



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Felsted & Stebbing Ward
District Councillors John Evans & Richard Silcock



DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT: JULY 2024

Please find attached below our monthly Report to the Parish Council.

THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – A FURTHER UPDATE

As we reported last month, there has been some delay brought about to the timetable for the Local Plan because of the period of General Election purdah. We now repeat for readers' benefit the current timetable and anticipated subsequent programme with revised important dates/events:

- Local Plan Panel papers / Reg 19 Plan published **Friday 5 July**
- Local Plan Panel (moved from 2 July) to **Monday 15 July**.
- Cabinet (moved from 11 July) to **Thursday 18 July**
- Full Council (moved from 16 July) to **Tuesday 30 July**

Assuming Council approved the Regulation 19 Plan, consultation upon it would commence on 8th August and run for a 8 week period (greater than the regulation period of 6 weeks, to allow for Summer Holidays).

So, it will be on 30th July that Council will decide whether or not to proceed with the latest draft ie Regulation 19 Local Plan, and then after consultation, together with accompanying evidence base of course, to agree to its submission to The Planning Inspectorate to begin the formal process of Local Plan examination, culminating in its Examination in Public in the course of 2025.

We will be in a position to report when you next meet in September on the outcome of Council's decision on 30 July and the impact for the District, going forward.

GRANTS & AWARDS

We have touched upon this subject in our last two monthly Reports and in particular as to potential sources of funding for community use/benefit. We are not sure as to what extent applications have been made to the funding available through MAG/Stansted Airport, but as a new funding window has opened on 1 July, we hasten to bring it to your attention as it closes on **11 August**.

Stansted Airport community funding exists in two forms with a view to benefiting the local community through charitable actions through two categories of funding: the Stansted Airport Passenger Community Fund and the Stansted Airport Community Trust. Last year, 100 local community group initiatives were funded to the extent of some £ 140,000 and there may be several clubs, societies or groups within the Parish which might wish for some additional detail and hopefully consider the suitability of one of their possible projects for grant eligibility.

The Stansted Airport Passenger Community Fund

The Stansted Airport Passenger Community Fund donates money to local causes within a 20-mile radius of the airport. The money donated by the committee is raised from the unwanted foreign currency of passengers and staff, which is collected in the terminal. Consideration is given to requests from sports clubs, pre-schools and nurseries, junior sports clubs, Brownies, Guides, clubs and other local charities.

For further information and to request an application form, email Sandra_king@stanstedairport.com.

And

The Stansted Airport Community Fund

The Stansted Airport Community Fund is dedicated to bringing lasting benefit to those areas most affected by the airport's operations. It forms part of our Community Engagement programme, committed to minimising the impact that airport operations have on surrounding communities, and offers grants to groups within an approximate 10-mile radius of the airport.

All applications for a grant from the Community Fund are assessed by an independent Committee, which is made up of local councillors stakeholders and airport representatives. These members bring local knowledge to the Community Fund, ensuring the money is used to the maximum benefit of the community. The airport has committed an annual contribution of £150,000 to our Community Fund until 2029 and this is topped up with any fines for noisy or off track aircraft.

If any further information about the Community Fund is required, contact should be made at community@stanstedairport.com. More information about the funding criteria and to

make an application may be made [here](#). The funding schedule and relevant dates are here:



Stansted Airport Community Fund 2024-25 Funding Schedule				
	Flagship Award			
	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Application Window	1 st April – 12 th May	1 st July – 11 th August	1 st October – 10 th November	6 th January 2024 – 16 th February 2024
Internal Review	13 th May – 19 th May	12 th August – 18 th August	11 th November – 24 th November	17 th February 2024 – 23 rd February 2024
Funding Committee Review	20 th May – 7 th June	19 th August – 8 th September	25 th November – 13 th December	24 th February – 9 th March
Committee Meeting	12 th June	11 th September	18 th December	12 th March
Award Notification	W/c 24 th June	W/c 23 rd September	W/c 6 th January	W/c 24 th March

Community Fund Committee Meetings:

Wednesday 12th June:
 Wednesday 11th September:
 Wednesday 18th December:
 Wednesday 12th March
 All meeting 10am – 1pm at Enterprise House

WASTE STRATEGY

We have touched upon this subject when reporting earlier on the year about the disruption experienced in the refuse service. That was a very disappointing episode but in this context, the future for waste handling extends not only to an improvement of service delivery (in way of increased numbers of vehicles in the refuse fleet and the recruitment of additional drivers and loaders, which we have previously described), but also to significant changes ahead for waste handling and recycling.

