

SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Full Council Meeting

Date of meeting: Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Cllrs Curtis (Deputy Mayor), de Vries, Eke, Freeman, Fiddy, Hawke-Smith, Jones, McLellan, Parker and Porch

Officers: Town Clerk

Public: None present

In the absence of the Mayor, Cllr Ahmed, Deputy Mayor Cllr Curtis chaired this meeting.

FC 048-26	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Abercrombie, Ahmed, Asker, McBirnie and Reeve. Absent Cllrs Coote and Shotropa.
FC 049-26	Declarations of Interest Cllrs Fiddy and Freeman declared generic non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council (UDC).
FC 050-26	Public Speaking Time Council received and thanked Ms Thompson for her update report, regarding the ECC Bus Service proposals, (Ms Thomspson attended and spoke at the February Council meeting).
FC 051-26	Updates from 3rd parties – for information only (a) Council received a written update and report from Cllr P Gadd as the Essex County Councillor (b) District Councillors noted the Local Plan is due to be presented at the March Cabinet meeting.
FC 052-26	Mayor's Communications Council received and noted the Mayor's written update report.
FC 053-26	To verify the Minutes of the Town Council meetings The 09.02.2026 Full Council minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meetings and signed by the Mayor.
FC 054-26	To receive the Minutes of the Previous Meetings Council received and noted the minutes from the following Committee meetings:

Signed as a true and accurate record

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Transport 12.02.2026 (Approved minutes) • Planning and Transport 26.02.2026 (draft minutes) • Finance and Establishment 16.02.2026 (draft minutes) • Assets and Services 23.02.2026 (draft minutes)
FC 055-26	<p>Mayor/Deputy Mayor and Leader/Deputy Leader Nominations</p> <p>In accordance with the Role of Mayor and Leader and Selection Policies, the following valid nominations were submitted and received by Council.</p> <p>It was resolved: To accept all of the following nominations:</p> <p>(a) Position of Town Mayor being: Nomination: Cllr Jeanette Curtis Nominated by Cllr Arthur Coote Seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman</p> <p>(b) Position of Deputy Mayor being: Nomination: Cllr Lucy Abercrombie Nominated by Cllr Deryk Eke Seconded by Cllr Richard Porch</p> <p>(c) Position of Leader being: Nomination: Cllr Richard Freeman Nominated by Cllr Arthur Coote Seconded by Cllr Jeanette Curtis</p> <p>(d) Position of Deputy Leader being: Nomination: Cllr Patrick Hawke-Smith Nominated by Cllr Jeanette Curtis Seconded by Cllr Dave McLellan</p> <p>These nominations will be carried forward to the Annual (General) meeting scheduled for Tuesday 12th May 2026.</p>
FC 056-26	<p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>Council considered the proposed changes to the current Financial Regulations, as recommended by the Finance and Establishment Committee.</p> <p>Resolved: To adopt the Financial Regulations as proposed.</p>

FC 057-26	<p>Housing Estate Management and Government Consultation</p> <p>Council noted that the Government is asking for views on the growing use of private estate management companies on new housing developments, noting, many new estates have unadopted roads, drainage and green spaces, leaving residents paying private maintenance charges that are often high, unclear, and difficult to challenge.</p> <p>Resolved: To delegate the Clerk and Cllr McLellan to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council, noting SWTC’s historic concerns around additional management charges.</p>
FC 058-26	<p>Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation</p> <p>Council noted that UDC has launched a refreshed consultation on Uttlesford District Council’s draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) closing 25 March.</p> <p>Resolved: To delegate the Planning & Transport Committee authority to consider its response (if any) to the consultation at its 12 March meeting.</p>
FC 059-26	<p>National Planning Policy Consultation</p> <p>Council noted an updated Government consultation was launched but closed at midnight therefore no response would be submitted.</p>
FC 060-26	<p>Chase New Homes – Public Open Space (Former Friends School site)</p> <p>Council noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Officers are preparing an additional report to Council regarding the potential transfer of woodland and sporting facilities and the former playing fields site (as considered at the February meeting). (b) It is anticipated an updated report will be presented at the April Full Council meeting, subject to receipt of information from Chase New Homes regarding T&C of any draft lease agreement. Council agreed that a fully informed report should be presented, and therefore a report may be delayed further, pending receipt of draft lease arrangements from the developer (c) Concerns were raised regarding any clause in the S106 agreement which may mean the developer could offer the land straight to a management company, or that the request to SWTC is timed out. Officers to verify and include details in a future report. (d) That Officers will progress with a letter to UDC regarding allocations/receipt of S106 monies more generally

FC 061-26	<p>SWTC Corporate Priorities</p> <p>Council received and considered the updated priorities list.</p> <p>Unanimously Resolved:</p> <p>(a) To adopt the following three priorities as the core focus for delivery within the timeframe of the current administration and before March 2027:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skatepark works 2. Creation of a new community centre in Saffron Walden Whilst this objective will not be completed by March 2027, Council agreed to continuation evaluation and development of any future opportunities for a new community centre 3. Implement better pedestrian use of the Market Square, including considering part or full pedestrianisation (Council acknowledges this is a project led by ECC and thus, SWTC does not control delivery of this priority) <p>(b) To adopt the following corporate objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be an efficient and effective Council • To improve the physical environment • To raise the standards of recreational facilities • To advocate and champion for the needs of the community • To deliver good governance. • To promote the cultural, economic and heritage well-being of Saffron Walden • To nurture and encourage a green town that reduces its carbon footprint year on year and seeks to protect nature <p>(c) To establish an overarching corporate plan for SWTC, covering the period 2026-2031, and that a draft plan will be presented to a future Council meeting for consideration.</p>
FC 062-26	<p>Reports from other Meetings</p> <p>Cllr Porch noted the successful school visit with officers, promoting environmental initiatives.</p>
FC 063-26	<p>Additional Forthcoming Meetings</p> <p>Council noted the following meeting: Town Meeting Tuesday 7th April at 7.30pm in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden</p>

FC 064-26	<p>Urgent Items</p> <p>No matters raised.</p>
FC 065-26	<p>Date and time of Next meeting(s)</p> <p>The Mayor reminded all that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 13th April – Cllr Fiddy gave apologies.</p>
FC 066-26	<p>Confidential Item – Exclusion of Press and Public (Part II meeting)</p> <p>It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
FC 067-26	<p>Jubilee Hub</p> <p>Council discussed and noted the update regarding future service delivery.</p>

The Deputy Mayor closed the meeting at 9.10pm