

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday October 14th 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: Gillian Tarrant – Chairman, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Sarah Humphries, Tina Kiddell, Graham Martin, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Jack White

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

7 members of the public present

Breckland District Council Officer and District Cllr Cowen in attendance to answer questions relating to item 8.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED from

Tony Bridges, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Tomos Hutchings

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on September 23rd 2025 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Update from the meeting held on September 23rd not agenda items for this meeting:

- Whole Council training took place on Thursday 25th September with eight Councillors attending.
- The Market Forum scheduled to be held on October 1st was cancelled due to lack of participants.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

10th September Charlotte Harvey Community Centre and Food Hub Meetings

12th September Battle of Britain 85th Memorial, County Hall

3rd October Rotary Club Charter Night Dinner, Broom Hall

12th October High Sheriff's Justice Service, Norwich Cathedral

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

As the Mayor was unavailable, the Vice-Chairman attended the Civic Leaders Tour at RAF Lakenheath on 17.09.25

4.3 Clerks Report

Written report presented in Councillors Agenda Pack:

Love Your Town Pride of Place – Watton Hare Trail

The Town Council has been awarded a grant of £4,800 from Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council's Love Your Town Fund.

This initiative aims to increase footfall and engagement in the town centre by placing 12 hares around Watton. The project includes two large fibreglass hares at the High

Street entrances and ten smaller wooden hares in shops and venues. The trail will encourage residents and visitors to explore the town, culminating in a Spring Fayre event with prizes for participants.

Church Walk Light

The Breckland Officer who was leading on the installation of the light and CCTV for Church Walk left Breckland just after completion of the project. Funding for the project was part of Safer Streets (Local concerns of safety and ASB).

Whilst the project did fund additional and upgraded lighting, unfortunately there was never any intention or agreement to place a light on the pole at the end of Church Walk. This was for CCTV only and this is backed up by invoices (this item is column, power ready for CCTV). The additional streetlight has been installed (singular not plural).

Unfortunately, there was connectivity issues for the CCTV so CCTV could not be progressed.

Therefore, there is a column with power, but nothing on it currently.

The original project and the funding opportunity expired some time ago and Breckland District Council has no budget for any additional works.

There may be other funding opportunities available, and Breckland is investigating.

Breckland has asked if Watton Town Council would have any funds available for the purchase of a lighting head and installation? *[this is not something the Town Council has budgeted for!]*

Breckland has offered to contact the original contractor to see if they would be able to provide a quote for this, to get an idea of cost and other enquiries are also being made.

The contractors who put the new footpath in at Church Road have verbally stated that the streetlight that was removed from the corner by the Church is to be replaced in November 25.

It is possible a head could be added to the pole at this time, but Watton Town Council would probably need to pay for it and there are complications in that the pole does not belong to the Town Council and the Town Council would not be paying for electricity. There may be an option of a solar light head but this needs investigation.

2026/7 AGAR What is Assertion 10?

With the 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide, the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) has introduced a new **Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance**, to sit alongside the existing assertions in the Annual Governance Statement.

PFR engagement pack and questionnaire

Parish and Town Councils in Norfolk that have been affected by flooding have been approached for opinions on existing Property Flood Resilience (PFR) schemes and how the County Council look at options to mitigate flood risk.

The current property flood resilience (PFR) process has been affected by the increased frequency of storm events, including Storm Babet, meaning resources were diverted to respond to flooding reports across the county. Norfolk County Council has taken steps to reduce any further delays by employing a dedicated Flood Risk Officer to deliver PFR schemes.

This has been passed to WASFAG.

Breckland Five Market Towns Meeting – 02.10.25

Clerk attended

- **Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation**
Stressed that any new authority would want to work at a neighbourhood level. Information on Future Norfolk website: [Future Norfolk - Future Norfolk](#) including timetable. Decision re. unitary status expected in March 26 with elections for new authority in March 27.
- **Car Parks**
Delay over summer was due to Breckland investigating how to use the General Consent Order which would allow freehold transfer of assets. Stressed that Breckland want to work with the Town Councils to see that the car park transfers do happen.
- **Grants currently being offered to support Businesses and High Streets –**
includes Shop Front Redecoration Grants and Rural England Prosperity Fund Grants which aids start up businesses and established businesses to improve buildings and equipment.
- **Breckland Council Town & Parish Council Forum – Narborough Village Hall**
3rd November 2025 6-8pm.
- **Thetford has been awarded 19.5million through the Pride in Place**
Government Initiative to enable delivery of re-generation. An independent board has been established to make decisions.
- **Noted that Attleborough is seeing a good attendance at its weekly market with**
an average of 20 stalls each week.
- **Swaffham TC reported ongoing problems with vandalism at its public toilets.**
- **Local Plan**
The Local Plan is progressing as timetabled with formal consultation on the Issues & Options to begin on October 31st. Breckland planners will be holding surgery type events early in the consultation in each market town.

Sports Association AGM

Notification received that the Watton Sports Association AGM will take place at the Sports Centre on October 28th at 7.30pm.

4.4 Lead Councillors Reports

4.4i Report from the Lead Councillor for Heritage was included within the agenda pack for the meeting.

4.4ii Report regarding the High Street Footfall Cameras was included within the agenda pack for the meeting.

4.4iii It was resolved to postpone any decision regarding replacing the Church Walk Working Group with a Biodiversity Working Group until the next Full Council Meeting.

