



District Councillor Monthly Report

Lawford, Manningtree & Mistley

January 2021

Happy New Year!

Let's hope that 2021 will (in time) be a much better year for us all than 2020.

Coronavirus Update

As you will all be aware by now, the Tier Status relating to our area changed again on the 26th December. Tendring District, along with the rest of the East of England is now firmly in Tier 4. I hope as many of you as possible made the best of our 'Day of Freedom', on Christmas Day, whilst still in Tier 2.

However I know that many of our more vulnerable residents chose not to take the risk of family contact and of course many of our relatives were already living in higher tier areas and were unable to visit relatives living here.

So, our care and caution must remain. The vaccine programme is being progressed, but clearly it will take many months before the majority of the population has been immunised, even accounting for the approval of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. We must continue to heed the medical advice regarding Social Distancing, Mask Wearing and Hand Washing.

Additional COVID-19 Business Grant Support

Further financial support for businesses is available in Tendring, with businesses and pub landlords encouraged to apply.

The **Local Restrictions Support Grant Version (open) version 2** provides funding for businesses that have remained open but are being impacted by Tendring being in Tier 2 following the period of national restrictions that ended in early December.

Further government guidance about this scheme will be published shortly.

Additionally, a one-off grant of £1,000 is available for each wet-led pub (a pub that cannot run as a restaurant or otherwise serve food), where a pub that has been able to remain open which can demonstrate that they derive less than

50% of their income from food sales – or, where the pub had to remain closed from 2 December following the period of national lockdown.

Applications for the Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs grants are now open at www.tendringdc.gov.uk/coronavirus and business owners have until **31st January 2021 to apply.**

Tendring District Council (TDC) is working its way through a high number of applications made under earlier phases of grant schemes, with the aim of making payments to eligible businesses shortly.

Community Groups Receive Grants to Support COVID-19 Work

Grants totalling more than £30,000 have been paid out to help feed people in Tendring. Tendring District Council (TDC) received £30,389 from the government's Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies Fund, via Essex County Council (ECC).

Five community groups were supported with grants, while money was also used for food shopping vouchers which can be redeemed by struggling families.

The grant was split in the following way:

- Tendring Eldercare - £6,000
- Jaywick Resource Centre - £4,000
- Harwich Helps - £4,000
- Community Voluntary Services Tendring - £5,000
- Local food banks - £3,000 (split between Tendring food banks)
- Food shopping vouchers - £8,390

Lynda McWilliams, TDC Cabinet Member for Partnerships, thanked the community groups for their work. “During lockdown our Tendring Shield helpline called on these groups, and others, to put together emergency food supplies while residents were waiting for government food parcels, or if they could not access online shopping,” Cllr McWilliams said.

“In order to support these groups and maintain our strong partnership with them, it is right this funding goes to them to cover costs already incurred or future support. Both our Shield helpline and many community groups are still working hard to support residents in Tendring, including the 8,500 Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people who are being told to stay at home at the moment.”

The food shopping vouchers are held by TDC, but if they go unused will be donated to local food banks.

The **Shield helpline** can be contacted on **01255 686700.**

Census - 2021

Households across Tendring will be asked to take part in Census 2021 this spring.

The census, run by the Office for National Statistics, is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every ten years since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

Understanding the needs of the nation helps everyone from central government to organisations, such as Tendring District and Essex County councils and health authorities, plan and fund public services across England and Wales. Census outputs inform where billions of pounds of public funding needs to be spent on services like transport, education and health, including cycle routes, schools GP and dental surgeries.

Information from the census is also important in helping lots of other people and organisations do their work.

Charities and voluntary organisations often use it as evidence to get funding. It helps businesses to understand their customers and, for example, decide where to open new shops. Plus those doing research, like university students and people looking into their family history, use census data. It provides important information on population diversity, allowing organisations to know whether they are meeting their responsibilities and triggering action where necessary.

Census 2021 will be the first run *predominantly* online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets. **However, there will be plenty of support available for people who are not confident with online services, or have no access to the Internet.**

Lynda McWilliams, Tendring District Council Cabinet Member for Partnerships, encouraged everyone to take part when Census Day came around.

