

## Minutes of the Watton Annual Town Meeting

held at Watton Sports Centre on April 16<sup>th</sup> 2024

Present: Peter Bishop (Chairman of Watton Town Council), District Councillors Mr K Gilbert (also Town Councillor) Ms T Kiddell (also Town Councillor) and Ms C Bowes (also County Councillor), 4 other members of Watton Town Council and 36 members of the public (many representing organisations in the town).

Also present Watton Town Council Clerk.

### **1. The minutes of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting were presented, agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.**

### **2. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman gave a report of Town Council activities over the past year. A copy of all reports received or given at the meeting will be made available on the Town Council website: [www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk)  
Town Council Financial Update also available.

### **3. District Councillors' Report**

Written reports were received from Claire Bowes, Tina Kiddell and Keith Gilbert.

### **4. County Councillor's Report**

Written report received from County Councillor Claire Bowes with verbal update given:

- Members budget has supported road safety measures in the town
- More cherry trees are planned for the High Street
- The scheduled 20mph speed limit through the High Street is about to be implemented
- The County Councillor has supported Parish Partnership schemes applied for by the Town Council.

### **5. Reports received from organisations which have received grants or donations from Watton Town Council in 2023**

- The Charlotte Harvey Trust (CHT) – written report received for the Community Hub and the Food Hub with verbal update given. Improvements are gradually being implemented at the CHT Community Centre and use of the facilities is growing.
- The Benjamin Foundation – written report received.
- Watton Carnival Committee - written report received.  
Noted that the 2024 carnival is to be held at Watton Sports Centre on July 14<sup>th</sup>.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Watton Guides and Rangers – written report received.
- 864 (Watton) Squadron – written report received with verbal thanks given to the Town Council for the grant received. The Town Council reciprocated the thanks for the assistance given by the Squadron in support of events

held in the town.

- Watton Twinning Association – written report received with request made for younger members to join the Association.
- Watton Junior Park Run – written report received.
- Wayland Men’s Shed - written report received. Verbal update given, noting that the Men’s Shed currently has 92 members.
- Watton Society - written report received. Information about the Society’s activities were also available at the meeting. The Watton Society was thanked for its assistance with the Watton Heritage Boards project.
- Wayland Chamber of Commerce - written report received with verbal update given. A business case for a £1m investment is being put together for the proposed Digital and Creative Media Centre to replace Wayland House. Thanks were voiced to Breckland Council and Officers within Andrew Holdsworth’s team for assisting with the business case which it is hoped will be available from September 2024 with possible build in 2025/6. Noted that the Watton Neighbourhood Plan has been through referendum (leaflet produced by the Watton Chamber of Commerce to support a “yes” vote) and the Plan is now live.

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has passed recommendations from the Plan to the Town Council for consideration at the Town Council meeting on 23.04.24.

- Watton Family Group - written report received with verbal update given.
- Watton Sports Association – presentation given with a copy of the slides received. It is noted that relationships between Watton Sports Association and the town and district councils are continually improving.

Noted that the Blenheim Social Club received a grant of £500 from the Town Council but no report has been received regarding how the grant has been used.

## **6. Reports received from local organisations**

- Watton Safer Neighborhoods Team – apologies received for non-attendance. Written report received.
- Watton and Saham Flood Action Group – written report received and verbal update given.
- Watton Ladies Group - written report received. Leaflets available and verbal invitation given for anyone to join the Group.
- Wayland Partnership Development Trust - written report received. Verbal update given with invitation to visit the Gallery for a coffee and a request for people to let the Partnership know if they would like to see basic computer skills training offered.
- Loch Neaton Committee - written report received with verbal update given informing that a raised rose garden is to be planted at the Loch.
- Watton Diabetic Support Group - written report received with verbal update given. The group is trying to keep running although it has little funds and is no longer associated with Diabetes UK.
- Inner Wheel Club – written report received.
- Watton Rotary Club - written report received with verbal update given.

- Museum4Watton – verbal update given. The Museum is planning a week of activities to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D Day landings supported by a grant from Breckland District Council.  
The Museum has acquired the pestle & mortar shop sign from the vacated Boots store at Chaston Place with the intention of restoring it.  
More volunteers are needed!
- Watton Medical Practice – written report received with verbal update given. It was noted that the Practice has challenges to face including the recruitment and retention of staff. Noted however an initiative from Breckland Council to fund 2 Community Health Workers to work with hard to reach residents is proving useful.

#### **7. Town Affairs/Matters raised by attendees**

No matters raised by those present.

***Reports available on the Town Council website***