

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL Minutes

of the Annual Meeting of Sawbridgeworth Town Council held at 19.30 in the Council Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street on **Monday 26 July 2021**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder	Cllr Annelise Furnace
Cllr Eric Buckmaster	Cllr Greg Rattey
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster	Cllr David Royle
Cllr John Burmicz	Cllr Nathan Parsad
Cllr Craig Chester	

In attendance:

J Sargant – Interim Town Clerk	Chris Carter Bishop's Stortford Independent
	3 members of Hertfordshire Constabulary
	3 members of the public

Welcome by the Town Mayor followed by thought for the day from Cllr David Royle

21/41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr P Gray – Absent
Cllr D Patel – Family Commitment
Cllr A Furnace – Family Commitment
Cllr P Coysten - Illness

21/42 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of Pecuniary Interests.

21/43 PUBLIC FORUM

There were a series of questions from a member of the public in relation to agenda item 21/48 on matters within the remit of the Town Council: The Mayor invited the member of the public to speak at the time of agenda item 21/48. They also shared their thanks to the Interim Town Clerk, Jo Sargant for all that she had done with the smooth transition of keeping the town council operating efficiently since the previous clerk's departure.

21/44 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 June 2021 (M02) [*prop Cllr A Alder; secd Cllr R Buckmaster*]

Matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda. Cllr Royle asked if a response had been sent to Herts County Council in relation to our support on the Mandeville School expansion. Interim Town Clerk responded that there had not been any correspondence sent to date.

21/45 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Received and noted: the minutes of the planning committee held on 28 June 2021 (P02)

Received and noted: the draft minutes of the planning committee held on 12 July 2021 (P03)

21/46 AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Received and noted: the draft minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 28 June 2021 (A01)

21/47 ED & STAP COMMITTEE

Received and noted: the draft minutes of the ED & STAP Committee held on 12 July 2021 (E01)

21/48 WRENBRIDGE B8 LOGISTICS CENTRE

Question from a member of the public: I ask this question to the town council as a whole body, could they tell me what they are doing in cooperation with other agencies to minimise the damage from the lorry traffic which will come down the A1184 also through Bishop's Stortford from the ill-advised distribution centre in the South of Bishop's Stortford. Are they talking to Essex County Council Highways about junction 7A on the M11 and the extra difficulties which will befall the A1184 in Sawbridgeworth.

Additionally questions for the District Councillor on the Development Control Committee. Was the planning permission for the Distribution Centre passed unanimously? Did the committee realise what they were agreeing to? If so, why did they agree? If not, why not?

Cllr Nathan Parsad responded that a letter had been written and sent by the town council with strong objections, however, to note that we were limited by the grounds on which we could object as this was a 'reserved matters' application i.e. the outline planning application has already been approved. Objections in relations to the reserved matters including layout, design, the relationship to grade 2 listed buildings and the potential disaster with the additional movement of heavy goods vehicles travelling through Sawbridgeworth. There have been many local objections in various formats and as individuals and a corporate body they will continue to encourage all to object against this application.

Interim Town Clerk confirmed that to date there had been no response to our formal letter that was sent by mail, email and logged onto the East Herts Council Planning Portal before the deadline. As a council we are liaising closely with Cllr Graham McAndrew as a Bishop's Stortford Town Councillor and his East Herts Council portfolio as Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability. Herts County Council's Development Management Group Manager has also now responded comprehensively rejecting the reserved matters application.

Cllr A Alder responded that she felt that it was unfair to lay the blame with East Herts Council for approving this plan as it deviates from what was originally proposed. As a council although it was classified as B8 it was detailed as a high tech development to include a car showroom with additional professional / technical type businesses. The land was subsequently sold to Wrenbridge who have moved away from the original proposal. It is a very unfortunate turn of events and we can only hope that with all of the local objection that common sense will prevail and the development will not proceed as currently planned.

Cllr David Royle advised that other bodies that have been involved are the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation who have submitted a detailed objection. Additionally Cllr A Furnace and Cllr D Royle attended a Bishop's Stortford Town Council Planning Committee meeting, and it was good that as neighbouring towns we share the same views.

Cllr R Buckmaster answered the questions in relation to her role on Development Management Control (DMC) committee at East Herts Council – she reported that she was not on DMC at the time that the outline planning was passed and therefore could not answer those questions, she did advise that members of the DMC have now requested that votes be recorded, current members of DMC are concerned that decisions are coming before them that they do not all agree with and therefore it is now necessary to record how members vote on future applications. Cllr R Buckmaster detailed that as a member of DMC she is not allowed to comment on any planning issue that comes before her, she is unable to personally give an opinion on the Wrenbridge application. It came to DMC as an outline planning application and in these instances the committee members are not given any details of what outline planning applications could become in the future.

21/49 HAILEY CENTRE REPRESENTATIVE

Resolved: to accept the recommendation of the Trustees of the Hailey Centre Charity to appoint Cllr G Rattey as a representative of the town council on the Board of Trustees.

[prop Cllr J Burmicz; secd Cllr N Parsad]

21/50 SAWBRIDGEWORTH TRUST REPRESENTATIVE

Resolved: to accept the recommendation of the Trustees of the Sawbridgeworth Trust Charity to appoint Cllr G Rattey as a representative of the town council on the Board of Trustees.

[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr J Burmicz]

21/51 MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

To receive new Mayor's appointments and communications:

Cllr G Rattey advised that he had continued to meet with landlords in the town and they have expressed how pleased that they are with the town council's involvement with local businesses. Businesses on London Road and West Road had also been visited with Cllr N Parsad and reported that they often feel neglected and not part of the community on town issues, Cllr G Rattey will ensure in future that they are consulted on all matters with town vibrancy.