“The Census is a really fascinating piece of work, as well as being of vital importance to us all,” Cllr McWilliams said.

“Data from the Census guide authorities, such as Tendring District Council, for the next ten years around shaping services – for example, knowing what sort of work people do, where people live, and building up a holistic picture of the area.

“It means we know where to best invest our spending, as well as providing an insight into life in 2021.”

“The census provides a unique snapshot of our communities,” Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at Office for National Statistics, added. “It benefits everyone. Based on the information you give, it ensures millions of pounds are

invested in emergency services, mental health care, school places, hospital beds, houses, roads, GPs' and dentists' services.

“No-one should miss out. Everyone can complete the Census online with a new search-as-you-type ability and **paper forms for those who need them.**”

Census day will be on **March 21**, with households receiving letters early that month with online codes explaining how they can take part. The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

The last census, held in 2011, revealed:

- 138,048 people lived in Tendring, including 5,195 students
- 39,610 residents were retired
- Just over 2,800 people worked as care workers and home carers
- 1,177 people worked as cleaners and domestics
- There were 392 chefs
- There were 200 bricklayers and masons
- 33,702 residents used a car or van to drive to work, although just over 6,400 Tendring residents, at that time, (11.6%) worked from home
- Tendring was made up of 192 different ethnicities
- Other than the UK, Ireland was the top country of birth, with Polish the most common language other than English or Welsh, spoken by 436 people
- There were 83 households with 8 or more people
- 505 people said they were Jedi Knights (Is that helpful...??)

Planning for next year's Budget

The outline budget for Tendring District Council (TDC) next year was discussed at Cabinet on the 18 December, as part of an initial review.

Approved by senior councillors, the plans will now be scrutinised by an overview and scrutiny committee, before final Budget proposals are voted on by Cabinet, and then full council, in February.

In line with the council's ten-year financial plan, which the authority is currently in its fifth year of, **an average council tax rise of £5 is proposed. This would increase the TDC share of a Band D property's council tax from £172.64 to £177.64.**

The extra income to the council will help to balance the books, especially as we recover from the impact of Covid-19. It also supports TDC being self-sufficient as Government continues to phase out grant funding, although it

has now been confirmed there will be a general grant of just over £400,000 to the council for next year alone.

A forecast deficit will be met by the forecast risk fund, as per the ten-year plan.

Carlo Guglielmi, TDC's Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources, said the budget would continue to deliver for local residents.

"Despite the uncertainty we face at the moment due to the pandemic – both in terms of health and economy – due to our prudent approach in previous years we remain in a stable position," Cllr Guglielmi said.

"Five years ago we embarked upon our ten-year financial plan, to move us away from reliance upon funding from Whitehall and being self-sufficient as a council. I am gladdened that halfway on this journey we are still on track.

Although there are some cost pressures on the council and risks such as cliff stabilisation works at Holland-on-Sea, TDC has also seen some increased income – including potentially £115,000 in recycling credits due to the authority's new waste service.

Recycling Rate increased

Figures from the first year of the new waste service has confirmed a 10% rise in recycling rates across Tendring.

Last year Tendring District Council (TDC) launched a new waste collection service, moving the majority of homes from weekly pick-ups of unlimited black bags to fortnightly collection of a wheeled bin.

The roll-out of the new service was completed by the end of August 2019, and data is now available to compare September 2018 to August 2019, with the same period 2019-20.

Overall the recycling rate across the district has increased by 10%, to 40.4%, with black bag waste (non-recycled to landfill) down by almost 5,000 tonnes (15%).

Food waste collections increased by more than 2,000 tonnes (76% increase year-on-year), while garden waste (a paid-for service) is up one-fifth and bottle bank recycling was also up three-fifths.

Whilst it's good news that recycling in the district has significantly increased, we are still purchasing goods wrapped in materials which are then collected by TDC as waste and recycled, if at all possible. In addition the extra 2,000 tonnes of waste food collected for recycling is great.....but potentially represents a tremendous over purchase of food.

This all continues to result in significant carbon emissions from increased lorry movements and recycling processes.

If at all possible can we all reduce our 'purchased waste' during 2021?

