



## Watton Town Council

Wayland Hall, Middle Street, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6AG  
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Town Clerk: Mrs Jane Scarrott [clerk@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk)

To Councillors: You are hereby summoned to attend the Town Council meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Wayland Hall on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Please note there is a CHT Meeting being held at 6:30pm before the Town Council Meeting.  
Doors to the chamber will be open to members of the public from 7pm

*Jane Scarrott* Town Clerk

19<sup>th</sup> November 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 11.11.25 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 District Councillor's Report
  - 4.4 County Councillor's Report
  - 4.5 Clerk's Report
  - 4.6 Reports from Lead Councillors
    - i. Youth Provision – Sports Centre Play Area
5. To note the Works in Progress List
6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
7. FINANCE
  - 7.1 To approve payments for November 2025 (To follow)
  - 7.2 To note the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 13.11.25
  - 7.3 Finance Committee recommendation to full council:
    - i. to accept the budget as presented, set at £594370 for 2026/27 with a precept request of £519420. App 1
8. Update on Devolution and Local Government re-organisation
9. To consider Town Council response to the Breckland Local Plan Consultation App 2
10. To consider whether the Council would want to take over any green spaces land from Breckland
11. To consider Jubilee Garden becoming a wildflower meadow
12. PLANNING To consult on planning applications received since the last meeting:
13. To pass a resolution to Exclude the Press and Public to consider confidential Staffing matters:
  - 13.1 To note the Minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 13.11.25

## Item 3.1

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday November 11th 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: Gillian Tarrant – Chairman, Tony Bridges, Tina Cruz, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Keith Gilbert, Sarah Humphries, Tomos Hutchings, Tina Kiddell, Graham Martin, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Jack White

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

Lucy Austin, Principal of Wayland Academy present to address the Council.

### 1. NO APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE:

Sue Hebborn declared an interest in item 8.

### 3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on October 28th were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Update from the meeting held on October 28th not agenda items for this meeting:

- Dyno-Rod and Anglian Water attended Wayland Hall on Nov 4<sup>th</sup> to investigate the sewerage smell. Nothing was found although the problem still exists. The Office is once again looking for quotes to replace the Office toilet to eliminate the old toilet as possibly causing the issue.
- Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme acceptance form has been signed and returned for the agreed trod along the Norwich Road.
- The Highways Engineer has been chased up for a diagram/spec of the dropped kerb to enable quotes to also be obtained for possibly widening the paths at Bridle Road play area to make them compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act.

### 4. REPORTS

#### 4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has:

31st October Attended the launch of the Wayland Chamber of Commerce Digital Creative Media Centre (DCMC) at the Dragon Hall, Norwich

1st November Helped to put up the poppy display at the Methodist Church

3rd November Attended the Squirrels Award Evening

5th November Laid a wreath at St Ethelberts church Wretham and attended service for Polish and Czechoslovak War Graves

8th November Attended the Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church at the Commonwealth War Graves

9th November Attended the Remembrance Service at the War Memorial and took part in the parade along the High Street and the service at the Methodist Church

11th November Attended the Armistice Day 11.00am remembrance at Chaston Place

The Chairman thanked all those involved in the remembrance events and also reminded those present that tombola prizes and volunteers will be needed for the Festive Market.

#### 4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman attended the launch of the DCMC, the Remembrance Service at the Memorial on 09.11.25 and at Chaston Place on 11.11.25.

### 4.3 Clerks Report

Written report presented in Councillors Agenda Pack:

- Noted the Breckland Policing Priorities and dates for Neighbourhood Meetings.
- As a result of Councillors stepping down the Council acknowledged that there are two vacancies on the Town Council. Breckland Council has been informed and will begin the process to fill the vacancies.
- The Clerk attended the Breckland Town & Parish Council Forum on 03.11.25.
- Car Parks Update – the Clerk has had a meeting with Officers of Breckland Council and it is sounding more positive that the three Breckland owned car parks in the town may be able to be transferred to the Town Council at nil consideration. However, to protect all parties it is likely a legal opinion will be sought before progressing further. More will be known after a meeting at Breckland Council on November 17<sup>th</sup>.
- The Witch Trail Report by Cllr Hutchings submitted in the agenda pack for the meeting was noted.

