



# Watlington Parish Council

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## Minutes of Strategy Committee held at 7pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021 on Zoom

**Present:**

**Strategy Members:**

Andrew McAuley (AM) - Chairman  
Matt Reid (MR) – Vice-Chair  
Ian Hill (IH)  
Terry Jackson (TJ)  
Roger Beattie (RB)  
Steve Bolingbroke (SB)  
Margaret Noon (MN)

**Co-opted Member:**

Gill Bindoff (GB)

**Officer:**

Kristina Tynan

34/21 Apologies for Absence

There were none.

35/21 Minutes

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 which were received by Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021 to be signed as a correct record.

36/21 Matters Arising

There were none other than agenda items.

37/21 Election of Vice-Chair

Andrew McAuley proposed Matt Reid and Tim Horton seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved:** That Matt Reid be elected as Vice- Chairman.

38/21 Declaration of Interests

There were none notified.

39/21 Review of Strategic Plan- AM (attached)

Confirmation of updated Strategic Plan - priorities, allocated lead group/person and integration of major project short list activities. Update feedback as required.

AM stated that he has filled in a lot of the gaps in this document and has allocated lead people to the 6 projects that were approved by Full Council on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to proceed to business case.

TH raised the following 3 points:

**A) CO3C Flooding** – Work is being done by the Water Sources group of WEG, but it was thought that Council could commission an external organisation to prepare a report on this.

GB said that the Water Sources Group have been studying this issue for 3 years and primarily recording streams and the level of water in them. They are also doing measurements of local wells and

this is a very useful exercise and would give an indication of any flooding issues such as in 2014.

AM said that this a medium priority on the Plan. It was noted that there is an action on the Land Agent for PYR2 to do an assessment of the potential for and impact of flooding on the site. It was noted that there has been some flooding of sewerage into the Chalgrove Brook and this cannot be dismissed. The Environment Agency to be contacted regarding this.

Tim Horton agreed to be the lead person on Flooding and will take any actions forward.

**Flooding at corner of Gorwell and Brook Street** – This was noted as an ongoing problem and this is issue is with the Operations Committee. IH reported that OCC are due to do an investigation of this problem but have deferred it until the Pyrton Lane works have been completed, due to road closures. They have said they will do it in 2022.

**B) CO2B Development of Town Centre** - There was a possibility raised in the Plan to have a working group with WPC reps and the WBA and TH said he did not think this has happened. MR said that he attends WBA meetings but that a working group has not happened. MR will speak with WBA. MR said that this is a good time to align with the WBA as they are appointing a person to do some social media work on a Watlington brand for businesses which is very active. It would be useful to have a data base of all business premises there are to see if any additional spaces are needed. SB stated that this would give a good basis of light industrial, businesses and we could also approach commercial landlords to see what the demands are on workshops etc. Do we have the right mix within 5 miles for Watlington? It would also be useful to see if the Lys Mill units are full or whether they have some space.

TH said that 33 High Street will be available at some point. The Watlington Garage has now moved, and it is unknown what will happen to this site. There will also be some industrial/commercial land at Red Kite View. WBA may have some contribution to make on this issue.

Matt Reid to be the lead person on this issue.

**C) CO6B – Development of Schools and Education Facilities** – TH stated that there is only one private nursery school in Watlington (Rainbow) and they have a long waiting list. This is a concern and this demand for Under 4 's provision was noted. If another nursery was to be established, it would have to be a commercially run one. WPC could look to see what space would be available and it would need outside space also.

Margaret Noon to be the lead person on this and she will speak to the local schools and Rainbow nursery. It was noted that Richard Dorney-Savage is also the rep for schools and MN will contact him.

Additional issues:

**D) CO4E – Providing a good mix of facilities for Sport and Recreation** – There was a recent Sports and Rec Survey done and SB has put this information into a report. GB said that this is a very useful document. SB has made a start on making this into a strategy document and will feed this into the NP and will be discussed further in this committee. SB is contacting the relevant sports to gain more information. SB stated that it is very interesting to see how much sport is played across the disciplines in our community. A Leisure Centre/Gym would be a very useful facility in Watlington.

