



Watton Town Council

Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6AG
Telephone: 01953 881007 Website: www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk
Town Clerk: Mrs Jane Scarrott clerk@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk

Councillors: You are hereby summoned to attend the Town Council meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Wayland Hall on Tuesday 8th April 2025 at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Jane Scarrott – Town Clerk

2nd April 2025

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence
2. To note Declaration of Members personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda
3. MINUTES
 - 3.1 To confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 25.03.2025 are a true and accurate record
 - 3.2 To receive an update on items from the previous meeting if not agenda items for this meeting
4. TO RECEIVE REPORTS
 - 4.1 Chairman's Report
 - 4.2 Vice Chairman's Report
 - 4.3 Clerk's Report
 - 4.4 Reports from Lead Councillors
 - 4.5 Report from Councillor Hutchings
 - I. Watton Town Council to adjust the work in progress list, removing 'contacting NWT and NCC regarding Wayland Wood', as new information and connections allow easier discussions to take place.
 - II. Introduce a maximum number of gazebos for the Town Operatives to erect every Wednesday.
 - III. To decide if community groups should have free access or discount to allotments provided? This follows the Men's Shed request for an allotment. Suggested 50% discount for charities and community groups.
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
6. Update on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation
7. Assessing the Rights of Way and footpaths in the parish
8. To consider implementing a Summer Recess
9. To note Breckland Local Plan Review
10. To consider an application to Parish Partnership funding 2025 and to confirm the purchase of 3rd SAM 2 sign
11. Christmas lighting provision 2025
12. PLANNING - To consult on planning applications received since the last meeting

12.1	PL/2025/0366/FMIN	Demolition of existing bungalow and development of single storey annexed building for existing care	255 Lovell Gardens, Watton	https://publicportal.breckland.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=get
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		home and erection of new porch for existing care home.		Application&id=197432
12.2	PL/2025/0395/FMIN	9no dwellings with associated parking, access and landscaping.	Land At Rear 121a Brandon Road, Watton	Breckland Breckland Online Application 197460

13. To pass a resolution to exclude the public and press to consider confidential matters

13. 1 The Charlotte Harvey Trust

13.2 To confirm whether the Charlotte Harvey Trust or the Town Council is organising the Community Fun Days at the Watton Community Centre

Item 3.1

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

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

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

Officer present: Michelle Thompson Deputy Clerk

1 members of the public arrived at item 7.3

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND APPROVED from Don Saunders

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

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on March 11th 2025 were accepted as a true record.

3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on March 11th 2025 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Electrical contractor booked for 24th, 25th and 26th March for electrical work at the unit
- Contractor attending the Clock Tower on April 2nd to quote for the remedial works.
- Local Highways Engineer comments regarding yellow lines at Harvest Road: Double yellow lines would require a legal order and cost around 10k and take 12 months to deliver. I'm not sure why this would be asked for?
- Breckland Executive Director Steve James has offered to provide more information regarding the Safer Street Warden Scheme. This is awaited.

4. REPORTS

- Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

- Norfolk Community Foundation event at Royal Norfolk Showground on 12th March
- Swaffham Civic Reception on 14th March
- Food Hub & Charlotte Harvey Trust Management Meetings on 20th March

- Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended

- Watton Twinning Association Annual General Meeting on 23rd March 2025

- District Councillor's Report

E-mailed report from District Councillor Claire Bowes had been forwarded to Town Councillors prior to the meeting.

District Councillors Tina Kiddell and Keith Gilbert reported that:

- Regarding the Local Government re-organisation Breckland Council have now submitted their interim proposal to support the 3-tier unitary authority council model.
- Breckland Council have now approved the reused call for sites, National planning framework and local plan will now go live.
- Serco have been weed spraying in Watton
- Footfall cameras are due to be installed in the high street at Longsons and the Health Centre this week.

- County Councillors Report

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

Claire Bowes will be asked again to supply her Report 24 hours before the meeting to give Councillors a chance to respond at the meeting to points raised

- Clerks Report as presented in the agenda pack with verbal update given: Councillors were reminded of the date for the Annual Town Meeting. It was suggested that the meeting would be a good opportunity to promote the council and the role as councillor to future proof the Town Council.