Essex County Council has a legal duty to maintain a joint strategy, acting together with the boroughs and district councils, for the management of waste. The relevant joint body is the Essex Waste Partnership (EWP) which prepared a draft Waste Strategy for public consultation in 2023. Over the consultation period, it might be surprising to learn that in excess of 4,500 individual consultation responses were received made up of over 16,000 inputs, revealing a considerable degree of interest from the community in this subject.

In consequence, a detailed Waste Strategy for Essex **2024-2054** is proposed for adoption and which contain the following headline provisions/aims, as expressed by EWP:

- We will ensure that all residents have access to recycling services for plastic, paper, card, metal, glass and garden waste by 2026
- We will ensure that all residents have access to food waste recycling collections by 2027
- We will ensure that all residents have access to recycling services for plastic film by 2030

- We will stop using landfill by 2035
- We will reuse, recycle or compost 65% of waste by 2035 with an ambition to achieve 70% or more
- We will halve the amount of residual waste per person to 110 kg per year by 2050
- We will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to achieving net zero by 2050

Multi-generational living and an ageing population may also impact both waste collection and the types of waste generated in the County. Overall, the population in Essex is forecast to grow by **125,000 to 1.6 million by 2030**. Although we need to recycle more, we also need to address the problem that we create too much waste. The proportion of waste recycled in the County has increased from **21%** in 2001 to around **50%** currently but still in 2023, over **343,000 tons** of waste was sent to landfill. A significant change of public perceptions and attitude towards recycling is needed to protect the environment and conserve resources and at Uttlesford, we shall be actively working towards improvements in this area. As Councillors, we do receive briefings from the relevant officers concerning such matters and it is firm Council policy to improve our recycling outcomes in line with the EWP.

We shall continue to keep you advised of those improvements.

ESSEX LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY – IMPORTANT CONSULTATION AHEAD

Essex County Council and the Essex Nature Partnership have been working on the development of the draft Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), with public consultation on the strategy when published which is currently anticipated as due to run for eight weeks commencing **29 July**. It is presently being reviewed as a draft by the various District and Borough Councils in the County.

The role of the LNRS is to provide a county-wide, practical solution to driving action for nature recovery on the ground. Essex County Council is the Responsible Authority for the Greater Essex LNRS. The primary purpose of the LNRS is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. It will identify where new habitats can be created, such as woodlands, grasslands, freshwater areas, river buffers, coastal and marine zones, and urban habitats. Opportunity maps highlight these areas and suggest actions for nature recovery within them. These actions will help connect and expand important natural areas. The Essex LNRS provides guidance for organizations and individuals on where to focus their efforts, what actions to take, and how to incentivize these actions to achieve nature recovery.

The Essex LNRS will identify the top 10 biodiversity priorities for Essex, two of which will be:

1. To create networks of bigger, better, more connected habitats.
2. To have green and blue habitats covering 25% of the county by 2030, with an ambition to achieve 30%, compared to 14% coverage today

Maps will be created through a data-driven analysis process to show all potential areas for biodiversity creation, indicating where efforts will be most beneficial for nature and the wider environment, including the expansion of existing habitats. These opportunity maps will look to (among other matters):

- Create 18,000 hectares of new woodland across Essex
- Create 22,000 hectares of new grassland across Essex
- Create 3,100 hectares of new habitats in urban areas in Essex

This county wide strategy could have huge positive and coordinated impacts in Uttlesford, through development, planning, and habitat enhancement and creation initiatives, and some of these aspects will already be anticipated in the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

We shall be grateful to receive your support to reach as many residents in the Parish as possible, to encourage engagement in the public consultation when it comes about. We shall provide a further update and suggestions in this regard as soon as we can.

Meanwhile, this is a set of FAQ's which we think will make essential reading, pending publication of the consultation draft. It addresses issues of potential relevance to all interests, not only residents, but also landowners, farmers and developers since it will be "plugged in" to the planning (and thus land use) system as a requirement under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act and NPPF.