### 4.4 Lead Councillors Reports

Tony Bridges, Lead Councillor for Youth, asked that the Sports Centre Play Area be included as an agenda item for the next Full Meeting of the Town Council.

## 5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lucy Austin, Principal of Wayland Academy, spoke of the rapid changes and commendable achievements Wayland Academy has made in recent times. The Academy achieved an Ofsted rating of good in 2023 but is looking to move this to “exceptional” by the time of the next Ofsted visit. This year the school has celebrated the best exam results it has ever achieved. Staff and students should be recognised and congratulated.

The Principal expressed a desire for the Council to visit the school and an open invite will be made available via the Town Council Office.

## 6. DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) –

See information on <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/LGR>

## 7. FINANCE

7.1 The minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 23.10.25 were noted.

7.2 **It was resolved** to pay £359 to Force8 Events for security at the Fireworks Evening.

7.3 **It was resolved** to agree advance payment of £400 to Mobile Disco Network to attend the Festive Market 2025.

7.4 **It was resolved** to accept the quote for equipment as needed for the Town Operatives to attend a course to qualify them in the use of a chain saw.

## 9. GRANT APPLICATION

8.1 Watton Christmas Hamper Appeal

It was agreed an offer would be made to purchase 50 boxes of mince pies to support the Watton Christmas Hamper Appeal.

8.2 Watton Evening Women’s Institute

It was agreed not to offer the grant as requested by Watton Evening Women’s Institute for CPR/defibrillator training but information will be passed on regarding possible sources of free training providers.

## 10. NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL (NCC)

The Response submitted to the Norfolk County Council Questionnaire re. flooding as presented in the agenda pack for the meeting was noted.

## 11. BIODIVERSITY WORKING GROUP

The Council is looking to establish a Biodiversity Working Group.

It was suggested an invitation should be made to all Councillors to join the group with those interested in volunteering to be members of the group to arrange to get together for an initial meeting.

Tomos Hutchings, Stan Hebborn and Keith Prince showed interest in possibly being members of the group.

## **12. DIGITALISATION WORKING GROUP**

The Council will look to establishing a Digitalisation Working Group to make use of technology wherever possible to benefit the Council and the Town.

Suggestion was made to liaise with the Wayland Chamber of Commerce and make links with the Wayland Partnership which is progressing with a Digital and Creative Media Centre at the west end of the High Street.

Cllr White was asked to put some costings together to bring back to the Council and Councillors interested will be invited to be part of the Group.

It was noted that BT is thought to be installing a BT street hub at Chaston Place and this is likely to provide public wi-fi.

## **13. FREE TOWN WI-FI**

It was felt that the possibility of the Council providing free public wi-fi in the town could be investigated by the Digitalisation Working Group.

## **14. MEMORIAL GARDEN BENCH**

Some debate took place as to whether the bench at Memorial Garden should be re-sited further back from the road.

Consideration was given to spending public money to move the bench again and **it was resolved** not to do so.

It was noted the Office struggles to find tradesmen such as builders and plumbers to undertake small jobs and it was suggested notices be posted at local builders merchants stating the Council would be keen to hear from people willing to quote for jobs.

