

Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook

Annual Town Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Town Meeting of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook held at The Council Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 11 April 2016.

Present: Cllr Eric Buckmaster (Town Mayor) Chairman; 15 Local Government Electors for the Parish of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook, (including 8 Town Councillors). Michael Jarvis H&E Observer, Dr Roger Beeching MBE JP, Vice Chairman Herts CC; Sgt Ricky Bartlett, Herts Police, Town Clerk Richard Bowran, Town Projects Manager Joanne Sargent.

The Town Mayor welcomed those present to the Sawbridgeworth Annual Town meeting and explained that this was not a meeting of the Town Council but of the people of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook.

16/01 Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting

Resolved – that the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 13 April 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

16/02 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from those minutes

16/03 Report by the Mayor on Town Council Activities in 2015/16

The Mayor, Cllr Eric Buckmaster reported on the Council's Activities in 2015/16. There were no questions for the Mayor.
Attached as Appendix A.

16/04 Report by the Town Clerk

The Town Clerk, Richard Bowran, reported on the Council's Accounts to 31 March 2016. There were no questions for the Clerk.
Attached as Appendix B.

16/05 The Mayor invited Trustee Reports from Town Charities:

Cllr Angela Alder, Chairman of the **Hailey Centre** reported on activities for the year.
Attached as Appendix C.

Cllr Derek Filler, Chairman of the **Sawbridgeworth Young Peoples Recreational Centre** reported on activities for the year.
Attached as Appendix D.

16/06 The Mayor invited Reports from other parties:

County Cllr Roger Beeching reported to the meeting.
Attached as Appendix E.

District Cllr Angela Alder reported being on:
Health and Wellbeing Committee
Licencing Committee
Standards Committee
Task and Finish Group for Leisure Facilities
and being:
Loneliness champion for East Herts
Involved with District and Neighbourhood Plans

District Cllr Eric Buckmaster reported being:
Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing
And involved with:
Leisure
Ageing well steering group
Activities for older people
Housing Associations
Refugee Housing
CCGs and NHealth Trusts
Grants
Empty Homes
District Plan panel

Cllr Ruth Buckmaster, Council appointed Trustee of the **Sawbridgeworth Memorial Hall** reported on activities for the year. *Attached as Appendix F.*

Sgt Ricky Bartlett, Herts Police – reported:
Thanks for the council's support with CCTV
Appointment of PCSO Amanda Hyne to Sawbridgeworth
Crime remaining low except for criminal damage; Operation Agrarian is very effective; Surgeries at the council offices; Speed enforcement in Spellbrook, High Wych, Bonks Hill and Station Road
Communications event on 12 may
May fayre on 01 may
Pub Watch meetings
Fun on the Field on 12 June
Youth Crime Reduction Team especially on IT misuse
Operation STOMP on 20 April
Setting up a Twitter account

Several Questions:
Q: Vandalism at Bullfields.
A: Police will redouble their efforts
Q: Teenage drug abuse.
A: Difficult to deal with "Legal Highs" but law will change on 01 May.
Q: Should people ring in with reports.
A: Yes please do

16/07 Presentation of the Town Action Plan 2016-2020

The Town Clerk introduced and presented the new Town Action Plan. This one is very different in approach from the last one covering the years 2009-2013. That was very wordy, however 90%

of the tasks set were achieved.

Last year at the ATM we promised to present a successor plan to the meeting this year as an agenda for the new town council.

Two consultation days were held and the eight working parties assembled the main elements.

It is now posted on the web-site and hard copies are available. We will continue to report on progress against the plan at each year's ATM.

16/08 Resolutions for which written notice had been received

None had been received

16/09 Open Forum

There being no other business the meeting was closed.

The Meeting closed at 21:00

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Appendix A

Report by the Mayor on Town Council Activities 2015/16

This is a whistle stop account of the activities of the Town Council over the past year.

The beginning of this civic year followed the General Election and Town and District Elections. The result for the Town was the emergence of a council comprised of 5 political groupings among the 12 members. Dubbed by the press as the Rainbow Council.

