

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL Minutes

of the Meeting of Sawbridgeworth Town Council held at 7:30pm in the Council Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street on **Monday 26th June 2023**.

Those present

Cllr Eric Buckmaster	Cllr Salvatore Pagdades
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster	Cllr Greg Rattey
Cllr Annelise Furnace	Cllr John Rider
Cllr Dawn Newell	Cllr Reece Smith
Cllr Fred Parr	Cllr Steve Smith

In attendance: 4 x members of the public
Lisa Dale –
Chris Carter – Press

Welcome by the Town Mayor followed by thought for the day from Cllr Dawn Newell

23/27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Nathan Parsad - Wyatt
Cllr Angus Parsad - Wyatt
Approved [Prop Cllr Pagdades; sec'd Cllr Rattey]

23/28 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

23/29 PUBLIC FORUM

Questions

Mr Royle - Will this Council do all it can to support our two community pharmacies? I have raised this issue with our MP more than once but have not even had an acknowledgement. We have seen how well our pharmacies responded during the Covid pandemic. I recommended a conversation with them to better understand the challenges they face.

Cllr R Buckmaster – stated the NHS are running a campaign to support pharmacies and she has asked the town clerk to arrange a meeting with the managers of the pharmacies to get an understanding of the issues they are facing.

Cllr Rattey and Cllr E Buckmaster were happy for the council to support the two local pharmacies.

Cllr J Rider pointed out that a balance was needed, the town has two pharmacies that are fighting for a bigger market.

Ms Irwin – the developments in West Road are displaying on noticeboards that four million pounds has been invested in the local community, were do we see the books to see where this money was spent.?

Cllr E Buckmaster explained that section 106 money was being used for an extension on Mandeville School, the new roundabout junction at West Road, with other elements that are in need of improvements

around the town. Money has been earmarked for Bullfields and the High Wych pre school expansion and the Hailey Centre. There is a whole list which can be circulated via the Town Council website.

Ms Irwin questioned that the roundabout improvements should be highways funded and the school extension should come from education.

Cllr E Buckmaster stated that the developer's description of community investment would be different to that of the council, funding will be for local matters as well as a local green space. Other funding will be needed, such as community infrastructure improvements which may be causing confusion. These contributions should have been delivered from the three planned developments, but one has stalled.

Cllr Furnace, stated that a recent freedom of information request had revealed some of the information Ms Irwin requested and this may be shared. Also the funding from the developments may not be index linked with inflation.

Cllr E Buckmaster explained the funding was index linked but there may be a shortfall from the original plans for the investment.

Cllr Furnace also identified that the delay in the third development will negatively impact on the walking and cycling infrastructure which the money was earmarked for.

Cllr Newell also identified that building material costs had risen significantly and this will impact on future development start dates.

Mrs Mead wanted to highlight the excellent event River Day had been and she appreciated the comfort facilities and asked if refreshments could be considered for future events. Also was there any news on the Jubilee Gardens design,

Cllr R Buckmaster stated it had been noted regarding the refreshment request. She added an initial meeting with a designer for the Jubilee Gardens project was planned for next week and following on from this a date will be set for the working group to meet and consult with the designer.

23/30 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the town council held on 15th May 2023 (M01) There was a typing error highlighted by Cllr E Buckmaster which was corrected by the Clerk.

[prop Cllr R Smith; sec'd Cllr Furnace]

To attend to any matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda.

Cllr Rider raised the speed of vehicles in Vantorts Road and the impact the 20mph restriction was having.

Cllr E Buckmaster stated speed and volume recorders have been deployed to record the impact of the reduction in speed limit but he had not seen the results of the surveys yet, he will share the information when he receives it.

Cllr Rider also asked if there was an update on sheering Mill Lane no entry.

Cllr E Buckmaster stated he was still waiting and the recent update he had received was the project will go ahead in September.

Cllr Parr asked if the council would support the enforcement on the Forebury estate of the 20mph speed restriction.

Cllr R Buckmaster stated that this was a private road and we could as a council write to the estate manager.

23/31 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Received and noted: the minutes of the planning committee held on 22nd May 2023 (P01)

Cllr Parr stated his apologies were not recorded but he had notified officers of his holiday.

Received and noted: the draft minutes of the planning committee held on 12th June 2023 (P02)

Cllr Rider stated he wasn't aware of the meeting but he was on holiday when this had taken place.

Cllr R Buckmaster did remind councillors that all meeting dates and times were in the pack they were all given from the first full town council meeting.