4.4iv Report from Events and Marketing Officer (EMO)

Fireworks event planning is going well. The food village will be stocked with a variety of different food vendors this year, and there will be free entertainment from Fire Frenzy on offer throughout the event. Both sets of Cadets are available and willing to assist with the event again this year, as well as the Rotary Club. Set up for the event will be managed by the EMO, Sue Dent, Steve Bryce and Councillors Stan Hebborn and Sue Hebborn. Councillors Gilbert and Prince are down as volunteers for the event, they will be manning the control and command centre/refreshments for volunteers/staff. The only payment that needs to be made prior to the event is for Hallmark (the toilets), all other payments have already been made or will be made at end of October (this will include donations to the groups attending/assisting with the event)."

It was agreed to pay the Hallmark invoice of £1624.50 for hire of toilets.

4.4v Report from Watton and Saham Flood Action Group presented with the agenda pack for the meeting.

Liz Whitcher, Chairman of Watton and Swaffham Flood Action Group (WASFAG) spoke to update on the WASFAG Report which had been included with the agenda pack for the meeting. It was noted that since the Report was compiled there has been further information received regarding the WSP project. The hope is that flood mitigation measures can be put in at five sites in Watton, but due to continual funding gaps within the Environment Agency it is unlikely any action will be taken in the near future.

Item 8. – It was agreed that item 8 would be moved up the agenda so discussion could be heard prior to public participation.

Breckland Councillor Cowen and Ralph Burton, Breckland Assistant Director of Property & Projects were in attendance at the meeting to answer questions regarding the offers put to the Town Council regarding future management and ownership of the three currently Breckland District Council owned car parks in the town.

Councillors had been presented with the option letter in the agenda pack for the meeting and also provided with further information relating to the possible transfer of the car parks.

The Town Council would like the three car parks to be transferred from the District Council to the Town Council at nil value (option 2 as given by Breckland).

It was resolved that option 2 will continue to be investigated and a recommendation will be brought back to the next Full Council meeting.

In the meantime a small working group of Councillors and the Clerk will meet to prepare the recommendation. It was suggested public opinion should be sought via a social media post.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public spoke in favour of the Town Council taking ownership of the three currently Breckland District Council owned car parks in the town.

6. DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) –

Update within the Clerks Report.

All information received regarding devolution and LGR is shared with Councillors.

7. FINANCE

7.1 The minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25.09.25 were noted.

7.2i It was resolved to pass the £100 income from stall fees from the 2025 VE Day event held at Watton Sports Centre to Loch Neaton to part cover the invoice received.

8. CAR PARKS – item moved to before public participation.

9. GRANT APPLICATION

Having received a grant application to support the Watton Christmas Hamper Appeal **it was resolved** to offer to purchase items to put in the hampers.

It was also resolved that in future only registered charities will be eligible to apply for a grant.

10. BOX TRAILER

It was resolved that as the Council's box trailer is being used for storage only it will be sold at auction.

11. CHARLOTTE HARVEY TRUST

Correspondence received relating to the Town Council's support for the Charlotte Harvey Trust was noted. This matter was considered in depth by the Finance Committee which felt valid points had been raised. The staff operating costs of the Community Hub is partly financed by the Town Council and this will be better reflected in future accounts of the Charity.

12. PLANNING

To note:

12.1 PL/2025/1400/TCA 75 High Street Watton. IP25 6AW Willow - W1 - Re-pollard to previous pollard points as last undertaken in 2022. At a height of approx. 5m from ground level.

12.2 PL/2025/1402/CLOPUD Watton Junior School, Brandon Road, Watton
Proposed single storey timber clad and brick extension between block 2 and block 3.
Ramp proposed on east elevation and ASHP, with roof turrets for mechanical plant on roof - certificate of lawfulness for proposed use

12.3 PL/2025/1448/DCA New Green Business Park Norwich Road, Watton, Norfolk
Discharge of Condition 12 on PP 3PL/2022/0806/F

12.4 Update on enforcement ENF/064/25 Otterwood Kennels Dereham Road Saham
Toney Unauthorised Development

12.5 PL/2025/1261/DCA 28a Thornhill Road, Watton (formerly plot 40A) Discharge
of condition 7 on pp 3PL/2023/1206/F

12.6 PL/2025/1340/OMAJ Land to the rear of the Raj (formerly the Flying Fish),
Norwich Road, Carbrooke Outline application with all matters reserved except for
access for new commercial buildings

Noted this application is in Carbrooke

12.7 PL/2025/1437/FMIN basin extension Serco Transport Depot Norwich Road,
Watton Extension to refuse vehicle and car parking areas at Serco depot and
proposed attenuation

*Watton & Saham Flood Action Group believe that a very thorough flood risk
assessment has been undertaken*

12.8 Proposed Change of use The Yard Griston Road, Watton, IP25 6DL Change of
use from commercial/building land to storage for up to 50no cars & light commercial
vehicles

*Concern raised regarding possible increase in traffic within the Griston Road cul-de-
sac which could result from this development*

13. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider staffing matters

13.1 The minutes from the HR meeting held on 25.09.25 were noted.

13.2 Recommendations from the HR Committee

13.2i **It was resolved** to engage Council HR and Governance Support to undertake
job evaluation of Town Council staffing positions.

13.2ii **It was resolved** to engage Zivile Mauri to provide HR services to the Council
for a period of 6 months at an estimated cost of £1250.