I began my second consecutive term as mayor and chose Sawbridgeworth and High Wych Guides as my charity. In addition to the official civic events we held a quiz night, open air cinema on Bullfields, and a charity duck race on the river.

Civic Events included a Civic Church Service, plus the Civic Dinner last weekend. All proceeds will go to the guides and the sum raised will be announced at the Civic Awards evening in May.

For Town Twinning we hosted Bry-sur-Marne last September. We also visited Moosburg in Germany for the first time in a semi-official capacity in October. Grant funding has now been included for both.

Other successful events organised by the Town Council included Fun on the Field and the Christmas Lights Festival. Last Year's attendance for the festival was larger than ever with around 4,000 attendees. This year we have decided to change the day from Friday to Saturday on police advice.

This year celebrates HM Queen's 90th birthday and we shall mark the actual birthday with a lighting of the beacon and include a street party style picnic at the Fun on the Field event in June.

Sawbobus continues to run successfully with around 22,000 passenger journeys.

We have been awarded a new bus under DfT scheme and expect to take delivery this summer. We have also provided a limited Dial-a- Ride service and have vehicles available to hire for local groups

We have provided support for Rivers Orchard volunteer group along with grant funding and storage of records and equipment. We assisted with the Wassail Risk Assessment and Health and safety at the event.

A new Ornate Town Sign was erected with grant funding In London Road

We continued to lead and work with residents on a new Town Action Plan and held Public consultations in October and March.

Priorities arising from it include the District Plan and Housing, Traffic and parking issues and Shared spaces in town. The Completed Town action Plan is launched at this Annual Meeting of the Town. We continue our discussions

with East Herts District Council regarding the refurbishment of the Public Lavatories and our future role in maintaining them.

Allotments underwent significant maintenance works plus the installation of Eco-Toilets at Southbrook and Bullfields. The waiting list is now down to 15 people.

The Cemetery suffered some vandalism. New fencing has been installed in C Section and there were 45 interments during the year.

In Planning over 100 applications considered. The council resolved to consider a Neighbourhood Plan and to include the whole of the parish as the designated area.

A major success with a difference was World War One Exhibition held in the chamber from September to January and included a Trench recreation in the garden. There were over 1,400 visitors and we received a visit from every school in the town and elsewhere.

Finally our CCTV system has provided Images that have assisted the police on a number of occasions and in addition have provided evidence on several insurance claims.

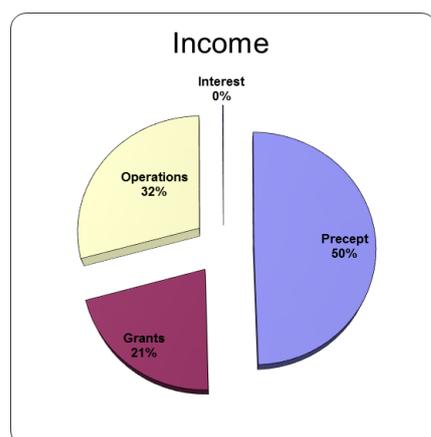
I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Town Council staff and members for their dedication over the past year and for the contributions of our residents in supporting our various activities and for the high level of volunteering within our community.

Appendix B

Report by the Town Clerk

At the Annual Town Meeting the role of the Clerk is to report on the finances of the Council for the year just ended.

In the year 2015/16 the Town Council's Precept was £223,746, this was 50% of the Council's total income.



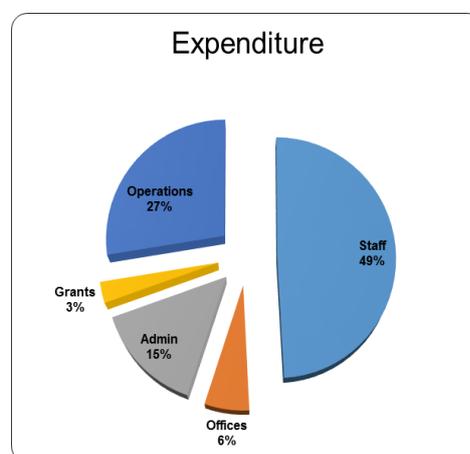
The Council derives other income from its operations in the town, such as the Town Cemetery, the four Allotment Gardens and the Community Bus services. Income relating to these other activities amounted to £167,899; and extraordinarily this year we received s106 monies of £60,000 which have been put into reserves. So the Council's total income for the year was £451,645.