## **15. PLANNING**

14.1 PL/2025/1563/FMIN Proposed change of use for a residential dwelling: The property will transition from Residential (Use Class C3) to a Day Nursery (Use Class E(f)). The proposed changes include internal renovations to the building. Additionally, the applicant plans to provide secure access and a play area for the children attending the nursery. Opal House, 61 Griston Road, Watton IP25 6DN

*Comments raised regarding possible Highway issues with additional traffic using Griston Road which is a cul-de-sac.*

## **16. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider staffing matters**

15.1 The Minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 23.10.25 were noted.

### Item 3.2 Update from the meeting held 11.11.25

Agenda Item No.	Update
3.2	It is believed the Office toilet may be leaking which is possibly causing the sewerage smell being experienced, so quotes to replace the toilet are being sought.
4.2	Notice of vacancies for 2 Councillors has been published. Breckland will inform the Town Council if an election is to be called.
7.4	Equipment as needed for the TO's Chainsaw course has been ordered.
12	First meeting of the Digitalisation group to be held on 27.11.25

### Item 4.5 Clerks Report

#### Wayland Hall

5 windows in the Council Chamber have been replaced. The builders have also been asked to replace the top window of the large north frame and the glass of a downstairs window.

#### WASFAG

A WASFAG meeting was held on 17.11.15. A lot of information relating to flooding and climate change is available and it is of note that Breckland Council has recently published emergency planning information for ward members (shared with Town Councillors). It is hoped that when time allows information will be published on the WASFAG website.

WASFAG plan to have a presence at the Festive Market and it is likely Reclaim the Rain will provide an update in December on the plans for rain gardens in Watton High Street.

#### Bird Flu

Notice published regarding a confirmed case of Avian Influenza at a premises near Watton.

#### Wayland Academy Prom Committee

The Committee is seeking support for the Prom in June 2026. It is suggested a grant application form is submitted.

# Wayland Partnership

## Wayland Partnership, Partners Meeting

Monday 10 November 2025, 7pm, Wayland House

Present :

Bronwen Tyler (Trustee and Thompson), Tony Powell (Trustee and Saham), Elaine Banks (Trustee), Roger Harrold (Trustee and Saham Toney), John Chamberlain (Men's Shed), David Dent (Wayland Chamber of Commerce), Sue Dent (Watton Community Centre), Tomos Hutchings (WASFAG), Amanda Sherherd (Ashill Parish Council), Bridget Park. (Griston Parish Council), Alison Tombs (Love Watton / Watton Churches Together).

### 1. Apologies

Helen Crane, Katie Powell

### 2. Minutes agreed and signed.

Agreed

### 3. Reports from Partners

#### **Saham Toney (Roger Harrold)**

- Remembrance yesterday well attended.
- Wells Cole Community Centre. Putting in a new easy access outdoor seating area including 4 specimen trees.
- New playing Field floodlighting being installed, will improve facilities.
- Church, still no mains water. Are applying to Anglian Water for a new separate supply. New owners of the Old Rectory will not allow the shared supply to be used.
- Saham Road, was meant to open on 10 November but still closed.

#### **Griston Parish (Bridget Park)**

- New Clerk & meetings now being held at the Prison as Church wasn't warm enough.  
Will pass on contact details to David
- Play area: had to remove some of wooden play equipment but have a new Lottery funded climbing wall.
- Church Mice Festival very well attended. Raised over £2500 for each Church.
- Sunday 4 January. Carols with a difference.

#### **Amanda Shepherd (Ashill Parish Council)**

- Requested drop kerbs into Community Centre: have been quoted £20,000 to do it (problem with gas main).
- Solar Panels, debate is ongoing but general feeling is opposed to them.
- Summer Fair, well attended & weather was good.
- Christmas Fair coming up.

#### **Thompson (Bron Tyler)**

- Book Sale shed now up and running. Sorting for next sale. Will take books in. Next Sale November 22 / 23<sup>rd</sup>, will run 10 – 2.30 each day.  
Will have usual sales in 2026.
- Village Sign. Awaiting new one, basically the same but metal, paid for by old village hall fund.
- Community Hall Sign. Also being produced, being designed.
- 29 November, Quiz
- 5 December, Tree lighting around village.
- Near Church, work being done across the Pingo area, uncovering 'ghost' Pingoos. Reclaim the Rain, Norfolk WT and Rivers Trust all involved.
- Reclaim the Rain also working on village green to investigate drainage.

#### **Wayland Men's Shed (Jon Chamberlain)**

Now 101 members. Near record of 53 on one day. In total have had 206 members.

