

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 25th August 2026 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Sarah Humphries (Chairman of the meeting), Cathy Halfacre, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tomos Hutchings, Graham Martin, Jack White.

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

2 members of the public present for part of the meeting.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman presented the Council's first Community Champions Certificate to David Cook in recognition of the voluntary litter picking he regularly undertakes along the Norwich Road.

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED FROM:

Tina Cruz, Gavin Bulmer, Keith Gilbert, Keith Prince, Don Saunders, Gillian Tarrant, Jacqueline White.

[Apologies also received from District Councillor Tina Kiddell]

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on August 11th 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Updates from items raised. at the meeting on August 11th 2026 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Meeting held with members of Watton Twinning Association on 20.08.26 to consider the 40th anniversary of Twinning with Weeze. A Working Group of those present for the meeting on 20.08 will continue to plan celebrations for 2027.
- Notes from the meeting of the Market Working Group held on 20.08.26 have been shared with Cllrs. A draft licence for use of suggested premises has been passed to the Town Council's solicitor for guidance.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman attended the Allotment Afternoon Tea held on 13.08.26 when certificates for the Mayors Best Allotments 2026 were awarded.

She has also attended the Food Hub Volunteers Lunch on 20.08.26 and the Fun Days held at the Community Hub on the 18th and 25th August. Mr Whippy was thanked for his generous donations in support of the Fun Days.

The Chairman also writes a regular article for the Watton & Wayland Times and attends meetings of the Finance Committee, Market Working Group and Twinning Working Group.

It was announced that the ownership of the car parks at Kittell Close, Cadman Way and Goddards Court have been transferred from Breckland Council to the Town Council.

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman has attended events as also attended by the Chairman plus meetings of the Finance Committee and Market Working Group.

He has also attended an evening with the Watton Shanty Men and volunteered at the Sale held in the Museum on 16.08.26.

4.3 District Councillor's Report

Prior to the meeting District Cllrs Kiddell and Claire Bowes had submitted written reports which had been passed to Cllrs.

Cllr Hebborn responded to the Report from the District Cllr which referenced the removal of the graffiti wall at Lovell Gardens Play Area,

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.

It was noted Reports from Cllrs were not received in the Office in time to be included within the agenda pack for the meeting and reminders will be sent again.

Moving forward Reports from District and County Councillors will be posted on the Town Council website with the minutes from the meeting.

[Reports and response will be filed with the minutes of the meeting]

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

- Insurance claims have been submitted for the lost bench and bin on Watton High Street resulting from the ram raid on the cashpoint outside the Old Post Office and for the repairs to the public toilets which will be necessary following arson.
- The public toilets have been closed since the arson attack but it is hoped the ladies and the disabled toilets can be re-opened following an electrical installations check.
- Invite to Anglian Water webinar 03.09.26 forwarded to Councillors.
- Clerk is to visit the TC solicitor 27.08.26 to clarify points around the transfer of open spaces land from Breckland District Council to the Town Council. The solicitor will also be asked to check the proposed licence for the use of the car park at the Crown Hotel in Watton High Street to locate the weekly Wednesday Market.

4.6 No further Reports from Councillors.

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress List was noted.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for August 2026 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting.

7.2 The draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 14.08.26 were noted.

7.3 Recommendations from the Finance Committee:

7.3i Agreed to move this item relating to Wayland Fields to after the resolution to exclude the public and press. Cllrs were presented with a confidential report providing information about the management of play areas and open spaces within Watton.

7.3ii **It was resolved** to refuse the grant application submitted by the Watton Westfield School as it does not meet the criteria of the applicant being a voluntary body.

7.3iii **It was resolved** to obtain quotes to engage a landscape architect to help develop plans for the open space land at Heritage Park.

7.3iv **It was resolved** to donate £7500 towards the planning application for the Digital and Media Centre at the west end of Watton High Street. No further funding will be granted to the Wayland Partnership this financial year and it is expected that the Partnership will resume regular meetings with its partner organisations.

7.3v **It was resolved** to accept the quote of £6252 for maintenance works to the Clock Tower in Watton High Street.

7.4 Bank Rec, Net Position and Financial Report received.

It was noted that staff pay scales have been published for 26/27 and the nationally agreed 3.3% increase will be an agenda item for acceptance at the next meeting of the Full Council.

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

9. ANNUAL PLAY INSPECTION REPORTS

Councillors had been presented with the annual Play Inspection Reports for the equipment at Lovell Gardens, the Sports Centre, Bridle Road and Hares Green.

The Reports will be an agenda item for the next meeting of the Full Council.

10. LOVE YOUR MARKET TOWN

It was resolved to submit an Expression of Interest for Love Your Market Town grant funding as outlined in the agenda pack.

11. HR COMMITTEE RESERVE

No Councillors present volunteered to be the reserve for the HR Committee. This matter will remain an agenda item for meetings of the Full Council until a reserve comes forward.

12. EVENTS

It was suggested the Town Council should take ownership of acknowledging National, Civic, Commemorative and notable Community dates, and that the EMO should be asked to attend a Full Council meeting once a month.

Some consideration may be needed as to who would lead on recognising listed dates and job roles within the Team will be confirmed with the HR Committee.

This item will be brought back to Full Council once it has been considered by both the HR and Finance Committees.

13. PLANNING

No planning consultations received for this agenda.

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

14.1 The draft minutes from the meeting of the HR Committee held on 14.08.25 were noted.

14.2 Item 7.2i from the agenda regarding the management of the Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) at Wayland Fields was debated but no decision made. This will be an agenda item again for the next meeting of the Full Council.