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 October 2026 at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Please note –A Biodiversity Working Group Meeting will be held at 6:15pm before the Full Council Meeting. Doors to the chamber will be open to the public from 7pm.

Jane Scarrott Town Clerk 21st October 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 13.10.26 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
4.2Vice Chairman's Report
4.3 District Councillor's Report
4.4 County Councillor's Report
4.5 Clerk's Report
4.6 Reports from Councillors

5. To note the Works in Progress List

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7. FINANCE
7.1 To approve payments for October 2026 (To follow)
7.2 To note Finance Committee minutes from meeting held on 16.10.26
7.3 To consider purchase of transparent sides for the market gazebos
7.4 To consider purchase of a portable lighting system to support the set-up of the market

8. To agree how the Council will use the Breckland Council Pride in Breckland funding

9. To consider quote received to undertake Memorial Safety Testing at the Town Council owned new and old cemetery

10. To agree HR Committee Chairman

11. To confirm Councillor volunteers for the Fireworks event

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

12.1	PL/2026/1329/OMAJ	Outline planning permission for residential development of up to 140 dwellings including open space, landscaping and associated infrastructure and works, with all matters reserved for future determination apart from main vehicular access to the site from Watton Road and Merton Road. (Schedule 2)	Land West of Thetford Road, Watton, Norfolk, IP25 6BA	https://publicportal.breckland.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=200136&language=en
12.2	PL/2026/1406/TRE **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**	Oak Tree - crown lift to provide a clearance of 4m above ground level over rear gardens of 8 & 9 The Stables. Removal of lower secondary and tertiary branches as necessary & any deadwood will be carefully removed.	9 The Stables, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6YP	https://publicportal.breckland.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=200197

12.3 From previous meeting:
3PL/2019/0991/D Reserved matters application for residential development of 177 dwellings following outline permission 3PL/2015/0254/0 DEVELOPMENT SITE Mallard Road, Watton, Norfolk

Item 3.1

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 13th October 2026 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

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

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM:

Gillian Turrant
[Jacqueline White has resigned as a Town Councillor]

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on September 22nd 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on September 22nd 2026 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Public Toilets arson –The Insurance assessor has visited the site and is asking the specialist cleaners to return to complete soot removal from the glass roof panels. A report is awaited.
- The Love Your Market Town grant application for £5000 has been successful.
- Further discussion has taken place around forming a possible planning committee with the consensus that the current meeting format works well. Unless specifically requested, this matter will not be a future Town Council agenda item.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report
The Chairman attended the Chairman of Breckland Council Civic Reception held at the English Distillery on 24th Sept., visited a resident of Watton who was celebrating her 100th birthday on 27th Sept. and attended the Wayland Men's Shed 10th anniversary on 30th Sept.

She has also attended Town Council Committee and Working Group Meetings and thanked everyone involved with the Weekly Market.
Cllr Gilbert was thanked for providing Halloween props to support the town's Halloween Trail at the end of the month.

It was noted that reports from District and County Councillors are agenda items for the end of the month Full Council Meetings but County Cllr Jack White reported that he was happy to support the Parish Partnership application for a dropped kerb at Bridle Road and that the County Council is not selling Norse Care homes at the present time.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report
The report from the Vice-Chairman had been circulated prior to the meeting with a verbal brief given at the meeting.

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

Clock Tower Watton

The building surveyor from Kings and Dunne used to compile the original report of the Clock Tower building has contacted the Town Council after seeing an article in the EDP. He has now contacted the appointed builders to add some weight to the request for the work to be undertaken asap.

He also spoke of the refurbishment of Swaffham Town Centre that Kings and Dunne are involved with which might be a model worth looking at for Watton. Paul Kings who has been leading the work there could be asked to meet councillors in Swaffham to see what has been done there.

Watton - Middle Street

The County Council has been working in partnership with Breckland District Council to develop proposals to pedestrianise, or otherwise restrict general traffic from, Middle Street. This forms part of a wider programme aimed at revitalising the town centre, including creating space for markets, outdoor hospitality, and events or public displays.