2026 10 year anniversary, will have event at Sports Centre & invite everyone who has helped. 3 October 2026.

Now a CIO.

### **Watton Community Centre (Sue Dent)**

- Watton Food Hub.  
Now 379 members and consistent use.  
Received several 'Harvest Festival' donations.
- Community Centre  
Held another 'Family Fun Day' in half term. Well attended again (over 100 children + grown ups). Very grateful for support from Cllrs & volunteers, special shout out to Tomos.  
Have just heard have a grant to replace the existing sheds with a Container  
Running 'Soup's On' every Tuesday when the Food Hub is open.  
Have been awarded a grant to replace 2 very broken sheds with a container.

### **Dementia Café (Katie Powell not present . Report by Tony Powell)**

- Still busy & popular. More volunteers would always be appreciated..

### **Watton Town Council (Tomos Hutchings)**

Food Action Group

- Nothing to report.

Watton Town Council

- Middle Street pedestrianisation. Still being progressed so are ready to go if get funding.
- Local Government Review. Still on going. Currently 3 options (1, 2 or 3 areas).  
NCC have put forward a plan that would include the creation of local area teams to help maintain local knowledge.  
Breckland also leading.
- Car Parking, Town Council have agreed to take on the car parks from Breckland.  
88% of residents who responded to recent poll in favour of this. Not yet clear how this will go forward.
- Attended Fun Day during half term
- Footfall cameras. Now have 6 months of data & have written a report, Tomos can sent to (Chamber of Commerce would like).  
For instance can demonstrate the increase in footfall from events such as recent Witches town trail.  
Can't be used to identify cars or people.
- Working on Youth Group.
- Awarded £4800 for a Hare Trail around Watton in spring 2026.
- Biodiversity Working Group being set up to plan to improve biodiversity in Watton. Hope to apply for grants.
- Church Walk, have been issues over public safety. Have installed 1 extra lamp post, couldn't get CCTV as had no available WiFi. Working on funding another.  
Not helped now that Lindon Court has closed, their lighting has gone.
- Fireworks, all went well and good feedback.
- Parish Partnership Scheme: using to fund for a new 'trod' on route to new Lidl and a drop kerb at Bridle Road Park.
- Wayland Academy. Attended a play put on for pupils based on 'County Lines' & the impact they can have.  
Will sponsor a prize for next achievement awards.
- Breckland Local Plan. Will be having consultation period, running till December. Are issues so good to have local feedback (e.g. possible development adjacent to Wayland Wood).
- Remembrance Parade as usual on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>.

Tomos, personally

- High Street Halloween Trail. 63% increase in footfall. Good feedback from businesses. Dragonfly Gallery had 120+ visitors.
- Park Run, had Remembrance run on Saturday.
- Watton Westfield & Infant School won a large box of cakes!
- Norfolk Wildlife Trust have practical tasks & talks coming up.

- Breckland Council, allocating s106 money including: Sports Centre, Loch Neaton, Bridle Way and Park Run.
- Watton Bowls Club, raised £300 for Sports Centre / Memory Café.
- Met with Claire Bowes to get her support for his youth project.

#### 4. Wayland Chamber of Commerce (David Dent)

- Running Christmas Window Competition.
- 13 November. Last business networking breakfast at Broom Hall.
- 5 December. Christmas awards evening. Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk will be handing out awards.

#### DCMC (David Dent)

- Launch event at Dragon Hall in Norwich last week. Over 70 people on the day from across local authorities, businesses and groups across the County. Pleased that were able to present to the people need to influence.
- Had several presentations, can show a couple this evening, including: George Freeman, Haify Hamster AI.
- These contacts are important for identifying and obtaining funding for the project.
- Event was sponsored by Breckland & Spartek as well as others.
- There is a QR Code to register your 'support' for the DCMC, a way of demonstrating support for the project. Already have 184 people signed up.
- Question: what will effect on parking be? Surveys have shown that at the times that the Centre will be busy the car parks are generally not busy. Will be disabled parking on site.
- Next steps: now going to continue to drive forward plans, building support and preparing the ground work. Key point will be May 2026 when Mayoral election takes place. Plan to launch in Watton, but can also go to other villages if interested, probably early in the New Year.
- Tomos: any Reclaim the Rain update? DRD are hoping to build RtR project into DCMC plans before go to Planning which hope to do soon.