The Council is aiming to continue to develop Operations Income to minimise any increase in the Precept.

We spent a total of £397,767 this year.

Staff costs amounted to 49% of our expenditure; we have two full time employees, three part time administration officers, the town ranger, a handyman and two part time bus drivers. All other services are carried out by contractors.

Our operations costs were 27% of our spend, and included management of the Town Cemetery, the Allotment Gardens, Sawbobus, the two Community Minibuses, recreation areas, footpaths, the Town Ranger, provision and maintenance of Floral Displays, grants to various organisations and the Christmas Lights.



Our administration costs at 15% of the total included our responsibilities as a Consultee on planning applications and matters relating to the town, removal of Fly Posting, Town Council Newsletters, Civic Events, Community Transport, Floral Decorations, Promoting the Town, subscriptions, insurances and our duty to provide Democratic Services including meetings, committees, elections and representation on outside bodies including liaison with the County and District Councils.

During the year, the Council continued the operation of Sawbobus, now in its sixth year. This has been financed by grants from EHDC and EFDC; support from HCC and from commercial sponsorship. It started a Dial-a Ride service providing a link to hospitals in Harlow and Bishops Stortford. It also managed the two Community Minibuses, which are self-financing although take up significant administration time. In March 2014 the Council was awarded a Minibus under the DfT scheme. We expect delivery of this in July this year.

The Town Council continues to step in to preserve services to the community when other organisations are unable to continue.

The Council made grants totalling £4,716 to five different local organisations during the year, these were the Citizens Advice Service, Sawbridgeworth Girl Guides, Southbrook and Bullfields Allotment Associations and Sawbridgeworth Camera Club. In addition it made donations totalling £6,000 to support the activities of the Town Twinning Association, the Hailey Centre and the Young Peoples Recreation Centre.

The shortfall for the year of £6,122 was principally due to covering for a staff member who has been on long term sick leave since September 2014 and has been taken from our general reserves.

For this coming year the precept has been increased to £248,075. This is to cover the costs of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. If we end up by not doing one the monies will be added to our reserves which we are advised by our auditors are on the low side. Since the town's housing stock has increased this amounts to an increase of 1.8p per week for a Band D household.

Appendix C

Report on the Hailey Centre

Objects and Powers

The Trust is established for the benefit of older people in the Parish of Sawbridgeworth with the object of improving their quality of life.

The Board met on four occasions during the period covered by this report and has dealt with matters relating to the efficient running of the Centre including reviewing the health and safety policy, financial management arrangements, staffing and safeguarding issues and rates of pay. The Management Committee has also met four times and has made various recommendations to the Board to enhance the smooth running of Centre activities.

The serving Trustees are:

Councillors – Mrs. Angela Alder - Chairman)
Mr. John Burmicz) four year terms until May 2019
Mrs. Pat Coysten)

Community – Mr. Eric Buckmaster)
Mr. Colin Gill – Honorary Treasurer)
Mr. Tony Fitch) three year terms until
Mr. Ralph Reed – Deputy Chairman) May 2017
Mr. Steve Robertson)

The Trustees are grateful to the Town Council for the grant towards the cost of utilities and to Hertfordshire County Council and Community Services for its grant towards staffing costs. During this year the Board was grateful for a grant from East Herts District Council towards the cost of the Silver Sunday Lunch celebration. The Trustees are responsible for internal decoration and maintenance. The main hall and entrance were last decorated five years ago. The Board made a decision to redecorate and to renew the carpet which was laid over twenty years ago. The Board wishes to record our grateful thanks to Hertfordshire Community Foundation for its generous grant towards the cost of the new carpet and redecoration of the Centre.

