

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Gillian Tarrant (Chairman of the meeting), Gavin Bulmer, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Cathy Halfacre, Tomos Hutchings, Keith Prince, Graham Martin, Don Saunders, Jack White, Jacqueline White

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED from**

Sarah Humphries, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tina Kiddell,

**2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE**

**3. MINUTES**

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2026 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Breckland Council has been invited to attend a future Town Council meeting to update on the Safer Street Wardens Scheme. It was agreed that Breckland representatives should attend prior to the Town Council meeting on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Grant Policy is still to be reviewed by the Finance Committee and grant applications received not an agenda item for this meeting will be deferred until the Policy has been updated.

**4. REPORTS**

**4.1 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman has attended the Finance Committee meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>, judged Watton in Bloom on April 18<sup>th</sup>, and hosted the Mayor's Celebrating Volunteers Reception on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Those who supported the Reception at Broom Hall were thanked.

The Chairman reported that £1000 has been raised for her Mayor's Charities PACT and Watton Rainbows.

**4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report – Vice-Chairman not present at the meeting.**

**4.3 District Councillor's Report – Cllr Gilbert reported that Breckland Council appears to be on a "run down"! He has recently attended meetings of the Breckland Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and Full Council.**

**4.4 County Councillors Report – County Councillor not present but written report presented prior to the meeting. Noted that this was an update to the fuller report presented at the Annual Town Meeting. Information regarding grant funding provided.**

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

- Norfolk ALC Newsletters forwarded to Cllrs 20.04.26 and 28.04.26

- Bin at Thetford Road roundabout

The litter bin located on the side of the road by the Thetford Road roundabout has been damaged by a vehicle for the second time. It is beyond repair and thought needs to be given to possibly locating any replacement bin where it will not be so easily hit. Requests have also been received for additional bins but it is possible that as a consequence of local government re-organisation charges will be introduced for bin emptying and it was noted that the current agreed Town Council policy is not to install any more bins.

- Notification received of events taking place at Buckingham Lodge which Cllrs are invited to attend.

- Factory Shop Car Park

The entrance to the carpark to the rear of the Factory Shop has bollards put across it and notices erected that the area is privately owned.

The land agents dealing with the property have been approached and they have informed the Council that this is due to insurance requirements.

- Weeze

Noted that Cllr Gilbert will represent the Town Council at the festival weekend being held in Weeze to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the town.

#### 4.6 Reports from Councillors

Written report from Cllr Hutchings included within the agenda pack for the meeting.

### 5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress List was received.

### 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - no members of the public present.

### 7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for April 2026 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting with the addition of the final £150 Mayors Allowance.

7.2 The draft minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on 16.04.26 were noted.

7.3i **It was resolved** to accept the Equipment Hire Policy as presented

7.3ii **It was resolved** that the Council would accept to undertake the maintenance schedule for the Reclaim the Rain assets as requested.

7.3iii **It was resolved** that an outstanding historic debt of £570 plus a Small Claims Court cost of £75 would be written off.

7.3iv **It was resolved** that the Town Council will offer to pay 50% (£80) towards an additional grave digging charge.

7.3v **It was resolved** the contract with the current HR consultant will be extended. To be reviewed in one year's time.

#### 7.3vi Grants

- **It was resolved** to offer Loch Neaton Bowls Club £400 in response to the grant application submitted, with the expectation that the Club will match fund the remainder of the funding requested. Money will be re-imbursed when appropriate invoices are received.

- **It was resolved** match funding will be offered in response to a grant application submitted by the Rainbows if they are unable to raise the requested funds themselves.

- **It was resolved** not to offer funding to the Wayland Chamber of Commerce as applied for.

Noted that the Finance Committee is looking to recommend that all grants request match funding.

**8. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION (LGR)** - See information on <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/LGR>

**9. WATTON & SAHAM FLOOD ACTION GROUP (WASFAG)**

**It was resolved** to continue to support WASFAG by funding 50% of the cost of £252 for the hosting and yearly domain renewal for the WASFAG website. In 2025 Saham Tomey Parish Council also contributed 50% and an approach will be made to request the same for 2026.

**10. WAYLAND ACADEMY GARDEN PROJECT**

**It was resolved** to respond to the correspondence received from Wayland Academy regarding its Garden Project Appeal to say the Council is willing to be involved and if possible Councillors would like to visit the school.

**11. WEEZE**

**It was resolved** to purchase two framed plaques at a cost of £300 to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Watton Twinning Association.

Research will also continue to be undertaken regarding the cost of a wooden hare and barrell as an additional gift for Weeze.

**12. GRANT APPLICATION**

**It was resolved** not to give the grant as applied for by Norfolk Community Law Service.

**13. PLANNING**

13.1 PL/2026/0520/PAMA Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to 1 no. Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) - Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA Breckland House, Norwich Road, Watton

**No comments**

13.2 FUL/2025/0016 TO NOTE - Carbrooke: Carbrooke Quarry, Summer Lane, Carbrooke, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6TJ: Non-compliance with conditions 1 (time limit), 2 (approved plans/documents), 3 (phasing and infilling), 20 (soils) and 24 (landscaping) of permission reference FUL/2022/0012 to allow to Extend the time limit, Amended Phasing and Infilling, Soil handling, Restoration/ Landscaping and Associated Details and Installation of new processing plant (plant retrospective) Carbrooke Quarry, Summer Lane, Carbrooke

**Supported**

**14. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider confidential matters.**

14.1 The Minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 16.04.26 were noted.

14.2 Recommendations from the HR Committee:

14.2i **It was resolved** to accept the Staff Job Evaluations Report including salary recommendations.

14.2ii **It was resolved** to accept the staffing policies, handbook and contracts as presented.

14.2iii It was resolved to accept a policy to offer staff the opportunity to undertake temporary additional hours to cover short-term staff absence.

A staffing update was given by Cllr Saunders on behalf of the HR Committee informing Councillors that the Town Council HR Consultant is scheduled to brief staff about the new policies and handbook at the staff meeting on 29.04.26.

A briefing note has also been produced for Councillors which will be e-mailed out.