

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on
Tuesday 28th June 2022 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at
Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton IP25 6AG

Councillors Present: Sue Hebborn –Chairman, Tobi Amadasun, Peter Bishop, Beryl Bunning, Jane Fountain, Keith Gilbert, Charlotte Greenough, Stan Hebborn, 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 AND ACCEPTED FROM

Tina Cruz, Tina Kiddell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:

Sue Hebborn declared an interest in item 7.1

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2022 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Written report presented updating on items from the meeting on 14.06.22

- Office investigating purchase of suitable portable flagpole
- NCC informed that Watton would want to be included in the proposed bid to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund. Clerk and Cllr Warwick attended EVC webinar 15.06.22 - slides shared with Cllrs.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

16th June attended Finance Committee Meeting.

17th June Visited Pensthorpe Park with the visitors from Weeze and the Watton Twinning Association.

18th June 10am Welcomed the Twinning Association and their guests from Weeze.

Gifts were exchanged, with the Twinning Association also presenting the Town Council with an engraved memento to commemorate 35 years of the Twinning Association. Items are displayed in the Council Chamber.

11.00am The Chairman was one of the judges for the Town Criers competition. Unfortunately the weather was not good and so not as many people attended as had been hoped. It was however the first such event for Watton and so hopefully there will be many more to come. Thanks were voiced to Watton Town Crier Mike Wabe and his wife Caroline for organizing the event.

Evening - The Mayor attended the open house for the German visitors.

24th June The Mayor attended the lighting of the beacon at Loch Neaton for mid-summer. There was an interesting display of times gone by in Watton and how the Loch used to look. People were encouraged to take a picnic and enjoy the evening, which several families did.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended the June 16th Finance Committee meeting, the Town Crier Competition and Weeze welcoming on the 18th, met with the grounds maintenance contractor on the 21st and attended the Charlotte Harvey Trust Management Committee meeting on June 24th.

4.3 District Councillors Report

Written Report received from Tina Kiddell passed to Councillors.

Keith Gilbert reported that trees planted by Breckland District Council need a maintenance program.

4.4 County Councillor Report

County Councillor not present (apologies noted and accepted) and no report received.

4.5 Clerk's Report

Written report issued with the agenda pack with verbal update given.

S106

Breckland Council s106 Monitoring & Compliance Officer has informed that the s106 Lovell Garden contribution was paid in instalments, and spend date is always 5 years from the date of the final payment (5/9/17 & 23/10/19). Therefore, **22/10/24** is the date the money needs to be spent by, so there is some time to consider what new equipment would be best for the play area. Payments received - £22,896.10 Phase 1 (Lovell Gardens) & £37,394.86 Phase 2 (Lovell Gardens) - To be use for improvements to LEAP at Lovell Gardens.

Reclaim the Rain

<https://www.reclaimtherain.org/project-news>

Liz Whitcher attended the meeting to update on the Reclaim the Rain project. Watton and Merton is one of only six communities across Norfolk and Suffolk to be part of the project.

Members of the Reclaim the Rain Project Team visited Watton on 23.06.22.

Public Toilets

Refurbishment of the toilets is under consideration and a meeting will be held on 04.07.22 with a contractor who provides public toilets.

Parish Partnership Scheme

Norfolk County Council has announced that the Highways Parish Partnership Scheme is to run again in 2022/23.

Antiques Street Market

Keith Gilbert volunteered to help man the road closure for the Antiques Market on 03.07.22.

4.6 Update from Watton and Saham Flood Action Group (WASFAG)

Two written reports from Liz Whitcher, Chairman of WASFAG had been presented to Councillors prior to the meeting.

It was suggested an item should be included on the next Town Council agenda to agree a Lead Councillor for the Reclaim the Rain project and whether the Council Emergency Planning Group should also work on the project rather than establishing another working group.

Liz Whitcher was applauded for all the work she has undertaken as part of WASFAG and for submitting the application which has brought the exciting Reclaim the Rain project to Watton.

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS LIST

The Works in Progress list was accepted as presented.

Noted that the street light columns in the High Street have still not been re-painted as has been previously promised. Amey's who will be undertaking the work cannot give any dates for when this will be undertaken.

It was noted that the High Street is generally beginning to look tidier but there is still more work needed. This will be an agenda item for the next Town Council meeting on July 12th.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Liz Whitcher, as Chairman of the Watton and Swaffham Flood Action Group (WASFAG) was present and spoke at item 4.6.

