

Minutes of the meeting of WATTON TOWN COUNCIL held on
Tuesday November 22nd 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 – Vice-Chairman, Beryl Bunning, Jane Fountain, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Don Saunders, Kathryn Stallard, Pat Warwick

Officer present: Michelle Thompson Deputy Clerk

1 members of the public present – Tom Navarro Wayland News Editor

Also, present PC Austin Clarke and Inspector Shaun Baker

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED

Tina Cruz, Tina Kiddell, James Wooler, Keith Prince and Claire Bowes

It was agreed to send Tina Cruz a Card and a bunch of flowers to wish her well.

It was noted that apologies have again been received from a District and County Councillor who both receive an allowance which covers them to look after all villages and parishes under their responsibilities but it is felt that Watton is being neglected and their purpose isn't being fulfilled.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

Beryl Bunning declared an interest in item 7.1 and item 9

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on November 8th 2022 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Written report presented updating on items from the meeting on 08.11.22

- No quote received to date for clearing the gutters at Wayland Hall
- Further information has been obtained from the 864 Watton Squadron regarding their Grant Application request.
- UK Power Network has attended the site but is unable to assist unless a new electricity supply is undertaken which would cost thousands. We are awaiting another quote from Smiths of Derby for a cheaper solution but mains power would still be needed. The office is looking to arrange a meeting with Paul Adcock regarding electricity supply.
- Planters are now in place around the perimeter of Bridle Road Play Area.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

On Wed 9th November, I attended the Remembrance parade at Wretham

On Thurs 10th November I attended the finance Meeting.

On Wed 12th November, I attended the service of remembrance at the commonwealth war graves at St Marys.

On Sun 13th November, I attended the Watton Town Council act of remembrance at the War Memorial and then at St Marys.

On Thurs, 17th November, I attended the meeting hosted by Breckland in the council chamber regarding ***Unlocking Your Place Potential' with The High Streets Task Force's direct support.***

This is where my report would usually end, but not today. Part of the rationale that Jane Fountain nominated me as Chair is that I sit back, take it in and then give/take constructive criticism.

Two such meetings in my report have caused me to do just that.

Finance meeting: I was horrified to learn how much is spent photocopying agendas and attachments. Do ten councillors really need these? We agreed to move towards being a greener council. Have a think about what we really need the office to send out. Could you bring laptops or tablets to follow in the meeting or watch the TV screen where it is shown?

There were many valid and interesting points brought up at the Breckland meeting. New enthusiastic and forward-thinking staff members attended. Suggestions put forward, which I feel once we have the report, we have to take further with ALL the community. Jane and I were informed that market town initiative money is still available. Did our Breckland councillors let us know? Are they the right people to represent us? I have asked that Jane be copied into all funding matters in future. As this money must be spent quickly, and there is a panel meeting on Thursday, I suggested that we put in for the clock to be repaired as we have all the quotes, and it's ready to go. Breckland seemed happy for this to go forward.

Searches on the internet provide very little information about Watton. To survive and move forward, we must promote the town working together with Breckland, partnerships and organisations within Watton. Too long have we been forgotten Watton? We are currently whingeing Watton, lets be **What's next for Watton** with a positive can-do Attitude.

Every year we hold a remembrance parade that we organise as a town council. Why is it left to the last minute to arrange road closures? We know when it will occur; let's get the request in at the beginning of the year. We need to work with our public services, not against them.

I am also aware that this could mean employing more staff, but if needed, our four-year plan must be adapted.

Chairmans report to be circulated to all councillors present and not present at the meeting

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

11th November – Remembrance Service at Chaston Place

12th November – Commonwealth War Graves Service at St Marys Church Yard

13th November - Attended Watton Remembrance Service and Parade at the War Memorial

14th November – HR Committee undertaking the Town Clerks Appraisal

15th November – Attended a meeting with Councillor Stallard, Councillor Jane Fountain and the Town Clerk at at County Hall with Norfolk County Council Officer Ian Sharman to discuss Church Walk.

22nd November – Thetford Food Hub with Councillor Stallard and new Watton Food Hub Supervisor Jo Howe.

Inspector Shaun Baker and PC Austin Clarke attended to talk about the change in policy regarding pre planned road closures. Norfolk Constabulary will always support local events where possible if

resources are available. For a pre-planned event the police do not have authority to close the road, but would have officers present at the events to support the community. Information was not widely shared as to why the Norfolk constabulary can no longer provide pre planned road closure. Traffic Management officer Steve Askew is liaising with NCC over the next few months to share information to all councils and safety Advisors Groups on what the police can and can't do and what options there are available. Inspector Shaun Baker would be willing to meet with the Town Clerk and Sue Dent to discuss the change in policy and legislation relating to road closures and pre planned closures.

4.3 District Councillor's Report Report given under item 14.

4.4 County Councillor' Report

County Councillor Claire Bowes gave her apologies and submitted a written report. It was agreed that the County Councillor be written to, to request that a written report is submitted a week in advance if unable to attend a Town Council meeting.

