



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

To Councillors: You are hereby summoned to attend the Town Council meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Wayland Hall on Tuesday 27th January 2026 at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Jane Scarrott Town Clerk

21st January 2026

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 13.01.26 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

4.7 To receive notes from the Digitalisation Working Group Meeting held on 15.01.26

Suggested actions:

- i. To consider installation of CCTV in the High Street
- ii. To consider the 2 options presented for public Wi-fi in the High Street
- iii. To consider quote for Smart Benches
- iv. To consider financial viability for updating the Town Council website and creation of a Town App
- v. To consider consulting the public on communication strategies and digital infrastructure and whether public surveys to gauge support for suggested actions should be undertaken.

5. To note the Works in Progress List

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7. To consider gift to Weeze

8. FINANCE

8.1 To approve payments for January 2026 (To follow)

8.2 To note the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 15.01.26

8.3 Finance Committee recommendations to Full Council:

- I. that the Council will subscribe to Breathe HR at a cost of £22 per month for the basic software package plus £10 per month to add "Rota, Time and Attendance" which will record employees working times.
- II. that the Council accepts the quote of £1000 from SJB Safety Solutions for a Health & Safety audit to be undertaken to ensure all relevant arrangements are in place.

9. Update on Devolution and Local Government re-organisation

10. To consider introducing a Community Champions initiative which could include recognition for staff

11. PLANNING To consult on planning applications received since the last meeting:

11.1	PL/2025/1335/ FMIN	Proposed Change of use from commercial/building land to storage for up to 50no cars & light commercial vehicles.	Yard Griston Road Watton Thetford Norfolk IP25 6DL	https://appeal-planning-decision.service.gov.uk/comment-planning-appeal/enter-appeal-reference
11.2	PL/2026/0052/ FMIN	Proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and construction of a replacement dwelling in the form of a dormer-style bungalow	53 Griston Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6DN	https://publicportal.breckland.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=198934
11.3	PL/2025/1895/ HOU	Proposed erection of a single storey garden room to the rear elevation.	10 Woodpecker Drive, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6TW	https://publicportal.breckland.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=198950&language=en

12. To pass a resolution to Exclude the Press and Public to consider confidential Staffing matters:

12.1 To note the Minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 15.01.26

12.2 HR Committee recommendations to full council:

- I. To accept the draft Job Descriptions as presented - App 1
- II. To accept the recruitment package for the Town Council Caretaker as presented (to follow)

Item 3.1

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 13th November 2026 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: Gillian Turrant – Chairman, 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

Representatives from Orbit Homes gave a presentation prior to the start of the meeting relating to the proposed development of 177 homes off Mallard Road.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED from:

Tina Cruz

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE.

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on December 12th 2025 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Update from the meeting held on December 12th 2025 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Toilet at Wayland Hall is now scheduled to be re-instated on 26.01.26
- Meeting still to be arranged with Watton Sports Centre regarding the play area – It needs to be decided which Councillors will attend.
- DC and TC met with the Breckland Tree Officer on January 9th re TPOs. Commissioned tree works still to be undertaken.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman attended the Finance Committee Meeting on 11.12.25 and visited PACT Animal Sanctuary (one of her chosen charities) on 16.12.25.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman attended the Breckland Cabinet meeting on 12.01.26 where the transfer of Breckland owned car parks to the relevant Town Councils was approved.

4.3 Clerks Report

Written report presented in Councillors Agenda Pack:

- Reclaim the Rain update forwarded to Councillors 13.01.26.
- To date the Council has received three applications for the two casual vacancies on the Town Council. Breckland Council has been informed of the resignation of Anthony Bridges and the process has begun to also fill this vacancy. It is suggested, and agreed, that if no election is called for this third vacancy the Town Council will look to fill the three vacancies at the same time.
- An aim of the Norfolk Community Heritage Milestone Project is to have the full set of 20 Norwich - Watton milestones repainted this year. Volunteers are prepared to paint the stones and it was agreed the Council, as requested, will provide the paint (at a cost of £30) for the two milestones in the parish.

4.4 Lead Councillors Reports

- Report from Cllr Hutchings had been shared by e-mail prior to the meeting. Report included an update from the Reclaim the Rain meeting held on 18.12.25, a formal thanks for the Town Councils efforts to consider concerns relating to the proposed development site adjacent to

Wayland Woods and an acknowledgment of integrity relating to Cllr Hutchings role as a Trustee of the Loch Neaton Charity.

(It was suggested that the Events & Marketing Officer could be tasked with investigating the possibility of whether there might be funding available to enable the Town Council to purchase a strip of land adjacent to Wayland Wood which would be a buffer zone between the SSI and development.)

- Cllr Martin reported that a new light head has eventually been installed at the east end of Church Walk.
- Cllr Gilbert attended the recent Watton Twinning Association “get together”.
- Cllr Hebborn reported that staff job descriptions are being reviewed by the HR Committee which will also be looking at recruitment for three posts which are likely to become vacant this year. The caretaker of the Community Hub has submitted his resignation.

4.5 Notes from the Digitalisation Working Group meeting held on December 11th 2026 were received.

Cllr White will circulate information regarding solar powered wi-fi benches.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – No members of the public present.

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 11.12.25 were noted.

7.2 **It was resolved** to accept the quote of £2868.73 to complete works as identified in the Annual Play Area Inspections Report.

8. CAR PARKS

As noted in the Vice-Chairman report Breckland Council will now proceed with the transfer of Breckland owned car parks to the relevant Town Councils.

An issue has arisen regarding whether the car parks can be treated as non-business for VAT recovery and further information is being sought.

9. EMERGENCY LIGHTING

It was **resolved** to continue to engage the current contractors to provide servicing of the emergency lighting at Wayland Hall.

10. WEEZE

It was **agreed** that the invitation from Weeze for Councillors to attend the 800th anniversary of the town would be an agenda item again for the next Town Council meeting when consideration will be given for a gift to be taken to Weeze. Cllr Gilbert will represent the Town Council on the visit.

The Chairman of the Twinning Association will be invited to attend the meeting on January 27th.

11. PLANNING

11.1 PL/2025/1874/FMIN Installation of an extension to existing ground mounted solar array at Cranswick Country Foods, Brandon Road, Watton IP25 6LW

No comments

11.2 PL/2025/1845/FMIN Proposed change of use & conversion and extension of existing out building to annexe for short term holiday rental & family annexe 65 High Street Watton IP25 6AW

No comments

11.3 PL/2025/1848/FMIN Conversion of existing property in to 7 bed house in shared occupancy 8 Swaffham Road, Watton IP25 6LA

No comments

11.4 PL/2025/1910/FMIN Proposed Single Storey Extension to Create Despatch Room
Cranswick Country Foods, Abattoir Brandon Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6LW
No comments

11.5 To note: PL/2025/1924/DCA Discharge of Condition 8 on
PP3PL/2016/0701/VAR Redhill Park Redhill Lane, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6RE

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

15.1 The Minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 11.12.25 were noted.

Item 3.2 Update from the meeting held 13.01.26

Agenda Item No.	Update
3.2	Response awaited from the Breckland Tree Officer following his visit 09.01.26
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EMO investigating funding to purchase buffer zone adjacent to Wayland Wood• Staff Job Descriptions are agenda item 13.2i on 27th Jan 2026
9.	Emergency lighting servicing undertaken at Wayland Hall 14.01.26
10	Gift to take to Weeze is agenda item 9 on 27 th Jan 2026

Item 4.5 Clerks Report

Bridle Road and Sports Centre update

The Events and Marketing Officer has been investigating alternative safety surfacing for the Sports Centre Play Area to make the site more accessible for all.

It has also been noted that Bridle Road Play Area would not be classed as accessible for all as there is no path from the dropped kerb closest to the site so options are also being researched.

Bridle Road Play Area is currently benefitting from quite regular visits from Norfolk Youth Justice Service Team who are helping to better clear the boundary path.

Written request for agenda items from Cllrs

Just a polite reminder that Cllrs are asked to give written notice at least 7 clear days before the meeting if they wish to place a motion on the agenda. We will always try to accommodate such requests but it is helpful to receive them in good time and for instructions to be clear please!

Thetford Road development

Last year Endurance Estates contacted the Council regarding “proposals for a new, high-quality residential development, Land at Thetford Road, Watton”. The site is to the right when leaving Watton past the Thetford Road roundabout.

The consultant has stated “that plans are still in the early stages and the aim is to deliver new homes whilst providing a natural extension to the community with access to local services and green spaces. The vision aims are to support Watton’s long-term growth in a sensitive, well-planned way that respects its character”.

Ahead of launching a public consultation, the developers would like to invite Councillors to a briefing to gather feedback and answer any questions.

Watton and Saham Flood Action Group has also been invited to the meeting.

It is likely this site will come forward before the Breckland Local Plan is adopted as warned by Becky Collins the Head of Development at Breckland Planning at the Reclaim the Rain Green Blue Urban stakeholders meeting held before Christmas.

21.01.26 - To date the developer has been asked for clarification of a date and location for the suggested meeting.



Watton Town Council
Digitalisation Working Group

Thursday 15th January 2026

In Attendance:	Sarah Humphries, Tomos Hutchins, Jack White, Michelle Thompson, Lorren Woodgett
Apologies:	Stan Hebborn

1	Declaration of interest
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None
2	Notes from meeting 11/12/25
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notes from previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.
5	Updates from meeting 11/12/25 & discussions on 15/01/26
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JW has looked at the SLA's and suggested that an external consultation is carried out to look at what systems are in place and what cost reductions could be suggested. JW suggested it could cost between £250-500 for an external consultation, this is to go on the agenda for the next full council meeting. - JW suggested looking at accessibility features for how the TC communicates with the community, e.g. large print, and look at signing up to a translator service. Could the office look at putting out a poll on social media to find out how the public best receive communication, e.g. social media, posters, newspaper, etc. - JW wants the TC to invest in CCTV to have down the high street, local businesses can't afford it and don't want to provide CCTV footage to the police when required for crime as would put a target on their shop. The council should be looking at public safety. Office staff to look at putting out a poll on social media to gather public interest/opinion on having CCTV in the high street. JW also suggested an anonymous reporting system run by the council for the public to report crime when they don't feel comfortable dealing with the police. - Regarding the wi-fi in the high street, JW proposed two options to explore. Option 1 would be wi-fi extenders that boost the TC wi-fi at regular intervals down the high street. Option 2 would be smart benches that have wi-fi, due to the size of the wi-fi network it would need to be a managed service to monitor logging into the wi-fi tracking use, managing advertising space on the log in page, etc. Option 1 would not be largely expensive, Office staff to look at managed wi-fi services. - Smart street furniture as the Option 2 would include wi-fi, but could also include USB charging ports, footfall counters, and audio functions to tell stories about Watton. EMO is currently in contact with Westcotec regarding smart bench options and will present options when the information has been collated. JW would like to trial 4 smart benches, two on either side of the high street – this would require removing the benches currently installed. - JW proposed an Our Town App, costing £5,000 to set up and then an outlying cost of around £150 a month to upkeep. This could be used to communicate with the public and allow them to book appointments with the council. Currently appointments are not

	<p>required for the public to come in with an enquiry. JW also proposed the need for a new website; the old website is outdated and could do with being updated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMO voiced concerns regarding funding options for all of the above instalments and improvements, there are very limited funding pots out there at present. JW suggested borrowing money from central government for all of the above and paying back over a 50-year period.
6.	Priorities moving forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highstreet Wi-Fi - IT requirements consultation - CCTV in the high street - Getting quotes for smart benches

7.	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CCTV to go on next Council agenda - Office to look at a managed Wi-Fi service - Quotes for smart benches - Viability for updating website and Town App to go on agenda - Poll to go out on how the public best receive communication

Next Meeting Thursday 12th February

Item 4.7ii

Option 1 would be wi-fi extenders that boost the TC wi-fi at regular intervals down the high street.

Option 2 would be smart benches that have wi-fi, due to the size of the wi-fi network it would need to be a managed service to monitor logging into the wi-fi tracking use, managing advertising space on the log in page, etc.

Item 4.7iii

Quote from Wescotec (Local company) Each bench would be approximately £5,000 + VAT, however this is just an estimation.

SEEDiA Solar Bench

Model: NEW URBAN



1. Product designation

The SEEDiA NEW URBAN solar bench is designed for indoor as well as outdoor use.

The solar bench in its standard configuration is equipped with an autonomous, ecological power source - photovoltaic panel, electronic circuit and accessories enabling

- battery charging of electronic devices via 2 USB 2.0 ports;
- telemetry module
- LED lighting;

Optionally, the bench can be equipped with :

- wireless network router;
- Qi standard inductive charger;
- speaker;
- induction loop for the hearing impaired.

The bench is suitable for indoor and outdoor installation in open spaces. No roofing is required. The design, selection of construction materials and manufacturing of the bench ensure its ergonomics, safety and comfort of users, functionality, durability and reliability.

Item 4.7iv

Quote received from Semibold (Local company)

1) Your New Website

Website Pages Included

- All pages / articles on the current website on 13/08/2025

Website Functionalities Included

- Contact forms
- Pages editable with the Elementor editor

2) Website Hosting & Maintenance (optional)

We briefly discussed updating the website and ensuring it gets the TLC it needs to run smoothly without any hitches. This is my entry-level "Basic" maintenance service which provides everything you need for your website to be hosted and run smoothly. You can see other [packages here](#). Please let me know if you'd prefer a different package.

1. Hosting *Super-fast UK website hosting*
2. SSL *Give your website the green padlock*
3. Daily backups *Your website is backed up every day*
4. Plugin updates *Keeping your website's plugins up to date and running smoothly*
5. Theme updates *Keeping your website's theme up to date with the latest releases*
6. WordPress core updates *Keeping WordPress up to date with the latest releases*
7. PHP updates *Keeping PHP updates to the latest version to avoid error messages*
8. Website security monitoring *Several extra implementations to try to keep your website secure and out of harm's way*
9. Uptime monitoring *Consistent monitoring of your website to check it's up and running smoothly*
10. Plugin licenses worth £797+VAT/year *Licenses for critical tools that allow your website to work as you need it to*

Cost & Timelines

1) Website Design & Build £2,420+VAT (50% upfront and 50% before the site is made live)

2) Hosting, Support & Maintenance £45+VAT/month (optional, however, recommended)
(other [plans](#) are available)

	Resolution	Date/ Agenda item	Action	Link to 4YP/NP	Lead	Current Position – 21.01.26	Status
136	Request transfer of all the Breckland Council owned green spaces in the town to the ownership of Watton TC	25.11.25 10			Office	Breckland Council is arranging a meeting which will provide further information	
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 being undertaken	
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	Submission to be made	
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. No further action being taken until project can include widening of the paths	
124	That the Office should gather information on the provision of services for the elderly in Watton 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	11.03.25 4.4i	Gather information		Office	EMO is currently collating a directory	
120	Quote accepted to carry out the following works to the Clock Tower: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site inspection of the tower • review of the present quinquennial survey • production of a list of works and discussion of the list with a view to producing a minor schedule of works. 	14.01.24 15	Accept quote and arrange works		Office	<p>Site inspection of the tower took place 30.01.25</p> <p>Building Surveyor report received and forwarded to contractor</p> <p>Awaiting date for works to be undertaken.</p>	
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	<p>Breckland Council will now proceed with the transfer of Breckland owned car parks to the relevant Town Councils.</p> <p>An issue has arisen regarding whether the car parks can be treated as non-business for VAT recovery and further information is being sought.</p>	

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	Further meeting to be arranged	
104	To produce a staff well-being policy	23.07.24 4.6	Compile policy		HR	Policies being drafted	
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	Office to follow up	
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. To undertake a Town Council Sustainability Audit.	6 12.11.19 12 24.09.19	Clerk to investigate and present model policies to Full Council. To undertake Audit.	4YP Office	Clerk Office	Sustainability Audit to include Climate Change Awareness Policies	

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.	
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NP – Watton Neighbourhood Plan

4YP – Town Council Financial Four Year Forecast

Item 7

Margaret Devine (Chairman of Twinning) will be attending to talk in Public Participation.

Item 8.2

Minutes from the Watton Town Council Finance Committee Meeting held on Thursday January 15th 2026 at Wayland Hall

Present: Don Saunders (Chairman), Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Gillian Turrant
Officers Present: Jane Scarrott and Michelle Thompson

Cllr Tomos Hutchings present as an observer.

1. No Apologies for absence received. Noted that Tina Kiddell is the “reserve” member of the Committee.
2. No Declarations of Interest made.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11.12.25.
 - i. The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 11.12.25 were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
 - ii. Update from the Minutes of the Meeting 11.12.25:
 - The Office IT needs are still being considered and this matter has been passed to the Digitalisation Working Group.
 - It is felt that there is no issue at the moment with mushrooms growing in the bark safety surface at the Sports Centre Play Area and the Town Operatives will be asked to rake the bark and replenish areas in need of topping up. The Play Area will then be re-opened. Once prices have been obtained for possible other safety surfaces which would make the area more accessible to all a meeting will be arranged with the Sports Centre.
 - Noted that the transfer of the Breckland Council owned car parks to the Town Council is progressing. There is a query regarding whether VAT will be able to be reclaimed on future maintenance works on the car parks but this will hopefully be confirmed prior to transfer. Breckland Council is also offering other land which it currently owns to the Town Council and Breckland has scheduled a meeting for January 30th to provide parishes with more information. If the Clerk cannot attend the meeting Cllr Saunders offered to.
 - iii Other items raised by Full Council

Noted that the Town Council has agreed to continue with the current contractors for servicing of the emergency lighting system at Wayland Hall.

