



# THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 2nd  
JULY 2020 following on  
from the preceding MEETING VIA Zoom

THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND

In accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020, c. 7, Part 1, Local authority meetings, Section 78 – Members are permitted to be present and attend a meeting without being present in the Council Chamber or together in the same place - extract from this Act reads: “The provision which may be made by virtue of subsection (1)(d) includes in particular provision for persons to attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in, local authority meetings without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.”

**Present:**

Councillors: T Frostick (Chairman), A Frater (Vice Chairman), J Spencer, A Howells, I Stewart, R Williams, R Barrington, A Wattebott (arrived 20:06)

**Also Present:** Dena Ludford (Clerk & RFO)

**District Cllr's** Martin Foley & Mike Taylor

Richard Haynes NP Delivery Group

Peter Neale NP Delivery Group

2 members of the Public

**19/20.641 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

County Cllr Simon Walsh

**19/20.642 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None Received

**19/20.643 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**

To receive public representations from residents of Thaxted for matters relating to the agenda for a period not exceeding ten minutes.

**19/20.644 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED**

Cllr Foley reports that as well as normal Chair duties, I have spent quite a lot of time over the last couple of weeks helping to promote local businesses reopening in a safe way across the district and have seen first-hand some of the great difficulties shops and other businesses face in becoming compliant with the ever changing rules during the pandemic. The UDC staff have been magnificent giving advice, helping with grants etc.

UDC Council Finances

As you will be aware, all District and County Councils face a challenging time with finances. UDC in particular had a huge financial black hole before the pandemic due to things like a string of Failed Local Plans. Airport Plan Costs, dramatic Central Government Funding Cuts then like every other council costs related to the pandemic.

Options....

If the council were to rely on just covering all this by Council tax it would mean a rise of over 50% for everybody.

The Council could go down the route of a massive cut in services.

What has actually happened is “borrow at cheaper rates and investment strategy” has been continued from the last administration. Commercial Confidentiality forbids me from saying more at this time.

Cllr Mike Tayler reports: As we are all aware the lockdown is being eased on Saturday and the council is concerned that breaches of guidance may occur particularly around some pubs. I hope that the government and public health England are learning from the Leicester situation, and there is certainly nothing at the moment to suggest that we are facing a local lockdown but I do hope that the council will be given local daily infection rates and whether there are clusters of infection and what the R value is again on a daily basis.

Locally the volunteers are continuing to do magnificent work helping those who are vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19 particularly financial hardship and psychological effects. With Residents coming out of shielding they will no longer be receiving food boxes, and we are aware that some of these people will need continuing support, also concerns about unemployment rising and again there is an increasing risk that there will be additional hardship because of this.

I know a group of us are considering how we can find further financial support for these people.

**19/20.645 REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED  
(see appendix A)**

**19/20.646 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** To **APPROVE** and **DIGITALLY** sign as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on **11<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**19/20.647 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

To **NOTE** the minutes of the finance and assess committee held on the **11<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**19/20.648 THAXTED RANGERS FOOTBALL LICENCE RENEWAL AND PITCH RENOVATIONS.**

To receive a verbal update from the Club.

**RESOLVED** to appoint the Clerk in connection to the expiry of the current licence and the proposed solution for the immediate future to renew the licence for one year.

In connection to grant funding for pitch improvements, the Council are happy to continue to support the Thaxted Rangers regarding any grant funding, this support included the council paying for such improvements upon receipt of grant funds raised by the club to fully cover such expense. In addition to this, the council are willing to make further pitch improvements up to the value of £300 in place of any grants which may have been directly applied for by the rangers to the Parish Council. The Clerk in collaboration with the chairman of the Open Spaces committee and the club shall make arrangements for these works to commence.

**PLANNING**

*During the planning section of any full council meeting, a member/member's of the Neighbourhood Plan delivery group, (if present) will be invited to join the council table for participation, one vote may be cast in accordance to the Committee's terms of reference.*

*To better support the response of planning applications through the Parish Council during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Clerk shall inform all members of applications received, invitation to comment will be presented through email, where all responses will be collated, The Clerk, together with the Chairman of the Planning Committee will formulated the majority response to the District Council Planning Portal. In the event of any new dwelling application, a decision to hold a remote zoom meeting will be made at the discretion of the Chairman of the Council.*

**1) UTT/20/1264/OP**

**PROPOSAL:** Outline planning application with all matters reserved for the erection of up to 3 dwellings

**LOCATION:** Squirrels Croft Bardfield End Green

**RESOLVED** to **OBJECT**

The form of development proposed is considered to be wholly inappropriate for this location and would cause considerable loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.

Planning permission exists for one dwelling on the site. This was deemed to be acceptable by the planning officer on the basis that one dwelling could be placed within the site such that it was not overbearing in relation to neighbouring property. If that was the case however, the same principle cannot be applied to the current proposal which involves three new properties, particularly given that they would be half a storey higher than the previous single dwelling. The proposal fails the tests set out in Local Plan policy GEN2 and, given that it involves backland development, it also fails when considered against H4.

The access is considered unsuitable for three units. In the previous scheme the access arrangements were justified on the basis that Squirrels Croft itself would close its own access and create an exclusive independent access for the new property. It was suggested therefore that there would be no intensification of usage. With three units now using that same driveway that justification is lost. Given that the access is immediately adjacent to the neighbouring bungalow it will have considerable impact on the amenity of the neighbours.

The applicants are keen to point out the deficiency in Uttlesford's land supply and the presumption that that entails. The presumption is however in relation to sustainable development. There is no way that this location could be considered sustainable. The applicants say that it is half a mile from Thaxted. It may be half a mile from the first house on the Bardfield Road approach but it is at least a mile and a quarter from any of Thaxted's facilities that would make a location sustainable (shops/surgery/school).

