

**Minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on  
September 26th 2024 at Wayland Hall**

Present: Kathryn Stallard (Chairman), Peter Bishop, Don Saunders.

Officers Present: Jane Scarrott and Michelle Thompson

1. No apologies received.
2. No Declarations of Interest made.
3. Minutes from the previous meeting
  - (i) The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 15.08.24 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.
  - (ii) Update from the previous meeting:
    - The Town Operatives have been asked to paint Walsingham Gates.
    - The cost of the proposed transfer of the Thetford Road allotment site to the Town Council currently stands at £5228. It is not known how or if the transfer will proceed and more advice is being awaited from the solicitor. This will incur additional costs. It was noted that a second skip has been filled at the Thetford Road allotment site and the Office is looking at the best way to work with the Town Operatives to book another skip when they can be present to use it or to find a lockable skip.
  - (iii) Items raised by Full Council
    - Noted that a suggestion has been made for a High Street Halloween event to be undertaken but further consideration will be needed for 2025 plans, including looking at costs. An events budget will need to be set to include a VE Day event. The Community Projects Officer will be asked to share all past events follow up information with the Events and Marketing Officer.
    - Agreed by Full Council:
      - Estimated cost of £80 per policy for CBR to tailor HR policies for Watton Town Council.
      - £200 grant for Watton 1<sup>st</sup> Brownies.
      - To charge 1p per person entry fee for the 2024 Fireworks Event.
      - £2040 for The Conservation Volunteers to undertake work at Bridle Road Play Area.
      - From the aerial survey of Wayland Hall investigation will be made regarding the cost of clearing the gutters of the building.

4. Bank Reconciliation

The Bank Reconciliation dated 31.08.24 was presented to the Committee and checked and signed by the Internal Control Officer.

[Finance Committee members had been issued with net position figures with the agenda.]

- It was noted that the budget is on course but some virement will be needed within cost centres.
- It was agreed a comprehensive report should be compiled to inform Councillors of the position with the High Street clock. The report will give options as to how the clock may or may not be kept running.

- Due to staff holidays, the preferred contractor will be asked to provide a one-off service to erect the market gazebos on 02.10.24. Costs to undertake this service when needed will be investigated.
- Noted that the HR Committee is looking at staffing levels and roles and this could have further repercussions for the 2025 budget.

#### 4.1 IT Provision

It was agreed that Councillors who have not got their Council e-mail set up on their Council lap-top will be asked to bring the laptop into the Office so their e-mail can be set up and used. Two currently unused surface pros, which previously were used by staff, will be refurbished for use by Councillors.

#### 5. Pre-paid Fuel Card

It was agreed to obtain one pre-paid fuel card at no cost if possible but, if necessary, an agreed charge of £2 per month will be accepted.

#### 6. Grounds Maintenance

The grounds maintenance contracts expire on 31.03.25 and tenders need to be agreed and submitted to Contracts Finder in preparation for the 2025 season.

Draft tenders were considered and with minor suggested amendment to the drafts presented they will be posted asap.

It will be recommended to Full Council that the maintenance agreement currently in place with Watton Sports Association should remain the same.

Noted that the Memorandums of Understanding relating to services provided to charities in the town should be reviewed and renewed.

#### 7. Four Year Plan (4YP)

- Premises - Wayland Hall

The recent drone survey of Wayland Hall has suggested the chimney on the building should be monitored. Should its condition deteriorate, future works may be needed. This will be included in the four-year forecast.

It was also suggested in the report that the gutters should be cleared at Wayland Hall.

Wayland Hall heating remains a concern and investigation will be made into commissioning an overall survey of the current heating and plumbing systems.

#### 8. Date of the next meeting of the Finance Committee: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Recommendation to Full Council: that the maintenance agreement currently in place with Watton Sports Association should remain the same.