

Minutes of Watton Town Council Finance Committee Meeting

held on April 25th 2024, at Wayland Hall.

Committee members present: Kathryn Stallard – Chairman, Peter Bishop, and Don Saunders.

Staff present: Jane Scarrott

1. Apologies for absence received from:
Tina Kiddell, Stan and Sue Hebborn

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

(i) The Minutes of the meetings held on 14.03.24 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

(ii) Update from items in the Minutes:

- Office IT equipment is being upgraded.
- Council logo plaques are ready to be collected.
- A Heritage Sign has been purchased for Lovell Gardens Play Area but this is still to be erected.
- Noted that a second van will be needed for the Town Operative 2. This will be an agenda item for the Town Council meeting on May 28th.

(iii) Items raised by Full Council

Noted that the Full Council has committed to the following expenditure:

- Additional solicitors fees of £600 relating to the transfer of the Thetford Road allotment land plus land search fees estimated at up to £850
- Grant to Loch Neaton £250 to support D Day commemoration
- Grant to Wayland Mens Shed £500
- Grant to Watton Society £500
- Grant to Watton Family Group £500
- Donation to Wayland Chamber for production of the 2024 Directory £1750
- Removal and storage of Walsingham Gates £500
- IT equipment £294
- Electrical work at Wayland Hall £970
- Logo plaques £920
- Safety matting for Lovell Gardens Play Area £458
- Relocation of pump track £458
- Re-siting of goals from Lovell Gardens to Bridle Road £1850

Noted that suggested required workwear for staff will be purchased.

4. **Expenditure**

- (i) Quotes received for the 5 year electrical testing at Wayland Hall were considered and it was agreed to authorise acceptance of the quote of £672 as within the agreed spend for the Clerk.
- (ii) Purchase of a small PA system will be recommended to Full Council (estimated cost of £850).
- (iii) Mobile phones are needed for current and new staff. Full Council will be asked to ratify the provision of 7 phones.

5. **Bank Reconciliation**

The Bank Reconciliation dated 31.03.24 was presented with the agenda and checked and signed by Peter Bishop as the Internal Control Officer.

6. **Draft Reports**

- (i) **Bridle Road**
Draft report was presented with the view that improvement of the play area open space at Bridle Road is an ongoing project.
- (ii) **Mayors Chain**
Draft report was presented which suggested replacing the “full” links chain on the Mayors Chain with a new set of blank links. Once further research regarding this option has been undertaken a proposal can be put to Full Council.

7. **Four Year Forecast**

The Four Year Forecast was reviewed:

- Decision will need to be made regarding obtaining a van for the Town Council to be used by the second Town Operative. This will be an agenda item for the Full Council agenda at the end of May.
- It was suggested that the Mayor and Clerk should meet with a representative from Bennetts to understand what is happening and when at the Officers Mess/Heritage Park development site.
- A plan for Heritage Park needs to be agreed and it was suggested that a Working Group should be set up to establish what is wanted. This will be an agenda item for the Annual Town Council meeting. S106 money received should be earmarked for any project.
- Investigation is needed regarding the future use and storage of the market gazebos.
- It will be recommended to Full Council that Cllrs Saunders and Hutchings be asked to meet with town councillors from Thetford to investigate how the Wednesday Market may be re-vitalised.
- Noted that Cllr Bishop offered to assist with ongoing maintenance of Open Spaces and the Cemetery, including extension of the ashes area.
- It was suggested research should be undertaken into ownership and plans for the Ministry of Defence property in Church Walk.
- A verbal estimate of £6k has been received for repair of Walsingham Gates.

7 (i) Wayland Hall

A recommendation will be made to Full Council to follow the works as suggested in the review of the 2020 quinquennial report.

(ii) Fireworks

It will be recommended to Full Council to accept the offer of a further 3 year contract with Titanium Fireworks:

2024	£7035
2025	£7386.35
2026	£7756.09

8. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee will be slightly amended to clarify that the Committee will report to the Town Council at the Full Town Council following a Finance Committee meeting rather than at each Full Council meeting.

Date of next Finance Committee Meeting: to be set at the Full Council Meeting on 14.05.24

Recommendations for the next Full Council Meeting:

1. To purchase a small PA system up to £850 spend.
2. that Cllrs Saunders and Hutchings be asked to meet with town councillors from Thetford to investigate how the Wednesday Market may be re-vitalised.
3. to follow the works as suggested in the review of the 2020 quinquennial report.

PROGRAMME OF REPAIR WORK

Programme of repair work	2024	2025	2026	2027
8.01 E Replace felt in gutter with lead.				£1,500.00
8.03 M Brickwork repointing in small areas generally around the building.			£600.00	
8.03 M Erosion of stonework to sills and mullions plus removal of previous hard mortar making good.			£2,000.00	
8.03 E Remove/reorder cables on walls.				£500.00
8.03 D Service leaded lights.		£1,500.00		
8.04 D Pin and resin grout where damaged entrance steps to Museum.	£250.00			
8.04 B Prepare and decorate all external joinery.	£750.00			
9.01 Ease fire escape door from Council Chamber and refix door keep.	£200.00			
9.02 First Floor toilet - inspect roof leak and repair.	£500.00			
9.02 First Floor toilet - Provide latch arrangement to toilet window.		£150.00		
9.05 Stair to second floor gallery - Clean out stair area and gallery, care to be taken not to disturb historic decoration.	£150.00		£100.00	
10.04 Minor plaster repairs in toilet area and decorate.				
10.09 Fire stopping to pipes passing through walls from boiler room and the adjacent rooms is to be improved.	£200.00			
	£2,050.00	£1,650.00	£2,700.00	£2,000.00
Notes				
10.02 Previously noted corroded incoming gas pipe has been wrapped. Did the gas board inspect and are they happy with the solution?				

8.02 Provision of insulation to roof perhaps best left until a reroofing project carried out.				
9.01 Replacement of fibre board ceiling board to Council Chamber. Perhaps best left until a reroofing project carried out.				
9.01 It is assumed that the hopper heads have been inspected and cleared out and that there are no problems.				
No allowance has been made for routine internal decoration.				
It is assumed the electrical installation is being regularly inspected and any actions needed are being implemented.				
It is assumed the gas and heating installation is being regularly inspected and any necessary actions needed are being implemented.				

4. to accept 3 year contract with Titanium Fireworks:

2024	£7035
2025	£7386.35
2026	£7756.09

5. to accept quote of £1600 from the preferred contractor to paint the metal plant containers at the western end of the High Street.