4.5 Clerk's Report

Written report issued with the agenda pack:

- The Wayland News has been taken over and will continue to be printed and published online.
- One quote has been received for hedging the front border of the area of land to the rear of the Hares Green estate.
The Council is considering the options to, in time, replace all the knee high post fencing around open spaces it has acquired. The transfer of the Hares Green open space is not yet finalised as the solicitors acting on behalf of the Town Council are still waiting on outstanding enquiries which are being worked through with Abel Homes before the transfer can be finalised. A second option could be to purchase through the Woodland Trust but this may need further research. Suggested that this matter be an agenda item again once the land is transferred to the Town Council.
- Peter Bishop, Kathryn Stallard, Jane Fountain and the Clerk visited County Hall on 15.11.22 to meet with Norfolk County Council Officer Ian Sharman to discuss Church Walk.
It is recognised that Church Walk is an ancient highway which the 1803 Enclosure Award set out as a public highway for the whole length and from side boundary to side boundary. It is most likely that no-one owns Church Walk but the land is vested to Highways.
Watton Town Council can be given licence to maintain the trees and verges of Church Walk as it has done for over 100 years. Ian Sharman is to confirm the correct procedure for issue of such a licence.
The concern regarding encroachment of Church Walk where a paved driveway has been installed will be investigated further by Ian and his team. It is possible a road traffic offence is being committed by anyone who drives over Church Walk footpath without having a private right to do so. The paving should not have been installed without a licence being granted.
- The first meeting of a possible Steering Group for the Reclaim the Rain project is on 30th November. The Steering Group will drive the project forward and will be concentrating on how to engage the wider community. Anglian Water have a project in Watton to reduce the amount of surface water going into their foul sewers and the they will be working in

partnership with the Reclaim the Rain project so they will also be present on the 30th November. Liz Whitcher will fill us in with more information!

5. **WORKS IN PROGRESS LIST**

The Works in Progress List was accepted as presented with the following amendment:

It was agreed to remove item 25 "To form a working group to consider an identity for the Town Council and possible new logo." from the works in progress list. It was felt that the current new logo being used is well liked and moving forward this logo should be used.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Tom Navarro the new editor of the Wayland News attended to observe the meeting. It is hoped that the Town Council will continue to work closely with the Wayland News moving forward.

7. **FINANCE**

7.1 Payments for Approval for November accepted as presented with the additions of £960.00 Sunbelt Remembrance Road Closure, £432.00 Circus Sensible for Entertainment at the Festive Market and £91.56 SFC Ltd for consumables.

7.2 Minutes from the Emergency Finance Meeting held on 08.11.22 were accepted as presented.

7.3. Minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on 10.11.22 were accepted as presented. It was noted that the Finance Committee have now started working on next year's budget and precept request. It is hoped that if the precept is to be increased that it will be in line with inflation.

8. **GRANT APPLICATION**

A grant application from the Watton Air Cadets was received.

It was resolved to not award the grant at this time. The Town Council are in full support of the Air Cadets but they will be asked to re-apply in the new financial year due to already receiving financial support recently.

9. **DONATION APPLICATION**

A donation application from Steven's Almhouses Charity was received.

It was resolved to defer the application to the next Town Council meeting and invite the Secretary and Treasurer of the Charity to attend.

10. **MACMILLIAN INITIATIVE**

The Town Council are in support of the Macmillian Initiative which provides financial advice and welfare benefit support to help maximise the income of people with cancer.

Councillor Amadasun has been looking to set up a cancer support group in Watton, Volunteers have come forward from Watton Medical Practice who could help with the setup of a group and also provide a room if required. Other options for room are the Watton Sports Centre or The Charlotte Harvey Trust.

11. **MAYORS CHAIN**

It was resolved to get the Mayor's chain repaired but with the long term plan to include replacement of the chain. It was agreed that the Heritage working group and Finance committee research options and create a project for this.

12. ASBESTOS REPORT

It was resolved to get the Asbestos Report undertaken on the Public Toilets at a cost of £275.00 plus VAT. The report is needed to commence works on refurbishing the public toilet block.

13. PLANNING

Noted that Keith Gilbert, as a member of the Breckland Council Planning Committee, took no part in agreeing comments made.

13 .1 3PL/2022/1238/HOU - Single storey front porch extension - WATTON: 11 Tedder Close

No comments

13.2 3DC/2022/0307/DOC - Discharge Of Condition 21(b) on 3PL/2018/0952/O - Land off Thetford Road WATTON

The full residential travel plan for Barratts –There is numerous corrections that need to be made to the Local Accessibility Audit:

5.17 No mention of Thetford Railway Station

5.21 Table 5.2

Public Houses – The Crown Pub is not mentioned

Places of Worship – Methodist Church and Pentecostal Church are not mentioned

Village hall – The Nearest would be Watton Youth and Community Centre, Harvey Street and Carbrooke Community Centre not Saham Toney Village Hall.

Playing Fields – does not include Bridle Road, Watton Sports Centre and Watton Youth and Community Centre.

Fire Station – Watton Fire Station is not mentioned

Rail Station – Attleborough or Thetford are not mentioned.

Leisure – Watton Sports Centre, Watton Youth and Community Centre, Loch Neaton, Queens Hall and Wayland Partnership are not mentioned.

13.3 3NM/2022/0108/NMA - Non Material Amendment to 3PL/2020/1367/HOU - Side extension no longer connected to garage and is positioned further forward - 55 Thetford Road IP25 6PN

No comments

14. Resolution passed to exclude the press and public to consider staffing matters

14.1 It was resolved to accept National Pay Offer for a flat rate payment of £1923.00 on each scale point with effect from 1st April 2022

District Councillor reported that he had attended an online meeting about Market Town Initiative (MTI) monies and the pedestrianisation of Middle Street. The current situation with the Middle Street project is running late. The preliminary works is being progressed but the money from the MTI must be spent by April 2023. It is believed that the Middle Street project will now not be funded by the MTI monies, meaning other funding options will be needed. Breckland District Council are currently looking for other projects around the town in which the MTI money can be used for.