The Board gratefully acknowledges the very generous donation from the family of a regular visitor who expressly remembered the Centre in her Will. Contributions from all sources of financial support is much appreciated which helps to keep the Centre a welcoming, attractive and vibrant place to visit for the older people of Sawbridgeworth. The Board is very aware of the pressure on local authorities and makes every effort to control expenses as well as fund raising for the benefit of the users of the Centre. The Board is fortunate

in having an excellent Honorary Treasurer who keeps a tight hold on expenditure.

I am pleased to report our continued good relationship with Sawbridgeworth Town Council officers which has enabled the Centre to utilise the Council Chamber for some fund raising events. The WW1 Exhibition in the Council Chamber attracted many visitors and on the Saturdays the connecting door was opened to enable the Exhibition visitors to partake of refreshments in the Centre main hall.

As last year I am able to report continuing success with the catering at the Centre which is very much due to Mrs. Gill's catering expertise. However, sadly, Mrs. Gill has decided that she wants to move on and give time to her own business so the Board has agreed to give a three month trial to one of the volunteers who regularly cooked at the Centre when Mrs. Gill was not working. The volunteers continue to provide a cheerful waitress service week in and week out and without whom the Centre would be hard pressed to provide the level of service currently provided. I am delighted to report that at our most recent inspection by the Environmental Health Officer we retained our five star rating for our catering service.

The Management Committee has met regularly throughout the year and offered sound and practical advice to the Board which has been warmly received and acted upon.

In April the Board organised the annual "Thank you" lunch for our wonderful volunteers plus their partners or friends which was once again well attended.

Centre activities throughout the year have been well supported and the outings and events enjoyed to the full by Centre users and their friends. The Centre provided 5,000 lunches this year and 98 seats on food shopping trips. The Centre users had 10 days out and 2 holidays. The use of the community bus this year has declined also due to lack of volunteer drivers and people are now making their own way to the Centre independently or by using Sawbobus managed and staffed by Sawbridgeworth Town Council. We still cater for those with specific transport needs either by volunteers picking them up or by use of taxis.

The Centre has continued to run two keep-fit sessions, on Mondays and Tuesdays each week with a full complement of participants. Due to the popularity of the Pilates class and thanks to the generosity of County Councillor Roger Beeching we are starting a second class from March 2016. The Photography sessions on a Wednesday morning and the Silver Surfers on Thursday mornings are both "manned" by volunteer instructors and all slots filled. The Whist, Bingo and Art sessions along with craft and decoupage are also fully supported.

The Quiz, Film show and Musical afternoons continue to prove highly popular and profitable events. The new Camera Club has just celebrated its fourth birthday and has continued to go from strength to strength. Apart from the fun

and pleasure the members derive from the Club itself, where they have been out and about taking photographs, some of which have been used as front covers for our monthly Newsletter, they have assisted with the fund raising activities at the Centre. Many of the Centre users have taken advantage of the Camera club to have their pictures taken for bus passes or passport renewals.

The usual fund raising events such as the May Fayre, Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre together with the various raffles have all contributed to the vitality of life at the Centre. On the first Saturday each month following the closure of the Saturday market we have bacon butties on sale and these are doing a roaring trade and helping to boost our fund raising efforts. All these activities have increased not only the income but raised the profile of the Centre and what it can offer to older people in Sawbridgeworth.

The visiting Chiropodist delivered 468 treatments this year and during the year we have recruited a second chiropodist for an extra session each month to attempt to meet demand. Well cared for feet very much assists in keeping people mobile and self-reliant. The Hearing Aid Specialist had 150 consultations and is also helping to meet the growing demand. The attendance at the Centre on a regular basis and their professional expertise is very much appreciated by the people they serve.

