

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 23rd APRIL 2020 at 8pm 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, V Knight, R Williams, R Barrington.

Also Present: Dena Ludford (Clerk & RFO)
Richard Haynes NP Delivery Group

1 members of the Public

Uttlesford District Cllr District Foley & Cllr Mike Taylor
Essex County Cllr Simon Walsh

19/20.565 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr David Morgan

19/20.566 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received

19/20.567 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

None Received.

19/20.568 COVID-19 LOCAL RESPONSE REPORTS

See Report attached

Resolved:

To Authorise the Clerk to apply for any grants and provide any support to the Thaxted Community Group and to note the full support of the parish council

19/20.569 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED

Clearly, we are all facing very difficult times, and generally the response of Thaxted people has been superb, with over 400 people volunteering to support the community –Lauren Barham has given a detailed report as how this happening. We are most grateful to her and her team which have grown from nothing at the beginning of the pandemic, to a most efficient organisation. We are most impressed by how this group has liaised with both the communities' team at UDC and the surgery to make sure that all our residents are able to receive help if needed. Both District Councillors have offered some of our New Homes Bonus to support anyone who is suffering undue hardship through lack of provision or help from other quarters. This money is held by The Friends of Thaxted Church, but to be used for this specific purpose. The officers and staff of UDC should be commended for working extremely hard to provide assistance to the many in Uttlesford who are shielded, staying in their own homes or suffering financial or other hardship. Clearly COVID-19 is having a significant impact of UDC's budget, both from reduced income and more significantly in the longer term, the need to produce a sound investment strategy. There has been some help from central government, but ultimately this is unlikely to match the potential hole in the council's finances.

Chairman Signature:

With all this, District Council Business is continuing, and The Uttlesford Draft Local plan will be considered once more during an Extraordinary council meeting on the 30th April 2020 via the zoom platform (see attached Link), whilst the details are still in draft format there is a general perception that the Local plan will be scrapped, these are difficult times and as such, many changes will follow, and, the world is a very different place now as to when the Local plan began, and the Local Plan should, where possible reflect these changes as it emerges.

<https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=159&MId=5554>

19/20.570 REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED

(Report Attached)

The chairman asked when the refuse tips might come back online and reopen to the public, Cllr Walsh responded, we are looking at this very closely and wish to ensure the population, including our teams who run these sites remain protected. Just to give some steer on the complexity we face in achieving this, the weekend before the lockdown we had over 30,000 visits to our sites across Essex. we therefore are looking at ways to provide this service in a coordinated and safe way for all. We are ever mindful that this period has provided us with time to do home projects, which in turn have in many cases created the need to dispose of waste, we anticipate the tips being incredibly busy and this too poses a problem with traffic congestion upon entry points, again, we are actively thinking on solutions.

19/20.571 MINUTES

RESOLVED To **APPROVE** and **Digitally** sign as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on **5th MARCH 2020**

19/20.572 PLANNING

During the planning section of any full council meeting, a member/members 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.

I) UTT/20/0534/HHF	<p>PROPOSAL: Erection of garage (renewal of previously approved application UTT/16/3423/HHF). LOCATION: Back Lane Cottage Watling Lane</p> <p>RESOLVED to Object</p> <p>On the Grounds that this development is overbearing to the rear adjoining bungalow and loss of amenity.</p>
II) UTT/20/0802/OP	<p>PROPOSAL: Outline application with all matters reserved except access and layout for the erection of 1 no. dwelling LOCATION: The Yard Bardfield End Green</p> <p>RESOLVED to UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT</p> <p>The Council have requested that this application be called in, so they may make representation, District Cllr Mike Taylor will Call In this application with UDC.</p>
III) UTT/20/0810/HHF	<p>PROPOSAL: Single storey side porch extension and minor alterations. LOCATION: Greensleeves 37 Bolford Street</p> <p>RESOLVED to make NO COMMENT</p>
IV) UTT/20/0817/HHF	<p>PROPOSAL: Erection of single storey rear extension LOCATION: 18 Burns Way Thaxted</p> <p>RESOLVED to make NO COMMENT</p>