A range of options have been explored to date, and informal consultation was undertaken in late 2025 to gather initial views from residents, businesses and elected members. While there remains scope to refine the detail of any final scheme, a consistent element across the options considered is the removal of general traffic from Middle Street. This would be supported by associated changes to parking arrangements, access, and kerb alignments on Dereham Road, which connects the High Street with Harvey Road / Middle Street.

The project had been progressing on the assumption that, following devolution, a funding bid could be submitted to the Investment Fund. If this had been successful delivery could have started in 2026/27. However, government's decision to postpone Mayoral elections means that delivery within this timeframe is no longer achievable. As a result, the next stage of the project, which would have included further public consultation and the securing of necessary consents, has been paused until there is greater certainty regarding future funding opportunities, such as through a reconfigured Investment Fund.

The Town Council has been making enquiries with Norfolk County Council regarding how it might progress a TRO for Wednesdays, as a Plan B, should there be a need to relocate the weekly market. No response has been received to date!

Community Action Norfolk AGM
E-mail invite to be forwarded to Cllrs.

Breckland Town & Parish Council Forum 30.09.26
Attended by Cllr Bulmer and the Clerk.
Noted that the next Breckland Five Towns Meeting is to be held on 20.10.25. Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman invited.

4.4 Reports from Lead Councillors
4.4i Fireworks Evening
Cllr Stan Hebborn informed Cllrs that the cost of hire of the field where the Fireworks Event is held was originally £250 but this charge has now risen to a requested £6000 for this years event. A reduction of £1000 has been negotiated and £5000 has been paid for this year. It was suggested the viability of the event will need consideration for future years.

4.5 Social Media
Cllr Gavin Bulmer led a discussion around how the Council might use social media to better promote what it does and what it can and cannot do.

This is something Cllrs are keen to see happening and consideration will be given as to how best to implement a social media promotional campaign which will explain the powers the Town Council has as well as introducing Cllrs and giving an insight into their work and interests.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public present.

6. FINANCE

6.1 The minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25th September 2026 were noted.
6.2 The appointment of the Internal Auditor for year ending 31st March 2027 was ratified.

7. QUEENS HALL DONATION

The income from the Wednesday Market during the time it was located at the Queen's Hall has been clarified and **it was resolved** that £220 will be donated to the Queen's Hall rather than the £80 previously agreed.

8. HIGH STREET SEATING

It was resolved to re-locate the seat currently placed at the Charlotte Harvey Community Hub to replace the one damaged during the ram-raid of the cash point outside the Old Post Office. A replacement set will be purchased for the Community Hub. It is estimated the cost of a seat and the works to fit the seat and bench into the High Street will be in the region of £1700.

Noted that there is currently grant funding offered by Norfolk County Council which could provide additional seating for the bus shelter areas. This will be investigated.

9. OPEN SPACE TRANSFERS

Plans have been received of the open space areas which Breckland Council is offering to Watton Town Council and final site visits will be made prior to accepting the areas on the plans.

10. RECLAIM THE RAIN

Prior to public consultation being undertaken a site visit was held on 02.10.26 to help finalise the design for the Reclaim the Rain features which are to be located in Watton High Street.
The Project is suggesting tree pits and rain gardens at various locations along the High Street including a water collection tank to be placed on land belonging to the Wayland Partnership.
The aim of the Project is to help eliminate surface water flooding and to harvest rain water for re-use.
The plans currently include quite major works at the west end of the High Street which may include removal of some or all of the trees and planters outside Lings towards the entrance to Harvey Street.
The plans will be presented to the Town Council once they are available.

11. PRIDE IN BRECKLAND

It was resolved to ask the Office to issue a poll giving Cllrs the choice of possible projects which the Pride in Breckland funding could be spent on.
This matter will be and agenda item again for the next meeting of the Full Council when a decision must be made.

12. MARKET WORKING GROUP

Notes from the meeting of the Market Working Group held on 07.10.26 were accepted.