In preparation for V E Day on May 11th, councillors were asked for as much help as possible at the event.

- No Lead Councillors Report

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress list was noted.

6. NO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for March 2025 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting.

7.2 The draft minutes from the Finance Committee held on 14.02.25 were noted.

7.3 Recommendations from the Finance Committee

I **It was resolved** that the Town Council does not agree to giving a loan for £20,000 as requested by Watton Sports Association as it does not see this as an appropriate use of Council funds

It was asked if The Community Projects Officer Sue Dent could sign post the Sports Centre to other forms of funding.

8. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION

It was noted that email correspondence from Norfolk County Council leader was received and forwarded to councillors on 18.03.25

It was stressed that the National Government Consultation is currently running and it is strongly encouraged that Councillors and residents complete and share the consultation.

The link to the consultation will be published on the Town Council Website and Notice Boards.

9. CEMETERY

9.1 The draft minutes from the Cemetery Working Group Meeting held on 11.03.25 were noted.

9.2 Cemetery update

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk met with H Brett & Son Stonemasons on 18.03.25 Various matters were discussed. H Brett & Son is sending over guidance and professional advice on measurements of memorial sizes and heights.

Undertakers are still to be approached for advice regarding number of ashes in a plot.

Once the office has gathered all information, recommendations will be brought back to council for consideration.

Originally it was thought that any excess subsoil from grave digging can not be removed from site due to it being consecrated, this has since been investigated and found to not be the case. Subsoil from the cemetery is deemed non-hazardous. Ways in which the soil can be removed from site safely, is being investigated.

10. BBC RADIO NORFOLK – MAKE A DIFFERENCE AWARDS

The Make a Difference Awards are to celebrate individuals and groups who go above and beyond to make this county a better place to live.

The Clerk will be informed of any nominations the Councillors would like to make.

11. WATTON AND SAHAM FLOOD ACTION GROUP COUNCIL MEMBERS

It was resolved that Councillor Keith Gilbert and Councillor Tomos Hutchings will be members on the Watton and Saham Flood Action group

12. GRANT REQUEST FROM THE CHARLOTTE HARVEY TRUST

It was resolved to grant £1000 to The Charlotte Harvey Trust as requested.

A concern was raised regarding the Town Council being Custodian Trustees to the Charlotte Harvey Trust and supporting the Charity financially. It is to be made clear that the Charlotte Harvey Trust went through the Grants application process, and that any organisation can also apply to the Council for a Grant.

13. SUMMER RECESS

It has been suggested that the Town Council go back to having a Summer recess in August, this would mean no Town Council meetings.

It was resolved that the staff be consulted on this matter and the item will be brought back to the next meeting on April 8th.

It was also asked that the one meeting in December is also dismissed.

14. SPORTS CENTRE SKATE PARK

It was resolved to support the S106 project application for a Skate Park at Watton Sports Centre.

15. PLANNING

Planning applications received for consultation:

15.1 PL/2025/0284/OMIN - Outline Planning for access and layout of 7 dwellings. - Land to rear of 123 Brandon Road, Watton

It was agreed to support the recommendations made by Watton & Saham Flood Action Group.

15.2 PL/2025/0293/FMIN - Proposed change of use of a residential dwelling and its associated garage outbuilding. The use class will change from Residential (Use Class C3) to a Day Nursery (Use Class E(f)). The proposed works also include two extensions and internal alterations to link the buildings together. Additionally, to provide secure access and play space for the day occupants. - The Old School House, 85 High Street, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6AW

No comments

16. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press.