V) UTT/20/0614/OP	<p>PROPOSAL: Outline application for demolition of existing buildings and erection of 14 no. dwellings with all matters reserved except access and layout (alternative scheme to that approved under planning permission UTT/18/0750/OP) LOCATION: Claypits Farm Bardfield Road</p> <p>RESOLVED to OBJECT</p> <p>The access from Bardfield Road is an unsatisfactory arrangement. For a start it falls within the Conservation Area and will significantly alter the character of this corner of it with significant new traffic flows and no doubt, a substantial amount of new road paint. It is also immediately opposite the school which is not only very busy at peak periods but there is also a significant risk (as highlighted by ECC) that large delivery trucks will have to mount the pavement opposite to make the turn into the site. All traffic relating to the houses on the site will then have to pass Claypits Farmhouse a listed building very much altering its currently rural setting. There is also a concern about the large sycamore tree that stands on the island at the junction. It is stated in the supporting arboriculturally statement that there is no TPO on this tree and it is only protected as a result of its location in the Conservation Area. This appears to conflict with the 'My Uttlesford map' which clearly shows it as being protected by way of a TPO. It is stated that this tree will have to be subjected to root pruning to create the necessary junction improvements which must give rise to serious concerns about its future health. There is no mention of branch pruning, but this must be another concern at some stage. In addition to this The Neighbourhood Plan specifically says that the existing cypresses tree screen should be replaced by mature native species planting. The applicant indicates that this 'could' be included in a landscaping scheme to be dealt with as a reserved matter. This should be made a condition of any consent.</p> <p>It is clear that all of these concerns could be removed by an alternative new access over the coach park land owned by the Parish Council. This is in fact, proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council have indicated a willingness to discuss such an arrangement with the applicant, but this offer has not to date been taken up.</p> <p>Consideration must also be given to the effect of changing the newly formalised footpath. The proposed diversion will clearly alter its character from a surrounding rural environment to a hard urban (or at least suburban) environment which will impact on the experience of footpath users. Indeed, even the applicants' own Landscape and Visual Appraisal classifies the impact of change on some elements of the path as high. Clearly, if the footpath was to remain in its current route this would significantly limit the scope for developing the site. The applicants in their Planning Statement (para 5.48) seek to justify the diversion on viability grounds. They say it is 'not possible to design a viable residential development that retains the line of (the) footpath'. They do not however provide any analysis to support this statement. It would no doubt be quite possible to design a scheme which retains the existing route, and a rather better setting for it, albeit with a reduced number of units. Such a scheme would, most likely, still be viable; it is just that the development value of the land would be reduced. It will be appreciated that tests of viability relate to there being a margin of land value over existing use value just sufficient to make a land owner willing to sell for the enhanced use. The fact that the land value is simply reduced is immaterial.</p>
VI) UTT/20/0588/HHF	<p>PROPOSAL: s73a Retrospective application for the erection of a single storey double garage (Revised scheme to approved UTT/14/3209/HHF) LOCATION: South Cottage Dunmow Road</p> <p>RESOLVED to Comment that officers should look to place a restrictive covenant on this application so that no dwelling may be made in future.</p>
VII) UTT/20/0888/HHF	<p>PROPOSAL: New pitched roof to replace existing flat roof to side and additional fenestration. LOCATION: Peggy's Cottage Park Street</p> <p>RESOLVED to SUPPORT</p>

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.

To note the receipt of the first half of the Precept £ 61250

c) **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the **Parish Councils** grant documentation for publication (see Background Papers) to include the amendment: 'up to £350'

19/20.574 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Due to these unprecedented and unique circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the following committee meetings were scheduled to be held in the Month of April 2020 The Parish council has a desire to include a brief report on behalf of the chairman of the following committees:

a) To receive a verbal report from the Chairman on the **OPEN SPACES** Committee.

Cllr Howells reports on the work being achieved by the ground's maintenance crew, who all work individually and in open spaces retaining the social distancing measures at all times.

Jubilee Gardens has been worked and the land rolled, new bench stands have been created and all is looking much better, there is still some evidence of rubble under foot which grass seed alone will not cover, we shall await the summer months and the continuing conversations with the surgery to see if they are wishing to take the hard standing over before we make any firm decisions.

The area in **Margaret Street Gardens** have had a nice new bed created, Planting this isn't priority for now so will be left until such time that this feel appropriate.

Beech Tree Gardens, the Holly needs removal and the Clerk shall request this via Uttlesford, this however is not an Uttlesford priority so will be addressed at a more appropriate time also.

Mosscotts Meadow, the grass has been flail cut and the hedges have all been recut, the cut did reveal that the trees were under attack by wildlife so with the help of some local residents all the young trees have all been protected with little bark shields, this was achieved just before the lock down, as you are aware, we were going to have a wild flower planting day, however this is now cancelled and further plans will be looked at an appropriate time.

Coach park has been beautifully tidied up all the brambles have gone.

The tubs, sadly not going to be able to re plant these in June, they are all being watered by local residents who are able to do so safely.

Dena & I have organised 30 new trees free of charge, for distribution around Thaxted, whilst there may be a delay, once we know the dates, I shall distribute them accordingly.

Cllr Frostick also reports that the ditch along the recreation Ground has been completed to the satisfaction of Hunts charity, the 2 dead trees are to be removed in early May and this is all in hand.

b) To receive a verbal report from the chairman on the **FINANCE AND ASSETS** committee

The clerk has the RBS accounting programme on a separate home laptop provided by the Council, all income and expenses are up to date and payments are being made to suppliers without delay. Year-end fall during this crisis and amendments to this and internal and external audits are being made for all local government bodies to ensure transparency and continued operation.

19/20.575 CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE CLERK: *The clerks provide a verbal report on the following items:*

RESOLVED To and **APPROVE** an appropriate action in connection to the works requested by Gigaclear at the location marked, Cutlers Green (see Background papers) to ensure the ditch remains clear. Insist this is part of the provision.

19/20.576 TOILET REFURBISHMENT

The Chairman reports that once more this project has landed firmly in his Lap, with experience the Logistics and operations of such a project, this is being moved forward and contractors will make a start tidying up the gents to begin

Chairman Signature:

with in the near future. The Council thank the chairman for taking this forward and greatly appreciate his experience in these matters.

19/20.577 CHAIRMAN'S and VICE CHAIRMANS UPDATE

Whilst there is nothing specific to report, the Chairman asks that all councillors remain mindful of their public position and should anyone require information or guidance regarding code of conduct issues please address this directly to the Clerk.

There is no need to hold an Annual Council Meeting and as such, should this be the desire of this council The Chairman and Vice Chairman positions will remain unchanged, including all committees. Cllr I Stewart requests to remove himself from representation of the Thaxted Society, Cllr Ralph Barrington takes on this role in his place.

It was **RESOLVED** to keep the council unchanged for 2020/2021 year.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: TBA

In accordance with the latest COVID-19 Government Advice; The scheduled ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING will now not take place for 2020/2021