

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes

of the Meeting of Sawbridgeworth Town Council held at the Council Offices, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 7.30 pm on **Monday 29 April 2013**.

Those present

Cllr Barry Hodges – The Mayor	
Cllr Jane Adams	Cllr Will Mortimer
Cllr Angela Alder	Cllr Brian Rochester
Cllr Eric Buckmaster	Cllr Joyce Vincent
Cllr Pat Coysten	Cllr Andrew Wincott
Cllr Derek Filler	

In attendance:

Cty Cllr Roger Beeching	
PS Rikki Bartlett - Herts Police	PCSO Paul Weston - Herts Police
5 members of the public	Eleanor Patmore – H&E Observer
R Bowran - Town Clerk	Jo Kenny – Town Projects Manager

Welcome by the Mayor; prayers were read by Cllr Andrew Wincott.

12/178 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mitchell – on holiday and Cllr Reeks – imminent examination pressures.

12/179 PUBLIC FORUM

To receive representations from members of the public on matters within the remit of the Town Council.

Mrs Monya Billing: commented that there were no yellow lines on Station Road near the junction with Leat Close

Clerk responded that the traffic management changes in the area were an on-going situation and improvements would soon be evident.

County Councillor Roger Beeching echoed the comments and said he was actively following this through with the Highways department.

Mrs Monya Billing: commented that the scaffolding erected around The Market House has meant that there is no footpath on this dangerous corner. Cllr Filler echoed this concern.

Clerk responded that he would check the validity of the scaffolding licence that would have had to be granted.

The police confirmed that they were aware of the situation and had asked for netting to be added in time for the May Bank Holiday week-end.

Mr Norman Manion: commented that he had made a comment on 26 October 2010 and that it had not been recorded in the minutes. He further commented that he had raised thirteen matters with the council and none had been satisfactorily recorded.

Clerk responded that all his comments had been recorded in the notes attached to the minutes of the relevant council meetings.

Mr Norman Manion: commented that Barratt Homes had cut down seven ash trees during construction and noted that a developer in Norfolk had recently been fined heavily for a similar action. Barratt Homes had shown no interest in his complaint.

Clerk responded that he would contact the developer.

Mr Norman Manion: commented that there was still two way traffic at the top end of Millfields into and out of Saffron Gardens. He said he had contacted the Local Government Ombudsman, who had responded that he was too busy to deal with the case. He had also contacted Herts Highways who had displayed a negative attitude towards the situation.

Clerk responded that the condition to create one way traffic, although shown on the original proposals had been omitted from the planning consent given by the Local Planning Authority. He was in current discussions with Herts Highways whose approach was to take this as a traffic management issue.

County councillor Beeching confirmed he was aware of the situation and endorsed Mr Manion's comments.

Mr Jonathan Barnard: commented that the footway at the top end of Millfields remained damaged after the departure of Barratt Homes the developer. He noted that the footway near April Place had been repaired.

Clerk responded that the matter was in the hands of Hertfordshire Highways.

Mrs Heather Riches: reminded Members that she had written to them raising a number of issues that she would like answers to in due course. Without going over her letter she wanted to highlight some points that she had raised.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented on a number of accessibility issues to both the council offices and the Hailey Centre. She cited the presence of a wheelie bin, waste cardboard and a generator.

Clerk responded that the wheelie bin was put out late on a Tuesday afternoon and put back in by 8am at the latest on Wednesday morning. Waste cardboard was associated with the trade collection of the wheelie bin on one occasion. The generator was present for two hours on the first working day after the April Farmers market and was in the process of being disposed of.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that it was not possible to drive a mobility scooter to the entrance of the council office while only one of the two gates was open.

Clerk responded that the entrance courtyard was a fire escape route and needed to be kept clear. He said he would reconsider the practice of how the gates were to be opened and closed.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that it was difficult to get to the door of the Hailey Centre and the accessibility bell was difficult to reach.

Councillor Alder responded that the bell push had been placed in the only practical location for it.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that there was too big a step down between the Hailey Centre and the Council Chamber

Clerk responded that in the event of the two rooms being used in conjunction with each other a ramp would be provided for access by the less able. Thus far that situation has not arisen.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that there was only space for three mobility scooters in the yard behind the Hailey Centre and yet there were six mobility scooter users who attended the centre.

Councillor Alder responded and expressed concern about the number of scooters causing an obstruction in the area.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that she had been promised that accessibility issues would be taken into account by the architect and the district council. She advised the council to take advice about improving accessibility.

Clerk responded that the council offices had been constructed with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination legislation being taken into account. These had been approved by the Local Planning Authority. A review of issues arising from Mrs Riches comments would be made.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that there was a lack of dropped kerbs in the town which made journeys by mobility scooter inconvenienced at best and hazardous at worst.

Clerk responded that the point had been made by several people and that a list of points where dropped kerbs could usefully be installed was being compiled at the request of Herts Highways.

Mrs Heather Riches: commented that there was a problem of cars being parked on pavements which made progress on mobility scooters very difficult.

County Councillor Roger Beeching said that the issue of pavement obstruction was being addressed by Herts Highways.

12/180 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any Declarations of Pecuniary Interest by Members. There were none.

12/181 MINUTES

Resolved: After two amendments were made, approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 25 March 2013 (M10) [*prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Buckmaster*]
There were no matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda.