In January the Centre held its annual New Year celebration lunch at the Hunters' Meet at Hatfield Heath which was delicious and we were pleased to have the Lady Mayoress of Sawbridgeworth as our special guest enjoying the occasion with us. The function was a huge success and attended by a hundred regular users of the Centre. As well as our now annual New Year lunch the Centre has special lunch events to celebrate occasions such as Mothering Sunday, Valentine's day, Easter, Father's Day, Halloween and our own Christmas lunch in the Centre. This year we had two extra lunches one to celebrate VE Day and the other Silver Sunday lunch both with full attendance plus a waiting list! Mrs. Gill pulled out all the stops to produce an excellent Christmas meal and even recruits her family members to do the waitressing!

The Centre has received regular press coverage over the twelve months giving a positive picture of a Centre for older people being active, leading fulfilled lives and enjoying themselves with much of this attributable to our present and former Managers with their vision for engaging older people in a proactive role.

On the staffing side there have been a number of changes; the Board confirmed Mrs. Sue Fitzwilliams in the post of Centre Manager in June 2015; we received the resignation of Mrs. Ginny Dewson in the autumn. Ginny had been employed at the Centre for seventeen years and her departure was certainly tinged with sadness but with her growing number of grandchildren she wished to spend more time with them and helping her own family.

With Ginny's departure the Board decided to recruit a part-time Assistant to the Centre Manager, Julie Bradley, to enable Sue to have a break mid-day

and generally to assist in the running of the Centre which is growing increasingly busy. As previously mentioned in this report Mrs. Gill left us at the end of March 2016 after many years of service. She was instrumental in transforming our catering service to its current high standard. She will be very much missed. Also during this year we employed an Apprentice, Jack Kelly, through Hertford Regional College. Jack was with us until Christmas when he moved on to broaden his business experience. Jack was popular with our visitors and was very innovative in designing wall charts and posters for our events.

Another important issue for the Board will be the setting up of Pension arrangements for our staff. The Board is grateful for the expertise of the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Colin Gill, (no relation to Mrs. Gill) who is ensuring that we are legally compliant.

The Board wishes to acknowledge with grateful thanks the valuable contribution of the volunteers who give over 1,000 volunteer "man" hours per month to the running of the Centre and without whose willing help the Centre would not be the vibrant and happy place it is today. The Board would also wish to place on record its thanks to the staff who provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all visitors and users of the Hailey Centre week by week throughout the year. On a personal note I would like to thank my Deputy Chairman and all the volunteer Trustees for their help and support throughout the year.

Thank you

Angela Alder
Chairman of the board of Trustees
April 2016

Appendix D

Report on the Young Peoples Recreation Centre

Objects and Powers

The purpose of the Centre is to help and educate the children and young people of Sawbridgeworth through their leisure time activities so to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and as members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.

The Management Committee met only once during the period covered by this report and has dealt with matters relating to the efficient running of the Centre as and when they occurred.

The Management Committee consists of the following individuals

Cllr. D. Filler – Chairman	(Appointed May 2012)	
Cllr. Mrs. A. Alder – Hon. Secretary and Vice Chair) Town Council
Cllr. T. Reeks) Appointed May 2014
Cllr. Mrs. R. Buckmaster) Appointed Sept 2013
Cllr. S. Adamopoulos) Appointed May 2015
Ms. J Sargant – Hon. Treasurer		
Mr. R. Alder		
Mrs. G. Hawkins		

Mrs. L. Dale – Centre Manager attends all Management Committee Meetings, manages the hall bookings, deals with all enquiries in relation to the centre and the open space and play area. She is paid a small honorarium.

The Management Committee is pleased to record the high level of hiring of the Centre which enables the Committee to finance additional facilities. Occasional hirers are generally for children's parties up to the age of 21 years. The large floor area and layout is well suited for indoor bouncy castles and sports activities.

The High Wych Pre-school Nursery are the main regular hirer of the Centre from Monday to Friday during school term time. The Centre Manager liaises closely with the leader of the Pre-school to ensure that the centre meets their requirements at all times. The Pre-school is well established at Bullfields and the committee is delighted that the centre is the perfect location for the Pre-school with its large car parking facilities and a safe and well equipped play area that provides their outdoor play requirement to enhance the curriculum activities.