Local Plan

After examining stage one of the Tendring District Local Plan for three years, the Planning Inspector has finally decided that our “Plan is Sound” and the council has received the confirmation letter to that effect.

The plan now has to be approved initially by the Local Plan and Policy Committee at its meeting on the **11th January**, then ratified by Full Council at their meeting on the **26th January**. I confidently anticipate that the plan will be fully approved at both meetings!

Once fully ratified our Annual Housing Figure will revert back to 550 dwellings, from the current Government Annual Figure of 1,100.

Some developers have been able to gain planning approvals in the district because we were unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply (on changed Government figures). Once the plan is ratified we can demonstrate a 6.5 year housing supply. This is extremely important.

Tendring District Council can now progress stage two of the Local Plan. Much of the work on this section has already been completed and could go to Public Consultation as early as March 2021.

The Local Plan will be in place until 2033, but will have to be reviewed every five years.

Although the Approved Local Plan will provide additional protection to parishes, any Parish Council wishing to develop a Neighbourhood Plan can seek advice from the TDC Planning Department.

Garden Community

Tendring District Council, working with Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council has secured £99,000,000 of Government funding for a link road also servicing the anticipated Garden Community on the Tendring and Colchester border.

Carlo is TDC’s lead representative on the Tendring Colchester Border (TCB) Steering Group, whose main aim, besides driving this project forward, is to engage with local communities in a more meaningful way than the now dismantled North Essex Garden Community previously did.

A Communication and Engagement Strategy will be launched in the New Year which will set out the method and principles which the Council will follow in engaging with local Stakeholders, as well as the wider audience.

A Development Planning Document (DPD) is currently being worked on which will be the early discussion instrument to shape this new venture.

Planning

(1) *Anchor Public House, Mistley* – Change of use. I have ‘called-in’ the application which is awaiting the Planning Committee Agenda date.

Separate to this application Mistley Parish Council successfully requested that the public house be classified as an Asset of Community Value.

(2) *Land East of New Road, Mistley* - Variation of condition 13 of the approved application. I have ‘called-in’ the application which was awaiting the Planning Committee Agenda date. However, the applicant Carla Homes, has withdrawn the application.

Legally, the developer is at liberty to continue with the construction of the new homes. However, until Condition 13 is complied with and discharged, no home can be sold.

I understand that the applicant has stated their intention to submit a revised application.

We have received representations from nearby residents regarding construction traffic using New Road as their parking area. We have reported this to TDC’s Assistant Director for Planning, who has instructed the Enforcement team to make sure that this unauthorised practice stops forthwith. This will be closely monitored in the New Year when work recommences.

(3) *Land East of Long Road, Mistley* – The construction of a Health Centre, Car Parking and a new Access Road. I have ‘called-in’ the application which is awaiting the Planning Committee Agenda Date.

Whilst we agree that a new Health Centre is required, it is our view that land should be found near to the existing Riverside Surgery and the Commercial Centre of Manningtree. This is essential to care for current patients and for the continued viability of Manningtree Town.

(4) *2 High Street, Manningtree* – Change of use to Dwelling. Carlo has ‘called-in’ the application which is awaiting the Planning Committee Agenda date. The Listed Building Application side of the application has now been withdrawn by the applicant.....? It is unclear at this time, if this LBC referred to the approved or pending applications.

(5) *High Street, Mistley* – Groundworks for the construction of 48 apartments.

The latest update I have regarding the closed footway is dated 1st December. The Strategic Development Engineer has informed me that:

“... the Structure Team at Essex County Highways state that the contractor/ applicant for the site has submitted their proposals to structures and it is currently awaiting technical approval. They are still going through and checking the technical aspect for the retaining wall, and at the moment they can’t say when technical approval will be granted. Obviously, until this is resolved the work cannot be programmed and the closure of the footway has to remain in place.”

There is no further update on this situation from the above. I will again pursue this towards the middle of January. As soon as we have further information this will be passed to Parish Councils.

(6) *Land South of Harwich Road, Lawford* - Erection of a Flexible Electricity Generation Facility with associated ancillary infrastructure, access and boundary treatment.

