

## Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 27th May 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Gillian Tarrant – Vice Chairman, Tina Cruz, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tomos Hutchings, Tina Kiddell, Graham Martin.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

4 members of the public present

Prior to the meeting a presentation about the Safer Street Wardens Scheme was given by Breckland District Council.

### **I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED from**

Keith Gilbert and Keith Prince

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

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:**

Stan and Sue Hebborn declared an interest in item 7 as they are part of the band engaged by the Watton Carnival Committee.

### **3. MINUTES**

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on May 13th 2025 were accepted as a true record.

3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on May 13th 2025 not agenda items for this meeting:

- The commissioned Structural Report of the Clock Tower has been received and passed to the builders. Now awaiting a date when works will commence.
- Casual Vacancies - The period during which electors might request an election to fill the two casual vacancies on Watton Town Council has now elapsed. No requests were received, therefore the Council has advertised the vacancies which can now be filled by co-option. The closing date for receipt of applications has been set for June 16<sup>th</sup>.
- The reviewed Museum4Watton lease for part of Wayland Hall has been signed.

### **4. REPORTS**

- Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

- An interview with a press reporter on May 14<sup>th</sup>. Cllrs Stan Hebborn and Tina Kiddell were also present plus Sandra Dingle from the Watton Ladies Group. The aim of the interview was to promote positive images of Watton – “Wonderful Watton”. The published article in the Eastern Daily Press on May 17<sup>th</sup> was positive.
- Norfolk County Council Information Session on Local Government Re-organisation and Devolution 15<sup>th</sup> May
- Charlotte Harvey Trust Fun Day on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Chairman asked that any agenda items for the Full Town Council Meetings should be received in writing by the Office no later than the Tuesday of the week prior to the meeting.

- Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman submitted a written report prior to the meeting which had been circulated to Councillors.

- District Councillor's Report

Reports from District Councillors Claire Bowes and Tina Kiddell had been forwarded to Town Councillors prior to the meeting.

- 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.

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

- Claire Burton, Breckland Council Placemaking and Partnerships Manged, visited the Office on 27.05.25. Claire will look into the issues with the flags furling around the poles in the High Street and her team is investigating why the promised additional street light along Church Walk has not materialised. There is a pole in place but no light head on the pole.

Claire also suggested that the Town Council should remind itself of the Watton Town Delivery Plan and feed ideas for any quick wins listed in the Plan back to her.

This matter will be an agenda item for the next Town Council Meeting.

- Lead Councillors Report

Allotments Lead Councillor Don Saunders informed those present that a successful meeting had been held with some of the allotment holders from the Thetford Road site. Good discussion resulted in agreement to keep gates locked and that the allotment holders will manage the unofficial entry point from Jubilee Garden by blocking the current gap in the fence and putting in a proper gate. Another meeting will be held in six months time.

## **5. WORKS IN PROGRESS**

Cllrs had been sent the Council Resolution List which the Office looked at together with the Works in Progress List.

It was agreed Cllr Martin would take the old Christmas Lights to the local scrapyard with any money received to go back into general funds.

It was also agreed the Office will make the suggested amendments to the Work in Progress List which can then be ratified at a future meeting.

## **6. NO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the Watton Carnival Committee were present to speak about the grant request submitted.

## **7. GRANT APPLICATION**

**It was resolved** to grant £1000 to the Watton Carnival Committee.

Some debate took place regarding the fact that the Carnival is no longer held in Watton High Street. It was hoped the Town Council might be able to support the Carnival Committee more in future years.

## **8. FINANCE**

8.1 Payments for May 2025 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting with the addition of £1602 plus VAT to replace the assembly joint of the basket swing at Lovell Gardens Play Area and payment of the money received to the 2024/25 Mayors Charities.

8.2 The draft minutes from the Finance Committee held on 16.05.25 were noted.

8.3 Recommendations from the Finance Committee

- i **It was resolved** that the former Chairman and the Clerk will continue discussions with Breckland Council regarding the possible lease of the Breckland owned town car parks to the Town Council. Currently new Heads of Terms are awaited.

It was noted that Councillors are in favour of s106 funding of £80,000 being granted to Watton Sports Association towards resurfacing of the Hockey Pitch.

## **9. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION**

Copies of slides from the Norfolk County Council presentation which the Chairman, Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended on May 15<sup>th</sup>, have been shared with Cllrs.

## **10. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**It was resolved** that the suggested updates should be made to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to recognise the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulation 2024.

### **10.1 PROPOSALS FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Following an objection raised at the Annual Meeting on the Council regarding the nomination of the Vice-Chairman a request was made for this matter to be an agenda item at this meeting.

Cllr Stan Hebborn spoke on this and noted that there is nothing in the Council's Standing Orders that prohibits the Chairman from nominating the Vice-Chairman. It has been a long-standing and accepted practice that this happens.

It was acknowledged that Standing Orders do not need any amendment to clarify this practice.

## **11. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Some updating of the Risk Management Plan will be undertaken and the document will then be brought back to Full Council for acceptance of the amendments.

## **12. INSURANCE**

**It was resolved** that the Office should renew the insurance provision following review of the schedule. If a considerable saving can be made to undertake a three year agreement with the current provider this would be accepted.

## **13. VJ DAY EVENT**

A request has been made to include the British Legion in any VJ Day commemorations. The proposed plan for VJ Day is that the beacon should be lit at Loch Neaton

It was suggested a meeting is needed with representatives from the Loch and the British Legion so plans can be formalised.

## **14 PLANNING**

Planning applications received for consultation:

14.1 PL/2025/0366/FMIN- Demolition of existing bungalow and development of single storey annexed building for existing care home and erection of new porch for existing care home 255 Lovell Gardens, Watton

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

**15.** No resolution passed to exclude the public and press as not needed!