16.1 The draft minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 14.03.25 were noted.

Some issues have been raised regarding a Market stall holder, **it was agreed that a letter will be written to the stall holder outlining the issues.**

Item 3.2 Update from the meeting held 25.02.25

Agenda Item No.	
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electrical work completed at the unit• Contractor attended site to quote for remedial works to the Clock Tower – awaiting quote
4	Footfall cameras have now been installed in the High Street. Town Council Officers are to be trained how to access the data.
8	National Government Consultation re. LGR has been published on the Town Council website.
10.	No nominations received from Councillors for “Make a Difference” awards– deadline has now expired.
16	Letter issuing a formal warning is being drafted for the Market Stall holder

Item 4.3 Clerks Report

Breckland Solar Farm

George Freeman has sent an invite letter to Watton Town Council regarding an invitation to join the Breckland Solar Farm Action Alliance Group.

George wishes to convene a meeting late April (6pm Friday 25th April – TBC) inviting each Parish council to designate a representative to attend and inviting expressions of interest / nominations for the Steering Group

V E Day – 11th May 2025

Just a reminder to councillors, all hands-on deck for the V E Day event. As much help as possible is needed!

Car parking

Clerk and Mayor to meet with Breckland on April 25th at 3pm

Item 4.5

Lead Market Councillor Report for WTC for 8th April 2025

Recommendations for council:

1. Watton Town Council adjust the work in progress list, removing 'contacting NWT and NCC regarding Wayland Wood', as new information and connections allow easier discussions to take place.
2. Introduce a maximum number of gazebos for the Town Operatives to erect every Wednesday.
 - I am asking the Town Council to approve the concept of a maximum number of gazebos. And for permission to be given to decide (collaboratively with Clerk, TO's and the Lead Market Councillor) what the maximum is. This number is to be sensible and respectful to TO's time, while also limiting the time-spent on Watton Market. This will allow us to dictate recourse use until a formal policy is made. This practise is already in place; however, I wish to update my market stallholders officially and correct inaccuracies in our market poster.
3. Watton Town Council decide if community groups should have free access or discount to allotments provided? This follows the Men's Shed request for an allotment. I suggest 50% discount for charities and community groups.

Watton Market:

Watton market has steady success with regular stall holders filling out middle St. Upon our Events and Marketing officers return to work, I would like to meet with her to discuss a 4-year market plan following our initial year of successful rejuvenation. This will ensure practises are maintained sustainably and its legacy is continued.

Unfortunately, on the 2nd of April, one of our gazebos blew over, damaging trade goods and knocking a stall-holders confidence. The TO's swiftly rectified the issue, removing gazebo side panels and watching closely.

Open/Green Spaces:

In a previous council meeting, Watton Town Council decided to contact NWT and NCC to discuss public footpath maintenance & Wayland Woods after a resident showed concern about the woodland. Having volunteered for NWT, I have connections and will be in regular conversations with the Heath and Woodland Team and Warden Manager to discuss upkeep and issues with the woodland.

I have asked for the footpath item to on our next agenda to speak fully to the proposal. TLDR; councillors to work together to determine the safety and quality of Watton's public footpaths, so that we can put together any argument to maintaining our footpaths with accurate information and detailed requests.

Community Centre:

I have been in talks with Sue Dent about improving biodiversity at the Community Centre. The butterfly garden has been an initial success, and new fruit trees are a great addition.

But we have a large green space that is for the benefit of our community, and I would argue that there is room for development. I continue to talk to community groups and conservation groups about potentials for the Community Centre Butterfly Garden, in line with the charity's intention. Furthermore, I would argue that given Anglian Waters 'plans' we should also have a clear image of what we want for the garden and how its legacy can continue.

I will also be volunteering again at the Easter Fun Day's which at the time of writing, hasn't happened yet.

Clock Tower:

Volunteers at the museum have handed me contact information for clock repair and clock face designs. I have passed on this information to the office. They believe we could save a lot of money by introducing a new clock mechanism instead of electrifying the building.

Wayland Partnership:

On the 10th of March, I attended the Wayland Partnership meeting. We welcomed new members Love Watton.

I have not received any minutes yet, so will briefly update Council below on happenings in the Partnership.

- The RWE solar farms moving onward, with local protest. More info: <https://highgrovesolar.co.uk/>

- The Men's Shed is continuing well, x94 members, multiple sub-groups and experience in catering to dementia and loneliness. They have applied to become a CIO.