- 12/182 PLANNING COMMITTEE**
Received and Noted: The minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on:
- 25 March 2013 (P18)
 - 15 April 2013 (P19)
- 12/183 FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**
Received and Noted: The minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee Meeting held on:
- 11 March 2013 (F04)
- 12/184 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**
- The Annual Town Meeting was held in the Council Chamber on Monday 15 April. There were 17 attendees. A full report is to be included in the next Town Council Newsletter.
 - An issue was raised by a parishioner concerning excessive and dangerous speeds of traffic in Station Road. This was answered by County Councillor Roger Beeching with an explanation of the steps that were being taken to improve the situation.
- 12/185 MAYOR'S CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**
 To receive Mayor's forward appointments and communications
- St Georges Day parade.
 - Thorley Wash Nature Reserve opening
 - Civic Dinner
 - Annual Awards evening and distribution to Mayor's Charity
 - Visit to Belgian WWI battlefields.
- 12/186 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS**
 To receive representatives reports from:
- **County Councillor Roger Beeching** reported:
 - Being in purdah running up to elections in May
 - Advised on the nature of the East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group.
 - **District Councillor Eric Buckmaster** reported:
 - He would be going to Grange Paddocks to see the improvements that have been made.
 - A new plan for 10,000 homes at Gilston Park. He emphasised the importance of engagement with the options process to make local opinion heard.
 - **District Councillor Will Mortimer:**
 - Had no comments to make relating to town council business
 - **Hertfordshire Police PS Rikki Bartlett** introduced himself as our new neighbourhood sergeant and reported:
 - Resources were being made available for the day and the evening of May Fayre
 - **Hertfordshire Police PCSO Paul Weston** reported:
 - Criminal damage to motor vehicles in West Road
 - Theft at Budgens, however cctv identified the culprits who

were apprehended at Harlow train station.

- Two new residents had volunteered to be involved with Neighbourhood Watch in the Vantorts area.
- Immobilise Scheme being promoted in Saffron Gardens
- Speed cameras had been set up in Station Road with PC Russell Jones and some prosecutions will result.

12/187 CLERK'S REPORT

○ **The Manor and The Cottage**

Following my recent reports we are close to reaching agreement on the final cost of the project. This will however be resolved at less than the contracted price.

○ **Police Lease**

We are nearing agreement on the terms of the lease we are willing to grant to Herts police for the use of the first floor of The Cottage.

○ **Fly Posting**

An update has been requested from the EHDC enforcement officer relating to the problem opposite The Maltings on Station Road. He advises that: "Officers are out on 'poster patrol' tomorrow and will visit Station Road, to see what signs, if any, have been removed as requested. A final letter will be sent to each company that continues to display unauthorised signage on site, advising them that officers revisit without further notice and remove the adverts".

○ **HAPTC Executive**

Nominations are being sought for vacancies on the HAPTC Executive committee. HAPTC is particularly keen to see representation from councils that are located at the east end of Hertfordshire. Cllr Adams expressed interest.

○ **Town Planters**

A composite deal has been negotiated with Oakridge Nurseries to supply and plant all our town planters this year, at our budget provision. They will have the right to advertise the fact and have also signed up to the "AAS" initiative as a main sponsor.

○ **New Homes Bonus 2013/14**

We have been advised that the New Homes Bonus for this year has been established as £22,724. We have been asked to advise EHDC what we are proposing to use it for. My recommendation is that it should at least in part be used to subsidise the Community Transport Service since we are still operating at 2010 grant levels.

○ **Sawbridgeworth Trust United Charities**

We have received a £1,000 grant from this charity to be used to support "the various buses that the Town Council is responsible for" The quid pro quo is that they would like advertising "on the bus". My recommendation is that any advertising should be on the former CVS bus which is used to transport those people whom the charity is most likely to support.

○ **Public Conveniences**

We have received a request from EHDC to make the toilet in the council offices available to the public as part of the Community Toilet Scheme. This we have declined as they are not suitable for this purpose. However following many complaints from the public about the state of the Bell Street Conveniences, the question of the asset transfer of the facility to the town council was raised again by us and it was promised that the issue would be reviewed.

12/188 FARMERS MARKET

The Farmers Market in April attracted 1,200 visitors and that on the

May Bank Holiday Saturday a total of 800 visitors. There were a number of new stall holders, a number of new attractions and all backed by an advertising campaign on Heart radio and the co-operative effort of "All About Sawbridgeworth".

12/189 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

The Clerk reported that the Sawbobus 2 service to the Rivers Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital And the Herts and Essex Hospital would start on May 14.

12/190 ALL ABOUT SAWBRIDGEWORTH

Town Project Manager reported the relationship with "All About Sawbridgeworth" continues to grow and seems to have found a winning formula. Its aim is to attract diverse businesses and a modest subscription of £20 is the entry fee for Facebook support and promotions headed by Clare Ramsbotham at Mark David Kitchens. Twelve major sponsors are now being sought at a fee of £120 per month which includes market promotion.

12/191 PISHIOBURY PARK AS AN LNR

A request had been received for the Town Council to support an application for Pishiobury Park to be designated as a Local Nature Reserve. This project is supported by EHDC. Members agreed and the Clerk was so instructed.

12/192 CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROJECTS

- The World War I Cultural Exchange Project as promoted by EHDC, the University of Hertfordshire and CVS was discussed and it was agreed to approve an expression of support by Cllr Buckmaster on behalf of the Town Council
- The Hertfordshire at War Project was discussed and ***It was Resolved:*** that a sum of £75 be allocated to a visit to the battlefields at Ypres by the town Mayor. [*Prop: Cllr Buckmaster; Secd: Cllr Alder*]

12/193 DEPOSIT & CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

- Final Version of the Pishiobury Park "Greenspace Action Plan 2012- 2017".

12/194 FINANCIAL REPORT

Noted: The current Financial Report

12/195 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Noted and approved: Accounts for payment

Meeting was closed at 20:59

The next meeting of the Town Council will be the Annual Meeting of the Council and will be held at 7.30 pm on Monday 29 April 2013 in the Council Offices at Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth.