

Minutes of Watton Town Council Finance Committee Meeting

held on August 10th 2023, at Wayland Hall.

Committee members present: Kathryn Stallard – Chairman, Peter Bishop and Sue Hebborn

Staff present: Jane Scarrott and Michelle Thompson

1. Apologies for absence received from:

Stan Hebborn, Tina Kiddell and Don Saunders

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

(i) The Minutes of the meeting held on 13.07.23 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

(ii) Update from items in the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13.07.23

- The project to install an electronic blind for the large end window in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall is progressing.
- Maintenance work on the clock tower building has been re-scheduled to take place w/b 14.08.23.
- A compound has been installed at the cemetery to hold two skips, one of which will store excess soil from grave excavations. Investigation will be undertaken regarding purchase of a small skip to hold the soil.
- The quote to provide an artificial Christmas tree and additional Christmas lights for 2023 was accepted by Full Council Meeting on July 25th 2023.
- The Play Area at Hares Green remains closed due to a problem with discolouration coming from the rubber surfaces. The Town Council insurers will be contacted for advice.
- The firm which holds the cleaning contractor for the public toilets has been taken over by another company. It is hoped that the new company will make contact with the Town Council in the near future. The current contract is a six month rolling contract with renewal due in November 2023.
- A copy of the accepted SAG notification and the Event Management Plan for the 2023 High Street Bike Event has been requested from the event organiser.
- All staff are to undertake IT training on 16.08.23 and the Council Office will be closed for the day.

(iii) Items raised at Full Council meeting 08.08.23:

- Noted that the Council has met with an Events Organiser with a view to how a professional company might assist with management of future events. However, the Town Council needs to agree what it would want an events management company to do this year and following years. It was suggested that a meeting should be held to decide what is wanted and once this is clear other event organisers will be approached.
- The Town Council has allocated the following money in the past month:

£5763 to the Heritage Boards Project

£5500 to the Bike Event 2023

£6253 donation to the Benjamin Foundation

£32615 to provide Christmas lights and an artificial Christmas tree for 2023

£1000 for an initial cut of the recently acquired Officer's Mess Site Alternative Community Land

£250 to investigate what works may need to be undertaken to the raised platform in Chaston Place to prepare it for the artificial Christmas tree

Funding for the above will be mostly taken from the Community Improvement Fund.

4. Bank Reconciliation

Bank reconciliation for 19.07.23 presented and accepted. Checked and signed by Cllr Bishop as Internal Control Officer.

It was agreed to accept the recommendation made during the recent check of the emergency lighting to replace four of the old emergency lights with new LED low level energy fittings at a cost of £173.32 plus VAT (within agreed spend).

Noted that the Council cannot register for the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) as the Council's annual budget is more than £430065.

(i) Photocopier

Quotes to replace the Office photocopier were considered but it was felt unnecessary to change the service contract at this time.

(ii) Bins at Public Toilets

There has been some concern that the nappy bins at the public toilets are being filled with bottles. Litter bins will be put into the toilets to see if this will help rather than arrange more frequent emptying of the sanitary and nappy bins.

5. Wayland Hall works

The Maintenance Checklist for Wayland Hall was reviewed and will be updated from discussions held.

A schedule for completing internal and possibly external checklists for the building needs to be incorporated into the regular tasks for the Town Operative. Investigation will be made as to whether any relevant training is available.

Staff first aid training needs will also be investigated.

6. Four Year Forecast

The Four Year Forecast was reviewed and will be updated from points raised.

7. Internal Audit 2023/24

A recommendation will be passed to the Full Council to accept the proposal received for the Internal Audit 2023/24.

8. Grant Funding for individuals

The Finance Committee will recommend to Full Council that, as it is felt that grants to individuals would be difficult to administer, it would better to keep a general fund available which could be of benefit to all young people of the town.

9. Date of next Finance Committee Meeting:

Thursday 28th September at 1:00pm

Recommendations for the next Full Council Meeting:

- To accept the proposal received for the 2023/24 Internal Audit.
- Not to administer grant funding for individuals but to keep a general fund available which could be of benefit to all young people of the town.