- Love Watton is supporting families, the food hub, sports centre and wish to promote business. Looking for volunteers and community opportunities. Small projects focus. They also work with churches of Watton to increase communication.

- Ashill saw their allotments broken into, with minimal damages. Ashill are continuing to meet in opposition to the Solar Farm.

- Griston raised £800 for a community kitchen project.

- Liz Witcher spoke to the organisations she represented, providing some success stories behind the flood action group and reclaim the rain.

- Chamber of Commerce held a wellbeing event at the community centre on the 18th of March. They also plan a jobs fair for the 20th of June at the Queen's Hall.

- The Memory Café are up to x46 members for those who struggle or care for those with dementia. They have x2 trained nurses on hand and do bespoke activities from stencilling to singing.

- Thompson had their huge book sale on the 29th of March. Parish is working with woodland trust to replant hedgerows.

- U3A Wayland branch has disbanded but the social group continue to meet.

- Wayland House. BOOST! Are in once week and Citizens Advice are taking appointments in a 6-week trial. They are supporting the Wayland Show. The SwapShop has been reorganized.

-DCMC, possibility of looking to rename 'Wayland House'. Promoting their reports and consultations. Working with Watton Library.

Local Plan:

I would urge Watton Town Council to work with smaller neighbour parishes to benefit from the knowledge of their locality and come up with a Local Plan suggestion for Breckland Council to use and benefit from.

Wayland Times:

As a resident, not a councillor, I have begun writing in the Wayland Times. My article can be found on page 6, 'Against the Grain, a Young Writer' where I explore where and what my peers are up to. You can look forward to future editions of 'Against the Grain' in the next copy which will discuss disability among young people amidst government welfare cuts.

Written by Cllr Tomos Hutchings

Item 7

Email from Cllr Tomos Hutchings

"Please can you put our next agenda 'assessing our parish right of way and footpaths' for an accurate response to the correct bodies regarding footpaths in Watton.

Perhaps we can all take 1 footpath to check-out and report back as a collective. Working together is always good. This is something Jane has suggested, however said it would be unsuitable for TO's time.

I gave Will from NWT a ring about Wayland Woods, he has been there with contractors recently and works have completed for now. Will thinks the woods is tidy and clean, and I'd agree for the most part.

The Warden is hired and starting next week on the 1st. She will be finding her footing initially and there is a potential to support NWT through WTC advancing a volunteer group.

Will let me know that 'breckland local group' has little to nothing to do with watton as the team working on our woods is part of the 'woodland and heath' team.

I would love to see a watton based conservation group supported by WTC whom can lend their volunteers to NWT, the loch and others.”

Item 8

If, as being considered, no Full Council meetings are held in either August or September the Council would need to adopt a Payments Procedure which would give the Clerk/RFO delegated authority to authorise all payments within those 2 months.

Current Financial Regulation 6.8 states:

The Clerk/RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:

- i. any payments of up to £1000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
- ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
- iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council {or finance committee}.
- iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.

Also Financial Regulation 7.9 states:

Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

The opinion from the staff is that if there is no meeting in August the first meeting in September is likely to have many items on the agenda meaning a very long meeting. The same would be likely for January if there is no meeting held in December.

There may be responses and decisions needed, including planning applications, which would be requested within a timeframe less than a month.

Decisions generally need to be made at a Council meeting. Only some can be delegated.

Standing Order 3q is based on statute and states:

Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.

(LGA 1972 Sch.12 39(1))

Item 9

[Keep in Touch with Latest News - Breckland Local Plan - Commonplace](#)

Item 10. Parish Partnership Funding

The Town Council bid for a **SAM2** sign has been successful and will be funded up to 50% in accordance with agreed terms and conditions as below.

The funding must be spent in the 2025/26 financial year unless other agreement is reached.

Norfolk County Council: Conditions for delivering a small highway improvement scheme in partnership with Watton Town Council. 2025/26

Scheme title: SAM2 Signs

1. Timescale

We ask that you aim to deliver in the financial year 2025/26.

