

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber at Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Don Saunders - Chairman, Peter Bishop, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tomos Hutchings, Graham Martin, Kathryn Stallard, Catherine Turley-Long, Steve Turley-Long

Officer present: Michelle Thompson – Deputy Clerk

No members of the public present

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND APPROVED from**  
Tina Kiddell, Tobi Amadasun, Gillian Tarrant, Tony Bridges

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST MADE:**  
Kathryn Stallard declared an interest in item 4.7.

**3. MINUTES**

**3.1** The Minutes of the meeting held on August 13<sup>th</sup> 2024 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024:**

- Anglian Water volunteers happy to clean up Memorial Garden and re-paint the weigh bridge – Awaiting dates for works to be carried out.
- Smith of Derby site visit 21.08.24 – Have taken the clock weights away to investigate as they believe the weights are not the originals therefore not heavy enough to make the clock work. Original weights are on display in the Museum 4 Watton.
- Heritage Park cut on 15.08.24
- Coronation Living Heritage Fund - Community Orchards  
The Events and Marketing officer is currently looking at putting together an application for the Coronation Living Heritage Fund for a Community Orchard on Jubilee Gardens. The Community Projects Officer has recommended getting trees from the East of England Apples and Orchards Project – so the EMO is currently putting together a plan from their catalogue to then be able to apply for a specific amount of money from the Fund.
- Councillor Stan Hebborn has drafted a Non-Endorsement and Equal Support Policy regarding Contractors and service providers that are used by the Town Council
- Materials for 2<sup>nd</sup> Chalk wall at Lovell Gardens Playarea has been purchased – Chalk board to be installed when summer holidays are over.
- The Events and Marketing Officer and the Community Projects Officer have looked into the possibility of applying for the Love Your Market Town funding for 2024 to fund the Easter Holidays events at the Community Centre in 2025. However, the Breckland funding states that projects that are awarded the funding should be ready to start within 2 months of the grant award, however, consideration will be given to events taking place in early 2025. But the last date for projects to be delivered and impact evaluated is 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025. This means

that we would be unable to use the funding for the easter holidays events, as the easter school holiday in 2025 is the 7<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> April – so an impact evaluation would not be able to be completed until the end of April at the earliest – therefore not meeting the funding criteria. It was discussed at Finance that the Events and Marketing Officer, and the Community Projects Officer would explore the possibility of the Love Watton Group running a trail of some kind down the high-street in time to meet the deadlines for the fund. It was expected that the lady running the Love Watton Group would be at the Community Centre Fun day on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> August – however she did not attend so were unable to discuss this with her. The Events and Marketing Officer will make contact via email and explain the funding to see whether they would like to collaborate or whether they would like to put an application form in by themselves.

- The TC are now Members of the National Allotment Society
- Thetford Road allotment skip has been ordered for Sept 2nd.
- A Wayland Hall site visit with a Conservation Accredited Engineer has been booked for August 29th
- Mayors Chain and case is now on order.

## **4. REPORTS**

### **4.1 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman attended the 25 year Celebration of Dorrington house on August 17<sup>th</sup>, The Bike Event in the High Street on August 25<sup>th</sup> and a few Community days at the Community Centre for the Summer Tuesday events.

The Events and Marketing officer was very much thanked for her hard work in organising a very successful bike event on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August. The Event was positively received by many.

### **4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report**

The Vice-Chairman was not present at the meeting

### **4.3 District Councillor's Report**

Written report received from District Councillor Tina Kiddell; report filed with minutes.

### **4.4 County Councillors Report**

County Councillor Claire Bowes submitted a written report which was circulated to councillors but also verbally read out at the meeting. Written report will be filed with the minutes.

Claire Bowes did confirm that she will be representing the residents of Watton in voting against the car parking charges.

### **4.5 Deputy Clerks Report**

Written report presented in Councillors Agenda packs with verbal update given:

- Westcotec have made a start to the new Gold Bus Stop in the high street – removal of the old structure has taken place. Installation of the new bus stop is scheduled for w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> September and w/c 9<sup>th</sup> September.