(Some while ago the Council had been visited by officers from Norfolk Constabulary regarding the Police presence at Wayland House. A request will be made for an update on the Police lease of the premises).

4. Bank Reconciliation

The Finance Committee members were issued with a Bank Reconciliation dated 31.12.25. The Bank Reconciliation will be checked and signed by the Internal Control Officer on 16.01.25.

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

Points raised:

- Noted that no sponsorship has yet been received from Cranswick for the 2025 Firework Evening.

5. Insurance

Members had been presented with copies of the Insurance Schedule, Risk Details and Statement of Fact.

The Internal Auditor suggested in his interim report that the Council should increase its Fidelity Guarantee to £1m cover. This will be implemented at an additional cost of £160.24 for the current year.

Having had sight of the insurance documents members of the Committee were happy with the arrangements and cover as shown.

6. Cemetery Fees

Following a request for the inclusion of ashes with a burial a query was raised regarding charges. In this instance, when the family has requested acknowledgement of the final resting place of those whose ashes have been interred it was considered the usual charge should be made.

7. Breathe HR

A recommendation will be made to Full Council that the Council will subscribe to Breathe HR at a cost of £22 per month for the basic software package plus £10 per month to add "Rota, Time and Attendance" which will record employees working times. It was stressed the software should be trialled for a year and the contract needs to contain a clause stating an end date.

A further recommendation will be made that the Council accepts the quote of £1000 from SJB Safety Solutions for a Health & Safety audit to be undertaken to ensure all relevant arrangements are in place.

8. Date of the next meeting: Finance Committee:

Thursday February 13th 2026 @ 10.00am.

Noted that the current pattern of holding three meetings on the same day is taking up a lot of staff time on that day. It was suggested the Digitalisation Working Group meeting could be more ad hoc with meetings called as needed.

Recommendations to Full Council:

- that the Council will subscribe to Breathe HR at a cost of £22 per month for the basic software package plus £10 per month to add “Rota, Time and Attendance” which will record employees working times.
- that the Council accepts the quote of £1000 from SJB Safety Solutions for a Health & Safety audit to be undertaken to ensure all relevant arrangements are in place.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS AWARD SCHEME

Celebrating Outstanding Local Contributions by Watton Town Council

Introduction

The Watton Town Council's Community Champions Award Scheme is a prestigious initiative designed to recognise and celebrate the exceptional contributions of individuals, groups, and organisations within our community. The scheme aims to highlight the positive impact that local champions have on the wellbeing, spirit, and development of our town.

Aims of the Scheme

- To acknowledge and commend those who dedicate their time and effort to improving life in the community or who exhibit an unforeseen act of kindness.
- To inspire others by sharing stories of outstanding service and achievement.
- To promote civic pride and encourage wider participation in community activities.

Eligibility Criteria

The Community Champions Award Scheme is open to:

- Residents of the town who have demonstrated outstanding acts of kindness, service, volunteering, or leadership.
- Local organisations or groups making a significant positive difference.
- Young people (under 25) who have shown initiative and commitment to community causes.

Nomination Process

1. Nominations can be submitted by any member of the public, local organisations, or council members.
2. Nomination forms are available on the Town Council website and at the Council offices.
3. Each nomination should include a description of the nominee's contributions and their impact on the community.
4. A panel of councillors will review nominations and select the award recipients.

Award Categories

- Individual Champions: For an outstanding resident making a personal impact.
- Youth Champion: For an exceptional young person.
- Group/Organisation Champion: For collective achievements by a group or organisation.
- Special Recognition: For unique or long-term contributions.

Benefits and Recognition

Recipients of the Community Champions Award will be honoured at the Town Hall during the Council Meeting and receive a certificate and public recognition for their achievements. Their stories will be featured in local media and council communications, serving as inspiration for others.

