

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

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

Councillors Present: Gillian Tarrant – 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.