13. HALLOWEEN TRAIL

It was resolved that, if grant funding to pay for a board is not successful, a Halloween Selfie board will be purchased to support the town's Halloween Trail. Estimated cost of £350.

14. CAR PARKS

Some discussion took place as to how the Town Council can manage long stay parking in the town's car parks.
A fair use policy will be put together and the cost of installing removable height restrictions at the entrances to the car parks will be investigated.

15. PLANNING

15.1 PL/2026/1261/TRE 12 Brandon Road, Watton IP25 6AL Chestnut Tree C1 Crown lift over terrace in garden to 3m, removing only smaller branches to give light and clearance. No comments

15.2 PL/2026/1029/FMIN 6 - 8 Dereham Road, Watton, IP25 6ER Change of Use of 2 no buildings from office to 1 no self- contained dwelling and 4no flats

Agreed proposal to be submitted as comment to application PL/2026/1029/FMIN

"Watton Town Council welcomes the proposed re-use and renovation of vacant buildings and recognises the benefits of bringing such properties back into use. However, the Council seeks clarification regarding the provision of private or communal amenity space for future residents, particularly in relation to the proposed 3 Bedroom Dwelling. The Design and Access Statement refers to suitable amenity space but does not clearly identify its location or extent.

Watton Town Council would also request the Planning Authority satisfy itself that appropriate provision is made for refuse storage, cycle storage and long-term amenity, having regard for Policies WTN3 and WTN4 of the Watton Neighbourhood Plan."

Concern was also raised regarding the possible use of the premises as a future HMO with consensus that this would not be an acceptable location.

15.3 PL/2026/1233/VAR 12 Tom Turley Close, Watton, IP25 6GU Variation of Condition 3 on PP PL/2026/0225/FMIN - to remove the upper age limit of 18 years for residents (with no upper age limit proposed), retaining the lower age limit of 7 years, for the small residential home (Use Class C2) accommodating one person.

The Council felt unable to comment on application PL/2026/1233/VAR without further information.

15.4 3PL/2019/0991/D Reserved matters application for residential development of 177 dwellings following outline permission 3PL/2015/0254/0 DEVELOPMENT SITE Mallard Road, Watton, Norfolk

Cllr Bulmer offered to put together an outline pack to be emailed out to councillors regarding Mallard Road which will then be considered at the next meeting of the Full Council.

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

16.1 The minutes of the HR Committee Meeting held on 25.09.26 were noted.
16.2 It was resolved to set a budget of £500 for the 2026 staff Christmas meal.

Youth Advisory Board

A letter dated 04.10.26 received on 08.10.26 from the Youth Advisory Board was shared with Cllrs and a response will be drafted.

Item 3.2 Update from the meeting held 13.10.26

Agenda Item No.	Update
8	High Street seating - Bench and litter bin ordered.
9	Open Space Transfers - Clerk and Deputy Clerk undertook site visits to some of the land which is being transferred to the TC from Breckland Council. It has been realised that a lot of the pieces of smaller land have been encroached on over the years by neighbouring properties and included in the land transfer is a fair few random pathways which do not lead to anywhere.
11	Pride in Breckland Funding - Agena item 8 on 27.10.26 – a poll was sent by email to councillors on 16.10.26
13.	Clock Tower has now been cleared and is ready to decorate for the Halloween Trail.
16.2	Provision date and place have been agreed for the staff Christmas dinner.

Item 4.5 Clerks Report

Town Clerk to give verbal update

Councillor vacancy

Notice of Vacancy of Town Councillor was published on 15.10.26

Unless within 14 days of the 15.10.26, 10 Watton electors request an election, the TC can co-opt a new councillor.

Five Market Towns Meeting

Deputy clerk, EMO, Mayor and Deputy Mayor attended the online Five Market Towns Meeting on 20.10.26

BT Hub

The TC office now has access to the Global BT Hub in the High Street for a select number of creatives at any one time.

The fireworks event and weekly market have already been created and the office is currently working on a campaign for the Remembrance Parade.





