

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday August 11th 2026 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: – Sarah Humphries - Chairman, Gavin Bulmer, Tina Cruz, 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

Also in attendance 4 members of Watton Twinning Association

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED from:

Keith Prince

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. CO-OPTION

It was resolved to co-opt candidate 2 to fill the one casual vacancy on the Town Council.

4. MINUTES

4.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on July 28th 2026, were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Update from the meeting held on July 28th not agenda items for this meeting:

- Large Graffiti wall has now been removed from the Lovell Gardens Play Area.
- Community Champion Certificate has been produced, and Litter Picking Equipment has been ordered for the volunteer nominated to receive the recognition. It was suggested that the volunteer will be asked to attend the next Full Council Meeting when he will be presented with his certificate.
- Wayland Fields - to be an agenda item for a future Town Council Meeting.

5. REPORTS

5.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended Council Committee Meetings, Working Group Meetings and Fun Days at the Community Hub. The Chairman described the Fun Days as "amazing" and it was estimated that over 200 people attended on one of the days. The Chairman has also judged her best allotments and will give out certificates to winners at the Allotment Afternoon Tea on August 13th.

Bad odour purporting to emanate from the Cranswick Site along Brandon Road has been reported again recently and investigation is ongoing. The Environment Agency is aware and it is understood works will be completed in the next few weeks which should eliminate odour release from the site.

5.2 Vice-Chairmans Report

The Vice-Chairman submitted a written report which has been shared.

The Report included a summary of the Vice-Chairman's recent activities:

29th July – Participated in Wayland Woods Work Party.

1st & 8th Aug – Volunteered at Museum for Watton. The Museum led Antique and bric-a-brac sale is on the 16th of August 10-4.

3rd Aug – Watton and Saham Flood Action group met with the Clerk to visit the land north of Mill Rd which features a prominent ditch and pond. It was suggested the ditch does not immediately need dredging, nor to be fenced off.

6th Aug – Market Working Group Meeting.

9th Aug – Attended Japa Tiny Town opening event with Watton's Town Crier.

4th & 11th Aug – assisted at Free Fun Days at Watton Community Hub.

The Vice-Chairman's Report also contained updates including from the Market Working Group and Biodiversity Working Group plus a reflection on his 3 years as a Councillor.

5.3 Clerks Report

Written report presented in Councillors Agenda Pack.

It was noted that £406 is to be paid towards the EMO's CiCLA course.

5.4 Lead Councillors Reports

Cllr Jack White requested two motions to be put forward to the Full Council at future meetings:

- I. To propose that £15000 should be granted to the Wayland Partnership to support the planning application needed to progress the Digital and Creative Media Centre which it is hoped will be developed on the Wayland House site. The Finance Committee was tasked with considering the suggestion and bringing a recommendation back to the next meeting of the Full Council.
- II. To propose that a Working Group should be established to consider how the Town Council supports other organisations in the parish. It was suggested a detailed proposal should be presented to the Council once the Finance Committee has considered what funding might be available.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – members of Watton Twinning Association present re. item 8.

7. DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR)

No update regarding Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

8. 40th ANNIVERSARY OF WATTON TWINNING ASSOCIATION

To mark the 40th anniversary of Watton Twinning Association the Council has purchased two framed copies of the emblems of Watton and Weeze. One to be kept at Wayland Hall and one to be presented to Weeze on the Twinning visit to Watton in 2027.

It was resolved that the Town Council will support the request from the Twinning Association to facilitate a celebratory event on Sunday 16th May 2027 to mark 40 years of Twinning.

A beer-fest style town wide event was suggested and the EMO will be tasked with liaising with the Twinning Association to plan this event.

It was also stated that former trees planted to acknowledge the twinning of the two towns have been lost and it would be an appropriate time to re-plant two replacement trees during the 2027 40th Twinning visit.

The Council was also asked to stage a reception in the Council Chamber on the morning of May 15th for the visitors from Weeze.

9. LOVE YOUR MARKET TOWN

A suggested project to apply for Love Your Market Town grant funding in 2026 was presented within the agenda pack for the meeting.

Councillors were asked to forward any further ideas to the EMO who will be asked to present a final proposal to Full Council at the next meeting to be submitted as an Expression of Interest before the deadline date of August 31st 2026.

10. CAR PARKS

It was resolved to sign the Deed of Novation relating to Kittell Close Car Park and the TR5 form to transfer ownership of the car parks off Kittell Close, Thetford Road, and the South Side of the High Street.

11. PLAYGROUNDS

It was resolved not to remove the small graffiti wall at Lovell Gardens Play Area but to scrap the MUGA removed from Lovell Gardens Play Area prior to the refurbishment in 2023.

12. BUS TIMETABLES

Following concern with the difficulty obtaining correct bus timetables for bus services in Watton, County Councillor Jack White has raised the issues with both Norfolk County Council Highways and the service provider. He will share any updates received with the Town Council.

13. HR COMMITTEE RESERVE

It was suggested the new member of the Town Council could be asked to act as reserve member for the HR Committee.

14. BIODIVERSITY WORKING GROUP

The notes from the meeting of the Biodiversity Working Group held on 27.07.26 were received along with the slightly revised Biodiversity Policy. The Policy was accepted in principle with any suggested amendments to be forwarded to the Office.

15. HERITAGE PARK

Consideration was given to how to progress plans for Heritage Park and whether any project should be started until the open space areas on the site are owned by the Town Council. The Finance Committee will confirm funding for the project with the suggestion that a landscape architect should be engaged.

16. MARKET WORKING GROUP

The notes from the meeting of the Market Working Group (MWG) held on 28.07.26 were presented in the agenda pack for the meeting with further information provided in the Vice-Chairman's Report.

[From Vice-Chairman's Report – Notes from the MWG held on 06.08.26:

- The MWG met with land agents who manage Chaston Place, they were amicable to the Market as it would increase footfall for the property they seek to fill. Downsides are they can ask us to leave with a week notice, and any new tenant (of the former Factory Shop) may wish to have full visibility of the square. The land agent also confirmed they are not keen on the Reclaim the Rain plans but would support the Market.
- A draft image was put forward which featured market vans utilising highways space, artisanal and craft stalls in Chaston Place and traditional traders in the Crown Car Park. Highways permission and license agreements with The Crown Hotel and Chaston Place agents would be needed.
- Suggested that a re-opening event should take place on the 28th of October during the half term week. This may be the soonest date in which grant funding and licenses can be acquired, and it may even take longer and therefore pushing the reopening into winter months.
- Suggested that the re-opening event should feature attractions, to work alongside businesses who may benefit from the Market, large decoration and could even have some Halloween themes.
- Suggested that the Market should have a Market Hare as part of any new trail.
- Suggested that the Market should advertise in as many places as possible, from apps to LinkedIn and of course legacy media such as radio and newspapers.]

The hope is that the plans as outlined can be actioned and work will continue in the direction set out.

17. PLANNING

17.1 PL/2026/0956/DCA Discharge of Conditions 7, 10 & 11 on
PL/2025/1437/FMIN Serco Transport Depot, Norwich Road, Watton IP25 6JB
No comments as considered this is an Officers technical decision

17.2 PL/2026/1021/FMIN Replacement windows, same style as existing 87 High
Street, Watton IP25 6AW

No objections

18. Resolution passed to Exclude the Press and Public to consider confidential matters:

18.1 Annual Fireworks Event

It was reported that there is ongoing discussion regarding the cost of the use of the Firework Field with Cllr Hebborn leading on this. The future costs of the Fireworks Event will be

considered with input from the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the EMO. The Council was in support in principle with plans as outlined.