

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL Minutes

of the Meeting of Sawbridgeworth Town Council held at 7:00pm in the Council Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street on **Monday 26th January 2026**.

Those present

Cllr Eric Buckmaster	Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster	Cllr Simon Penney
Cllr Annelise Furnace	Cllr Greg Rattey
Cllr Dawn Newell	Cllr John Rider
Cllr Salvatore Pagdades	Cllr Reece Smith
Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt	Cllr Steve Smith

In attendance:

4 x members of the public

Holocaust Memorial Day candles were lit followed by a one-minute silence

Thought for the day was read by Cllr Eric Buckmaster highlighting the passing of former councillors Angela Alder and Roger Beeching .

25/110 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received

25/111 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were none.

25/112 PUBLIC FORUM

Q1. Proposed Car Parking weekend charges for Bell St Car Park This seems to be a fait accompli. What further action is STC proposing/recommending?

Cllr John Rider confirmed that the Town Council have tried to engage with East Herts District Council and when the leader Ben Crystall attends a meeting in the future this will be raised with him. He stated the work previously completed to try and stop this decision and ideas are to be discussed to reimburse users of the car park.

Cllr Greg Rattey stated the traders feel undermined and feel everything is against us and each carpark should be considered individually and not with the blanket approach that has been used.

Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt stated the town council has worked for two years to try to stop these charges. Ideas to alleviate the costs to residents will be sought but the reimbursement scheme may be too much for the Town Council to administer. Alternatives such as the changing of yellow lines may assist visitors and car park users.

Cllr Dawn Newell stated that people attending the Doctors Surgery at the weekend will be penalised.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster stated at numerous meetings he has raised objections at District level, but the decision went ahead anyway. "*The Listening Council*" are not listening.

Cllr Annelise stated that hard data on the effect it will have on the sports club's attendance would be useful evidence of the impact that these changes will have.

Cllr John Rider has asked for revenue figures from East Herts District Council but this has not been forthcoming.

25/113 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the town council held on 24th November 2025 (M06)
[prop Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt; sec'd Cllr Annelise Furnace]

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

Action	Owner	Update
To Explore the siting of the cycle repair station at the rail station	Cllr A Furnace & Cllr A Parsad-Wyatt	The manager has been contacted regarding the cycle station and consideration is being made. Also, a planter that has been placed can now progressed. Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt

25/114 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RECEIVED and NOTED the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 24th November 2025 (P11)

RECEIVED and NOTED the draft minutes of the Planning Committee held on 12th January 2026 (P12)

25/115 FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

RECEIVED and NOTED the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 12th January 2026 (F03).

25/116 MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

To receive new Mayor's appointments and communications
Cllr Salvatore Pagdades advised.

- Attended the Lights of Love Service
- Attended the Ukrainian Community Christmas Party.
- Attended the Fawbert and Barnard year one Tea Party.
- Attended the official launch of the refurbished Hailey Centre.
- Attended the Leventhorpe School cultures fair.
- Met with the MP Josh Dean.

25/117 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Received and noted: Representatives reports from:

County Councillor Eric Buckmaster

- Sign to be replaced in Sheering Mill Lane that had been knocked over
- Road Markings and sunken gully has been reported at Vantorts
- Footpath 29 should be resurfaced
- Footpath repairs in Cambridge Road have been completed
- The parking restriction changes in the town centre has only had four responses to the consultation. The main thing will be further restrictions at night in the Forebury and Knight Street. Day time will see de-

restrictions and be changed to no waiting for one hour to prevent commuter parking.

- Speed indicator device will be extended to stay in place for a further five years from his locality budget.
- His area of responsibility has been the worst hit for flooding. Work is being completed with Thames Water and drainage investigation in Hoestock Road.
- Wychford Drive and land behind Rowney Gardens has had an application for an exemption from the landowner for an environmental impact assessment to build 200 homes. This will go through the call for sites and district plan processes, but we don't want any more houses in the town. The Garden Town 23,000 homes will also have a negative impact and building has not been started yet.
- Classroom air purifiers have been made available the three schools have made an application to get them.
- 40 new lime trees were planted in Pishiobury Park to create a new avenue but the planting is a bit hap hazard and this doesn't look good and it is being raised at East Herts District Council.

Cllr Reece Smith stated that flooding issues in Bullfields were improved from the recent work there.

Cllr Ruth Buckmaster asked if Spellbrook School could be considered for an air purifier which Cllr Eric Buckmaster said he would follow up on.

Cllr John Rider raised the accident Cllr Eric Buckmaster had slipping on ice in the Bell Street car park. Cllr Eric Buckmaster made enquiries with East Herts District Council who stated they grit the car park. This was at odds with information passed to Cllr John Rider following a freedom of information request.

Cllr Greg Rattey raised the issue with affinity water who were making a small repair to a leak and closed Bell Street. This caused issues with people using Bell Street and the road closed sign was removed by traders.

Cllr Annelise asked if the locations for on street EV chargers was known and could the Town Council assist in identifying these. Also if body worn cameras were available for school crossing patrol employees.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster stated he will look at these points and asked Cllr Annelise Furnace to email him these questions.