Devolution timeline

From the NCC website

Before a Mayoral Strategic Authority can be created, the two County Councils must give local consent and the Government must lay secondary legislation before Parliament.
Norfolk County Council will discuss local consent at its Scrutiny and Corporate Select Committee on 21 October, followed by a member decision on 23 October. Suffolk County Council is targeting a Cabinet decision on 10 November.

Following local consent, secondary legislation is expected to be laid before Parliament. Royal assent and establishment of the Strategic Authority are now expected in early 2027.

- **December 2024** - The Government published the English Devolution White Paper, setting out plans for wider devolution across England and encouraging local government reorganisation alongside devolution
- **Early 2025** - Norfolk and Suffolk were included in the Government's Devolution Priority Programme (DPP)
- **Spring 2025** - The Government consulted on proposals for a Norfolk and Suffolk Mayoral Strategic Authority

- **October 2025** - Suffolk County Council and Norfolk County Council cabinets voted in favour of progressing devolution proposals and creating a mayoral authority covering both counties
- **December 2025** - The Government announced that it was minded to delay the planned mayoral election from May 2026 to May 2028 to allow local government reorganisation to progress
- **Early 2026** - Debate emerged about the future of devolution arrangements following changes to local election plans and wider local government reorganisation proposals. Norfolk County Council publicly raised concerns about the revised timetable and process.
- **March 2026** - The Government confirmed that Suffolk would move to three new unitary councils as part of Local Government Reorganisation
- **Summer 2026** onwards - Work continues on devolution planning and implementing local government reorganisation. Subject to re-consent, detailed governance arrangements will be developed.
- **September 2026** - The Government announced that Local Government Reorganisation decisions for Norfolk and Suffolk had been withdrawn and were subject to further review. The Government confirmed that this should not affect devolution timescales.
- **Autumn 2026** onwards - Norfolk and Suffolk County Council cabinets need to re-consent to new Statutory Instruments, reflecting changes made by the Government to allow the new Mayoral Strategic Authority to be established
- **Early 2027** - The Statutory Instrument reaches Royal assent, the MSA is established and holds its first meeting
- **2027 (indicative)** - Statutory Instruments for transferring Fire and Rescue Services and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) functions should be laid
- **1 April 2028 (planned)** - Indicative transfer of OPCC functions and governance of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to the Mayoral Strategic Authority, subject to separate secondary legislation being laid
- **May 2028 (planned)** - The first election for the Norfolk and Suffolk Mayor is currently expected to take place

Related webpages

- **Latest devolution news**
- **About devolution**
- **What devolution means for colleagues**
- **Powers and services**
- **Devolution FAQ**

National Scheme of Delegation for planning applications

Letter received from Councillor Sarah Suggitt, Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing & Planning

Dear Town and Parish Council colleagues,

I am writing to you regarding the Government's National Scheme of Delegation for planning applications in England, introduced as part of its wider reforms, and to express my disappointment at the impact these changes will have on local democratic oversight.

On Thursday, 15 October, Breckland Council formally voted at Full Council to introduce this new scheme. This ensures that the Council is compliant with national legislation, however it is not a step that we would have chosen to take, and I am deeply disappointed that we are required to implement arrangements that diminish local democratic accountability.

Under the new arrangements, smaller and more technical applications (known as Schedule 1 applications) will be determined by officers. Larger or more complex Schedule 2 applications may continue to be considered by planning committees where they meet the prescribed criteria.

Breckland Council is opposed to this aspect of the national scheme. In particular, the fact that councillors will no longer be able to call in any Schedule 1 application for consideration by a planning committee. I believe this represents a significant reduction in local democratic oversight. At a time when the Government is placing increasing emphasis on devolution and bringing decision-making closer to communities, it is difficult to understand why changes are being introduced that remove an important mechanism for local scrutiny.

Town and parish councils will remain statutory consultees, and their local knowledge and comments will continue to be valued. Councils are encouraged to discuss applications with their local ward councillor or councillors, who can represent local views in discussions with planning officers.

