

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on
Tuesday 25th November 2025 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Gillian Tarrant (Chairman of the meeting), Tony Bridges, Keith Gilbert, Sarah Humphries, Tomos Hutchings, Tina Kiddell, Graham Martin, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Jack White.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED from

Tina Cruz, Stan Hebborn and Sue Hebborn

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

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

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

- Office toilet is being replaced.
- Awaiting notification from Breckland Council that there has been no call for an election to fill the current two casual vacancies on the Town Council. If this is so the Council can begin the co-option process.
- Digitalisation Working Group to hold its first meeting on 27.11.25.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended:

13.11.25 Finance Committee Meeting

13.11.25 CHT Management Committee Meeting and Food Hub Meeting

24/11 RAF Cadets Award Evening

4.2 Vice-Chairman's/District Councillors Report

- The Vice-Chairman voiced appreciation to the proprietor of the recently opened Watton Baguette Shop for his promotion of the town. It was noted that it is good to see such positivity in the High Street.
- It is understood that a meeting at Breckland Council w/b 01/12/25 will be looking at the possible transfer of the town car parks to Watton Town Council. It is hoped further information will be available following the meeting.

4.3 District Councillor's Report

District Councillor Keith Gilbert informed the Council that as he is a member of Breckland Council Planning Committee he cannot make any comment on specific sites within the Local Plan consultation as he cannot be seen to be predetermined. However he stressed that a public meeting should be called to facilitate discussion on the proposed development site adjacent to Wayland Wood.

It was agreed that a public meeting would be called specifically to put comments together regarding the proposed allocation in the Breckland Local Plan of land which is adjacent to Wayland Wood as development land (WAT 3). The meeting would

need to be arranged as soon as possible and be well advertised. A message will be posted on social media to inform members of the public of the planned meeting.

4.4 County Councillors Report – County Councillor not present.

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

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.

The gas heating boiler at Wayland Hall has also been replaced due to a fault occurring resulting in no heat in the building.

The work was undertaken as an emergency with the expenditure agreed by the Chairman and the Chairman of the Finance Committee. All Councillors were in agreement to support the Chairmans request for ratification of the cost of £3770 plus VAT for the replacement boiler.

Watton and Saham Flood Action Group (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.

Bird Flu

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

Wayland Academy Prom Committee

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

Internal Audit

The Internal Auditor undertook his interim audit visit on 24.11.25 and his draft report has made some suggestions which will be considered by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 27.11.25 with recommendations to be brought back to Full Council.

20mph Speed Limit Consultation

Norfolk County Council is proposing to make various roads in Watton 20mph speed zone limits. The roads are Washington Drive and those off Washington Drive on the former RAF site along the Norwich Road.

4.6 Lead Councillors Reports

Cllr Hutchings reported that it was agreed at the WASFAG meeting that WASFAG will have a presence at the Festive Market and that it is likely Reclaim the Rain will provide an update in December on the plans for rain gardens in Watton High Street.

4.6i Cllr Bridges had presented a report regarding the play area at Watton Sports Centre.

There has been an issue with mushrooms growing in the bark safety surface at the play area and decisions need to be made regarding action needed. At present the play area has been closed due to Health & Safety concerns.

It was resolved to keep the play area closed until plans have been agreed.

A meeting will be arranged with Watton Sports Association which owns the land on which the play equipment is sited and quotes will be sought for possible alternative safety surfaces. The Memorandum of Understanding in place between the Town Council and Watton Sports Association was shared with those present.

Cllr White confirmed that he is willing to lead the proposed Digitilisation Working Group and he outlined some thoughts as to how a digital strategy could help build Watton and lead to recognition for the town. It was stressed that the Chamber of Commerce and Wayland Partnership, who are working towards the creation of a Digital and Creative Media Centre in the town, should be included in discussions.

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress List was accepted as presented.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public present.

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for November 2025 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting with the addition of payment of £134.40 to Ashill Fire Protection.

7.2 The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 13.11.25 were noted.

7.3 **2026/27 Budget** - It was resolved to accept the recommendation from the Finance Committee to set the 2026/27 budget of £594370 as presented with a precept request of £519420.

It was resolved not to increase charges for the Cemetery, Market or Allotments during the 2026/27 financial year.

8. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION (LGR)

Updates received from Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Association of Local Councillors all passed to Councillors.

9. BRECKLAND LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

It was resolved to call a public meeting to facilitate discussion regarding site allocation WAT 3 in the draft local plan before making any comments on the Local Plan Consultation.

10. GREEN SPACES

It was resolved to request transfer of all the Breckland Council owned green spaces in the town to the ownership of Watton Town Council.

11. JUBILEE GARDEN

It was resolved not to turn Jubilee Garden into a wild flower meadow.

12. PLANNING - no planning consultations received.

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

13.1 The Minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 13.11.25 were noted.