

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 25th February 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Don Saunders - Chairman, Peter Bishop, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tomos Hutchings, Tina Kiddell, Graham Martin, Keith Prince, Kathryn Stallard, Gillian Tarrant, Steve Turley-Long.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

Two members of the public also present.

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND APPROVED from

Catherine Turley-Long

District Councillor/County Councillor Claire Bowes sent notice that she could not attend the meeting.

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

With slight correction to wording of item 4.4, first bullet point, the Minutes of the meeting held on February 11th 2025 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Updates from items raised at the meeting on February 11th 2025 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Teams meeting to be held with Norfolk Trails Team re. Church Walk 04.03.25.
- Report re. Wayland Wood by Cllr Hutchings forwarded to Cllrs 18.02.25.
Clerk still to correspond with Norfolk Wildlife Trust.
- Signs for Heritage Park are being designed (drafts presented to Cllrs for comment).
- The solicitors acting for the Town Council have stated that the transfer of the Thetford Road Allotment Land is progressing.

5. REPORTS

5.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended the Food Hub and CHT Management Committee meeting on Feb. 13th, the Finance Committee meeting on Feb. 14th and the Watton Twinning Association Dinner on 22nd Feb.

5.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended the Food Hub and CHT Management Committee meeting on Feb. 13th, the HR Committee meeting on Feb. 14th and the Family Fun Day at the Community Hub on 18th Feb.

5.3 District Councillor's Report

Both Tina Kiddell and Keith Gilbert stressed the importance of the Town Council being prepared for and ready to engage with the proposed Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

Notification of a Teams Meeting to be held by Breckland Council on March 3rd, to give a short presentation on Devolution, has been passed to Councillors.

Tina Kiddell suggested it would be sensible to consider remaining a member of Norfolk Association of Local Councils as NALC is the Town & Parish Council body the Government will communicate through. As the decision has previously been made not to subscribe to NALC in 2025 this matter will need to be a future Town Council agenda item to be re-considered against the information given.

It was suggested that Devolution and Local Government Re-organisation should be on the agenda of every Full Town Council meeting for the foreseeable future.

5.4 County Councillors Report

Written report received from County Councillor Claire Bowes was forwarded to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

It was resolved to ask Claire to supply her Report 24 hours before the meeting to give Cllrs a chance to respond at the meeting to points raised.

5.5 Clerks Report as presented in the agenda pack with verbal update given:

Staffing

It has been a busy time within the Office as staff are taking their final holidays of the year before the cut-off date of 31.03.25 and Office staff are also called upon to help with events and the Food Hub at CHT.

Sustainability and Environmental Impact Assessment Report

The recommendation within the Sustainability and Environmental Impact Assessment Report compiled by the Events & Marketing Officer to install improved LED motion sensor lighting at the Offices at Wayland Hall has been undertaken.

Bridle Road Play Area

The pump track at Bridle Road has been re-installed and it is hoped it will see greater use. Picnic benches from Lovell Gardens Play Area have been re-sited at Bridle Road and volunteers have one more day to work at Bridle Road to help clear vegetation and finish the creation of a path around the northern and part of the eastern boundaries of the site.

Open Spaces

The Town Operatives have planted eight fruit trees at Jubilee Garden for which funding was obtained through the Breckland Community Orchard Project.

The Town Operatives have also been painting the fencing, posts and compound at the Cemetery and refurbishing the seat and bin outside the Cemetery.

Family Fun Day

A report from the Events and Marketing Officer of the Family Fun Day held at the Charlotte Harvey Trust Community Hub on Feb. 18th was presented to Councillors within the agenda pack for the meeting.

5.6 Lead Councillors Report

Stan Hebborn the Council Rep. for the Wayland Chamber of Commerce informed the Council of a Well-Being Event to be held by the Chamber at the CHT Community Hub on March 18th 2025.

6. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress list was noted.

6.1 Cemetery Land

It was resolved to revoke the commitment to find land for a new Cemetery as it is felt to be an unrealistic aim. Item 5 will therefore be removed from the Works in Progress List.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Member of the public present to stress a desire for the Town Council to continue negotiations with Breckland Council regarding the transfer of the Breckland Council owned car parks to the Town Council.

Chairman of Saham Toney Parish Council present to speak about the willingness of Saham Toney Parish Council to support the continuation of Watton and Saham Flood Action Group.

8. FINANCE

8.1 Payments for February 2025 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting, with the addition of £28.70 staff expenses.

8.2 The draft minutes from the Finance Committee held on 23.01.25 were noted.

8.3 Recommendations from the Finance Committee

i **It was resolved** to accept the quote of £3375 plus VAT to carry out the fixed electrical wiring test at the Linmore Unit and install a new circuit for the lights.

ii **It was resolved** not to put the transfer of the town car parks from Breckland Council "on hold" but to continue negotiations with Breckland Council.

9. GRANTS POLICY

It was resolved to accept the Grant Policy as presented.

10. GRANT REQUEST WATTON DISTRICT GUIDING

It was resolved to grant £500 to Watton Rainbows as requested. Noted that this was a retrospective application which had been submitted in advance but not considered by the Town Council previously due to the timings set in the former grants policy.

11. WATTON AND SAHAM FLOOD ACTION GROUP

It was resolved to work with Saham Toney Parish Council to establish a joint committee of 6 persons to include 2 Councillors from each Council which would form the Watton and Saham Flood Action Group. It was felt that the Clerks should give administrative support to the group but noted that this would be an encumbrance on staff time.

12. CLOCK TOWER REPORT

The Events & Marketing Officer was thanked for her report of the Clock Tower. The Clock Tower will be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting when it is hoped more information may be available regarding the electricity supply to the building.

13. MUSEUM4WATTON RENEWAL OF LEASE

It was resolved to accept the draft renewal lease for part of Wayland Hall by the Museum4Watton as presented.

14. PLANNING

Planning applications received for consultation:

14.1 For information only: PL/2025/0046/TRE TI Beech - To reduce all round by 2 meters. Beech is approximately 16 meters wide, before any pruning work has been done Eastern Road, Watton

14.2 PL/2025/0157/HOU Front Porch Extension 22 Charles Avenue, Watton
No comment.

15. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press.

15.1 The draft minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 14.02.25 were noted.

It was agreed to hold a Cemetery Working Group Meeting prior to the Town Council Meeting on March 11th 2025.