However, this does not replace the democratic accountability provided by the ability to request committee consideration. When responding to applications, we encourage town and parish councils to:

- focus on material planning considerations;
- refer to adopted local and neighbourhood planning policies where relevant;
- clearly explain the planning impacts of a proposal;
- avoid relying solely on the number of objections or the level of local concern; and
- submit responses within consultation timescales so they can be fully considered by decisionmakers.

We have made our opposition clear in writing to the Government, and we support the work being done by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Local Councils Network (LCN) to lobby on this specific issue.

While we remain opposed to these restrictions, we will keep town and parish councils informed as the new arrangements are implemented and will provide further guidance where necessary. The national guidance is available at: Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions: Guidance for local planning authorities in England - GOV.UK.

Breckland Council will continue to press for a system that preserves meaningful local democratic oversight, while enabling timely and effective planning decisions.

We will be in touch shortly with proposed dates for training to help town and parish councils navigate the new arrangements and ensure that local views continue to be heard. We would be pleased to see as many of you as possible at these sessions.

Thank you for continuing to contribute your knowledge and experience to the planning process. We value your partnership and share your concern that local voices should remain central to decisions affecting our communities.

Item 5

	Resolution	Date/ Agenda item	Action	Link to 4YP/ NP	Lead	Current Position – 21.10.26	Status
166	Some discussion took place as to how the Town Council can manage long stay parking in the town's car parks. A fair use policy will be put together and the cost of installing removable height restrictions at the entrances to the car parks will be investigated.	13.09.26 14	Compile fair use policy Investigate cost of removable leigh restrictions		Office	Costs of installing removable height restrictions is being investigated.	
166	Re-locate the seat currently placed at the Charlotte Harvey Community Hub to replace the one damaged during the ram-raid of the cash point outside the Old Post Office. A replacement set will be purchased for the Community Hub.	13.09.26 8	Order bench and bin		Office	Bench and bin to order It is estimated the cost of a seat and the works to fit the seat and bench into the High Street will be in the region of £1700.	
165	Chairman, Vice-Chairman and clerk will meet to draft a response to the Breckland Local Plan	08.09.26 15	Draft response		SH TH Clerk	Chairman, Vice Chairman, Chairman of WASFAG and the Clerk met on 14.09.26 to consider a response to the Breckland Local Plan Reg.19 consultation	
164	Replace the litter bin at Thetford Road Car Park with a new lidded litter bin to match those in the High Street	08.09.26 14	Order bin		Office	Bin to be ordered Permission from NCC given to site bin on Grass verge	
163	Vice-Chairman and Clerk will draft a letter of support to Green Blue Urban to support Reclaim the Rain to ensure that High Street regeneration efforts continue promptly.	08.09.26 12	Draft letter		Clerk TH		
162	That the organisers of the High Street Halloween Trail will be approached with an offer of support for the event by opening the Clock Tower in the High	08.09.26 11	Approach organiser of Halloween Trail		Office	Cllr Hutching has approached	

	Street for viewing from the outside and use as an information point						
161	Investigate obtaining a Deed of Variation of the transfer agreement for the Thetford Road Car park	08.09.26 10.1	Investigate getting a Deed of Variation		Office	Initial enquires made with BDC – awaiting response	
160	Obtain quotes to engage a landscape architect to help develop plans for the open space land at Heritage Park	25.08.26 7.3iii	Obtain quotes		Office EMO	Refer to 82	
158	To stage a reception in the Council Chamber on the morning of May 15th for the visitors from Weeze.	11.08.26 8			Office EMO Twinning	Further Working Group Meeting with members of the Twinning Association to be arranged	
157	Re-plant two replacement trees during the 2027 40th Twinning visit.	11.08.26 8	Location to be identified		Office	Possible location at CHT	
156	To facilitate a celebratory event on Sunday 16th May 2027 to mark 40 years of Twinning.	11.08.26 8	Organise		Office EMO Twinning	Further Working Group Meeting with members of the Twinning Association to be arranged	
154	To progress with the transfer of land assets from Breckland District Council to the Town Council as presented.	09.06.26 12	In Progress		Office	Heads of Terms with the solicitor. Some clarification to be undertaken but project paused along with Local Government Re-organisation!	
153	Create a 'Town Council High Street Restoration Plan'	09.06.26 9	Create plan		TH/Office	TH has compiled a draft	
152	The Market Working Group will be tasked with discussing the benefits of creating a Four-Year Plan for Watton Market to coincide with the Councils Financial Four-Year Plan.	09.06.25 8	To be considered as part of Four Year Plan review		MWG	Finance Com. Meeting scheduled for 25.09.26	
151	Compile a future strategy for the provision of litter and dog waste bins	26.05.26 16	Compile strategy		Office	*No policy regarding the provision of bins will be made until more is known about future services once local government reorganisation is underway - to review*	
146	To accept a policy to offer staff the opportunity to undertake temporary	28.04.26 14.2iii	To adopt policy procedure		HR	Policy to be compiled by HR Consultant	