[FAQ - The Essex Local Nature Partnership \(essexnaturepartnership.co.uk\)](http://essexnaturepartnership.co.uk)

GAMBLING AND LICENSING

This is not a topic which we have reported upon previously but we now mention it as gambling is a matter of concern to many given sometimes its adverse effect upon certain community members. UDC is consulting on a revised statement of principles to set out how it will carry out its duties as required under the Gambling Act 2005. It must review its Statement of Licensing Principles every 3 years and the process includes a statutory public consultation. As a Licensing Authority for the Gambling Act 2005, Uttlesford District Council is permitted to regulate the following within the district:

- Premises licences including provisional statements, variations, transfers and reviews for premises including casinos, bingo, betting, adult gaming centres and family entertainment centres.
- Permits for gambling activities such as gaming machines, prize gaming and unlicensed family entertainment centres.
- Registrations such as small society lotteries.

The Statement of Principles sets out how the council will administer and monitor applications made in accordance with the Act, and how it expects applicants to operate reasonably consistently with the Licensing Objectives:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder, or being used to support crime.
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

UDC welcomes comments via Email: licensing@uttlesford.gov.uk on the latest Statement of Licensing Principles and the consultation will close on **Monday 12 August 2024**:

[Draft Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 Policy for 2025-28 \(PDF\) \[771KB\]](#)

SUPPORT OF YOUR PLANNING COMMITTEE

Given the significance accorded by you to the proper consideration of planning applications made in the Parish by members of your Planning Committee, supported by your Assistant Clerk, we have felt able to bring to its attention from time to time updates in planning law or policy, Decisions of the UDC Planning Committee or by PINS, on appeal therefrom or under section 62A Procedure, which might be thought to be of assistance to its work.

Additionally, we ourselves undertake mandatory training in the planning field which are conducted by UDC Planning Officers and by external speakers (including members of the Bar). We consider that such a programme of continuing further education is beneficial and assists us the better to continue our support of the Parish Council in its work. John further attends lectures and seminars conducted by Members of Barristers' Chambers on evolving and recent planning law, including one given this past Monday on last month's decision in the Supreme Court on nutrient neutrality (potentially relevant if a potential development the adverse effect of which could affect a watercourse) and a further Court of Appeal decision given last week on the Habitats Regulations (potentially relevant since the Parish lies within the RAMSAR area of Essex coastal protection).

These matters might appear arcane but the political climate is one which might change as regards encouragement of development, depending on the outcome of the Election later this week, and it is important to be aware of policies which might emerge to the extent that they could potentially impact our local work.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

We receive periodical advice from the UDC Planning Enforcement Officers of development alleged to be undertaken in breach of planning policy or conditions with our Ward. This information is provided to us in confidence on the basis that it is by way of first advice of an alleged breach being investigated. We mention this practice so as to advise and reassure Members that there are instances of this type of work being undertaken "behind the scenes" even though it might not be immediately possible to disclose details of it to the wider community, pending conclusion of the investigations.

If there are instances of suspected planning breach which concern Members or residents, we shall be pleased to look into them and give what support we can to UDC officers in order to conduct their investigations.

UDC CHAMBER AND MEETINGS – ATTENDANCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As you will be aware, many Members' meetings when held in open session (as typically is the case) in the UDC Chamber in Saffron Walden are broadcast live and available to be viewed at viewers' convenience at

a later date. Such meetings of course include Council, but also for example, meetings of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee, Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and Audit Committee, to name but a few. The visual quality of the broadcasts and the audio standard/acoustics within the Chamber for the benefit of members of the public in attendance has on occasion been poor, which was attributable to the age (15 + years) of the audio/visual equipment. This equipment has now been replaced and it will be possible for viewing and audio recording of Members' business to be seen and heard more clearly and for some, possibly "enjoyably" in future!

A number of members of the Parish Council have in recent times attended meetings convened at the UDC Depot in Little Canfield (the former banana ripening factory) where good meeting room facilities now exist. The same audio visual equipment as now deployed in Saffron Walden is also installed in Little Canfield and so it will be possible to hold more meetings there in future, enabling Parish Councils and residents from the south of the District to attend there perhaps more conveniently to them than would be the case for meetings held only at Saffron Walden as in the past.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' AND CONSTITUENTS' SURGERY

We will be holding our usual monthly surgery this month at 1730 at URC Village Hall and look forward to meeting residents without first making any appointment.

We are always, of course, pleased to meet up elsewhere, by appointment as required, with any resident who wishes to discuss a matter of concern or indeed anything we have commented upon in our Monthly Reports.

If any resident would like to receive a personal copy of our Monthly Reports, we shall be pleased to send one directly to them by e mail.

Finally, we remain very happy to consider requests for financial support, utilising our Members' Initiative Grant as appropriate and which can be made available to community groups for suitable purposes.

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