The development proposed is clearly contrary to Local Plan policy S7. A case is made for it being infill development. Infill development for outlying settlements is dealt with in the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan. It was never intended that policy TX LSC4 should permit three dwellings and this is clearly supported by the accompanying narrative. Driveway presents issues the use of access has been intensified therefore not suitable for development.

## 2) UTT/20/1294/FUL

**PROPOSAL:** Proposed Garage conversion to form new two-bedroom dwelling.

**LOCATION:** Sarnia Cutlers Green

**RESOLVED to OBJECT**

The site is set within the area of Sensitive Rural Setting at shown in the Thaxted Neighborhood Plan. In accordance with policy TX LSC1 development within this area should be limited to agricultural uses, rural recreation or for affordable or special needs housing. This application is for unfettered residential use. We would also be concerned by the proposed car parking arrangement. If this is to be an independent property then it would seem that for two cars to be parked as shown would necessitate either reversing in off the public highway or reversing out.

## 3) UTT/20/1443/HHF

**PROPOSAL:** Construction of detached single garage (renewal of planning permission UTT/16/3423/HHF)

**LOCATION:** Back Lane Cottage Watling Lane

**RESOLVED to OBJECT**

An identical proposal was only recently refused. The applicants have now submitted what is claimed to be a Heritage Statement. This is however wholly inadequate and provides no proper professional assessment of the impact of development on the historic environment. We are principally concerned however, with the consequences of this development for neighbouring properties. There can be no doubt that their amenity would be significantly impacted.

## 4) UTT/20/1205/PAP3

Prior notification of change of use from light industrial to 1 no. dwelling house | Store At Claypits Farm Bardfield Road Thaxted CM6 2LW

**RESOLVED to OBJECT** Whilst this is a notification in relation to permitted development we wish to point out that what is proposed would create a completely unsatisfactory dwelling. The proposed access even with substantial upgrading would not be acceptable to any proposed occupier. We are also concerned over the fact that it is attached to other premises that are retained in B1 use with all of the environmental concerns that naturally follow. There also seems to be a lack of definition as to the extent of the plot that will form the complete residential unit.

## 5) UTT/20/1251/FUL

**PROPOSAL:** Variation of condition 2 (external materials) and condition 3 (landscaping) attached to UTT/17/1869/FUL to allow for approval of these conditions prior to installation/prior to occupation rather than prior to commencement of works

**LOCATION:** Chelmer House Watling Lane

## **RESOLVED to OBJECT**

It is unreasonable and unnecessary to allow for condition 2 (external materials) and 3 (landscaping) to be approved prior to installation/prior to occupation of the works rather than as is the norm, prior to commencement of the works.

Planning permission was granted for this scheme three years ago and expires next month. Ample time has therefor been available to provide these details.

This application should be objected to on the basis that it needs to be understood exactly what the applicant intends to do in respect of landscaping and the external materials they intend to use, before construction starts. Premature commencement of the works, without these details being approved may result in a scheme which jeopardises the integration of the work into the existing setting and could harm the appearance/views of/from the surrounding countryside

### **19/20.649 FINANCE**

**a) To Note and Approve the Councils Gross income, expenditure and EMR balances.**

**b) To review online payment for Approval**

**RESOLVED To DIGITALLY SIGN and APPROVE** the online payments as detailed for approval.

### **19/20.650 INTERNAL AUDIT**

**RESOLVED To APPROVE** the internal Auditor for 2020/21 as Mrs Vicky Waples

### **19/20.651 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED To APPROVE** the upcoming schedule of **DIGITAL** meetings for the remainder of **2020/21**

### **19/20.652 INFORMAL CONSULTATION - FOOTPATH 105 THAXTED, UTTLESFORD DISTRICT DIVERSION**

To Consider Uttlesford District Council's (UDC) Order under Section 257 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to divert Footpath 105 (see attached)

The council deliberated the proposed scheme and are resolved to make no comment on the proposed scheme.

### **19/20.653 CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE CLERK: *The clerks provides a verbal report on the following items:***

**a) Covid-19 post lockdown measures in connection to the following areas:**

Open spaces: we are in a position to open the play park, however, until we receive official recommendations in terms of cleaning schedules and that the responsibility for this can be managed we are unable to commit to a specific date, the clerk and Custodian have an on line training seminar booked for tomorrow which should bring together a fuller picture. The opening of the play park will be advertised on residents facebook sites.

Guildhall: until such time as UDC have had official notification the building shall remain closed.

Public Buildings: all other buildings owned by the Council are to remain closed.

### **19/20.654 CHAIRMAN'S and VICE CHAIRMANS UPDATE**

The Chairman wishes to remind all Thaxted Residents that reporting crime is essential if Thaxted is to have any way forward in front line Policing. Statistically Thaxted is low crime, every criminal matter reported either through 101, or emergency 999 together with anonymous crime reporting tools including a new Chat Line which are easily accessible on line, are all collated in to the national database, this indicator is critical in determining the level of support Thaxted receives in the event of future policing. The Clerk Cannot report crime on the resident's behalf, this is third party hearsay reporting and not something this Council will engage in, neither will this council engage in Facebook remarks in connection to any suspected criminal activity, if as residents you consider that a crime is taking place, the priority is to REMAIN SAFE, and report the incident.

### **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

Future scheduled meets will be advised and remain **September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 via Zoom**

*To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Administration 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.*

**19/20.655 OPEN SPACES AMENITY AREA**

Cllr R Williams Vice Chairman of the Finance and assets committee reports on a meeting held with the Clerks and Chairman's knowledge and consent with a landowner for a portion of land for public use acquisition. **RESOLVED** To and **AGREE** in principle that the Clerk shall continue to find an amicable way forward with all parties and return this matter to the council when further information is available.