

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
THURSDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2020 at 8pm in the Guildhall**

Present: Councillors: T Frostick (Chairman), A Frater (Vice Chairman), J Spencer, A Howells, V Knight, R Barrington, A Wattebot, I Stewart, D Morgan, R Williams

Also Present: Dena Ludford (Clerk & RFO)
7 member of the Public

19/20.565 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

County Cllr Simon Walsh

19/20.566 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None Received

19/20.567 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

A public query was made in connection to the finances and the new payment being received by the Kebab van. And to ask the Clerk why the handyman was not paid in January, the Clerk Responded to say that The handyperson didn't work every Friday over the Christmas and new Year period and would therefore add those worked to his February invoice.

19/20.568 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PARISH OF THAXTED

See attached

Cllr Tayler mentioned the ongoing problems at Copthall lane, the sign is now in place and despite this a 44 tonne lorry full of bricks got wedged at 7am this morning. The lorry driver had noticed the sign and then decided to take verbal instructions from a pedestrian; one other vehicle hadn't noticed the sign. The suggestion is that a width restriction gate be installed beyond the houses. The Chairman responds to this frustrating consequence, and asks that the Clerk to bring together interested parties to seek a resolution to this ongoing issue all Councillor agreed.

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

See Attached

19/20.570 MINUTES

RESOLVED To **APPROVE** and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th January 2020

19/20.571 COMMITTEE MINUTES

To **NOTE** as a correct record the minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee meeting held on 10th December 2019
To **NOTE** as a correct record the minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee meeting held on 21st November 2019

19/20.572 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.

a. UTT/19/3165/FUL

PROPOSAL: Proposed single storey residential development and associated infrastructure to erect 9 no. bungalows.

LOCATION: Land To The East Of Dunmow Road

RESOLVED to **OBJECT** with the following comments

The planning Inspector's previous key issues were that there would be a significant encroachment of built form into the open countryside which would extend well beyond the settlement boundaries and that the proposals would not constitute sustainable development as they would harm a designated Heritage Asset. The change from houses to bungalows would make no difference to the Inspectors conclusions.

With the now made Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan as such its policies together with those of the existing Local Plan (2005) form part of Uttlesford's Development Plan.

Chairman Signature:

The site is outside the village development limits and is therefore contrary to Policy S3 of the Local Plan. It is also contrary to Policy S7 - Protection of the Countryside.

The location of this site renders development contrary to Neighbourhood Plan Policy TXLSC1 as it would have a harmful impact on the Liz Lake view lines 20 and 25 as indicated on map 8 of the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan. This policy states that any development in a sensitive area should be restricted to agriculture, rural recreation or affordable or special needs housing.

Development of this site would cause harm to the character and appearance of this unspoilt entry into Thaxted. Although only partially in the Thaxted Conservation Area (TCA) the development would significantly impact on the listed Totmans Farmhouse opposite the proposed site entrance and also the setting of the TCA itself. Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan's Heritage Evidence prepared by Grover Lewis Associates emphasises that development of this site would have a direct and significant impact on the southern entry into Thaxted and jeopardise the very high degree of inter-visibility between the TCA and its countryside setting.

The site boundary hedges that the applicant's state will screen the development are irrelevant since they have no specific designation and could be grubbed up prior to development.

b. UTT/19/3166/FUL

PROPOSAL: Proposed residential development and associated infrastructure to erect 8 no. dwellings.

LOCATION: Land South Of Bardfield Road/East Of Claypits Villas.

RESOLVED to OBJECT with the following comments

The site is outside the village development limits and is therefore contrary to Policy S3 of the Local Plan, it is also contrary to Policy S7 - Protection of the Countryside. The Neighbourhood Plan has now been adopted and therefore its policies should be adhered to in collaboration to the Local Plan.

The location of this site renders development contrary to Neighbourhood Plan Policy TXLSC1 as it is within the area of Thaxted's sensitive rural setting (see Map 7). This policy states that any development in a sensitive area should be restricted to agriculture, rural recreation or affordable or special needs housing. Also it would be argued that the It would appear that the adjoining site (which was granted planning permission last year but on which construction has not started) and this site have been arbitrarily split which would appear is simply to avoid the need to provide affordable housing. Both sites are owned by the same landowner. This attempt to circumvent Uttlesford's planning requirements for affordable housing (the two sites would provide 17 housing units in total), should be taken into consideration when balancing the perceived benefits of these proposals against the harmful impact of breaching Development Plan policies.

c. UTT/20/0030/FUL UTT/20/0031/ & UTT/20/0031/LB

PROPOSAL: Demolition of part of existing garage and extension to existing garage, and change of use to separate residential dwelling

LOCATION: Cranberry Cottage 24 Newbiggen Street

RESOLVED to OBJECT with the following comments

The Design and Access and Heritage statement says that the net internal area will be 43 sq. m.. Having measured it We suspect that in fact it will only be about 34.4 sq. m. which is less than the national minimum standard for a single person dwelling (about 37sq.m.). It also says that the amenity area is 'fair and proportionate'. We Note that there is NO amenity area rending this statement un-factual.

The loss of garaging from the Parish Councils perspective is a real principle issue. The Design statement says there is a free car-park round the corner, this Free Car Park is not within the gift of the developer and therefore cannot be offered by way of compensation to the substantial loss the removal of the Garage will without question create. This is even more significant in that it is an aspiration of the Neighbourhood Plan that car parking in Newbiggen Street shall be reduced. The Design statement says that the existing garage is not capable of accommodating cars. This is simply is not factual given the misleading measurement on the Existing Floor Plan of 2.73 for the building's depth. In fact it's actually about 3.3 metres which is ample for a medium size car. The door width then is 4.6 metres, enough space to park two cars.

The other thing of course is that conversion to residential would alter the character of the Conservation Area (historically Vicarage Lane was a row of workshops associated with the weaving industry) and Cranberry Cottage is listed. This would again alter the character of the listed building and its setting.

d. UTT/20/0093/HHF

PROPOSAL: Conversion of garage to accommodation

LOCATION: Apple House 57 Magdalen Green

RESOLVED to **MAKE NO COMMENT**

e. UTT/20/0016/FUL

PROPOSAL: Proposed 1 no. new dwelling

LOCATION: Mill Hill Farmhouse Cutlers Green

RESOLVED to **OBJECT** with the following comments

This application is an additional property to that contained in application UTT/18/1686/FUL and Thaxted Parish Council wish to bring this clearly to the planners attention as a hamlet style development in this area is clearly unacceptable. This application is Contrary to Policy S7 sustainability and is a considerable distance to all local amenities with no local bus routes or paths to support this development.

19/20.573 FINANCE

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

b) To review online payment for Approval

Councillors Agreed to **SIGN** and **APPROVE** the online payments as detailed for approval.

19/20.574 INTERNAL AUDIT

To receive the findings from the interim internal audit, and to follow the recommendations contained within. The recommendation to bring the notice of conclusion of audit to full council as a separate agenda item.

19/20.575 NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT

RESOLVED To **NOTE** the Publication of the notice of the conclusion of audit of Thaxted Parish Council for the annual governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2019. And thank the clerk for receiving an unqualified audit for this period.

19/20.576 QUALITY STATUS

To Note the council has achieved Quality Status, the assessors report is available upon request. To Note that the recommendations in connection to our Thaxted.co.uk website have now been completed and are Accessibility compliant. The clerk is congratulated on her hard work , due diligence and effort in obtaining this award.

19/20.577 ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

RESOLVED To Note and **APPROVE** the draft accessibility statement in accordance to: The regulations of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

19/20.578 MEMORIAL BOARDS EMR FUNDS

a) **RESOLVED** To **APPROVE** that the Clerk and Chairman of the Thaxted Branch of the Royal British Legion be granted delegated authority to spend monies from the EMR Memorial board account to facilitate remedial repairs/works to the existing memorial Board.

b) **RESOLVED** To reaffirm that the Clerk in future under **DELEGATED POWERS OF AUTHORITY** may authorise works directly connected to the Existing Memorial Board, in accordance with budgetary allowances and the Councils financial regulations.

19/20.579 ALLOTMENTS

Whilst the Council are empathetic to this there is no desire to install a gate or fence in a rural area, the council has suggested that those who use the allotments mark in indelible ink all items that remain on site and to consider speaking to the rural engagement team for additional advice and support. Cllr Barrington is happy to coordinate such a meeting.

19/20.580 ST JOHN AMBULANCE CHARITY SHOP

RESOLVED to **APPROVAL** of a non-transferrable licence to provide gate access and so that improvements can be made to the fire evacuation procedures, all legal and physical works are at the expense of St John Ambulance. The Clerk is to progress this matter directly and bring back findings to this meeting.