The centre is also hired to 7 other regular users on a weekly basis which includes a Youth Club that is run by County Council Youth Connections, Kung Fu, performing arts groups, dance schools and exercise classes.

The plan to alter the current changing rooms into a large workshop space has made some progress and later in 2016 the committee is aiming to be in a position to start sourcing quotations for the work to be carried out thereby enabling grant applications to be made. A starting point for this project was to secure the rear, side and front of the building to prohibit access directly behind the centre, this work has been carried out with palisade fencing at the rear and chain link barrier with a gate at the front of the building. This work was a very costly project and was funded by grant applications for 50% of the cost by East Herts District Council, £1000 from County Councillor Roger Beeching's Locality Budget, and the remainder paid by the Management Committee funds.

The Committee is pleased to continue to provide parking space for the Town Council's buses. The car park is suitable for use, however a new surface does need to be considered in the near future, this will be part of the project to alter the changing rooms as construction vehicles will require access and undoubtedly cause some further wear and tear, reinstating the car park to a higher specification will be the last stage of the project.

Vandalism – The rear roof has once again suffered from continual vandalism from large rocks being thrown up and onto the fragile roof slates, repairs are made but the perpetual anti-social behaviour is extremely tiresome and frankly quite demoralising for the management committee who volunteer their time to keep this centre running.

Large litter bins were installed in two locations at a cost of around £400 each. They were of plastic construction and worked well for some time as they had a much larger capacity to cope with the amount of waste during the warmer summer months when the open space is well used. However, the bin sited at the Youth Shelter side of the field was set alight last summer and the bin melted entirely, it took several hours to remove the bin and the decision was made to lock the gate at this side of the field and remove the bin completely and not to replace it at the present time. The youth shelter was purchased and sited at this location to allow older youths to have a meeting place, however their sheer lack of respect for this facility left us with no option than to restrict its use.

As a Management Committee we need to convey the message to the small minority of youths who continually abuse, disrespect and vandalise elements of this fantastic facility that money spent on vandalism repairs means that other projects will not be fulfilled such as new and enhanced play equipment.

The play equipment has been well maintained throughout the year and regular inspection and litter picks are carried out by the Town Council on a weekly basis. There are no current plans to add any additional facilities in this year.

The Summer Play Scheme is delivered by Pathways-Plus and was a great success in 2015 and is oversubscribed with a waiting list. A grant from the Town Council enables the scheme to be offered at the daily rate of £5 per child per day. We have kept the daily charge at the same rate so that local children can benefit from a safe and secure well run play scheme and parents can have full confidence when sending their children to attend a professionally managed scheme.

The standard of cleaning in the hall, kitchen, toilets and other areas has been excellently maintained thanks to Mrs. Dale the Centre Manager.

In conclusion the Management Committee wishes to record its grateful thanks to the Town Council for the generous grant towards the cost of utilities and especially for the allocation of funding for the Play Scheme. To East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council for other grant awards.

Derek Filler
Chairman
April 2016

Appendix E

Report from the County Councillor

My position at county council

I am Vice-Chairman so in this office I have to attend many functions such as civic services, civic dinners, opening things, award ceremonies, citizenship awards at Hatfield, Lectures at Hertfordshire University and so on.

Committees that I am on or panels including the following:

- Adult care and health - health scrutiny committee
- Standards committee and
- Monitoring recommendations topic group.

I also chair some of these panels.

Scrutinies I have been involved in and chaired are the following:

Public health integration group, child sexual exploitation topic group autistic spectrum topic group, HSCB HSAB thriving families' topic group. I chaired IPP budget topic group an investigation into the budget of public health localism and libraries. Also care pathways in to diabetes and stroke.

Locality budget I have again spent my £10,000 benefiting all types of community projects. There were approximately 15 of these this year Highways locality budget here I have £90,000 to spend on various highway related projects. And there were 20 of these including TRO's resurfacing highways and footpaths, dropped kerbs, safety features consultations. These can be very expensive but they are democratically necessary and street scene improvements.