Conclusion

The Community Champions Award Scheme is a testament to the Town Council's commitment to fostering an engaged, caring, and vibrant community. By celebrating those who go above and beyond, we encourage a spirit of active citizenship and collective pride in our town.

Item 12.1

**Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council HR Committee held on
Thursday January 15th 2026 at Wayland Hall**

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

Staff present: Clerk and Deputy 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 11.12.25 were accepted as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.
5. Staffing Update
 - Noted in the Finance Committee meeting that the cost for the Events & Marketing Officer to undertake training for the Certificate in Local Council Administration is estimated to be around £1000 which will be covered within the allocated 2026/27 staff training budget. It was suggested study time could be allocated when the EMO is taking her weekly working from home day.
 - Following request for paid absence to attend hospital appointments and having taken advice from the HR consultant, it was felt that medical appointments should be considered on an individual basis and this will be reflected within the staffing policies now being reviewed.
 - Councillors had been made aware of assistance given by the Town Operatives to manage traffic following a road traffic accident along the Brandon Road. It was requested that an item be put on the next Full Council meeting agenda to consider how staff or members of the public might be recognised when they go above and beyond. A Community Champion award or certificate could be considered.

5.1 Job Descriptions (JD) and Person Specifications

- Updated Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been provided by the consultant engaged to undertake this exercise before they move on to job evaluation of all posts. These have been shared with staff and members of the HR Committee, and some comments have been noted:
 - Wayland Hall Cleaner – JD ok
 - Office Support Clerk – JD ok [It may be that consideration needs to be given to the above two roles knowing that the current post holder is expected to retire in May 2026].

- Town Operatives – JD ok
- Food Hub Supervisor - The Food Hub Supervisor has stated that she would like the job title to be “Food Hub Manager”. The consultant has advised that giving the title Manager would suggest the post holder should be part of the proposed Senior Management Team.

However, members of the HR Committee stated a willingness to change the post title to Food Hub Manager, and a recommendation will be made to Full Council to consider the post worthy of the suggested name change to more accurately reflect the role being undertaken.

- Community Projects Officer (CPO) - Note position is referred to as Community Projects Manager in current JD. CPO has commented that the Marketing & Promotion part of the role is now undertaken by the Events & Marketing Officer. There is a cross over in the arrangements for the management of the Charlotte Harvey Trust in that the JD for the Community Projects Officer gives responsibility to the CPO for managing meetings of the Trust but it is the TC Clerk who is also listed as Clerk to the Trustees of the CHT. This and financial management of CHT needs clarification.
- The Deputy Clerk has raised points within the JD for the post, and these will be noted prior to acceptance of the new JD.

The Deputy Clerk JD also refers to duties relating to finance management of the CHT and support for the Clerk as RFO with both to be further considered. Other points around line management of other staff, attendance at events and Cemetery management also need clarification. The Deputy Clerk has also expressed a desire to be considered for working from home from time to time and it was suggested home working for the Town Council Office staff should be trialled if appropriate to the running of the Office. Benefits of working from home will be reviewed in three months' time.

- The Clerks JD will be slightly amended to clarify work undertaken for the Charlotte Harvey Trust (CHT) and Watton & Saham Flood Action Group. It was suggested consideration could be given to removing the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) role from the Clerks duties, but the Council must appoint an RFO and in the majority of appointments, especially within parish and smaller town councils, the Clerk is the RFO. It may be that as the Council grows the RFO position could become a standalone post and help alleviate the Clerks workload.
- CHT Caretaker – ok but consideration needs to be given to the role as the current post holder is retiring on 20.02.26.

The Office will liaise with staff concerned and amend the JDs as suggested which will then be shared with Full Council before passed to the consultant for job evaluation.

5.2 Staff Recruitment

Consideration was given to the vacancy which will arise when the current Community Hub Caretaker retires on 20.02.26. Suggested amendments made regarding the job description and advert for the role will be made to be then shared with Full Council on 27.01.26.

It will be recommended that the role should become known as the “Town Council Caretaker” and that an additional five hours be added to the position to give time to also add cleaning at Wayland Hall to the role.

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

Thursday February 12th 2026 at 11.00am.

Recommendations to Full Council

- 1. To accept the Job Descriptions as presented**
- 2. To accept the recruitment package for the Town Council Caretaker as presented.**

Item 12.2

The Job Descriptions as presented will still be subject to slight amendment to Person Specifications to ensure uniformity.