19/20.581 WORKING GROUP REPORTS

To receive an update from the following working groups to include the latest meetings dates discussion points and considered activities.

- I. Library working group
Whilst there is nothing to report, there is another meeting which we are waiting to arrange Date to follow.
- II. Prevention of Crime working group
- III. Cllr R Barrington attended the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner's meeting at Saffron Waldon on 23 January. The PFC Commissioner, Roger Hirst, spoke, about his role and the increases in Police officer numbers achieved in 2019 and those in the 'pipeline' for 2020. Cllr Barrington also attended a meeting on Unauthorised Encampments held in Dunmow on 5 February. The meeting was organised by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) and was very well attended. The main speaker was Sgt Paul Downes of the Essex Police Rural Engagement Team, supported by Steve Andrews from the ECC's CountyWide Traveller Unit. The Essex Police Rural Engagement Team and the CountyWide Traveller Unit work very closely together so that a call to one is effectively a call to both; where site visits are necessary the police Rural Engagement Team and the CountyWide Traveller Unit will normally attend together. A helpful briefing note was issued to those attending and will be copied to Councillors. This refers to police powers in section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and National Police Chiefs Council Guidance intended to ensure that all police forces take a similar approach to Unauthorised Encampments. Cllr Barrington has downloaded more comprehensive guidance from the Home Office Gypsy and Traveller Unit which will be available if needed.
- IV. CLT Update from the Clerk, The Clerk has now met with a fellow Clerk who's already set up with a CLT Board and members with properties and ongoing tenants, from this informative meeting, the Clerk is now clear on the order of actions.
Board Members are to be appointed in the interim, today we can conclude that the following have agreed to form the CLT Board and paperwork can now be drawn up in accordance to this: the start-up Board members are: Cllr David Morgan, Cllr Ian Stewart, Cllr Jon Spencer, Cllr Terry Frostick with the Secretary appointed as Dena Ludford. Following on from the set up of the board, we await the financial conduct Authority's approval, after which, members may be considered going forward. The Clerk is in the process of creating documentation to support the CLT including declaration of interests and code of conduct. More to follow, including community engagement and individual meetings with interested parties.
- V. **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the newly Established working group for Moscotts Meadow formally known as Thatcher's Grange Wildlife Meadow area, Cllr Alison Howells will steer this working group , bringing additional members to this group to support this newly created area as required.

19/20.582 TOILET REFERB

To Note the Clerk has applied to the PFCC Essex Police For a grant to secure funding to continue with this project

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

To receive a verbal report from the chairman on council activities including attendances and code of conduct.

Other matters the chairman discussed were:

The Chairman asks Cllr Williams if anything has moved forward regarding the footpath at Wainsford villas to Cophthall lane? Cllr Williams reports that although he has been unwell is now happy to take this matter in hand and report back at the next meeting. The Clerk wishes to ensure that safety must take priority and if possible approaching residents in tandem must be considered.

Chairman Signature:

The Chairman wishes to talk about the Tubs, for some reason the two tubs from the bullring were moved to outside the Guildhall, I think Cllr Howells has a suggestion to move one tub from outside the CIC and one tub from the bottom with the same logo back to the Bullring. It is therefore Resolved that two tubs are to be replaced at the Bullring, there is some discussion around the colour of the badges in order to match. The Council were in favour of this and Cllr Howells and the Clerk are instructed to continue this work.

To note a letter of thanks from the Christmas tree committee in connection to the ongoing help and support offered by the Parish Council, in particular, the contribution to the insurance premiums which the parish have been able to cover in full.

To note the hearing of the licencing committee which we are invited to attend will take place on 24th February at 10:30, should anyone wish to attend and represent the council they may, however our points will be noted during this hearing and carried forward for consideration.

And I've also suggested that you highlight the land at jubilee gardens that we are waiting for a change of season to address the obvious grass area defects and we ask that parishioners remain patient in this approach

GDPR – for all CLLR's is now available as on line training delivered by the EALC, We believe this should be compulsory to all councillors and those who have not already received formal training from their employer are asked to attend this, the Clerk will compile a list and coordinate accordingly, for record those exempt from this are The Clerk, The Chairman and Vice Chairman, Cllr Victoria Knight and Cllr Ian Stewart as they have already had GDPR training.

To reiterate that NO councillor should be in possession of any Keys pertaining to the any Council property or open spaces of This Council, unless duly authorised by the clerk and in accordance with our key control policy.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING Thursday 5th March 2020 at 8pm