

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on
Tuesday September 28th 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, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Kathryn Stallard, Pat Warwick, James Wooler.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

District/County Councillor Claire Bowes and 3 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM

Keith Gilbert, Tina Kiddell and Kris Moore

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:

Jane Fountain declared an interest in items 8 and 12 and Pat Warwick declared an interest in item 12.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2021 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Written report presented updating on items from the meeting on 14.09.21

- It was noted that the contractor who undertook the tree survey of the embankment at Loch Neaton has confirmed that all trees were surveyed at the time, but it is suggested a further survey could be undertaken following the completion of the works identified. Recommendation is that a professional tree survey should be undertaken every other year.
- The Loch Neaton Working Party will meet to consider the draft Memorandum of Understanding relating to Loch Neaton, before the document is presented to the Full Council.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

- 21.09.21 Norfolk Club House Mental Health Hub at the Youth & Community Centre
- 22.09.21 Loch Neaton AGM
- 24.09.21 Watton PPG/Medical Practise Community Engagement Event
- 27.09.21 NP Meeting

The Chairman informed the meeting that, if it is acceptable to the host, she will invite an Air Cadet to attend events with her when her consort is unavailable.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman attended the Breckland Twilight Supper on September 17th.

4.3 District Councillors Report

District Councillor Claire Bowes gave a verbal report which included:

- Future Breckland - Breckland Thriving People and Places initiative for Watton. This initiative seeks to understand the needs and interests of residents and businesses in the town. Consultants HATCH and We Made That have been tasked with compiling a Town Delivery

Plan based on a robust evidence base and shared vision for the future for the Town. Engagement is under way, with the consultants to be at the Wednesday Market on 29th September and an intervention workshop planned for October 20th.

- Norfolk County Council is welcoming applications and offers of support to help achieve an ambitious plan to plant 1 million trees across the County, as part of wider aims to deliver lasting environmental benefits throughout Norfolk.

It was noted that the HR Committee had met and a suggestion was made that the Chairman might write individually to all staff to recognise their contributions to keep the Council Office and services running during the pandemic.

4.4 County Councillors Report

County Councillor Claire Bowes spoke at item 15 regarding the Parish Partnership Scheme.

4.5 Police Report

No Police attending the meeting but reminder given that the next Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP) Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall on October 6th 2021 @ 7pm.

4.6 Clerk's Report

Written report issued with the agenda pack.

Verbal update given

- Public Space Protection Order for Watton sealed 19.07.21.
- The former Uniter Bunker RAF Watton is to be auctioned. The Museum 4 Watton would hope this building can be kept intact and an application for it to be registered has been submitted.
- Norfolk Association of Local Councils is overseeing the distribution of "Memorial Token" plaques to communities to mark the pandemic.
- 2021 marks 100 years since the nation's collective Remembrance traditions were first brought together and the Royal British Legion is again asking communities to consider purchase of a "Tommy" figure.
- The public toilets have temporarily been closed as the cleaner is unable to attend due to the current fuel crisis.
- A meeting has been arranged with the 2021 Christmas Lights contractor - Monday October 4th 10.00am at Wayland Hall.

5. ADDRESS BY LEADER OF BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Leader of Breckland District Council, Sam Chapman-Allen was scheduled to attend this meeting but due to last minute commitments he was unable to attend. Answers to questions which had been submitted to him in anticipation of his attendance at the meeting have however been forwarded to Councillors. Questions and answers will be posted on the Town Council website and the Council will consider the answers at the next Town Council meeting.

6. WORKS IN PROGRESS LIST

The Works in progress list as presented was reviewed with points raised:

- The Manager of Parking Operations West will be invited to attend a future Town Council meeting.
- Noted that the Heritage Signs Working Group is scheduled to meet on 29.09.21.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Noted that Sam Chapman-Allen has been in contact with a member of the public who has been asked to arrange a meeting, not necessarily a Town Council meeting, which he will attend. This matter will be discussed at the next Town Council meeting.

The Town Council will respond to concerns about shabby buildings along the High Street by submitting a list of those properties of concern to Breckland District Council Enforcement Team.

Confirmation was given that following legal scrutiny it has been established that the embankment at Loch Neaton is owned by the Loch Neaton Charity.

It was noted by a member of the public that there is s106 money available for the town which is yet to be spent.

Liz Whitcher as Chairman of the Watton and Saham Flood Action Group was present to speak on items 14 and 16.

8. FINANCE

8.1 Payments for Approval were accepted as presented.

It was noted an investment £150000 is to be made with CCLA (Churches, Charities and Local Authorities).

9. BENCHES FOR CHURCH WALK

It was resolved to accept the quote of £1000 plus VAT to install three benches at Church Walk.

10. TREE WORKS

It was resolved to accept the one quote received to undertake the tree works as identified on the Tree Survey undertaken earlier in the year. The cost of the works is above that set in the budget for tree works in 2021 and thus money will need to be vired from another budget code line.

11. WEBCAM

It was resolved to accept the quote of £414.87 plus VAT to upgrade the conferencing video camera in the Council Chamber.

12. LOCH NEATON GRANT APPLICATION

It was resolved to grant £500 to the Loch Neaton Charity as applied for.

13. TRUSTEE FOR STEVENS ALMSHOUSES CHARITY

Beryl Bunning volunteered to be the Town Council nominated Trustee for the Stevens Almshouses Charity.

14. EMERGENCY PLANNING

Liz Whitcher as Chairman of the Watton and Saham Flood Action Group had submitted and spoke on the draft documents she has compiled relating to an Emergency Plan for Watton. The initial draft focuses on how to deal with flooding issues but it is hoped that in time the plan can be used to deal with any other emergency. Volunteers will be needed!

The Council accepted the draft documents as presented and consideration will be given at the next Full Council meeting to appointing a Lead Councillor for Emergency Planning. The Council will also consider allocation of a laptop to be used solely for Emergency Planning.

A review of all Lead Councillor positions will be undertaken at the next meeting.

15. PARISH PARTNERSHIP

The County Councillor was asked to obtain costs for four possible projects the Town Council will consider submitting to Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme:

- Trod for Thetford Road from Saddlers Rise to the roundabout
- Trod for Norwich Road
- Lighting for the High Street bus shelters
- Works to improve the drainage of Watton Restricted Byway 2 off Brandon Road

Application to the Parish Partnership Scheme will be an agenda item again at a future meeting once costs have been obtained. The Scheme is open until 10th December 2021.

16. PLANNING

- 16.1 3PL/2019/0991/D - Reserved matters application for residential development of 177 dwellings following outline permission 3PL/2015/0254/O - Development Site Mallard Road Watton - Tesni Properties Limited & Land Owners - AMENDMENT: Amended plans

Council happy to support comments submitted by the Watton and Saham Toney Flood Action Group

- 16.2 3PL/2021/1292/F - Change of Use of Part Ground Floor from Hairdressers to Residential (C3 - Dwellinghouse). - WATTON: 35 Thetford Road

Support