

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE, POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 8:00pm on **Monday 15th September 2025**.

Those present

Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt

Cllr Greg Rattey
Cllr Reece Smith
Cllr Steve Smith

In attendance:

Christopher Hunt - Town Clerk

F 25/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Accepted
Meeting chaired by Cllr Reece Smith.
[prop Cllr R Buckmaster sec'd Cllr R Smith]

F 25/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

F 25/17 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 9th June 2025 (FO1).
[prop Cllr R Buckmaster sec'd Cllr G Rattey]

F 25/18 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

The Clerk referred to his report and covered the welfare of staff and that one member of staff is on long term sick but receiving support from the Clerk and team members. Also the resignation of one of the drivers and the advert is out for a replacement member of the team.

F 25/19 FINANCE MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to the finances and year end arrangements of the Council.

The Clerk reported that

- External audit had not been completed to date and he has been asked for further information from PKF Littlejohn to get this completed.
- Variance report noted
- Income and expenditure report noted
- Fun on the field report was discussed and agreed a separate meeting will be required to get ideas on reshaping the event to attract a more diverse attendance.

ACTION – *Joanne Sargant to arrange a meeting to invite all councillors to planning meeting for the 'Fun on the Field' event 2026*

F 25/20 JUBILEE GARDENS (TOWN GREEN) WORKING PARTY

Update on the current project status, the Clerk reported that a planning application has been submitted and has been stalled by staffing issues

within the planning department in East Herts District Council. He has chased updates as well as Cllr Ruth Buckmaster and a member of the planning team is now having oversight of the application and has contacted the Clerk.

F25/21 COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT

The Clerk stated that continued engagement is managed through the events delivered by the town council. It was agreed this item be moved to the TAPAC meeting as an agenda item.

F25/22 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To discuss proposals for promoting economic development in the town: Cllr G Rattey informed members that only one shop was unoccupied. Trade was down across the board and he was keen to involve the Maltings into the business consortium for Sawbridgeworth. This would be bought to the cross-border meeting to ensure Sheering PC were in agreement with this as the businesses are in their parish.

F25/23 POLICY MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to policies for the future development of Town Council services to the community.

- To propose adoption of the Sawbridgeworth Town Council Safeguarding Policy at the next Full Town Council meeting on 29th September 2025.

Resolved; to present the safeguarding policy for adoption at Full Town Council 29th September 2025.

[prop Cllr R Smith sec'd Cllr S Smith]

F25/24 REDUCING THE COUNCILS CARBON FOOTPRINT

To discuss the following items to present a motion to the next full Town Council meeting. It was agreed that the following wording be presented.

- To aim to achieve net zero for the council's own generated emissions by 2030 and do all that we can to assist in achieving this by the same year for the wider town.
- In the interim, commit the council towards reducing its own carbon footprint to an absolute minimum by May 2027 [end of current council's term] whilst at the same time identifying a pathway to offset its residual carbon.

The Clerk's report was read through and the following points were agreed

- Heating System upgrade – not to pursue at this time due to the cost and the current system is in full working order.
- Energy Hub advice to be promoted on the Council Website.
- Greener Banking – not to pursue if it impacts on officer time and cost to transfer the bank account.
- Allotment site to fit water harvesting, to continue as this has been budgeted for.

[prop Cllr R Smith sec'd Cllr S Smith]

F25/25 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Clerk highlighted the Hundred Parishes Group which offer limited funding opportunities which he will join to have the opportunity to apply for small sums if they are appropriate to any projects the town council are undertaking.

F25/26 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Nothing raised

Meeting Closed at 7:41pm

Signed.....

Date.....