#### Wayland Academy

- Lucy Austin (Principle) speaking to Watton Town Council about the Academy. Would be keen to speak to other local authorities as well if possible.
- Open evening, 27 November 2025. Academy Awards. Always looking for sponsorship if anyone interested.

#### 5. Alison Toombs

##### Churches for Watton

- Continuing to meet regularly

##### Love Watton

- Running a series of Business Spotlights which have raised their profile & been good feedback.
- Let's Glow on 31 October, well attended and lots of activities. Hope to do again.
- Carols at Tesco on 13 December. Have had some sponsors.
- Supporting: Wayland Shoebox and Watton Ladies Christmas lunch.
- Have lots of Love Watton badges and stickers
- Also working to promote: 'Flourish' a project being run by Children & Young People Strategic Alliance. Want businesses and local groups to support this – with a Flourish 'pledge'. Hope to get funding from Claire Bowes so have a fund with which they can support children & young people accessing services. Ideally want Watton to be a 'Flourishing Town'.

#### 6. Wayland Partnership

- Engaging with 'Meet Watton' and working with a Community Artist to run sessions at the Gallery / Centre. Hope to do more.
- Started up 'warm spaces' lunches today. Hope will build over the winter. Have applied for a grant, awaiting decision.
- Finances, challenging as always. Would be very grateful to receive any support from groups who are fundraising.
- Planning events for New Year including: talks on history of Watton / RAF.

- 30 November. Will have a stall at the Christmas Market.

#### **Gallery**

- Footfall low at the moment, hope will improve approaching Christmas. Looking for more items for sale if anyone interested.
- New exhibition in place.
- Volunteers always welcome, will have a Christmas 'thank you' to volunteers.

#### **7. Date of next meeting**

Monday 20th January 2025, 7pm Wayland House provisionally

#### **Item 4.6i**

#### **Youth Lead Report 9**

Good evening all, for those of you that don't follow social media, I need to bring your attention to something that happened quite recently. This all revolves around the play park at the sports centre. This park has been a topic for discussions on many occasions with me mentioning that we as a council need to look at another form of surface due to the inability of some members of our community not being able to access it as they should.

Anyway on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November it was noted by a resident of an issue with what they believed to be a toxic or poisonous mushroom growing amongst the park equipment, this was brought to the attention of the office who took steps to investigate ie calling ROSPA and dispatching the town operatives to remove the offending fungi. As you can imagine though, damp and dark moist ground is ideal breeding for mushrooms. And these ones have been growing at an alarming rate. The post was nothing spectacular just a concerned parent making other parents aware. It was the comments on the post that were a little over the top. Some were aimed at the council in general for not taking things seriously especially child safety. I know parents are unaware of the work that goes on in the background here at the council and Jane and her staff do an excellent job. I spoke with Jane and countered with a post appropriate to the situation saying that until we as a council could decide what to do, we would keep the park closed until we had taken appropriate steps. Initially we talked a couple of weeks to be able to remove or replace the bark. This was deemed as not such a good idea because I think initially it would mean only removing a small portion. Fungi spores spread when picked so it's difficult to say where they will grow next and I do believe it becomes a bigger issue each year.

I mentioned in my post about the use of appropriate sprays, but the issue is and always will be health and safety.

1. My proposal would be to remove the bark, return the barked area to grass. We topsoil and grass seed and then we buy the appropriate rubber matting as has been laid down at Lovel Gardens park so only covering the area around the equipment with a rubber mat, and also make a path of the same to aide in mobility. We also clean and paint the equipment as discussed. We keep the park closed whilst we work on it.
2. A second proposal is to go fully soft pour as is already down at the front of the park. So, remove the bark and have full access to everyone., also paint the equipment.

3. A third proposal and an idea I had, was to approach the sports centre and discuss the possibility of turning the playpark into a splash park. This would involve fund raising and grants, but it would mean removing the current play equipment and using that area. Which in my opinion would mean we go for the cheapest option if the sports centre agreed to look at such a plan as a splash park like our skate park wouldn't be something done overnight.

I know that we have an open field park at Bridal road but none of those parks have the same issue as we are getting here. We could pay for environmental health to inspect and tell us if the offending items are toxic and dangerous and we could just say its down to parents to watch their own kids. But we as a council also have a responsibility to ensure our facilities are safe and fit for purpose.

We also have another issue that goes along side this one. This is to do with how and who we inform of closures and the reasons for it, and I am also to blame when putting posts on social media but let me explain what I mean. When Jane was speaking with ROSPA she asked about putting up signage and the consensus was that you would need to have the sign written in many languages nowadays. After our last meeting an idea came to me, and I approached Councillor White after he had spoken of modernisation and he came up with a better idea cheap and affordable, it also goes along with councillor Hebborn's proposal some time ago about electronic signs.

Proposal number 4 . We purchase a couple of large style electronic picture frames; we make safe boxes for them. We then can generate photos or signs as to why we are closing parks each one written in a different language (easily done on a laptop) and displayed on a single digital photo frame, they are uploaded on the device either by a dongle inserted into the side or a mini sansdisk. We then hang these in the secure boxes at park entrances so parents of all nationalities can understand why we have closed the parks, this way we don't need to keep making signs that cost money to the council. The messages, in all languages can be set on a rotating timer. We must be more inclusive in our everyday thinking and what better place to start than the play parks. They can be used to notify parents of upcoming events also.

So, in keeping this brief we need a resolution to the play park situation at the sports centre and a possible agreement to implement digital phot frames to be used as a means of informing the community of park closures and upcoming events.

	<b>Resolution</b>	<b>Date/ Agenda item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Link to 4YP/NP</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Current Position – 19.11.25</b>	<b>Status</b>
135	To establish a Biodiversity Working Group	28.10.25 4.6i	Establish membership		Office	Initial meeting date to be set	
134	Sell box trailer at auction	14.10.25 10	Book trailer in auction		Office	To do. Trailer is empty and ready to go. Auctions are the first week of each month.	
133	Commission further reports for Bridle Road, Lovell Gardens and Sports Centre play areas	23.09.25 12	Commission reports once the council has completed the remedial works it is able to do		Office	Remedial works on-going Asked preferred contractor to quote for some works required and 2 other play equipment companies	
132	Sought quotes for drone images	09.09.25 11	Sought quotes		Office	1 quote received so far	
131	To investigate Honours nominations for two residents	12.08.25 10.3	Investigate		Office	Awaiting information	
130	To proceed with the civil money claim relating to fees owed for use of Watton Cemetery	12.08.25 10.1	Proceed with claim		Office	See Finance Com. Minutes 13.11.25	
129	To submit an application for s106 funding to pay for the additional works identified at Bridle Road Play Area	12.08.25 4.4ii	Application to be made		Office	To finalise plans also refer to 126	
126	Apply to the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme 2025 to help fund a dropped kerb to allow easier disabled access to the Bridle Road Play Area site	08.04.25 10	Apply for funding		Office	Accept NPP offer of £694.94 to install dropped kerb quotes to also be obtained for possibly widening the paths at Bridle Road play area to make them compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act	
124	That the Office should gather information on the provision of services for the elderly in Watton	11.03.25 4.4i	Gather information		Office	EMO is currently collating a directory	