23/32 FINANCE, POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Received and noted: the draft minutes of the Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee held on 12th June 2023 (F01)

23/33 TOWN CLERK REPORT

Received and noted: the clerk's report for the month of June 2023.

23/34 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2022-23

1. **Noted:** the report of the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2022-23
2. **Resolved:** to approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement, 2022/2023.
[prop Cllr A Furnace; secd Cllr J Rider]
3. **Resolved:** to approve and sign the Annual Return for 2022/23.
[prop Cllr Pagdades; secd Cllr F Parr]

Cllr Rider congratulated the staff on the report and stated he thought the printing of the bank report was not required as it involved lots of work and paper to produce. The Clerk stated this would be sent out electronically moving forwards and a quarterly report produced on expenditure against the budget forecast.

23/35 MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

To receive new Mayor's appointments and communications
Cllr R Buckmaster advised.

- She had attended Bry for the 50th celebration of Jumalage

- Attended the River Day event.
- Was part of the Yellow Book launch that 5 local primary schools had produced.
- Attended armed forces week flag raising at County Hall.
- Met with a Lower Sheering Councillor to progress cross border working.
- Attended the police walk and talk event.

23/36

REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Received and noted: Representatives reports from:

- County Councillor E Buckmaster additionally added;
 - Referred to his report and the updates on the local projects he is working on.
 - He was attending the environmental cabinet panel which will be updating the environmental impact assessment of council decisions. This had been prompted by Mr Royles question regarding the Cornwall Wheel which is used in Cornwall regarding the environmental impact the council there has through its decision making.
 - On the 6th July will be attending the 2nd environmental youth COP at North Hertfordshire College, 18 secondary schools accepted invitations and Leventhorpe School will be sending representatives.

Question.

Cllr Furnace, the Cornwall Wheel could possibly be used by Sawbridgeworth Town Council once the results were seen of the adaption being used by Hertfordshire County Council.

Also raised if consideration could be made for double yellow lines at pinch points in Bell Street following an accident where a vehicle struck a pedestrian on the pavement.

Cllr E Buckmaster stated that parking restriction exist but enforcement officers do give a short period of grace for people to park and use the local shops. Asked if the whole council wanted him to explore parking scheme in Bell Street.

Cllr Rider encouraged the council to explore legislation regarding pavement parking.

Cllr Rattey wanted to raise some caution around parking changes, these may have a detrimental effect on local businesses and in 40 years trading he hasn't seen an accident in Bell Street.

Cllr Pagdades agreed with Cllr Rattey as local business is the heart of the community and drivers should be allowed to stop for five minutes to go into the shops.

Cllr E Buckmaster has been working with the police and drivers have been issued warning notices. Pavement parking is only enforceable in London but an obstruction can be prosecuted.

Cllr Parr asked if the cameras placed in Bell Street were for parking or for police.

Cllr R Buckmaster stated these cameras had been up for many years and had been upgraded recently, they are for police use regarding the investigation of crime and disorder.

Cllr Newell also agreed with Cllr Furnace that the situation is dangerous and this needed to be looked in too.

Cllr R Buckmaster stated that there had been a design made to improve safety in Bell Street but the cost to implement the design was very expensive.

Cllr Furnace stated that two or three areas marked off as no loading

areas would help resolve the current issues where large goods vehicles block the road.

Cllr E Buckmaster suggested a design should be revisited and should be included in the town action plan as it will need thinking through.

Question.

Cllr Furnace asked why the recycling bins had been removed.

Cllr E Buckmaster felt this was a cost saving exercise but the district councillors will come back to the next meeting with an answer as to why this decision had been made.

District Councillors reports

Cllr E Buckmaster has attended an executive meeting as an observer and asked questions and the overview and scrutiny meeting where shared service was being examined.

Cllr A Parsad-Wyatt, report noted.

Cllr R Buckmaster has attended training in her district role and has been teaching the new councillors, she encouraged Town Councillors to continue to access training whilst in post.

Cllr Pagdades met with local officers with the town clerk, where crime trends, crime reports and police events were discussed.

The police report will focus on police events and activity in the town, crime statistics will be reported on quarterly.

Sawbridgeworth is leading on water safety moving into the summer months.

The town council and the police are now sharing the upstairs office to allow for communication flow between the police and staff, assisting in event awareness and publicising.

He attended the recent walk and talk event with Cllrs Ruth and Eric Buckmaster, the main issues raised were anti-social behaviour and e-scooters. Signage to raise awareness in the illegal use of e-scooters have been placed in Bell Street car park and one requested for Bullfields.