	additional hours to cover short-term staff absence						
144	Undertake an audit of the footpaths in the parish	14.04.26 10	To contact Ramblers Association		Office KG	To agree how audit will be undertaken.	
143	Pride in Breckland Grant to support enhancement of the Reclaim the Rain project in the High Street. If there is enough money consideration will be given to how the gateways into the town might be improved	14.04.26 8	Consult with WASFAG and Biodiversity WG		Office	Information regarding Reclaim the Rain has been provided to the Pride in Breckland team but project plans and costs are still awaited. Deputy Chairman and Clerk to draft letter to support the project It has been suggested the Town Council might want to review how the grant is to be used differently. Agenda item on 27.10.26	
142	Move forward with plans to hold a Festival of Youth in 2027	24.03.26 4.7			DS EMO	DS and EMO to meet with Love Watton, Wayland Academy and Beside Youth	
141	Further research to purchase a wooden sculpture to present to Weeze for its 40th year in 2027	10.02.26 7.1	Research gift		Office	Research will also continue to be undertaken regarding the cost of a wooden hare and barrel as an additional gift	
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	ROSPA inspections 2026 have now been undertaken and Council has agreed to commission works as in the Reports (08.09.26)	
131	To investigate Honours nominations for two residents	12.08.25 10.3	Investigate		Office	Submission made	
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 made		Office	S106 application unsuccessful as funding could not be used as requested	

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	To review provision as part of project to refurb Bridle Road Play Equipment Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Scheme applied for	
126 and 129 are linked and research is still being undertaken regarding what works should take place. Quotes received from playground installers to create improved access to both Bridle Road and the Sports Centre Play Areas are expensive. Fin. Com. is suggesting external funding needs to be found.							
120	Quote accepted to carry out the following works to the Clock Tower: • 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	Awaiting date for works – to keep chasing!		Office	Building Maintenance quote accepted 08.09.26 Cllr Saunders and EMO to investigate English Heritage Funding for the tower. Cllr Bulmer and Mark Humphries to research clock mechanism. **It was resolved** to accept the quote of £6252 for maintenance works to the Clock Tower in Watton High Street.25.08.26 7.3v	
104	To produce a staff Well-Being Policy	23.07.24 4.6	Compile Policy		HR	All staffing policies, handbook and Contracts were accepted as presented on 28.04.26. Well-being policy still to be compiled. Office to approach new HR Consultants	
85	Compile Play Area Policy	22.08.23 4.6i a,b,c,d	To present Policy to Full Council		TB	Draft Policy to be compiled by Office	
82	Landscaping of Portal Avenue Community Land	08.08.23 7.3	Research landscaping.	4YP NP	Office	EMO tasked with researching landscape architects 25.08.26?	
68	Seats – to undertake audit of seats around the parish	11.10.22 5	Undertake audit of seats.		Town	Office is continuing to populate Civic.ly Asset software	
45	All initial urgent repairs recommended by the Quinquennial Inspection Report on Wayland Hall for which the Town Council is responsible will be undertaken.	14.09.21 6.1	Some works have been undertaken.	4YP	Office	To check final works which need to be undertaken prior to next Quinquennial Inspection Report.	

