

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL Minutes

of the Annual Meeting of Sawbridgeworth Town Council held by Zoom conference at 16:00 on
Monday 18 May 2020.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Eric Buckmaster
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
Cllr John Burmicz

Cllr Annelise Furnace
Cllr Greg Rattey
Cllr Spencer Richards
Cllr David Royle

In attendance:

R Bowran - Town Clerk

Joanne Sargant – Town Projects Manager

Welcome by the Town Mayor who said prayers and called for a minute's silence to remember those who had passed away in recent weeks.

20/01 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

Cllr Annelise Furnace was elected as Town Mayor for the civic year 2020/21

[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Richards]

She asked that the Clerk write a letter of condolence from the town council to Mrs Val Bright, past mayor, over the passing of her husband Nick Bright. All agreed.

20/02 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Town Mayor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Town Mayor's Address

Thank you to my fellow councillors for electing me as Mayor of Sawbridgeworth. I am honoured to take up this role, and will do my very best to represent this town and its citizens. Thank you also to our outgoing Mayor, Cllr John Burmicz, for all the hard work he has put into the role over the past year. I am sorry that the year has ended in a way in which none of us could have imagined, even a few months ago.

Sawbridgeworth has an amazing sense of community – and this has only been reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The town has responded to this crisis in a fantastic way – the support scheme set up by churches; our GPs, pharmacies, and NHS and care workers supporting us medically; our retailers ensuring we have food and supplies.

We also see so many acts of kindness – neighbours helping one another with shopping, Brownies writing cards to elderly residents via the Hailey Centre, those supporting the Memorial Hall's fundraising for PPE, and the wonderful rainbow pictures by our youngest citizens displayed in town windows. It has been especially moving to hear the whole town clapping for NHS workers on Thursday evenings.

These months have not been easy, and my heart goes out to those affected by worry and by grief. I also want to say to our young citizens, I know it has been difficult to have your learning disrupted and to miss seeing friends at your regular clubs and meeting places. But your support by staying in over these past weeks has really helped keep us all safer.

For these reasons I have chosen as this year's Mayor to raise funds for two charities– the 1st Sawbridgeworth Scouts, which play such an important part in many children's lives, and the Herts & Essex Air Ambulance in recognition of its critical work as one of our emergency services.

My theme for the year is building bridges – between generations, communities and countries – one thing the COVID-19 pandemic has taught me is just how connected we all are.

Beyond this crisis there will be challenges and opportunities for Sawbridgeworth as our town adapts to the new normal, and expands. We must work for a vibrant high street, to have new housing developments enhance infrastructure for all of us; and to promote sustainable and healthier ways of living.

While we as a town council cannot control all these outcomes, we will strive to influence and realise them. I thank councillors and our officers for their dedication to these initiatives. This includes plans for a mid-week market, support for events such as the schools' Travel Challenge, our own council eco-audit, and of course pushing to ensure that new housing brings the best outcomes possible.

We need to ensure Sawbridgeworth continues to be a warm, welcoming and inclusive community, and I look forward to the day when we can all gather together again to enjoy our fantastic town events.

Thank you for your support. I look forward to working with my fellow councillors, council officers and residents of all ages to contribute all that I can to Sawbridgeworth over the coming year.

20/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Patel – business commitment and Cllr Chester – mistaken time of meeting.
Cllr Coysten and Cllr Gray were absent.

20/04 THE RETIRING MAYOR

To receive a valedictory address from the retiring Mayor, Cllr Dr John Stefan Burmicz, who was presented with his past mayor's medallion.

Today I hand over the Chains of Office to a new Mayor.

The last year has been an interesting one in that a substantial part of it was shut down in Civic activity terms due to the current Pandemic.

There is an old Chinese curse which goes: "May you live in interesting times". Well, we have certainly fulfilled that qualification in good measure.

On the plus side however, I have met some wonderful people and as Jonathan Kay (Chair of EHDC) has often said, the class of 2019/2020 has been an exceptional one. Other members of the "chain gang" have been really supportive, as I have been of them, in their efforts to raise money for various charitable causes; these Mayors were from Hertfordshire, Essex and even Kent.

In handing over the chain of office I would bring to the fore that we are in a serious situation here in Sawbridgeworth. We have a huge number of houses to be built in this area and this situation needs constant supervision. Attention to build quality and infrastructure will be vital. My views on this situation are already in print and do not need to be amplified.

The other issue is the state of the Town. We live in a wonderful town in an even finer Country and we should be proud of that. In the Doomsday book, Sawbridgeworth was deemed to be the richest village in the country. We need to ensure that we are able to preserve the vibrancy of our town and for that

Madam Mayor Elect this means that you have to be seen, be seen to be seen and to be at the ready for the struggle which is ahead of us all. There are other Towns in East Herts apart from Bishops Stortford, Hertford and Ware. The appropriate authorities need to be made aware of this. The Sword of Damocles that hangs above us by a slender thread will take no prisoners. The Town Centre is basically bereft of visitors, which is as it should be under the current rules and advice. Once the new “normality” returns, we need to be in a position to get the Town back on its feet, otherwise people will go elsewhere and the Town will fade from vision. Remember, we will have at some stage, an influx of people from without who will occupy the new residences planned for this area. We need to be ready for this.