	with the intention of presenting a report to Full Council in September 2025 to help enable the Council to make a proposal regarding how it might provide or support future provision						
120	Quote accepted to carry out the following works to the Clock Tower: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site inspection of the tower</li> <li>• review of the present quinquennial survey</li> <li>• production of a list of works and discussion of the list with a view to producing a minor schedule of works.</li> </ul>	14.01.24 15	Accept quote and arrange works		Office	Site inspection of the tower took place 30.01.25  Building Surveyor report received and forwarded to contractor  Awaiting date for works to be undertaken.	
116	To establish a working group to prepare a long term staffing strategy.	22.10.24 7.3iii			Fin HR	Refer to HR minutes 14.08.25	
114	To hold discussions with BDC regarding possibility that the Town Council can take over the car parks in the town	24.09.24 8	Continue dialogue with BDC		Office	Continuing to pursue Option 2 as offered by Breckland -awaiting update from BDC	
111	A policy relating to the use of Council resources, such as the market gazebos, should be compiled.	10.09.24 11	Compile policy		Office	Draft report compiled Market Working Group was held on 13 <sup>th</sup> August	
104	To produce a staff well-being policy	23.07.24 4.6	Compile policy		HR	New HR consultant engaged Nov. 25	
85	Cllr Bridges to compile Play Area Policy	22.08.23 4.6i a,b,c,d	To present Policy to Full Council in 2025		TB	Awaiting Draft Policy – Cllr Bridge to liaise with the Office Report presented to council on 12.08.25	

82	Landscaping of Portal Avenue Community Land.	08.08.23 7.3	Research landscaping.	4YP NP	Office	EMO has started compiling a google sketch of ideas for Heritage Park	
68	Seats – to undertake audit of seats around the parish.	11.10.22 5	Undertake audit of seats.		Town	DC and TO have begun an audit of all street furniture Future project for EMO to populate Scribe Civility Asset Management Software	
45	All initial urgent repairs recommended by the Quinquennial Inspection Report on Wayland Hall for which the Town Council are responsible for will be undertaken.	14.09.21 6.1	Some works have been undertaken.	4YP	Office	Remaining works to be quoted by builders who are to repair the windows at Wayland Hall.	
21	To commission audit of energy usage in Council premises.	22.09.20 5.1		4YP	Office	Work to heating system at Wayland Hall has been undertaken. Audit of Energy could be incorporated within a review of the Sustainability Audit	
13	Watton Town Council will consider model Climate Change Awareness Policies for possible adoption.	6 12.11.19	Clerk to investigate and present model policies to Full Council.	4YP	Clerk	Sustainability Audit to include Climate Change Awareness Policies	
	To undertake a Town Council Sustainability Audit.	12 24.09.19	To undertake Audit.		Office		
4	To display photos of past Mayors in Council Chamber.	14/309	To collate photos and display.		Office	2 more photos to be obtained  Note to be posted in the Chamber to state these 2 photos are unobtainable.	

## Item 7.2

### **Minutes from the Watton Town Council Finance Committee Meeting held on Thursday November 13th 2025 at Wayland Hall**

Present: Don Saunders (Chairman), Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Gillian Tarrant

Officer Present: Jane Scarrott

1. No Apologies for absence received.
2. No Declarations of Interest made.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 23.10.25.
  - i. The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 23.10.25 were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
  - ii. Update from the Minutes of the Meeting 23.10.25:
    - The Office is still considering its IT needs and looking at quotes for IT service provision. It was suggested the Finance Committee could hold an additional meeting to consider any future contract.
    - An application has been submitted to Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership scheme to create a trod towards the bus shelter at the Carbrooke end of the Norwich Road.
    - The Office continues to review service contracts as they come up for renewal.
  - iii Other items raised by Full Council

Noted that the Town Council is to consider what maintenance work may be needed at the Sports Centre Play Area. It was felt the Sports Centre should be involved in future discussions.

#### 4. Bank Reconciliation

The Finance Committee members were issued with a Bank Reconciliation dated 31.10.25 which was checked and signed by the Internal Control Officer.

Members were presented with net figures showing current expenditure against the budget.