						Building contractors have been approached.	
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	Clerk Office	Sustainability Audit to include Climate Change Awareness Policies Biodiversity Working Group to look at.	
13 and 21 are linked - Suggest including Sustainability Audit in reviewed Climate Change Policy. Climate Change Policy to be researched.							
4	To display photos of past Mayors in Council Chamber.	14/309	To collate photos and display.		Office	Extend wall area up to accommodate more mayoral photos	

NP – Watton Neighbourhood Plan 4YP – Town Council Financial Four Year Forecast

The resolutions from the Works in Progress list is to be incorporated within a Projects Action Plan which will link to the 4 Year Financial Forecast which will include possible projects for the High Street and weekly market.

Item 7.2

Minutes from the Watton Town Council Finance Committee Meeting held on Friday October 16th 2026 at Wayland Hall

Present: Don Saunders (Chairman), Cathy Halfacre, Tomos Hutchings
Officers Present: Jane Scarrott and Michelle Thompson

1. Apologies for absence received from Sarah Humphries.

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25.09.26
   i. The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25.09.26 were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
   ii. Update from the Minutes of the Meeting 25.09.26
      - Decision still needs to be made as to how the Pride in Breckland grant could be used.
      - The Grounds Maintenance preferred contractor has been commissioned to remove the wooden play equipment deemed beyond repair at Bridle Road Play Area.
      - The purchase of transparent sides for the market gazebos and a portable lighting system to support the set up of the market will be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Full Council to ratify the expenditure.
      - Storage of the gazebos for the Weekly Market is something which needs further consideration.

   iii. Items raised at the meeting of the Full Council

      - The Grounds Maintenance preferred contractor has been commissioned to site a new bin and move a bench from the Community Hub into the High Street to replace the street furniture lost in a ram raid on the Old Post Office earlier in the year. The bench at the Hub will also be replaced.
      - The Council decided to allocate a budge of £500 for the 2026 Staff Christmas Lunch.

4. Bank Reconciliation

The Finance Committee members were issued with the Bank Reconciliation dated 30.09.26 and the current budget position. The Bank Reconciliation was accepted and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

5. Budget need for 2027 and Four Year Forecast

The Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Clerk had met previously to begin the budget setting process for 2027 and all cost codes were considered individually. Increases will be needed across most cost centres and initial figures will need further consideration before the budget is presented to Full Council.

The transfer of the car parks and open space land from Breckland Council to the Town Council will mean large increases are needed to the grounds maintenance allocations. Services, rates, subscriptions and staff salaries are also to rise and it will be difficult to make any reductions to the budget need so it is expected the precept will increase accordingly. Proposed figures will be produced once the tax base number is received from Breckland Council.

The Full Council will need to consider issues raised regarding the transfer of open space land from Breckland Council as decision needs to be made regarding parcels of land which appear to have been encroached upon.

An updated Four Year Forecast is being produced with the following considerations to be included and costed projects to be put together where necessary:

- Grounds Maintenance Projects for Heritage Park and other open space areas
- Clock Tower Project
- Replacement of Play Equipment and safety surfaces at the Sports Centre Play Area
- Pollarding of trees/future maintenance at Church Walk
- Provision of water at Thetford Road allotments
- Renewal of the contract for the provision of Christmas lighting
- Renewal of the contract for the Fireworks
- Future staffing – is a Market Warden needed?

6. Date of the next meeting: Finance Committee:

Friday 13th November 2026 @ 9.30am

Item 7.3

Refer to Finance Minutes 16.10.26 (3ii)

Consider purchasing 2 of the 3m x 3m sides at the cost of £212.99 each for the gazebos that are positioned on the open end of the market.



