including current costings, expected suppliers and a spreadsheet of dates when it is hoped works will be undertaken. The Museum Report was accepted and it was also requested that the Town Council set up an account with Wolseley at Thetford, who will be supplying new radiators for the Chamber.

Walsingham Gates

The Town Council is still waiting to hear about the condition report commissioned for the Walsingham Gates and a second blacksmith who is prepared to quote for any works has been approached.

Following correspondence received concerning rights along Church Walk it is suggested a Church Walk Working Group meeting is held to further investigate responsibility of Church Walk and to look at what work should be undertaken to the gates.

Noted that Norfolk County Council Highways has resurfaced two areas towards the town end of Church Walk where the tarmac was in particularly poor condition.

Clock Tower

The Annual service of the clock took place on Monday October 11th 2021.

Cemetery Working Group

Following a further request by a member of the public for a memorial bench it is suggested the Cemetery Working Group should schedule a meeting to consider a policy for such requests.

Bridle Road Play Area

Repairs to equipment as agreed following the Annual Play Inspection Report were undertaken w/b 04.10.21.

Erosion of the sides of some of the pump track mounds has exposed that the mounds appear to be quite hollow. This has been reported to the installer and the original grounds maintenance contractor has been instructed to return and fill in the voids.

Memorial Plaque

Letter received regarding presentation of memorial plaques to commemorate community resilience during the Covid pandemic.

Update on s106 Officer's Mess site

Bennetts have stated that "a Deed of Variation to the s106 planning has been drafted by Bennetts solicitor, who has contacted Breckland's solicitor to progress and agree this.

The transfer document itself was agreed with Breckland a couple of years ago so this second stage in the process should not take long."

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Liz Witcher, the Chairman of the Watton and Swaffham Flood Action Group was present to speak at item 13.

Liz also informed the Council that she has sent a letter of concern to Breckland District Council regarding the drainage strategy accepted for the Norwich Road Officer's Mess development site. It was suggested a site meeting should be arranged with the developers which will be attended by Liz, the Town Council Chairman and Cllr. Stan Hebborn. There is concern regarding the capacity and management of the planned on site attenuation tanks and responsibility for the drainage system must be acknowledged before transfer of the land to the Town Council.

6. FINANCE

6.1 The draft minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on October 1st were received and accepted.

The Following recommendations were considered and agreed:

- i. **Recommendation that** one unused Surface Pro laptop be dedicated to be used for Watton Emergency Planning
- ii. **Recommendation that** the Council supports the re-decoration of the Office Foyer and associated areas.
- iii. **Recommendation that** a project be investigated to repair the plinth of the Watton town sign, to include the possibility that this area might also locate a town flagpole.
- iv. **Request** to be made that the Town Council "writes-off" any unwanted furniture and crockery. Investigation will be made as how best to dispose of any goods which are not needed by the Town Council.

7. REMEMBRANCE TOMMY

It was resolved not to purchase a Remembrance Tommy but to put an item on the next Town Council agenda to allocated £200 to purchase more large display poppies and also give a donation of £300 to an appropriate Service charity.

It was acknowledged that the annual poppy display in the town is facilitated by Cllrs Hebborn and Prince putting the poppies up and the Town Operative assisting by removing the poppies.

8. ARMED FORCES PLEDGE

The Armed Forces Pledge was agreed as presented once slight amendment has been made as suggested, including a clause that the pledge should be reviewed annually.

Thanks were voiced to Cllr. Prince for tailoring the draft pledge.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

The Health & Safety Policy was ratified as presented.

The Risk Assessment Plan was reviewed and accepted, with slight amendment to be made as suggested.

10. LEAD COUNCILLORS

Lead Councillor positions were reviewed with it note that there is no longer any Councillor directly associated with the Men's Shed so there will no longer be a Rep. in this role.

Kris Moore volunteered to be the second Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel Rep. along with Pat Warwick.

James Wooler was confirmed to be the Liaison Councillor with Watton Sports Centre. The Sports Association will be made aware of this decision, and it will be made clear that James is not a Committee 'Rep' or a Council Trustee for the Sports Association.

Jane Fountain and Kris Moore offered to be Lead Councillors for Emergency Planning. James Wooler took on the role of Lead Councillor for the Public Toilets to assist the Clerk to investigate possible refurbishment of the toilets. Don Saunders also offered his help with this.

11. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

It was agreed to accept the quotes for the 2021 Christmas Lights display as presented.

12. CORRESPONDENCE FROM SAM CHAPMAN-ALLEN

Sam Chapman-Allen, Leader of Breckland District Council, had been unable to attend the previous Town Council meeting as scheduled but answers to questions submitted to him have been received and were considered. **It was agreed** that Councillors who felt their questions had not been answered should compile a response to be sent back to the Leader.

Sam Chapman-Allen will again be asked to attend a Watton Town Council meeting.

It was noted that the meeting with Simon Wood, attended by some Councillors, also raised further questions particularly around s106 contributions and the lack of action by Breckland District Council (BDC) which has resulted in the loss of an open space land contribution for the development at Tom Turley Close. This matter will also be raised again with BDC who will be asked what they can do for Watton to compensate for the loss.

13. PLANNING

13.1 3PL/2021/1329/HOU - Rear garden summer house (retrospective) - WATTON: 12 Sharman Avenue

Councillors were provided with a copy of the representation submitted by The Watton and Swaffham Flood Action Group for this application.