

Minutes of Watton Town Council Finance Committee Meeting

held on April 14th 2022, at Wayland Hall.

Present: Kathryn Stallard – Chairman, Peter Bishop, Pat Warwick

1. Apologies received from Don Saunders
 2. No Declarations of Interest made.
 3. Minutes of the previous meeting
- (i) The Minutes of the meeting held on 10.03.22 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- (ii) Update from items in the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10.03.22
- **Bridle Road** – Parking on the grass at the Bridle Road Play Area was an agenda item at the Full Council meeting on April 12th and will be so again at the Full Council meeting on July 27th.
 - **Church Walk** - Signage stating that vehicular access along Church Walk is only permitted for Linden Court has been erected on the gates at the town end of Church Walk.
 - **Wayland Hall** -Legionella risk assessment for Wayland Hall will now be booked as the majority of works are complete in the Chamber.
The Fire Risk Assessment undertaken for Wayland Hall suggested that an upgrade to the fire alarm system is needed. Further investigation will be undertaken to establish what works may be necessary, particularly within the Council Chamber.
 - Tree survey for 2022 has been undertaken. Quotes are being sought for identified works.
 - The list of all Council owned assets will be reviewed both for insurance purposes and to ensure all land and building assets have ownership registered .
 - Noted that replacement of the town van is within the Council's 3 year financial planning. At the moment, the Town Operative feels the present van is adequate for the Council's needs.
 - The Town Clock is not being wound at present due to issues regarding access.
 - An initial draft plan to refurbish the public toilets will be brought to the Finance Committee meeting in June.
 - The Town Council is in receipt of an e-mail dated 08.04.22 updating on Breckland District Council Market Town Initiative (MTI) spending. It is felt unlikely that there would be any MTI funding towards the Town Council's proposed project to replace the flower tubs in the High Street and the litter bins throughout the parish. Cllr Peter Bishop is leading on this initiative and will report to the Finance Committee in June.
- (iii) Matters raised by Full Council
- Noted that the events budget update presented by the PEPSO was manageable within the relevant cost centre.

- Hares Green – At the Town Council meeting on April 26th 2022 the Council will consider a revised proposition from the developer relating to the adoption of the open space at Hares Green.

4. **Bank Reconciliation**

Bank reconciliation for 07.03.22 presented and accepted. Checked and signed by Cllr Bishop as Internal Control Officer.

5. **IT**

As part of an upgrade to the Office IT support and phone provision Council is looking to provide a .gov e-mail address for all Councillors which could be undertaken.

It was felt that all related communications policies should be reviewed with a recommendation to be made to Full Council:

In light of rising costs and improvements in technology it is recognised that the Councils Expenses Policy, the Communications Policy and the Social Media Policy are in need of review. Policies need to be consistent and should be reviewed in time to be implemented by the newly elected Council in May 2023.

Once policies have been reviewed the Council will be in a better position to know what IT service provision will be needed moving forward.

6. **Financial Report**

Financial Report to be available at the Annual Town Meeting was agreed (copy attached).

7. **Council Newsletter**

A suggested draft of the Council Newsletter, to be first issued in May 2022, was considered with suggestions given for content. Councillors will be invited to feed news into the Office for possible future publication.

Suggestion made to add Lead Councillor positions to the Councillor list on the Town Council website.

8. **Budget and 3 Year Planning**

- 3 year plan to be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting
- Impact of possible legal fees to be recognised within the budget.
- To note: energy costs are expected to increase significantly.
- Recommendation made that Civic Policy should be reviewed in June 2022.

9. **Date of next Finance Committee Meeting:**

Thursday May 12th 2022 at 1.30pm.

Agenda items/Recommendations to Full Council:

1. In light of rising costs and improvements in technology it is recognised that the Councils Expenses Policy, the Communications Policy and the Social Media Policy are in need of review. Policies need to be consistent and should be reviewed in time to be implemented by the newly elected Council in May 2023.
2. To Review Civic Policy in June 2022.