0 customer reviews

3m x 3m Gala Shade Pro Gazebo Transparent Sidewalls

SKU: 13667

Size : 3m x 3m (In Stock)

Colour : Transparent (In Stock)

Quantity: 1

Est Delivery 21st October.
Total: **£212.99**

Buy Now

Item 7.4

Refer to Finance Minutes 16.10.26 (3ii)

A similar light has previously been borrowed and was very helpful with market set up when dark. The Lighting system could also be helpful at events and in case of any emergencies.



9460 AREA LIGHTING SYSTEM

9460-002-245

£2,451.60 (inc. VAT)
£2,043.00 (ex. VAT)

Colour

Yellow

1 Add to cart

DESCRIPTION

The 9460 is a portable lighting station, contained within a rugged Peli Protector case. It includes a digital intelligent control and offers variable light output.

DELIVERY

We offer next working day delivery on all UK Mainland orders placed before 3.00pm.

See our Delivery Policy for more information.

[Peli 9460 Area Light - Portable Floodlight - Peli UK – Peli Products (UK)]

Item 8

Pride in Breckland

The office issued a poll to councillors by email on 16.10.26 asking for 3 options on what the Pride in Breckland Fund could be spent on. See poll below:

Polls

Pride in Breckland Award money (PICK 3)

- [ ] Grounds maintenance works at Memorial Garden
- [ ] Flagpole at Memorial Garden
- [ ] Promotional material for Market
- [ ] New Welcome to Watton Signs
- [ ] Public Water Fountain
- [ ] Window Ledge Planters
- [ ] Benches
- [ ] Fruit Trees
- [ ] Signage/Way pointing (Car parks, community centre, library, etc.)

Results of poll as follows:



Regardless of the results of the Pride in Breckland poll, below is the cost received from the Councils preferred contractor for the Grounds Maintenance at Memorial Gardens

QTY	DESCRIPTION	LINE TOTAL
1	**Memorial Garden** Taking out/cutting back some of the shrubs to the front of the garden areas at Memorial Garden and replacing with ground cover plants.	£1,600.00 + VAT
	TOTAL	**£1,600.00 + VAT**

It was felt that as one of the fibreglass hares is being located next to the Millenium project plaque at Memorial Garden (location pictured below) it would be the prime opportunity to grub out the garden area at the same time.



Item 9

Memorial Safety testing involves checking headstones and memorials for stability to ensure they do not pose a risk to visitors or cemetery staff. By the Town Council getting these inspections undertaken it helps demonstrate responsible management of the Town Councils cemetery and fulfils its health and safety responsibilities.

A local Stone Mason has provided a quote **of £900.00 plus VAT** to attend site to assess the memorials with a staff member of the Town Council.

Any memorials deemed unsafe, requiring staking and banding, will be charged at £50.00 each, inclusive of VAT.

Deputy clerks' recommendation would be:

Once the Memorial Safety testing has been undertaken, where reasonably practicable, the Town Council gives grave owners prior notice before a memorial is staked and banded following identification as unsafe.

When notifying grave owners that a memorial has been assessed as unsafe, the Council could provide a reasonable timeframe for them to make contact. If no response is received within the specified period, the staking and banding could then proceed in accordance with the Council's procedures.

A form will need to be compiled which requires the grave owner's signature and must be submitted to the Town Council before remedial works can proceed. This form will provide a clear record of memorials requiring attention, works completed and memorials that remain unsafe. It could also support periodic follow-up with families where remedial works are outstanding. (Local stonemason is happy to provide a template for a form)

When the Town Council responds to enquiries from families regarding remedial works, the Council could advise them to contact a suitably qualified stonemason.

Item 10

Current members of the HR Committee:

Don Saunders

Cathy Halfacre

Paul Toombs (Reserve)

Item 11

If any councillors would like to volunteer on the night of Fireworks or the day after, I need volunteers for the following things please:

- Driving the disabled access buggy from the disabled carpark to show area
- Manning the Town Council gazebo – this will include making/serving hot drinks for volunteers
- Walking around with the blue donation buckets after the display
- Litter picking the show field Sunday morning

Any volunteers would be greatly appreciated!

Item 12.3

App 1

Report from Councillor Bulmer to follow