



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WATLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7PM ON TUESDAY 10th DECEMBER 2024 IN THE WEST ROOM

Present:

Councillors: Nicky Smallbone (NS)- Chair
Steve Bolingbroke (SB)
Ian Hill (IH)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Karyn Buck (KB)
Tim Horton (TH)
Andy Aherne (AA)
Syliva Glover (SG)
Brenda Bradford (BB)
Denise Mallon (DM)
Keith Jackson (KJ)
James Herridge-Leng (JHL)

Officer: Kristina Tynan (KT)

In Attendance: Gill Bindoff (GB) – NPAB

Members of the Public: David Cotterell and Lorraine Daniels for Visit Watlington

Press: Nathaniel Lawson- Henley Standard

193/24 Apologies for Absence
Leo Pesci, Isla Woodcock

194/24 To receive Declarations of Interest

KB asked for clarification on a point of order, she said that she understood that one of her fellow councillors is Clerk to Shirburn Parish Meeting who have opposed the Watlington Relief Road, threatened legal action against OCC to try to stop the project and they have refused to make their minutes available. This Councillor has never declared an interest when the WRR has been discussed. Advice from OALC states that this is a conflict of interest and should be declared. She suggested that this is in contravention of the Nolan Principles in respect of integrity and openness.

RB stated that he is the correspondent for Shirburn Parish Meeting but does not write the minutes. He said that they have 3 meetings a year and the minutes are not yet signed. SB has written as an individual asking for the minutes as has the Clerk.

Following on:

Planning R3.0010 Watlington Relief Road – Roger Beattie declared an interest as he is a member and correspondent of Shirburn Parish Council. He did not enter into discussion and did not vote on this issue.

195/24 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 12th November 2024 to be agreed and signed as a correct record

Resolved: That these minutes be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record of this meeting.

196/24 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were none.

197/24 Chairman's Remarks

NS said that it is good to see most Councillors here tonight. She thanked everyone for their work during the year and wished everyone a Happy Christmas.

198/24 Public Questions

There were no public questions notified.

199/24 Visit Watlington – Presentation by David Cotterell (DC)

DC thanked Council for giving the opportunity for him to update on this project. He will be putting an article in the Watlington Times in the New Year. He said that fundraising for the project is still ongoing and the aim of the project is to promote the town to a wider audience beyond Watlington on social media, via their website etc. It will ensure that as the town evolves and the WRR is built that businesses thrive and continue to thrive. It will showcase the town as an amazing place to visit and be a promotional exercise for the Town which was started before Christmas last year with some public consultations for residents to highlight the key attributes of Watlington. There is a local branding company which has given some free time to this. An Instagram campaign was launched in March and local businesses were involved in this. There has been good feedback and this continues going forward. The Visit Watlington group have looked at other towns to see what they are doing. JHL said that he follows the Visit Watlington Insta page and said it was very good

The website is looking at search engine optimisation. JHL stated that the higher up the list the website is the more trusted it is. The Visit Watlington website will have the local businesses, walking and biking information, An Arts and Culture section and Food and Drink. He said he knows there is mywatlington website but it will be very different to that site which concentrates on local organisations and their activities. It was noted that the Arts Spine Trail would be good to have on this website. TH said that places to stay have declined and it would be good to have a list of places to stay on the site. It was noted that there are now a lot of Airbnb's in the town. DC said that the group have already started looking at this.

The group will be commissioning Rare Designs to design the website and recruiting photographers to give free images for the site so that the gallery and building of the information of the website can be done in the New Year. SB said that the site figures would be important to know and that it would be useful to have the Instagram measurements. DC said that they are also looking at footfall.

The £18K grant from SODC to run this project will last until March 2025 and the group are working on a financial paper to look at costs for running the website for the next two to three years when it is hoped it will be self-sustainable and they are discussing how best to do this. They will be bring a proposal to Council for financial support shortly.

120/24 County Councillors Report - Cllr Freddie Van Mierlo

His report had been sent out to Councillors

121/24 District Councillors Report - Freddie Van Mierlo

His report had been sent out to Councillors

122/24 To receive the Balance of Accounts, Receipts received and approve the list of Payments to be settled.

SB reported that he has done the bank reconciliations and has reviewed the payments made.

He read out the Balance of Accounts and stated that we have £426K in the bank and healthy reserves at present. He said that whilst we are awaiting dual authority on bank payments all payments will be done with the Chair being present and checked by the Chair of Finance as part of the Bank Reconciliation.

He proposed that the list of payments be settled. [These are shown at the bottom of these minutes].

