

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL Finance Committee

held on October 1st 2021 at Wayland Hall

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

Officer Present: Jane Scarrott Town Clerk

Members previously presented with Budget Update and Bank Reconciliation for 13.09.21.

1. NO APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED

Noted that Sue Hebborn joined the meeting during item 3.

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3(i) The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10.09.21 were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3(ii). Update from the meeting held on 10.09.21

- It is hoped the original blacksmith who was contacted to compile a report on Walsingham gates is still planning to undertake this but a second blacksmith has now also been contacted. English Heritage will also be approached
- Asset list being compiled relating to works needed – agenda item 7.
- Cars parking on the grass at the Bridle Way Play Area will continue to be monitored by staff but it is felt that vehicles are often parked outside working hours so this is difficult to check.
- Working Group met on 29.09.21 to consider Heritage Signs for the town. An Action Plan has been drawn up.
- A suggestion has been made that one of the 2 old Surface Pro laptops which are no longer used by Office staff could be donated to the Flood Action Group to use as a dedicated computer for Emergency Planning. The second laptop could be used by the Town Operative. A recommendation will be made to the Full Council for one Surface Pro to be dedicated for use for Watton Emergency Planning.
- Recommended works to the play equipment following the annual inspection reports have been commissioned with safety surface issues to be monitored by the Town Operative.
- The Admin Support Clerks laptop has been ungraded and an improved webcam is to be installed in the Council Chamber. The webcam will be linked to the current audio recording equipment to improve sound whilst streaming meetings.
- Quotes are being sought for works identified in the recent Wayland Hall Building Report as being in most need of attention. It was noted that it is however proving quite difficult at the present time to find contractors willing to quote for works. Investigation is ongoing as to whether Wayland Hall needs lightning protection and a Maintenance Inspection Schedule for Wayland Hall, based on the Building Report, has been compiled.
- The Office is putting together a list of current contractors used by the Town Council.

4. RECENT EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET POSITION

- Bank Reconciliation dated 13.09.21 was accepted and signed by Peter Bishop as Internal Control Officer.
- Presented budget update showed current expenditure against the budget. It was noted there is an overspend against the IT line and programmed tree works will cost more than the sum allocated in the 2021/22 budget.
- Consideration will be given to future replacement of the town van. Don Saunders offered to investigate possible lease of a vehicle and expenditure will be included within the 3yr plan.
- Noted that Cemetery [allotment and market] fees should be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.
- 2022/23 Budget will be considered at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

5. BRIDLE ROAD GOAL POSTS

It was agreed a cost should be established to re-install a 5 a side goal post at Bridle Road Play Area.

6. DECORATION OF THE OFFICE FOYER

A quote has been requested to undertake re-decoration of the Town Council Office Foyer. This will be a recommendation for Full Council.

7. ASSET REPAIR LIST

Following incorporation of suggestions made, Draft 3 of the Asset Maintenance List will be presented to the Finance Committee at the next meeting (copy attached).

8. 3YR BUDGET PLANNING

- £30,000 to be included each year for provision of Christmas lighting
- Increase IT annual budget to £8000
- Add replacement of van to yr 2 - £40,000 to be allocated
- Include bus shelter refurbishment when more information is available
- Include replacement of Cemetery benches in yr 1
- £25000 to be allocated annually for works to Wayland Hall

9. DATE OF NEXT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING:

Thursday November 11th @ 2.00pm – Initial 2022/23 Budget discussions

For Town Council Agenda:

- 1. Recommendation that** one unused Surface Pro laptop be dedicated to be used for Watton Emergency Planning
- 2. Recommendation that** the Council supports the re-decoration of the Office Foyer and associated areas.
- 3. 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 flag pole.

4. **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.