2. Funding

The County Council will support up to 50% of the cost of scheme. Once bids are approved, the terms should not be altered (i.e. change of supplier etc.) without our express agreement.

Based on your submission the proposed cost share is as follows:

Total scheme costs	£3,638.00
Town Contribution	£1,819.00
Norfolk County Council Contribution	£1,819.00

The County Council requires that you (and any other participating Parishes) sign a memorandum of understanding to cover the use of the sign. Suitable locations should be agreed with your Local Highway Engineer. **Only when we have received a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Town and the Local Highway Engineer can the Town order the SAM2 unit.**

It is important to understand that the Town Council will own and be responsible for the SAM2.

At present we are waiting to hear from the Highway Engineer re. suitable other locations where a third SAM2 sign could be used. Current locations are at points on the four main roads into Watton and along the Swaffham Road. Signs should only be in position for up to 4 weeks and must not return to the same site within 8 weeks so additional locations are needed if third sign is to be of use. However, an updated sign and new batteries may be of benefit.

It has been suggested that the Council could apply for Parish Partnership funding 25/26 to install a dropped kerb for disabled access to the entrance path at Bridle Road Play Area.

See photo



Item 11

Quote below is from previous contractor – 3 year contract has now expired

QUOTE

Watton Town Council
Wayland Hall
Middle Street
Watton
Norfolk
IP25 6AG
UK

Date
01 Apr 2025

Expiry
01 May 2025

Quote Number
QU-0859

Reference
RFEST25-01

VAT Number
552 6584 25



Cozens (UK) Limited
10 Stanley Close
Cantley
Norwich
Norfolk
NR13 3RW

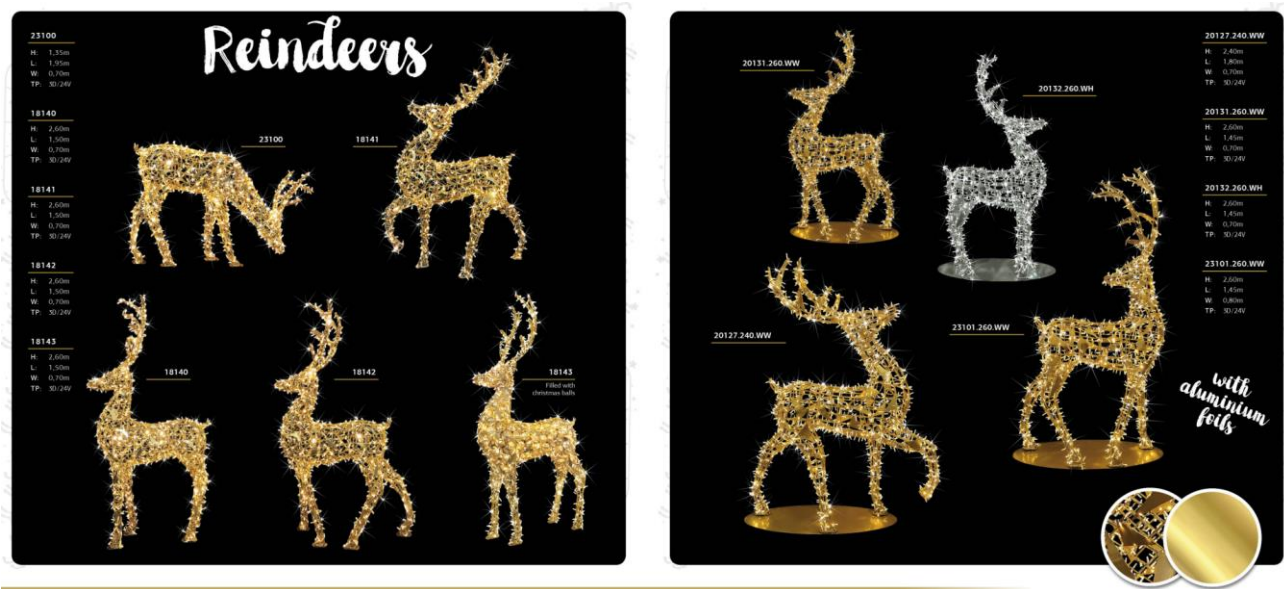
Description	VAT	Amount GBP
WATTON TOWN COUNCIL XMAS LIGHTING 2025-2027 - 20 X STREETLIGHT COLUMNS WITH BRAIDS AND ICICLES ON THE CLOCK TOWER & TOWN HALL BUILDING & 6M CONE TREE WITH STAR & LED STRING LIGHTS IN 7 X TREES & STARBURST MOTIFS IN 3 X TREES.		
1)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 20 X COLUMN LED BRAIDS ONTO STREETLIGHT COLUMNS EACH YEAR. (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	3,000.00
2)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 20M ICICLE LIGHTS ON TOWN HALL/CLOCK TOWER AND NETTING ON CLOCK TOWER EACH YEAR. (ATTEND THE XMAS SWITCH ON AND SET UP ALL TIME CLOCKS) (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	1,600.00
4)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 24 X STAR BURST LED MOTIFS ON JC BROOK TREE AND 2 X TREES OPPOSITE THE POLICE STATION EACH YEAR. (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	1,700.00
6)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 6 X LED HANGING BALLS ON THE TOWNHALL BUILDING. (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	480.00
9)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 6 X SETS OF LED STRING LIGHTS/TRANSFORMERS/POWER LEADS INTO 6 X TREES ON LINGS SIDE OF HIGH STREET. (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	1,920.00
11)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 1 X SET OF LED STRING LIGHTS/TRANSFORMER/POWER LEADS FOR DENTIST TREET ON HIGH STREET. (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	350.00
13)INSTALL AND TAKEDOWN 1 X 6.25M GRAND VEGA CONE XMAS TREE ON SLABBED AREA OUTSIDE THE COFFEE SHOP AREA. (3 - YEAR CONTRACT 2025-2027)	20%	1,960.00
14)SUPPLY OF 2 X 10M WARM WHITE FLASH BRAID LIGHTS (2 X SETS ARE CURRENTLY FAULTY)	20%	490.00
	Subtotal	11,500.00
	Total VAT 20%	2,300.00
	TOTAL GBP	13,800.00