Points raised:

- The Finance Committee looked at the likely cost to chase a small cemetery debt and it was suggested it would be more than it is worth to continue with any recovery process through the court. However, the Chairman and Clerk will make an attempt to meet with the debtor as a final attempt to recoup the outstanding money.
- A suggestion was made to investigate grant funding for works to the Clock Tower rather than increase the budget line for the clock tower.
- Noted that the weekly market runs at a loss, chiefly due to the cost of outsourcing road closure measures. It was felt that in the future this may be brought back in house but how to staff this would need consideration.

#### 5. Budget 26/27

Members were presented with a suggested budget for 2026/27 and possible options regarding the precept request.

The Finance Committee will recommend that the Council sets the budget need at £594370 which will include £25000 to be allocated for the possible transfer of the car parks in the town from Breckland District Council to Watton Town Council. Income is estimated at £54950 and as in the agreed four year plan £20000 from reserves will be used to support staffing costs. Therefore the suggested 2026/27 precept request is for £519420.

With a tax base of 3044.5 it is estimated the Band D charge for a property in Watton will be £170.61. This is an increase from 25/26 of £19.63 or 13%.

It was noted the informal survey put out to residents asking if they would be willing to accept a possible £10 per year increase on their Council tax to keep car parks in the town free of charge to the user indicated 85% in favour.

Noted that if the budget is agreed the £25000 allocated for the car parks would be transferred to the high interest CCLA account until needed.

Should the imminent general budget see an increase in employer national insurance contributions then it is possible some adjustment may be needed within the budget.

#### 6. Review of the Four Year Forecast

The Four Year Forecast will be in its final year in 2026 and it was stated that it will be for any new Council to consider plans for the next four years of its term.

#### 7. Date of the next meeting: Finance Committee:

**Thursday November 27th @ 10.00am.**

#### **Recommendation to Full Council:**

It is the view of the Finance Committee to accept the budget as presented set at £594370 for 2026/27 with a precept request of £519420.

## Item 9

Local Plan Link: <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/local-plan-2025>

Please also see App 2

## Item 10

Please take a look at: <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/mymaps>

## Item 13.1

### **Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council HR Committee held on Thursday October 23rd 2025 at Wayland Hall**

Cllrs present: Stan Hebborn – Chairman of the Committee, Sarah Humphries, Don Saunders and Jack White

Noted that Don Saunders needed to leave the meeting during item 5.

Staff present: Clerk

1. No Apologies for absence received. Noted that Sue Hebborn is the reserve member.
2. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider confidential staffing matters.
3. No Declarations of Interest made.
4. The minutes of the HR Committee meeting held 23.10.25 were accepted as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.
5. Staffing Update
  - New HR services provider Zivile Mauri has spent a day in the Office looking at how best to review HR policies and procedures. The day was very helpful and informative. Since visiting the Office Zivile has set up a trial of Breathe HR and has studied the National Joint Council Green Book of Terms & Conditions for staff along with the current Council HR policies. She has also undertaken a benchmarking exercise to make sure the Council makes an informed decision on all things HR.  
Once the way forward is agreed it is suggested a communication strategy is put in place to make sure that each stage of any changes is planned and communicated appropriately.  
The HR Committee felt that as it is difficult to predict the time needed to undertake all policy and contract updates as may be wanted it would propose that Zivile is engaged to work for the Council for up to four hours a week for an initial month.
  - The Council is also progressing with job evaluations. Staff job descriptions will be reviewed and evaluations will look at current job descriptions against

requirements. Job descriptions will be reviewed and sent for evaluation before the end of November.

- Following recent informal conversations with staff, the Chairman noted that welfare and morale appear positive at present. He emphasised that welfare and morale are continuously monitored and any emerging concerns will be supported promptly.
- Noted that there is a need to consider a “plan B” should any staff be off work for any length of time.
- The possibility of the Council building its own HR app was raised and will be investigated. Cllr White was asked to put a proposal together as to what he could offer once the Office has produced a spec. for him to work towards. Quotes will also be sought from other providers for app production.

6. The next HR Committee meeting will be held on:

**Thursday November 27th 2025 at 11.00am.**