As a final point, I would like to thank the Clerk (basically our CEO) and our Operations Manager for their help, support and ever-present advice which has been precious. The same goes for our other wonderful staff here at the STC; the ladies in the Office, the drivers of our local buses and the grounds-men who keep our Town looking trim. I would also like to mention the Police and the great relationship that we have developed over the last year. May that continue to be a highlight in the future, for without Law and Order, we have only chaos.

Last in this list is my ever-present wife, the Lady Mayoress who has supported me in not only this adventure but on the constant rounds of other executive activities with which I am involved, namely the RAF, the Polish Airmen's Association and the Polish Officer's Club in London to mention a few.

So, without any further ado, I would like to hand over digitally, the chains of office to Cllr Annelise Furnace and wish you luck in your endeavours in looking after our wonderful Town.

20/05 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of Pecuniary Interests.

20/06 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

Cllr Greg Rattey was elected as Deputy Town Mayor for the civic year 2020/21
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Burmicz]

20/07 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions from members of the public, submitted to the Clerk prior to the meeting, on matters within the remit of the Town Council

20/08 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27 April 2020 (2019 M09) *[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Burmicz]*

There were no matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda.

20/09 MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

To receive new Mayor's appointments and communications
There was none to consider

20/10 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Received and noted: Representatives reports from:

- County Councillor E Buckmaster who added;
 - Congratulations to the mayor and deputy mayor
 - He issues regular reports

- Extra ED & STAP committee on 26 may
- Recycling centres are opening
- 16 towns selected for special highways measures
- Arranging for street signage for the town
- District Councillor Cllr R Buckmaster added
 - Congratulations to the mayor and deputy mayor
 - Asked about opening of Pishiobury car park

20/11 OFFICERS REPORTS

Received and noted: Officers' reports for the month of May 2020

20/12 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Resolved: To agree a Committee structure for the year 2020/21
[structure attached]

20/13 COMMITTEES

Resolved: To appoint Members to Committees, sub-Committees, Working Parties and Task and Finish Groups for the year 2020/21.
[membership attached]

20/14 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Resolved: That delegation of authority to the Clerk of the Planning Committee for the time being should not be made, but that Planning Committee meetings should resume via Zoom and members should research application on the EHDC planning portal.
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

20/15 CHAMPIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Resolved: To appoint Members as Champions and Representatives for areas of Council responsibility.
[Champions and representatives for 2020/21 attached]

20/16 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Resolved: The payment of the Subscriptions for the year 2020/21
[schedule of subscriptions attached]
[prop Cllr Burmicz; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

Resolved: To adopt items 20/12; 20/13; 20/15 in toto. [prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Burmicz]

20/17 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Resolved: To approve the Calendar of Council and Committee meetings for the year to June 2021 [schedule attached]
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

20/18 STANDING ORDERS

Resolved: To approve the continuation of current Standing Orders
[prop Cllr E Buckmaster; secd Cllr Richards]

20/19 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Resolved: To approve the continuation of current Financial Regulations. [prop Cllr E Buckmaster; secd Cllr Rattey]

20/20 DEPOSIT & CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

There were no Documents for Noting and Consultation

20/21 FINANCIAL REPORT

Noted: The current Financial Report

20/22 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Noted and Approved: Accounts for payment

20/23 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items for future agendas

Meeting ended at 17:00



Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Schedule of Council Meetings 2020/21

Month	Council	Planning Cttee	F & P Cttee	Amenities Cttee	Econ Devt & STAP Cttee	Other meetings
2020 May	18 M01 <i>Annual Meeting of Town Council</i>	Tue 26 P01	Tue 26 F01		Tue 26 E00	Shaping Sawbridgeworth Working Group meets as required
Jun	29 M02	15 P02 29 P03		15 A01		
Jul	27 M03	13 P04 27 P05			13 E01	13 A&A Cttee SA12
Aug						
Sep	28 M04	14 P06 28 P07	14 F02		14 E02	
Oct	26 M05	12 P08 26 P09		12 A02		
Nov	30 M06	09 P10 30 P11			09 E03	09 A&A Cttee SA12
Dec						
2021 Jan	25 M07	11 P12 25 P13	11 F03		11 E04	
Feb	22 M08	15 P14 22 P15		15 A03		
Mar	29 M09	15 P16 29 P17			15 E05	
Apr	26 M10	12 P18 26 P19	12 F04			05 Annual Town Meeting
May	24 M01 <i>Annual Meeting of Town Council</i>	10 P20		10 A04		
Jun	28 M02	14 P01 28 P02	14 F01			

- All meetings are on a Monday and are held in the Council Offices or by Zoom (unless otherwise stated)
- Meetings commence at 6.00pm; A&A Cttee at 3.00pm (unless otherwise stated)
Planning Cttees follow on from full meetings of the Council but usually precede other Cttee meetings on the same date