- Highways Rangers will be visiting Watton over the coming weeks. Any defects around the town to be reported to Norfolk County Council by September 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- The Town Clerk and District Councillor Claire Bowes have been following up the Trod along Norwich Road and the pavement opposite the entrance gate to Loch Neaton along the Dereham Road which is in need of some clean up as the path is too narrow for wheelchair users. Awaiting a response regarding the Trod but the pathway should of now been cleared.
- 2024 marks 50 years of District Councils and Breckland Council would like to commemorate this milestone by planting 50 trees across the district. To achieve this and increase tree canopy cover, they are proposing to plant 10 trees in each of the five market towns. Breckland are asking for the Town Councils assistance in identifying suitable locations which are either Town Council owned land or Community land, deadline for suggestions is September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**It was resolved** that suggestions for suitable tree locations could be brought out of the Public Open Space and Playing Field provision questionnaire which is being conducted by Breckland Council. The existing provision for Watton, that was included in the 2015 open space audit is inaccurate.

Tomos Hutchings will provide a report on the questionnaire, the inaccuracy of existing provision and suitable tree locations at the next town council meeting before the questionnaire is returned to Breckland Council.

Councillor Claire Bowes also suggested that there is Norfolk County Council Highways owned land that has been identified which can be considered as potential tree locations

#### 4.6 Reports from Lead Councillors

No reports

#### 4.7 Report on Museum 4 Watton lease

The Museum 4 Watton Part lease of Wayland hall has now expired. Birketts has been contacted for advice on potentially reviewing and re-issue the lease, possibly with the addition of the Council Chamber.

**It was resolved** to reconvene the Museum 4 Watton Working Group to discuss the needs of the lease before proceeding any further with the solicitors.

### 5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress list was received.

Noted that the Heritage Park Working Group had already met on July 17<sup>th</sup>.

### 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public present.

### 7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for August 2024 were approved for payment as presented with the following additions:

NT Garden Services £38.00  
Spoilt for Choice £200.75  
PHS Group Public Toilets £63.04  
PHS Group Wayland Hall £63.04

**7.2** The draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 12th August 2024 were received.

## **8. Church Walk Working Group**

The draft notes from the Church Walk Working Group meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> August were received and noted.

## **9. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

Tomos Hutching lead on this item and felt the below options could be considered to gain clarity on the position moving forward and some concerns were expressed regarding the population increasing with no infrastructure improvements.

9.1 To consider option of objecting to the local plan housing

9.2 To consider pursuing town infrastructure improvement's based upon new housing

9.3 To consider option to pursue boundary changes

**It was resolved** that based on the concerns expressed, option 9.2 would be suitable. The Town Council will engage with the consultation by writing to Breckland Council.

## **10. Breckland Council High street Footfall cameras**

Originally there was some concerns as to whether the footfall cameras were GDPR compliant. These concerns have now been addressed.

**It was resolved** to investigate breakdown of future maintenance costs of the footfall cameras before making any decision to support the initiative.

## **11. PLANNING**

11.1 3PL/2024/0636/HOU - Proposed front extension and internal alterations - WATTON: 3 Fleming Court

No objections.

11.2 3PL/2023/1149/F - Proposals to develop two new dwellings and a garage/cart lodge for the existing house, 51 Thetford Road, retain the existing highway access and realign the driveway within the site to serve the proposed development together with associated ancillary works to hard and soft landscaping - 51 Thetford Road  
AMENDMENT: Amended Plans

The Watton and Saham Flood Action group submitted comments which the Town Council fully support.

**12. It was resolved** to exclude the public and press to consider confidential staffing matters

The Deputy Clerk was invited to leave the meeting so that the Town Council could discuss staff training and individual specific needs. This was to save her any embarrassment or discomfort.

The Chair of HR made Council aware that training needs had been identified for both the Clerk and DC. The Chair stated that he had identified a training package that included an audit of Clerks current activities and all relevant topics to benefit both staff members.

He also stated that whilst best practice would be to seek three quotes, this particular training is somewhat specialist and is only available from one particular Company. Internet searches disclosed that other service providers could deliver the required package in part, but at greater cost and without continuity.

We were further limited in who we could ask regarding the training, as there was a strong possibility that the service provider would have been known to our staff. It is necessary that the training is undertaken by facilitators unknown to our staff.

Council agreed to pay the amount of £4250 to cover the total amount for training.

12.1 The draft minutes from the HR Committee meeting held on 15.08.24 was received and noted.

12.2 **It was resolved** that CBR produce the relevant policies required by Watton Town Council. This will be at a cost outside of the contract in place between Watton Town Council and CBR