Resolved: That the Balances of Accounts be accepted, and the List of Payments be paid, and both these reports were signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

123/24 Committees:

A: FINANCE – There has been no meeting

Budget and Precept Proposal 2025/26 – Paper Attached

This document was agreed by Finance Members.

SB reported that since the November meeting we have received our tax base figure from SODC. The number of Band D equivalent dwellings has increased by 4.5% to 1,368. A spreadsheet was circulated with this paper which shows the detailed budget and includes comments on changes where relevant. It also includes a detailed breakdown of major Operations projects for the year, how they will be funded and where they appear in the budget. The precept over recent years is also shown.

BUDGET

Resolved: That a budget be set of £219,618 for 2025/26, an increase of £53,950 (33%) over 2024/25.

The major increases compared to 2024/25 budget are:

- £8.5k increase in staff costs due to the full year impact of changes in hours and grades
- £2.5k increased NI contributions following the budget
- £2.5k increase in external grants
- £12k increase in Operations Projects to improve the rec, paddock and street safety.
- Paddock Pathway flooding by Crumbs Coffee £1,000
- Rec Play Area - Chipping £2,000
- Solar Lighting - Rec Gate/MUGA £5,000
- Bollards £2,000
- Sundries £2,000

A one-off investment of £26.5k in equipment and premises to service the enlarged town

- Caretaker's E-Cart £10,000
- H&S Review Actions £2,000
- Parish/Caretaker Office Improvements £14,500

PRECEPT

Resolved: That we fund £20k of the Operations investment from General Reserves

Resolved: That we set a Precept of £199,618 for 2025/26, a 20% increase over 2024/25.

The higher tax base means that the Band D charge will rise by only 15.3% to £145.92. An increase of £19.37 or £1.61 per month.

Council gave appreciation to SB and the Finance Committee for their work on this important issue.

B: PLANNING - 11/11/2024 and 3/12/2024 – Gill Bindoff

Resolved: That Council accept these minutes

GB stated that the meeting on the 11th October was to discuss the application on the land opposite the Fox and Hounds at Christmas Common which the committee objected to.

[R3.0010/24](#) Fields to the northern and eastern outskirts of Watlington in Oxfordshire. The Proposed Notice of Submission of Further Information in relation to Application for Planning Permission Accompanied by an Environmental Statement (Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 as Amended)

Notice of an application for planning permission relating to the construction of two sections of single carriageway forming part of the Watlington Relief Road (WRR) including footways and cycleways, two new roundabouts, a new junction linking Britwell Road/Harmans Way and the provision of a vehicular

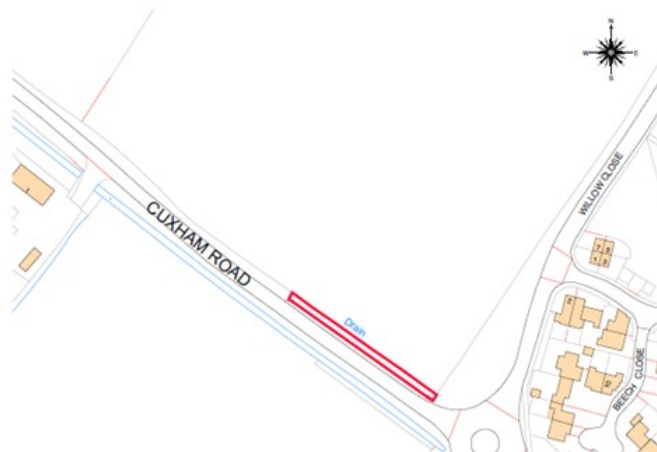
pick-up and drop-off area to Icknield Community College, a new section of bridleway (Pyrton Lane to east and west of the route alignment), pedestrian crossing facilities, a new bridge over Chalgrove Brook, landscaping and planting, drainage improvements, street lighting and associated earthworks and infrastructure.

Resolved: That Watlington Parish Council welcomes the improvements that have been made to the Watlington Relief Road plan under the S25 process and we unreservedly support this application.

The Clerk will submit this comment to OCC.

Redrow Development – SB said that Redrow have contacted us about a small piece of unregistered piece of land on the Cuxham Road asking if we would support their application to register this land to themselves. It was noted that OCC have supported this application.

Resolved: That WPC support the application for Redrow to register this piece of land (Shown below outlined in Red for clarity)



C. OPERATIONS – 19/11/24 – Andy Aherne

Resolved: That Council accept these minutes

Pavilion drainage work to connect to mains sewer – AA reported that works are ongoing and the diggers have been busy. They have need to remove a piece of hedge between the Rec and the allotments. The ground has been a bit churned up. Thames Water have visited the site and given approval for the connection to the sewer.

