

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 23rd February 2026**.

Those present

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

In attendance:

4 x members of the public

Thought for the day was read by Cllr Dawn Newell.

25/127 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Nathan Parsad-Wyatt,

25/128 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST -- None

25/129 PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised.

25/130 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the town council held on 26th January 2026 (M07)

[prop Cllr Dawn Newell; sec'd Cllr Steve Smith]

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

Action	Owner	Update
To collate information in relation to agencies that can assist in emergency situations and for all councillors to have this information.	Cllr Eric Buckmaster	Completed, contact list has been developed and will form of a live document with regular reviews for accuracy.

25/131 PLANNING COMMITTEE

RECEIVED and NOTED the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 26th January 2026 (P13)

RECEIVED and NOTED the draft minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9th February 2026 (P14)

25/132 TOWN ACTION PLAN AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE

RECEIVED and NOTED the minutes of the Town Action Plan and Amenities Committee 9th February 2026 (T03)

25/133 WOOD WASTE BURNING INCIDENT SPRINGHALL LANE

RECEIVED and NOTED The Sawbridgeworth Town Council's formal escalated complaint to the MP Josh Dean regarding the Environment Agencies handling of the prolonged burning of waste wood at the field off Springhall Lane during December 2025 and January 2026

25/134 MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

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

- Attended the Cultures Fayre at Leventhorpe School.
- Launched Youth Community Initiative for Leventhorpe sixth form students to volunteer with community groups.
- Liaison with MP Josh Dean and have been liaising with Greater Anglia senior managers regarding the recent timetable changes and overcrowding issues.
- Reminded all councillors of the Ukraine Vigil tomorrow evening at 6:30pm and asked a member of the public to speak regarding the event and its significance.

ACTION – write to Greater Anglia regarding the impact that recent timetable alterations, reduced carriage numbers, and changes to the starting points of certain services are having on our residents who commute daily from Sawbridgeworth Station.

25/135 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

Received and noted: Representatives reports from:

County Councillor Eric Buckmaster

- All flood upgrades in the town are performing well throughout the recent heavy rainfall.
- Lawrence Avenue and West Rd will have some pathway works and the West Road crossing should start works in May.

Questions

Cllr Annelise Furnace, are body cams for the crossing staff in West Rd going ahead. Cllr Eric Buckmaster will chase. Is he aware of local private investment into local nature projects, he responded this is a county wide project and a CEO has been appointed from Gascoine Estates with farming knowledge.

District Councillor Ruth Buckmaster

Referred to her report. Attended a Gilston development meeting where the highways road network scheme was released.

District Councillor Angus Parsad-Wyatt

The Warding petition has been submitted following the Community Governance Review held by East Herts District Council and will be presenting this next Wednesday at the district council meeting. Buntingford will be doing the same. A motion will request another consultation to take place as notices of the consultation had not been received by residents and the process has not proceeded.

Question

Cllr Greg Rattey asked if anyone had heard of the Town Centre Survey held by East Herts District Council. The process has made traders upset and asked some detailed questions that raised concerns if it was genuine. Cllr Eric Buckmaster stated he thought it was communications issues that raised the concern.

Hertfordshire Police

The report was read by the Mayor Cllr Salvatore Pagdades.
Traffic operations in Spellbrook had taken place and road safety sessions with students with Spellbrook Students. The new police priority has been set on the Harlow Road to reduce traffic offences.

SYPRC Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

Nothing to report

RHSO Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

Wanted it recorded the thanks for the Sawbridgeworth Town Council Staff for their support in celebrating the 300 anniversary events last year.
Cllr Annelise Furnace wanted the committee recognised for all their hard work for the 300 year anniversary events.

Sustainable Sawbridgeworth Cllr Annelise Furnace

The second of Bob Reeds Citizen Science group tours has taken place along the Sawbridgeworth Brook, A date is to be set for a third event.
The Eco Working Group met last month and will assess a new toolkit to record the eco footprint.
Planters have arrived at the train station and a community gardening group may develop to assist with these.
9:30 until 12 this Saturday the Energy Hub will be available in the Bell Street car park.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster the LCWIP will be assessed in April and funding options looked into for local upgrades.
Cllr Angus Parsad Wyatt updated the train station planters should be in position within a week.

Sports Association Cllr Simon Penney

He shared the price changes and the sports clubs will need to spend an extra £2000 a year for parking attendees. Advice has been passed to the committee to invite the East Herts District Council car parking manager to understand the dynamics of the car park users.
Cllr Eric Buckmaster raised the health and wellbeing of the community should be assessed as per the other towns and for equality to be applied.

25/136

TOWN CLERK REPORT

Received and noted: the Clerk's report for the month of February 2026.

Cllr Annelise Furnace highlighted that the designer of the Jubilee Gardens had agreed to place a Sakura cherry tree to support the national project.

25/137

TOWN PROJECT MANAGERS REPORT

Received and noted the verbal update from the Clerk that this year's events have been planned and are being managed.

25/138

FLY TIPPING

Fly tipping in the Town and solutions to reduce offences was discussed.
Cllr John Rider referred to a Times newspaper report whereby fly tipping should be recorded as a serious crime and is being committed by organised crime groups.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster explained he has been championing increasing fines and sentencing for these crimes but with little impact. Criminals can get around the fixed penalty notice by going to court and getting reduced fines through means testing from their income. The East Herts District Council officer who lead on investigations and prosecutions had left and had not been replaced. Prosecution rates were very low across the county, but all incidents are recorded. Police patrols offered limited opportunity to catch offenders and police prosecution powers were limited. Waste carriers' registration was being tightened and people using waste carriers were to be more vigilant to rogue traders.

ACTION – Cllr's Steve Smith and Dawn Newell to highlight the seriousness of fly tipping and the request for the government to increase the penalties for offenders with MP Josh Dean who they are meeting with this Wednesday.

25/139 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Standing item to be updated following any updates from the consultation and news from County or District Councils.

Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt encouraged councillors and members of the public to take part in the consultation and explained the three options that were being considered.

Consultation
Opened: 5th February 2026
Closes: 26th March 2026

25/140 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DATE

Resolved, the next Annual Town Meeting, proposed date is Wednesday 22nd April 2026 due to the availability of the Hailey Centre.

Discussion was held over promoting the meeting widely to try and increase footfall.
[prop Cllr Dawn Newell; sec'd Cllr Steve Smith]

25/141 FINANCE MATTERS

Received and noted: the finance and variance report up to January 2026

25/142 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Noted and Approved: Accounts for payment

25/143 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Nothing raised

Meeting ended at 8:05pm

Signed.....

Date.....

<i>Action</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Update</i>
Write to Greater Anglia regarding the impact that recent timetable alterations, reduced carriage numbers, and changes to the starting points of certain services are having on our residents who commute daily from Sawbridgeworth Station.	<i>Cllr Salvatore Pagdades and the Clerk</i>	
To highlight the seriousness of fly tipping with MP Josh Dean and request for the government to increase the penalties for offenders.	<i>Cllr Steve Smith and Dawn Newell</i>	