Meetings. There have been numerous. All full county council meetings, all committees I belong to - these are approximately one a month sometimes full day meetings. Then the evening go to as many the town council and parish council meetings that I can fit in. I rarely have an evening in during the week - then of course there are the outside bodies on which I represent the county council and have to attend their meetings as well. This leaves about one and a half days a week at home to prepare for meetings reading papers and organising questions for other participants and witnesses. Sometimes it is difficult to decide what is important to read and what is not.

County Council finances

This year government grant cut by £80m this is 33% reduction. Local government finance settlement has offered £7.8m extra. To bridge this gap there will be a 1.99 per cent increase in council tax, this means band D property will pay £22.71 extra in a year

This will help to pay for schools, roads, fire and rescue services and so on. To meet the growing cost for care for elderly and vulnerable adults our biggest spend at £311m we are taking up the government suggestion to raise an extra 2% on council tax to directly fund social care for adults

Even after all this we still have to save £124m over the next four years. This is on top of the £211m we have already saved since 2010 by being more efficient innovative, working more closely than ever with our partners.

LIAISON

And this takes place between town councillors and parish councillors by email or when I go to meetings. I try and give advice and cross fertilisation of ideas when this is required. I also will talk with district Councillors especially those whose areas overlap with my division, and with the seven East Herts County Councillors and we all work together for the good of the district. Particularly on the infrastructure housing roads and transport.

And problems

These are continuous and ongoing. Unfortunately we do not always get the result that some residents might like to have, especially as rapidly as some would want either.

I fully understand that any problem you're having is foremost in the resident's mind and the most pressing for them. As I have about 8 to 10 on the go at any one time I have to prioritise. Bureaucracy is not always the quickest in responding or in action, again unfortunately.

The problems I've had to deal with in no particular order have been in regard to housing, social services, school admissions, roads conditions, poor and illegal parking, speeding, dropping leaves in the autumn, blocked gullies, flooding, dog fouling, litter, noisy neighbours, contamination of water courses, various police matters, lack of services, planning matters, enforcement matters, badly placed signs, street signs both broken and stolen, and so on and so on.

It is a rich and varied life, never ever boring, and sometimes very tiring. It can however be very rewarding, especially when someone says thank you for what I have done for them, but this rarely happens.
I shall continue in the same vein for the next year

Thank you for your support

Appendix F

Report from the Memorial Hall

This is just a flavour of what the SMH is doing.

At the time of the AGM in November 2015 there was £ 46,320 in the account after spending £25,000 on Solar panels which now generate an income of over £3,000 a year for the next 20 years.

Currently there is around £50,000 in the account after £16,000 being used for improvements to the stage and lighting, new curtains, and a hearing loop. A grant towards this of £8,000 was received from East Herts District Council.

The trustees have also applied for a grant from Sport England for extending the storage capacity. The Hall provided the venue as a pilot for the East Herts Forever Active programme and was instrumental in securing funding from Sport England for activities for the over 50s across the District.

Activities include:

- Indoor short mat bowls
- Line Dancing
- Table tennis
- Petanque

A good quality cinema screen was added for twice monthly community cinema events. The screen is 16ft x 9ft i.e. the full size of the stage opening,

There are now also jazz evenings on third Friday of each month.

To complement these events the hall has purchased a number of round cocktail tables in order to provide a more intimate experience.

The hall provides a base for community organisations plus acting as a venue for other annual events, such as the Railway Exhibition with 390 people attending this year. Other events run for the community are:

- Coffee and Bounce
- Sawbo's Got Talent
- May Fayre,
- Food festivals

- Cockney sing-along

The Memorial Hall Remembrance events are very well supported such as the Nostalgia day, which involved the 5 Local Schools.

Regular activities for the community include Saplings parent and toddler group and monthly Family fun Discos which are a huge success for families. The focus is on providing value for money at £5 / family.

The hall goes from strength to strength with active support from trustees and friends and continues to have an expansive approach looking for new ideas and potential partnerships in order to expand what's offered.

Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
STC Trustee