EV chargers – IH gave a huge thank you to SB who has managed to sort out a meeting with all parties involved to progress the electricity connection which had stalled between OCC and the other bodies. They have given us a start date of 3rd February 2025 and affected properties will be given formal notification. The only way that this can be done will be to close Spring Lane for the time needed for these works.

It was agreed that WPC should send out a letter on this to residents and IH will organise for this to be done. A wayleave map will need to be signed.

Resolved: That SB and the Clerk be delegated to deal with this issue.

Blocked Culverts Pyrton Lane and Mason's Wood – The Highways team will deal with both the blockages on the 23rd December.

D. PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD Group – There has been no meeting

1. Lease with Sports Club – SB stated that this lease needs to be in place for 01/4/25

Resolved: That WPC approve that £1500 to spent on legal costs to draw up the lease.

2 Letter to Cllr Heritage, SODC Cabinet Member with responsibility for sports and leisure activity. SB reported that our Pavilion grant application was refused by SODC and the reason given that we

did not address Climate Action.

Resolved: That SB write a letter to Cllr Heritage in connection with the Sport and Leisure Strategy and CIL funding for Watlington

SB reported that he did not wish to do anything further on Sports side once the lease has been drawn up. It was agreed that NS and JHL take on this issue going forward.

E. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ADVISORY BOARD – 11/11/2024 -Gill Bindoff

Resolved: That Council accept these minutes

GB reported that there will not be a meeting in December and the next one will be on the 20/1/25.

She stated that the Advisory Board monitor the big developments and are looking at Hampden Meadows currently. They have been looking at location for the OCC replacement trees and will liaise with the Operations Committee on this.

The AECOM Cycling and Walking Plan has been circulated to Councillors and GB said that she was pleased with it despite them working remotely. SB thanked GB for her work on turning a terrible report around.

F. ALLOTMENTS – There has been no meeting.

124/24 Update from Working Groups if anything to report

G. Charlotte Coxe – KB said that the group are still waiting for a date for a meeting with OCC.

H. Traffic and Transport – SB stated that there has been no meeting but the Footpath project is being taken forward.

I. Flood Management – AA reported that a bid for £100K has been awarded for the stream project which ends up at The Goggs. 5 large scrapes will be created which will contain and slow the water down. He said that he was hugely pleased that the business case for these works was successful. More detailed drawings will now be done and there will be a small consultation on this. The work would be done in the summer months.

J. Arts Spine Project –2 papers were attached to the agenda -SB reported that a proposal will be sent by Joseph Hillier next week and will give 15 proposal of which the group will choose 5. Letters are ready to send and the Planning Permission application needs to be sent in.

1. Project Business Case for Footpath Improvements

Proposer: Steve Bolingbroke, Seconder Andy Aherne

Resolved: That WPC agree the project business case for £10K Enabling works for Spine Route improvements and associated sculpture trail

2. Arts Spine Approvals

Proposer: Steve Bolingbroke, Seconder Andy Aherne

Resolved: That Watlington Parish Council agree to:

1. Enter into a variation to the Hill Road Car Park Transfer Agreement with SODC to allow remodelling of the northwest corner of the car park including the siting of a sculpture, planting, reconfiguration of other services and related works.
2. Enter into commitments to OCC regarding placing of a map and interpretive board at the Town Hall in the form attached
3. Enter into a variation on the lease with SODC for the Public Conveniences in Church Street to allow siting of a Phone Box Gallery.
4. Siting of three sculptures in land owned by Watlington Parish Council in Mansle Gardens
5. Enter into commitments to OCC regarding placing of a sculpture near St Leonard's church in Prospect Place in the form attached.

6. Enter into licence or lease (as required) with Bloor Homes to allow siting of sculptures on land at Red Kite View and enter into other commitments regarding maintenance, insurance etc. relating to that site.
7. Enter into licence or lease (as required) with Redrow Homes to allow siting of sculptures on land at Hampton Meadows and enter into other commitments regarding maintenance, insurance etc. relating to that site.
8. Apply for planning permission for the sculptures at Red Kite View, Hampton Meadows and St Leonard's and for planning permission and/or advertising consent for the Town Hall location.
9. Apply for advertising consent (if required) for waymarking along the route.
10. Apply to SODC for the remaining s106 funds and enter into any associated commitments.
11. Approve funding for enabling works and professional fees as described in the attached business case.
12. Delegate decisions for agreeing the terms of the above agreements and for spending the agreed funds to the ArtSpine Working Group with approval by Finance Committee on any financial matters.

