

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 27th July 2026 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

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

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

2 members of the public.

Sgt Peter Fuller of the Watton Safer Neighbourhood Team was present prior to the start of the meeting with PC Jade Blanchflower who was introduced as the new Beat Manager for Watton. Jade plans to be seen out and about in Watton and said she will focus on anti-social drivers along Norwich Road, street drinking and ongoing reported urinating around the High Street area. The Team is keen to engage with the community and where possible will be present at events within the town. Message given was for members of the public to keep reporting any concerns as the Police cannot act on matters they are unaware of.

I. NO APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on July 14th 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman with additional wording as requested by Cllr Tarrant included in 4.1.

3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on July 14th 2026 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Still waiting for contractor to remove large graffiti wall from Lovell Gardens Play Area. It was suggested the small graffiti wall should also be removed and this will be an agenda item for the next Full Council Meeting.
- The High Street Matters Team visited the Office on 22.07.26. Information provided about the 2026 Love Your Market Town Grant in the Clerk's Report within the agenda pack for the meeting.
- Further correspondence relating to the St Giles Road Car Park received from the land agent. It is unlikely the Town Council would support lease of the St Giles Road Car Park.
- Community Champion Certificate drafted for volunteer litter picker.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman attended the Thetford Civic Ceremony on 18.07.26 and the Fun Day held at the Community Hub on 28.07.26 followed by a Market Working Group Meeting.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended the Finance Committee meeting on 17.07.26, volunteered at the Museum for Watton on 18.07.26, was part of the Working Party at Loch Neaton on 19.07.26 and also attended the Watton Car Show on that day, attended the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team Meeting held at Wayland Hall on 20.07.26, the High Street Matters

Meeting at the Council Office on 22.07.26 and the Community Fun Day, Market Working Group Meeting and Biodiversity Working Group Meeting on 29.07.26.

4.3 District Councillor's Report –

Prior to the meeting District Cllr Kiddell informed the Council that she had no report to give this month because “the main issue that has come out over the last month has been the Barnham camp issue. The leader has written to the Secretary of State demanding answers, and this is an ongoing situation.”

District Cllr Gilbert also stated he had no report to offer. He did however ask County Cllr Jack White if he could provide any update regarding the proposed pedestrianisation of Middle Street.

4.4 County Councillors Report – County Councillor Jack White submitted a written report prior to the meeting. Report shared in the agenda pack for the meeting.

Verbal update given in that remedial work is to take place in August to rectify resurfacing works which were undertaken along the Thetford Road in June.

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

- E-mail received from resident of Wayland Fields

The resident of Wayland Fields who had sent the e-mail was present at the meeting and was invited to address the Council. His request is for the Town Council to consider adopting the LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) located on the Wayland Fields estate.

The Council will investigate and the matter will be placed on a future Town Council meeting.

- Noted that the Council should consider an application to the Love Your Market Town Grant Fund. Expressions of Interest will be accepted until 14.09.26.
- Afternoon tea to be held at the Thetford Road Allotment Site 13.08.26 during Allotment Week.

4.6 Reports from Councillors

- Cllr Saunders thanked the CPO and EMO for facilitating the extremely successful Summer Fun Day held at the Community Hub on 29.07.26.
- It was requested that the Finance Committee investigate the possibility of installing air conditioning in the Council Chamber and whether the audio system in the Council Chamber could be improved to give better sound quality.

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress List was received.

Points raised: Noted that Cllr Gilbert would be willing to lead a walk around Rights of Way in the parish once the weather is cooler.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - 2 members of the public present. Council addressed at item 4.5.

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for July 2026 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting with the addition of £680 grave digging fees and £49.48 for sundries and trye repair.

7.2 The draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 17.07.26 were noted.

- 7.3 Recommendations from the Finance Committee:
- 7.3i **It was resolved** to accept the Grant Policy as presented.
- 7.3ii **It was resolved** to continue contracts with current grave diggers.

8. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION (LGR) – No updates.

9. HARES

It was felt that the Town Council should keep the remaining eight wooden hares purchased for the Hares Trail to be used to promote the town. It will be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting to confirm what should be done with the hares and whether any application to the Love Your Market Town Grant Funding 2026 should include building on the Hares Trail.

10. RESERVE MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE AND HR COMMITTEE

It was resolved that Jacqueline White and Cathy Halfacre will be reserve members of the Town Council Finance Committee and it will be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting to appoint a reserve member for the HR Committee.

11. CLOCK TOWER

Quotes for building maintenance work to the Clock Tower were presented in the agenda pack for the meeting. It was agreed that the Finance Committee should be tasked with considering the quotes and matching them against the surveyors report before bringing a recommendation back to Full Council.

12. PLANNING

12.1 PL/2026/0959/POWA Application for approval of the Open Space Scheme as required by Schedule 1, Part 1, 1.1 of the S106 Agreement dated 8th June 2023 on the planning permission 3PL/2022/0296/F Land Off Field Maple Road, Watton, Norfolk, IP25 6GA

No comments

12.2 PL/2026/0976/DCA Discharge of conditions 7 & 8 on pp 3PL/2022/0296/F Land Off Field Maple Road, Watton, Norfolk, IP25 6GA

No comments

12.3 PL/2026/0969/DPO Variation of Schedule 2, Parts 1 and 2 of the Section 106 Agreement relating to affordable housing obligations on pp 3PL/2023/0408/VAR - all affordable units to be delivered as shared equity units Former RAF Officers Mess Site Norwich Road, Watton, Norfolk

The Council will recommend refusal of this application as it is felt the original agreement should be upheld as the need for affordable units has not diminished.

12.4 PL/2026/0998/HOU Erection on two rear Extensions plus continuation of pitched roof over existing garage plus remodel of all existing walls 4B Saham Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6EA

No comments

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

13.1 The draft minutes from the meeting of the HR Committee held on 17.07.26 were noted.

13.2 Recommendations from the HR Committee:

- i. **It was resolved** that LGRC will be engaged to provide retained HR support at a cost of £125 per month plus VAT and the employer's national insurance.
- ii. **It was resolved** staff who are Display Screen Equipment (DSE) users will be allotted £120 per occasion that can be spent for an eye test as a DSE user. Staff will need to book an appointment with Cecil Amey in Watton and the cost of the eye test and glasses, if special lenses are needed for the distance the screen is viewed at, will be met from the allocation.