A date has been set for the 2nd August to have a social event with all of the traders in the town at The Old Bell, there has been a very positive response to the invitation on social media from many traders.

Collaboration with two east Herts officers on the Social Inclusion and Diversity Strategy is progressing, this is the first time that the LGBT+ community has been represented and therefore the Mayor commends East Herts District Council for this work.

Visit with Home Instead who are now registered charity and are keen to support the elderly population and are offering free dementia classes in collaboration with Tesco.

Continued work with the Black and Asian community in the town and discussions around racism have taken place. The results are mixed with most reporting that they have received indirect racism, so this continues to be a works in progress.

Visited the Brownies on their Hawaiian night along with Father Simon, this was great fun and all credit to Brown Owl and all the ladies there who do a superb job.

REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Received and noted: Representatives reports from:

- County Councillor E Buckmaster additionally added:
 - Flooding – with more frequent excessive rainfall there are local major issues, although gullies are working and have been maintained they are unable to cope with a deluge of water over a short period of time. This needs to be monitored and a longer term strategy sought and systems put in place to mitigate future flooding. Herts County Council had held a 2 day scrutiny meeting with agency partners including Affinity and Thames Water and a representative from University of Hertfordshire on Climate Change, the scrutiny committee will present recommendations from findings.
 - Sustainable Sawbridgeworth Group – County Council working together with schools on ‘No Idling’ signs, champions for schools to progress and ask individual schools what their requirements would be.
 - SAWB4 section 106 agreement should be signed by the autumn.
 - West Road – 10 weeks of utility connection works will start on 9th August and will be in three phases, two week road closure from Roseacres, three weeks of signals and a further five weeks of closure. This has been coordinated so that other utilities such as electricity and foul sewer will be carried out at the same time.
 - Taylor Wimpey site – letter written requesting for the town council to visit the site, awaiting response.
 - Barretts Site – outstanding issues from the local flood authority who have unanswered questions with regards to the drainage and culverts, this is part of the construction management plan that is outstanding.
- Questions to the County Councillor:
 - Cllr Alder – with regards to the road closure how is this going to affect the business at the end of West Road and how will residents access their own homes?
Cllr E Buckmaster responded that the businesses at Crumps Farm, the Orange Tree and Ridgeons will have to be accessed via High Wych, and to note that the weigh limit on that road will be suspended for the closure period.
- District Councillor Cllr R Buckmaster – no further information to report.
- District Councillor Cllr A Alder – no further information to report.
- District Councillor Cllr J Burmicz – no further information to report.
- Hertfordshire Police Report (Verbal report from PC S Marshall):
 - Increase in keyless car thefts and strongly recommended the use of faraday pouches to keep keys in, this can be obtained from the police. In particular it is high value cars that are targeted.
 - Priority areas remain with Great St Marys Church, engagement is good, where there are incidents with E-Scooters and anti-social behaviour the use of panther forms and education seem to be working well in addition to talking to parents. A Community Voice Event at Church Park on 19th August 11am-2pm. A successful visit and walk around

with Pearl Devonshire (Crime Prevention Officer) highlighted some hotspots and vulnerable areas that will now be the focus working alongside Father Simon.

- High Risk Missing Person – thanks to town council and local members of the community with offers of help.
 - BOBB Watch – still active, every three months.
 - CCTV training complete with Sunstone, thanks to Interim Town Clerk for arranging the training, this has enabled more access to the system to obtain footage in a timely manner.
 - Inspector Chris Hunt updated members on police recruitment and reported that East Herts has a healthy number of officers, there are a lot of new officers, degree students are now coming through also with changes to entry requirements. The Safer Neighbourhood Team is operating at full capacity and he thanked the town council for their support in advocating the importance of recruitment.
- Other Representatives –
- **Cllr D Royle:**
 - Young Peoples and Schools / SYPRC, will have a new youth leader in September.
 - Footpath 26 - still outstanding but work on this should not be too delayed now that new officers have been inducted.
 - **Cllr R Buckmaster:**
 - SYPRC AGM has taken place and fond farewell was given to Ron Alder for over 50 years of loyal dedication to the charity. There are currently 2 vacancies for community members to join the committee.

21/53 OFFICERS REPORTS

Received and noted: Officers' reports for the month of July 2021:

Cllr R Buckmaster requested the date for the Town Selfie Walk, the Interim Town Clerk will email the information through.

Interim Town Clerk confirmed that Emery Electrical were booked to visit on 29th July and work on the EV Charging points was imminent.

Cllr Alder confirmed that the appointment of a new driver for Sawbobus had taken place.

21/54 GRANT APPLICATIONS

To consider the following grant applications:

1. Sawbridgeworth Fire Station

Maintenance of community Defibrillator.

Sum requested £69.60

Resolved: To make a grant of £69.60 [prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr N Parsad]

2. Sawbridgeworth Allotment Association

Contribution to Conservation Project on Southbrook allotment site.

Sum requested £200

Resolved: To make a grant of £200 [prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr A Furnace]

21/55 DEPOSIT & CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

There were no Documents for Noting and Consultation

21/56 FINANCIAL REPORT

Noted: The current Financial Report

21/57 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Noted and Approved: Accounts for payment

21/58 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items for future agendas

Meeting ended at 20.30

Thought for the day – Cllr D Royle

The last page of *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela

...It was during those long and lonely years that my hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people, white and black. I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred, he is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else's freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.

When I walked out of prison, that was my mission, to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both. Some say that has now been achieved. But I know that that is not the case. The truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning.

I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.