TH stated that he was not happy with the phone box being sited by the Public Conveniences. It was noted that this issue can be discussed by Operations.

K. **EV Project** – IH had updated Council in the Operations item above.

125/24 Consultations

OCC Budget Consultation 2025/26 – Consultation from 28/11/2024 to 2/1/2025

WPC to send a response noting and supporting the inclusion of the Edge Road in the funding of the budget.

126/24 Reports from Organisations and Representation on other bodies

Watlington Welcome Packs - KB reported that the envelopes for these will need to be stuffed and asked Councillors to help do this in the Parish Office on 29/1/2025 from 6pm

127/24 Correspondence- see attached list

There was no discussion on any correspondence.

128/24 To agree to go into Confidential session to discuss the next item on the agenda: according to

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC RESOLVED: THAT under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for items of business of the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 7,8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Resolved: That the committee go into Confidential Session to discuss Complaint Issues.

129/24 Complaint Issues

Public Minute – Regarding the complaint sent in by a resident who does not live in Watlington to WPC.

Resolved: That the Clerk respond stating that WPC after consideration agreed that the complaint was vexatious.

130/24 Other Matters for Discussion at the discretion of Chair

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.50PM

2024/2025

BANK ACCOUNTS

	At month End November	10th Decen
Bank - Current A/C	818	
Bank - High Interest Account	81,767	
Bank - Business Premium Account	221,445	
Pavilion and Sport Field Account	0	
Unity Trust Bank Account	125,522	
Total Bank Accounts	429,553	
Other balance sheet items	14,566	
Total Assets	444,119	

N.C. Miller



S. Brown

Payments to be authorised by Watlington Parish Council 10 December 2024														
DATE	TO WHOM	DETAILS	INCL VAT	VAT	EXCL VAT	Town Hall	Arts Spine	MUGA	Car Park	Pub Con	Operations	Central	Wages	
20/11/2024	THE PRINT SHOP	My Watlington Leaflets	958.80	159.80	799.00							958.80		
20/11/2024	LYRECO UK LIMITED	Stationary	62.78	10.46	52.32							62.78		
25/11/2024	LUMENA LIGHTS	Solar Ballards for Rec	3751.20	625.20	3126.00						3751.20			
27/11/2024	BLACK KNIGHT	Town Hall Secondary Gla	4344.00	724.00	3620.00	4344.00								
27/11/2024	Town Hall	U/P of 23 24 Grant	188.00	0.00	188.00	188.00								
02/12/2024	AMAZON	Stationary	21.29	3.55	17.74								21.29	
06/12/2024	Staff	Net Wages	5902.20	0.00	5902.20								5902	
06/12/2024	Amazon	Nuts bolts paddock	11.20	1.87	9.33						11.20			
06/12/2024	Amazon	Allotment things	16.99	2.83	14.16									
10/10/2024	TLGO	Church Maintenance	300.00	50.00	250.00									
10/10/2024	TLGO	Grass Cutting incl Chuch	1852.92	308.82	1544.10						1852.92			
10/10/2024	Eventbrite	Course CB	39.22	6.54	32.68							39.22		
10/10/2024	First Steps	Annual Grant	5000.00	0.00	5000.00									
10/10/2024	PCC of Watlington	Small Grant	1000.00	0.00	1000.00									
10/10/2024	Shield	Dog Bin Emptying 8029	106.08	17.68	88.40						106.08			
10/10/2024	Shield	Dog Bin Emptying 8234	106.08	17.68	88.40						106.08			
10/10/2024	Wiseserve	Remote Back up x 2	48.00	8.00	40.00							48.00		
10/10/2024	Sam Hunt Joinery	Wood for Paddock	282.00	47.00	235.00						282.00			
10/10/2024	Exec Alarm	Sports Pavilion Service	526.20	87.70	438.50									
10/10/2024	Exec Alarm	Shipping Container Serv	144.00	24.00	120.00									
10/10/2024	Neil Campbell	2 visits MUGA lights	270.00	45.00	225.00			270.00						
10/10/2024	Viking	Stationary	150.31	25.05	125.26							150.31		
	Total		25081.27	2165.18	22916.09	0.00	4532.00	0.00	270.00	0.00	0.00	6109.48	1280.40	5902
	Receipts 11th November to 9th December 2024													
		£												
	MUGA Tokens	82.33												
	MUGA Hire	60.00												
	Allotment Rents/Fun	563.00												
	Sponsorship my watl	500.00												
	West Room	310.00												
	Sports Club Oct	1552.68												
	Bookteq	1668.47	not allocated											
	Arts Materials	49.15												
	Total	4,785.63												