

Minutes from the Finance Committee Meeting held on
August 15th 2024 at Wayland Hall

Present: Kathryn Stallard (Chairman), Peter Bishop, Stan Hebborn.
Officers Present: Jane Scarrott

1. Apologies received from:

Tina Kiddell and Don Saunders

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting

- (i) The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 12.07.24 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.
- (ii) Update from the previous meeting:
 - Full Council ratified the purchase of the two centre pages of the new Watton & Wayland Times each month at a cost of £400 per month. It was noted that the first invoice received was for £250 but that the Council is willing to pay up to the agreed £400 should the price increase.
 - Nothing has yet been heard from Fransham Forge regarding a condition report of the Walsingham Gates and the Town Operatives will be asked to paint the gates after the end of August.
 - Noted that the Clerk has delegation to spend up to £1000 within budget allocations or in an emergency.
 - The solicitors acting for the Town Council have been instructed to proceed with the transfer of the Thetford Road Allotment site. Total costs of the transfer will be made available at the next Finance Committee meeting.
 - Electrical work identified in the Wayland Hall electrical inspection report has been completed.
 - 7 new market gazebos have been purchased and are ready for use.
 - A new Mayor's Chain has been commissioned with agreement made at Full Council on 13.08.24 re. wording for the reverse of the jewel.
 - The grass at Heritage Park has been cut by the preferred contractor.

4. Bank Reconciliation

The Bank Reconciliation dated 31.07.24 was presented to the Committee and checked by the Internal Control Officer.

[Finance Committee members had been issued with net position figures with the agenda.]

Recent agreed expenditure by Full Council:

- To pay for the hire of a venue for a public meeting regarding the proposed introduction of car parking charges in Breckland
- £55 subs to National Allotment Society
- £248 to hire a skip for disposal of rubbish at the Thetford Road Allotment Site
- £72 for wording on reverse of jewel for new Mayor's chain
- £7583 clock repairs (paid)
- £500 for staff Team building day. (As good employers the Council is committed to investing in its staff)
- £5000 donation to Wayland Partnership

5. Staff Training Budget

It was agreed to increase the 2024/35 staff training budget by virement of £3000 from the additional staffing costs allocation.

6. Pre-paid staff card

It was decided against supplying staff with a pre-paid card but that costs of a fuel card will be investigated.

7. Budget for new events

The Events Officer outlined possible events for 2025:

Outdoor cinema event:

- Outdoor screen / sound system would be needed – can book these through a company that would set up/take down everything.
- Use CHT as a venue, the field is an ideal size and shape.
- Film hire – deputy clerk from Dereham has sent me the website they use for theirs.
- Invite people to bring their own chairs/picnic blankets.
- Allow people to bring their own food – but also have food vendors on site.
- Over the summer holidays?

Two-week event over Easter holidays – partnership with CHT (like Summer Fun Tuesdays)

- One easter themed day – with easter egg hunt, crafts, circus skills, sports activities?
- One earth day/spring themed day – Reclaim the rain do an activity? Anglian water has an activity stall – educational too? Wild Fae entertainment – bubbles and circus skills

The Committee was advised that having investigated the suggested Market Town funding it was found that this was not suitable for the Easter events. However, it was suggested that an application to help fund an event around the High Street during the 2025 February half term could be appropriate for the Love Your Market Initiative, perhaps working in conjunction with Love Watton.

VE Day:

- Possibly linking with Loch Neaton for lighting of beacon on VE Day
- VE Day event a Weekend following VE Day (11th May? or later? consider if VJ Day can be incorporated)
- Community celebration day eg at Sports Centre or a street party – close high street?
- Fish and Chip vendor? National Fish and Chip day moved to VE day
- Circus skills, traditional fair stalls (hook a duck? Ring toss?)

It was agreed that an increase in the Events Budget for 2025 will need further consideration when the 2025/6 budget is set.

8. Grounds Maintenance Report

The Council is considering if more grounds maintenance work can be undertaken in house and a report is to be produced so decisions can be made.

8.1. It was agreed that up to £1000 could be spent to purchase a shredder for grounds maintenance.

9. Four Year Plan (4YP)

- Premises - Wayland Hall

The structural report for the north end of Wayland Hall has suggested additional investigation is needed and a drone survey will be commissioned. It is suggested the company engaged to undertake the structural report could be asked to also create a maintenance schedule for Wayland Hall. This should be reflected in the 4 Year Plan.

- Noted that the Museum4Watton lease of part of Wayland Hall has expired. Initial enquiries will be made with Birketts solicitors regarding fees to review and renew the lease. It was agreed the 4 year budget plan needed to reflect increased Legal fees
- It was noted that an increase in the staff training and legal budget allocations may be needed to reflect increased staffing.

10. Date of the next meeting of the Finance Committee: 26th September 2024