Thursday 13th July at 6pm in Bell Street car park is the third police 'walk and talk' event and I encourage all councillors to attend and promote the event.

Police (Cllr Pagdades) then read from the recent police report mentioning the walk and talk events and the work they are completing with Cllr E Buckmaster on parking around the town. A recent issue of ASB has been seen and home visits to those involved has been made to curb this behaviour.

Question

Cllr R Smith thanked the police at the river day event and asked why the report had changed.

Cllr Pagdades stated the police statistics will be quarterly so that promoting the positive work is not lost amongst the statistics that may increase the fear of crime.

Cllr Furness asked if the police were not attending the council meetings any longer.

Cllr Pagdades stated they will attend when available.

** 8:30pm – Cllr Parr offers his apologies and leaves the meeting due to an early work start the following day. **

- Cllr R Buckmaster, updated on RHSO juice sales were going well and last Saturday they made over £300. SYPRC, the AGM will be on the 13th July at 7:30pm and funding is still being researched for grants.
- Cllr A Furnace, referred to her report and wanted to highlight the excellent work Leventhorpe school were completing around clean air awareness.

Cllr E Buckmaster wanted to raise a point that a previous discussion it was agreed for the Clerk to write to the PCC on behalf of the Council. Tis was agreed to take this forward as an action for the Clerk.

- 23/37 TOWN PROJECTS MANAGER REPORT**
Received and noted: the Town Project Managers report for June 2023
- 23/38 UPDATE ON UKRAINE LOCAL SUPPORTING EVENTS**
Mr Royle update members on several events taking place in July and August which he hopes will lead to a fund-raising event in August. He had met with Stuart Orton, the lead on community engagement for Citizens Advice and contacts exchange to assist both local Ukraine families and Stuart Orton. Also had established a contact for homes for Ukraine and had applied for a grant to assist with local families. F&B are holding an arts exhibition to fund raise, Mandeville and Reedings are also getting involved in money raising events. High Wych School have raised £920 from selling lollies and Hard Soft has supplied four laptops for local families to use.
- Cllr Furnace stated the cooking club saw Ukraine representatives cooking with the Sawbridgeworth members which was an excellent event.
- 23/39 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY**
To discuss members views on the current consultation and to offer a Sawbridgeworth Town Council response.
Cllr Furnace wanted to raise awareness of the strategy and the current consultation and for the council to make a response. Cllr Furnace will send out the link and key questions and collate the answers for the clerk to circulate the town council response.
Cllr E Buckmaster the strategy is connected to the local transport plan and is to create safe areas for walking, wheeling and cycling. Government funding historically has been focussed on the larger urban areas within Hertfordshire. Narrow roads and pavements are a challenge and through the consultation, walking improvements should not be overlooked.
- 23/40 FINANCIAL REPORT**
A new report that has been prepared by the Clerk to highlight any variances in expenditure and the budget forecast. This will be produced for the finance committee quarterly in future.
Noted: The current Financial Report
- 23/41 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**
Noted and Approved: Accounts for payment.
- 23/42 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

Cllr Rider raised awareness of the introduction of Martins Law and may be worth keeping an eye on as it could effect owners and managers of venues for public use.

The Bill will impose a duty on the owners and operators of certain locations to increase their preparedness for and protection from a terrorist attack by requiring them to take proportionate steps, depending on the size and nature of the activities that take place there. The Bill has not been passed as yet and will be monitored moving forwards.

Meeting ended at 8:46pm

ACTIONS

Owner	Action	Completed
Clerk	To arrange a meeting with the Pharmacy managers to understand current issues they face locally	
Cllr E Buckmaster	To create a list of earmarked 106 money and expenditure to date	
Clerk	To circulate the freedom of information request relating to 106 funding for local projects.	29/6 email sent
Clerk	To write to highways to chase the no entry new road layout at Sheering Mill Lane j/w Vantorts Road	
Clerk	To write to the Forebury estate managers regarding enforcement of the 20mph speed limit.	
District Councillors	To explore the reason for the recycling bin removal	
Clerk	To write to the PCC to enquire why we didn't get a replacement PCSO after the retirement of PCSO Western and what are the police doing to combat the rise in vehicle crime in Sawbridgeworth	
Cllr Furnace	To circulate the link and circulate the questions for the County travel strategy consultation and collate the answers for submission	
Clerk	Regarding the above action, the Clerk is to make enquiries to see if collated responses can be submitted rather than individual ones.	