Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 22nd September 2026 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Sarah Humphries (Chairman of the meeting), Gavin Bulmer, Cathy Halfacre, Tomos Hutchings, Graham Martin, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Paul Toombs, Gillian Turrant, Jack White, Jacqueline White.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

1 member of the public present.

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM:

Tina Cruz, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Keith Gilbert

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on September 8th 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

It was noted the decision to extend the previous meeting beyond 9.00pm was not made until after 9pm and requested that should there be a need in future the motion be passed earlier.

3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on September 8th 2026 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Quote for re-installation of bin and bench by the Old Post Office in the High Street being considered by the Finance Committee.
- Public Toilets – insurance assessor visiting on 24.09.26.
- Love Your Market Town grant application submitted.
- Market - Breckland Council approached re. a possible Deed of Variation for the car parks. This could be costly and it is suggested research is also undertaken into the cost of obtaining a Traffic Regulation Order for Middle Street each Wednesday.

A draft licence for the use the Crown Car Park has been received from the solicitor and is with the landlord for consideration.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman has attended two Battle of Britain commemorative events, the award giving for the library Summer Reading Challenge, a Market Working Group Meeting and the re-launch of the Wednesday Weekly Market.

Thanks were voiced to all those who have assisted with the market re-launch including Town Crier Mike Wabe who gave a cry and a request was made for Councillors to volunteer to man the planned Council weekly surgery stall at the market.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has

9th Sept – attended the Market Working Group meeting & visited organisers of the Halloween Trail

14th Sept – attended Local Plan Consultation Meeting

16th Sept – attended Market Relaunch
21st Sept – attended virtual catch-up with Reclaim the Rain Officer.

Noted that the next meeting of the Market Working Group is scheduled for October 7th at 2.30pm.

4.3 District Councillor's Report
No reports received from the District Councillors.

4.4 County Councillors Report
County Councillor Jack White submitted his written report prior to the meeting and gave a verbal update at the meeting. He is speaking with Officers at Norfolk County Council regarding the possibility of obtaining a Traffic Regulation Order for Middle Street to be used to locate the Weekly Wednesday Market again should this option be needed in the future.

He stressed that the Government has withdrawn (rather than paused) its decision to reorganise local government in Norfolk.

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

- Breckland Town and Parish Forum
  Cllr Gavin Bulmer and the Town Clerk will be attending the forum on Wednesday, 30 September 2026 at 5.30pm - Little Ellingham Old School Hall, Church Road, Little Ellingham, Attleborough, NR17 1JN.
- Norfolk Police and Crime Plan 2026-28 Consultation shared with Cllrs.
- Report received relating to illegal motorised vehicle activity on Restricted Byway Watton RB2. This has been reported to the Police by a resident but will be followed up by the TC Office.

4.6 Reports from Councillors
4.6i Cllr Gavin Bulmer reported on his attendance at an on-line planning training on 15.09.26 and slides from the presentation will be shared with Cllrs.

Some discussion took place as to whether the Town Council should form a Planning Committee and this will be an agenda item for a future meeting of the Town Council.

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress List was noted.
It was re-iterated that the Town Council wishes to progress with the transfer of ownership of open space land from Breckland Council to Watton Town Council.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was agreed to move item 11. to be considered after public participation.
Liz Whitcher (Chairman of Watton and Saham Flood Action Group) is a past Planning Committee Clerk at District Council and has shared her experience to assist the Council to compile its response to the Breckland Local Plan Reg. 19 consultation.

The draft response was shared within the agenda pack for the meeting.

Item 11. was considered with minor amendments agreed.
It was resolved that the statement around support of HOUs should be re-worded: "On a needs and requirements basis the Town Council supports……."

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for September 2026 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting with the addition of payments to Myhill and Sons for £227.20 and to Kings and Barnhams for £370.19.

7.2 The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for 25.09.26.

7.3 The Council has been awarded a Pride in Breckland grant of £12210 which it has been resolved would be used to support the Reclaim the Rain (RtR) High Street Project. It is suggested that as the RtR Project has sufficient funding and delivery has been considerably delayed the Town Council should look at other ways to spend the grant. Cllrs were asked to put suggestions forward for the next Full Council meeting and members of the public will also be consulted. A public meeting could be arranged to consider suggestions made. The Council needs to agree plans to be actioned.

8. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION (LGR) –

Update within Report received from County Councillor.

It was resolved that following the information in the County Councillors Report that plans for local government re-organisation have been withdrawn this item will now be removed as a standing item on future agendas.

9. QUEENS HALL DONATION

It was resolved to donate £80 to the Queens Hall, which is 50% of the stall fees received from the market while it was located at the Queens Hall Car Park.

10. ANNUAL GOVERNANACE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

The AGAR for the year ending 31.03.26 has been completed and is posted on the Town Council website.

11. BRECKLAND LOCAL PLAN Reg. 19 CONSULTATION

The 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.
See public participation above.

12. PLANNING

12.1 PL/2026/1230/DCA Discharge of Conditions 7,8 and 9 on PP PL/2025/1910/FMIN Cranswick Country Foods, Brandon Road, Watton IP25 6LW

No comments

12.2 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

12.2 will be placed on the agenda again once more information has been received. It was noted that the amendments relate to roads on the development and the need to ensure they are of a standard to be adopted by Highways. Concern was also raised relating to the proposed location of an attenuation area adjacent to Bridle Road Play Area.

It will be requested that Keith Gilbert provides a summary report of the planning on the agenda prior to each meeting.

14. Resolution not passed to exclude the public and press to consider confidential staffing matters as not needed!