**E) CO3A – Climate Change** -TJ said that she is very disappointed that this issue is only rated medium and not a high priority. AM stated that it is very difficult for WPC to do anything meaningful without input from SODC and OCC. They have said they will be zero carbon by 2030 and this is impossible without some huge projects such as electric charging points etc. WPC can encourage small changes such as not using single use plastics. We need to look at major projects and none have come forward. There needs to be robust practical proposals that will lead to identifiable substantial reduction in Watlington's carbon footprint. Our best approach may be to lobby on such things as providing renewable energy.

The priority bands, Low, Medium and High were discussed and AM said that he would be happy to

remove these bandings as this is only useful for the project list and not useful for other issues. SB said that a meta planning exercise could be carried out to assess priority on a required basis. IH said that there should be emphasis also on whether things could be done in relatively short time scales eg during the term of a Council. TH stated that money could be made available for feasibility studies.

**Resolved:** To take off the low, medium and high indicators.

#### 40/21 WPC Climate Action Advisory Board

It was noted that the Climate Action Plan (CAP) has stalled. TJ said that as WPC has declared a climate emergency this should be considered in all our activities and stated that she does not think that the pump track project does this as it would be taking away green space and using concrete.

GB reported that the NP review will be trying to put reduction and mitigation on all activities and hopefully WPC will also be looking at this issue in all decisions and projects and climate reduction/mitigation will have to be assessed as part of the project process. RB said that health and exercise must also be assessed.

SB said he has offered to join the WCAG and help develop the Action Plan but there has not been a meeting. He said that we need a plan that makes a difference, and we need a model to assess how to reduce our carbon footprint. It was noted that about half the properties in Watlington are heated by gas. We are already looking at EV charging points as an agreed project, considering trees etc. SODC will not have a Climate Action Plan until 2022. SB is hopeful that a plan can be drawn up on a firm basis and this can then be brought forward to a committee for discussion.

#### 41/21 Update on Current Actions

1. **Edge Road** -GB reported that at the SODC cabinet meeting an officer read out the joint statement for Watlington and Pyrton. The Edge Road received unanimous support from Cabinet. There will be an application to extend the time frame of the Growth Board money. It was noted that Harbi Ali-Ahmed has taken over from Andy Higginson as the OCC project manager for the Edge Road. MR stated that he has spoken with John Mearns who confirmed that he had submitted a proposal for a potential development site on his land in response to the SODC 'call for sites'. MR said that John Mearns has responded positively to the request that he considers selling or leasing 4 hectares of land, adjacent to the Edge Road, for an additional sports/recreational facility.

2. **CCT** – IH stated that there is no update yet. FvM is now involved and he is frustrated by the lack of action. It is key that he keeps engaged in this issue. Hopefully things will move forward. It was noted that Anita Bradley (OCC) is now involved in the CCT and IH has sent her an email.

#### 3. **Major Projects and CIL Working Group** – Six Projects Short Listed

SB said that he is working with the lead people to put together project boards. He stated that the people running the projects need to crack on. There will be a CIL/MP meeting in late October/early November.

#### 42/21 Items for Discussion

**Possible Reduction of Councillor numbers** – MR asked whether we should be considering doing this as we are now down to 11 Councillors and have struggled to get our numbers up. He asked whether 14 members is too many? It was agreed that this be discussed at the next meeting and MR will write a formal proposal.

#### 43/21 Consultations/ Policies

There were none.

#### 44/21 Correspondence

None.

#### 45/21 Any Other Business

**20mph for Watlington** – There will be a meeting on this with FvM shortly and discussion on proceeding to the next stage. Watlington could potentially fast track this and it would cost in the region of £10K or could wait for OCC and do it within a group and thereby share this cost. It was agreed to ask if OCC could pay for this out of their CIL money.

46/21 Items to future meeting:  
Councillor numbers - MR

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.45pm**