We consider Cozens to be the preferred contractor as they do store the lights and Christmas tree for the Town Council.

Budget for Christmas Lights 25/26 is £12,000

It is expected that the Cherry trees will have been removed from outside lings before this years Xmas lights are due to be erected. By not having the lights on the Cherry Trees we will be saving £1920.00. It has been suggested that a motif of some sort could be purchased to compensate for the lights not being in the cherry trees.

Example below: there are many other options available



It was suggested that this could be located outside Wayland House



It might be worth budgeting for 2 new column light braids each year of the contract in case of faulty lighting.

Item 13

[Councillors' guide to a council's role as charity trustee](#)

Local authorities – or councils – can be trustees of charities. For example, of charitable land such as recreation grounds, or funds such as school prize funds.

A local authority can be trustee of more than one charity. Often, they will be the only trustee of the charity.

Where a local authority is trustee, it is the local authority itself, not individual councillors, who is trustee.

Local authorities can have the expertise needed to manage charities. However, issues can arise such as the local authority:

- not being aware that it is trustee of a charity
- unknowingly using charity property for its own local authority purposes
- not identifying when there is a conflict of interest
- not managing small funds, which become dormant
- not keeping separate accounts for the charity
- not submitting accounts or annual returns to the Charity Commission when they fall due

The expectations on local authorities carrying out the trustee role are the same as on individuals and the same trustee duties apply. These are:

- ensuring the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- complying with the charity's governing document and the law
- acting in the charity's best interests
- managing the charity's resources responsibly
- acting with reasonable care and skill
- ensuring the charity is accountable

It is therefore important that local authorities that are trustees:

- ensure charity property is used for the charity's purposes
- ensure proper mechanisms are in place for making trustee decisions
- ensure decisions they make are only in the charity's best interests
- identify and manage conflicts of interest, and obtain authority from the Charity Commission where it is needed
- comply with accounting and reporting responsibilities

This guidance covers these and other issues.

Read more about [trustee duties](#).