This application is of great concern to neighbouring residents. Carlo has 'called-in' the application which is awaiting the Planning Committee Agenda Date.

(7) *Mistley Place Park* - On the 7th December McCarthy & Stone (providers of Retirement Homes) gave a presentation to Mistley Parish Council and myself regarding their ambitions for a development at this location.

Although they are yet to submit a planning application, the company has already held an on-site Public Consultation exercise and intends to conduct a further virtual consultation in the near future.

Their suggested ambition is to build a selection of 52 apartments and bungalows, together with 41 parking places on approximately 10% of the land. A proportion of the remaining land to be retained by the present owners and the remaining land gifted to the Parish Council.

This proposal, when the details are finalised, will require extremely close scrutiny by Parish and District Councils and it is essential that the public are able to have their say.

We await the submission of their planning application, which is anticipated in February.

(8) *Riverside Fish and Chips, Lawford Industrial Estate* - At their last meeting the Planning Committee approved the Retrospective Planning Application for the construction of three flats over the hot food retail premises.

Although the applicant had certain Permitted Development Rights, which had already been exercised, the relevant application for the additional dwellings had not been completed prior to the commencement of further development.

The application was 'called-in' to Planning Committee and Carlo spoke against the application, due to safety, over development, there being no provision of or reasonable access to recreational or amenity space....and the fact that this is an Industrial Estate! Bizarrely this was approved as a majority decision.

If every holder of an industrial unit on this site sought the same development opportunity it could result in an additional 300 residential units (on an industrial estate) and only a compulsory financial contribution of £125 each towards Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) which deals with wildlife, and absolutely nothing towards Education, Health,

Open Space, Affordable Housing, or Highways improvement, nor would there be any requirement to provide private amenity space.... not even a balcony.

Watch this space for further applications above industrial premises.....!

(9) *Shore Lane (Bradfield)* - Planning Application for Change of Use from Agricultural to a 120 Pitch Campsite between each period, 1st April – 1st October.

Although the location of this field is in Bradfield, it abuts the newly extended AONB section between Mistley and Wrabness, is in the Coastal Protection Belt and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Carlo, Val and I, whilst understanding the need for farming diversification, consider this application if approved, would have potentially negative impacts on the special nature of this area.

Considering the number of requested pitches, the hundreds of visitors, dogs and motor vehicles this concentrated would attract and the close proximity of this field to this unique area of biodiversity and foreshore, causes us serious concerns. These concerns are in addition to the safety issues regarding highway access to the site....

Furze Hill – Conservation Area

We have asked the District Council Planning Managers about the process of reviewing the boundary of the Furze Hill Conservation Area

At present the conservation area boundary does not encompass all of the area, and does not include some areas of forestation and some sites of historical interest. We believe this is important as there is now the encroaching development at River Reach which is in the process of construction.

Early indications are that the Conservation Area can be reviewed outside of the Local Plan. However, a formal review would need to be carried out by a professional body (usually Essex Place Services), and if changes were recommended an application would have to be made to the relevant Ministry via Historic England.

The TDC Heritage Strategy does recommend that periodic reviews of Conservation Areas should be conducted, but only those which are under the greatest pressure.

There is nothing to lose in carrying out a review and I'm sure that Mistley Parish will support us in pursuing this.

Flats – Stourview Avenue Estate

Following concerns expressed regarding the condition of communal areas and Health and Safety issues, I requested the TDC Housing Department to carry out unscheduled checks on these buildings.

Visits to all seven blocks have now been completed and several unacceptable items were found stored in many of the communal areas. These have now been removed and letters have been written to tenants. Follow up visits have also been carried out.

Tendring District Council still owns approximately 80% of the flats. The remaining number are privately owned, having been purchased under the 'Right-to-Buy' scheme.

Kind Regards
Alan Coley – District Councillor

District Report on Behalf of:
Alan Coley, Carlo Guglielmi & Val Guglielmi

1st January 2021

In an emergency which requires TDC's assistance residents can contact the council's Control Centre on 01255 222022, available 24/7.

General Information: If anyone witnesses any fly tipping occurring, please contact TDC's Waste Management Team on 01255 686768.