Cllr John Rider wanted to thank the officers who were looking after the footpaths as they are completing a good job. He raised footpath 22 was overgrown and will clear the path himself and make it safe and asked for willing volunteers to assist him.

District Councillor Ruth Buckmaster

DMC had been cancelled. Last Thursday she attended the Holocaust memorial service, this was attended by the Lord Lieutenant, the High Sheriff, the chair of Herts County Council and the Chair of the East Herts District Council. Rabbis from Harlow and Welwyn Garden City were also in attendance.

District Councillor Angus Parsad-Wyatt

Attended the Standards Committee meeting, the government have proposed a new code of conduct for councillors at all levels. These new codes introduce suspension and disqualification of councillors following a complaint and investigation.

Herts Police No report was read by the Mayor, Cllr Salvatore Pagdades

SYPRC Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

A film night has been arranged for February for families

RHSO Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

Held the Wassail last Saturday with over 200 people in attendance. Liz Hall attended with the Leventhorpe Choir and sang all the Wassail songs and £250 was raised. Apple juice prices will need to be raised as it cost nearly £3 per bottle to produce.

Sustainable Sawbridgeworth Cllr Annelise Furnace

First of Bob Reeds Citizen Science group tours has taken place along the Sawbridgeworth Brook. Twelve people of all ages attended
Attended the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Group where extreme weather scenarios and local planning was discussed.

Hailey Centre Cllr Steve Smith

Open day at the Hailey went well and the result of the refurbishment is incredible. He thanked trustee Colin Gill for all the hard work getting the funding and the work completed.

25/118 POLICY MATTERS

To resolve policies for the future development of Town Council services to the community.

- **Resolved** to continue using the current document, Financial Regulations 2025, as recommended by the Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee on 12th January 2026.

[prop Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt; sec'd Cllr Greg Rattey]

- **Resolved** to approve the draft document, Risk Assessment 2026-2027. following the recommendation from the members of the Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee on the 12th January 2026. Document signed by the Mayor and the Clerk.

[prop Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt; sec'd Cllr Annelise Furnace]

25/119 TOWN CLERK REPORT

Received and noted: the clerk's report for the month of January 2026. The Clerk also informed members he had sold the old Sawbobus today. The Jubilee Gardens tree planting has been agreed.

25/120 BUDGET 2026-27 & DETERMINATION OF PRECEPT

1. **Resolved** to adopt the Budget for 2026-27 as recommended by the Finance and Policy Committee.

[prop Cllr Eric Buckmaster; sec'd Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt]

2. **Resolved** to determine the Precept for 2026-27 and instruct the principal authority accordingly.

The precept application was signed by the Mayor Cllr Salvatore Pagdades, Cllr Annelise Furnace and Cllr Eric Buckmaster prior to be signed by the Clerk.

[prop Cllr Eric Buckmaster; sec'd Cllr Annelise Furnace]

25/121 DETERMINATION OF A MAYOR-ELECT

Resolved to designate Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt as mayor-elect for the civic year 2026-27. Election of a mayor to be determined by resolution at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council in May 2026.

[prop Cllr Eric Buckmaster; sec'd Cllr Reece Smith]

25/122 GRANT APPLICATIONS

To consider grant requests made by the following:

- Friends of Sawbridgeworth Neuro Centres
Amount Requested: £500 **Resolved and agreed to award £1023** from the available funds. Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt explained the project and the use of the Centre and the great work that they complete
[prop Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt; sec'd Cllr Ruth Buckmaster]
- Sawbridgeworth Town Twinning Association
Amount Requested: £500 **Resolved and agreed**
Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Annelise Furnace and Angus Parsad-Wyatt all supported the application and the importance of the Town Twinning relationship and huge amount of volunteering that occurs to make it successful.
[prop Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt; sec'd Cllr Simon Penney]
- CanalAbility
Amount Requested: £477 **Resolved and agreed**
Cllr Annelise Furnace supported this application and explained the aims of the project which will support residents
[prop Cllr Annelise Furnace; sec'd Cllr Dawn Newell]

25/123 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE REPORTING

To discuss the responses and future procedure to report environmental issues as per the recent burning in field behind Southbrook Allotments.

- It was agreed to raise the matter with the Ombudsman as it was generally felt the Environment Agency had not dealt with the situation to a successful conclusion.
- Cllr Eric Buckmaster stated it may be useful to collate information who to contact in what situation and for all Cllrs to hold this information
- Cllr John Rider stated he thought an emergency plan should be put in place.
- Cllr Annelise agreed with Cllr Eric Buckmaster's suggestion and had been in contact with the Fire Brigade and the Environment Agency regarding the fire incident.

Cllr J Rider, Cllr A Furnace, Cllr E Buckmaster

Action - To collate information in relation to agencies that can assist in emergency situations and for all councillors to have this information.

25/124 FINANCE MATTERS

Received and noted: the finance and variance report up to December 2025

25/125 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Noted and Approved: Accounts for payment

25/126 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Nothing raised

Meeting ended at 8:42pm

Signed.....

Date.....

<i>Action</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Update</i>
To collate information in relation to agencies that can assist in emergency situations and for all councillors to have this information.	<i>Cllr Eric Buckmaster</i>	