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for Approval for June were accepted as presented with the addition of:

Loch Neaton Donation £50

NT Services £72

NPS Group £3840

7.2. The draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 16.06.22 were received.

7.3 **Finance** Committee recommendations to Full Council:

i. **It was resolved** to accept the review of the Expenses Policy with the only suggested amendment being to include the months when the Chairman's Allowance should be paid: May, August, November and February.

ii. **It was resolved** that the Communications Policy and Social-Media Policy should be merged into one document. Cllr Hebborn offered to assist with this.

7.4 The Internal Auditors Report for 21/22 was accepted as presented.

7.5 The Annual Governance Statement 21/22 was agreed and signed.

7.6 The Accounting Statements for the financial year ending 31.03.22 were approved and signed.

8. ARCHIVE POLICY AND STANDING ORDERS

Having been reviewed, **it was resolved**, to accept the Archive Policy as presented with the addition of an appendix giving the 13.08.19 agreed protocol for "Council Decisions Extracted from Minutes Books".

To ensure procedures align **it was resolved** to remove the words "or recordings" from Standing Order 12f.

9. CLOCK TOWER QUINQUENNIAL REPORT

The Clock Tower Quinquennial Report was accepted as presented. The Finance Committee will consider cost implications and budgeting for the suggested works.

It was resolved that NPS who undertook the Report will be approached to advise on implementing the recommendations, preparing a specification, seeking tenders and overseeing the repairs.

10. CEMETERY WORKING GROUP MEETING 28.06.22

Recommendations made at the Cemetery Working Group meeting held prior to the Town Council meeting:

- Councillors had previously been presented with a letter regarding cemetery fees. The request for review of the fees was considered but consensus was that current fees are to be charged.
- Draft Memorials Policy
Following requests received from relatives for memorial benches to be placed in the town a draft policy for the provision of memorials has been researched. Discussion took place regarding different types of memorials and possible locations. It was felt at this time there is no space for further memorial benches either in Watton cemetery or around the town. However the Council is open to suggestions for how memorial provision could include other options in the future.
- Ashes plots within an existing burial plot
With more requests being made for the ashes to be interred in existing burial plots consideration needs to be given to the number of ashes one plot could hold. Guidelines should be set and local undertakers will be approached for advice.
- Charge for replacement memorials in the Cemetery
A request has been received to replace an existing single memorial and kerb surround in the old part of the Cemetery with a single headstone between two burial plots. It was agreed this is acceptable as long as it creates no disturbance to the ground (as this could mean a Diocese Faculty application would be needed). The usual charge for erection of a memorial will be made.
- Update on other cemetery matters:
Repair of cemetery water pump
The Cemetery water pump is broken and in need of quite major repair in that a new top part will need to be made. This has been quoted as £200 upwards.

The water quality from the Cemetery borehole has never been tested and the cost to do this is being investigated as consideration should be given to risk assessment re. use of the water.

Agreed that the Clerk will proceed to arrange for the water to be tested and the pump to be repaired as within agreed financial spend.

11. PLANNING

Noted that District Councillor Keith Gilbert is a member of the Breckland District Council Planning Committee and he chooses to abstain from commenting on applications brought before the Town Council for consultation.

11.1 3PL/2022/0687/VAR - Variation of Condition 2 on 3PL/2019/1554/D: To enable construction of a single garage at 20 Fairhead Way (Plot 60) - WATTON: 20 Fairhead Way (Plot 60)

No comments

11.2 3OB/2022/0041/OB - 3PL/2021/0032/F - Application for approval of the open space scheme as required by Schedule 2 of the S106 agreement - WATTON: Land North of Norwich Road

No comments

Cllr Fountain is looking at permitted use class changes with regard to shop storage in Watton High Street and this matter will be an agenda item for the meeting on July 12th.

Noted that a planning consultation to install two digital 75 inch LCD Display Screens on a Street Hub Unit outside Chaston Place has been received and will be an agenda item for 12.07.22, and that application 3PL/2022/0398/F to site 6 mobile homes on land to the rear of Dorrington House has been referred to the Breckland Planning Committee.

12. Resolution passed to Exclude the Press and Public

12.1 Church Walk

It was agreed that the Town Operative will be instructed to put together a programme of work to clean and paint the Walsingham Gates.

12.2 Legal Matters update

Councillors were presented with an update on the current position of various ongoing legal matters relating to land transfer and registration. Report attached.