

# TDC Update – Manningtree – April 2016

## **CASH COMMITMENT OF £164,000 TO SUPERFAST BROADBAND**

A significant cash commitment of £164,000 is being pumped into helping to provide superfast broadband to all homes and businesses across Tendring.

The money from Tendring District Council (TDC) will contribute towards a fibre extension project in the area.

The funding will be given to Superfast Essex to help deliver the upgrade - and will actually result in a potential investment of £600,000 plus in the District.

TDC's Cabinet agreed the financial contribution at their meeting on Friday (March 19) and it will come from its business investment growth budget.

Tom Howard, Cabinet Member for Finance, Transformation and Broadband, said the aspiration is to increase superfast broadband to as close to 100 per cent as is practically viable.

“This investment will give us the ability to have a much stronger influence on where the money is invested in order to make sure that it supports our communities with greatest need,” he added.

“I welcome the fact that we may be able to use further gainshare money to improve our coverage, and a further report will be produced detailing the potential contributions that may be required from this Council for further improvements.”

Cllr Howard said he looks forward to forthcoming reports which will show how it is possible to move to 100 percent superfast broadband coverage in Tendring.

He added that it is also important for TDC to explore alternative options with other suppliers – and not simply assume that Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) and Openreach is the only option available.

“All of that said, the BDUK path with gainshare money from BT is a great opportunity and we need to seize this before the money is gone,” said Cllr Howard.

It offers good leverage for our investment, is perhaps the only opportunity for a generation, and we must make the very most of it before it disappears.”

TDC Leader Neil Stock is to write to MPs Douglas Carswell and Bernard Jenkin calling for their support for 100 per cent superfast broadband for Tendring.

## **STEP NEARER TO A LOCAL PLAN FOR TENDRING**

A major step forward has been taken towards coming up with a Local Plan for Tendring which will shape housing and economic growth in the area over the next 17 years.

Housing numbers have been identified for various towns and villages and the next stage will be for the preferred options of individual sites going out to public consultation.

Tendring District Council's (TDC) Local Plan Committee discussed the issue at a meeting on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April in front of a large audience at Clacton's Princes Theatre.

**The overall number of homes required was agreed at 9,974** at a rate of 550 properties per year or 10,924 if that figure needs to rise to 600 per year, for the period from April 2015 to March 2032.

The supply of homes for various areas across the District was also approved.

Neil Stock, TDC Leader and Chairman of the Local Plan Committee, thanked all those who took part in the meeting.

"This is a very emotive subject and of course everyone has their own ideas and is seeking different outcomes," he said.

"However, there was a three hour debate with speakers from the public and parish councils and I am grateful for all the input.

"The important thing is that we are now able to move on to the next stage and the timetable has not been delayed.

"It is vital that we get our Local Plan in place – one which stands up to scrutiny – so that this issue is decided locally and not imposed on us from above.

"Having the plan in place will also stop the developer free for all that we are currently experiencing and which is not good for anyone other than the developers and landowners."

Cllr Stock said that the document will continue to be a moving feast until the stage is reached where it is put before a Government inspector and tested.

"There will be changes along the way as sites are approved – either by the Council or on appeal - and others drop out. But due to the decisions made last night we can make progress towards the end goal without further delay," he added.

The figures agreed include 1,164 homes for the Colchester Fringe; 2,780 for Clacton; 819 for the Harwich area; 367 for Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross; **520 for Manningtree, Mistley and Lawford**; 133 for Little Clacton and 100 each for Brightlingsea, Great Bentley and Thorpe; and 1,000 windfall sites.

The number for Weeley is 304 at 550 properties per year and 1,411 at 600 per year.

## **GEARING UP FOR TOUR DE TENDRING**

Four cycle rides are being staged over the next four weeks to help people gear up for the Tour de Tendring.

The rides – which are all on a Sunday – will increase in length each time to prepare for the 20-mile distance in the main event on May 15.

They will head off from Dovercourt Bay Lifestyles in Low Road at 2pm on April 17, **April 24, May 1 and May 8.**

The rides will be led by experienced cyclist Diane Warner and places are limited so those wanting to take part are advised to book quickly. Participants need to turn up with their own bike which should be in good working order. There will be checks and registration at 1.45pm.

The Tour de Tendring one of the biggest events on Tendring's calendar and so far more than 200 riders have already signed-up.

That figure is expected to increase significantly over the coming weeks – with a large turnout on the day depending on the weather

The event, which is run by Bike Events in partnership with Tendring District Council, attracts riders from all round the area and also pulls in others from further afield.

There are three distances to suit all aspirations starting with the family six miles, going up to 20 miles and then a 60-miler.

The team behind the tour are busy putting together all the arrangement for the attractions provided at the start and finish at Dovercourt Bay Lifestyles (DBL).

The start time for the two longer distances is between 8.30am and 9.30am, while those heading off on the six miles will depart between 9.30am and 10.30am.

All cyclists finish at DBL in Low Road where the entertainment will be laid on throughout the day.

For more information about the weekly rides and to book a place contact Diane Warner on 07908748247 or email [warnerdi59@gmail.com](mailto:warnerdi59@gmail.com)

For further information about the event and to sign up for the Tour de Tendring visit [www.bike-events.com](http://www.bike-events.com)

## **COUNCIL EXTENDS PERIOD OF REGISTRATION FOR 2016/17 PARKING PERMITS**

Residents across Tendring are being given an extra two weeks to register for their popular free householder parking permits due to demand.

Staff at Tendring District Council (TDC) are continuing to work non-stop to keep up with requests - and have dealt with 15,000 already.

**Last year's permit expired on March 31 and two weeks grace was given for the changeover.**

**Now the Council has decided to move that back to the end of April to cope with the sheer numbers.**

Nick Turner, TDC's Cabinet Member for Coast Protection and Seafronts, said that the Council is keen to ensure that no one is concerned about registering in time.

"It just goes to show how popular these free parking permits are that so many people are keen to get one," he said.

"We appreciate that some residents have experienced difficulties due to the volume of calls we are receiving and also getting through on the website.

"Staff are still working flat out and we have pulled in staff from other jobs to deal with the registrations.

"Once again we apologise for any frustration people have experienced. That is why we are extending the life of the old permits until April 30 so that residents do not worry that they are running out of time."

Residents can also pick up a form from Clacton Town Hall, TDC's Pier Avenue Offices or Planning Reception at Weeley and the registration will be done for them provided they supply their Council Tax account number.

They will receive a call back to confirm the process has been completed.

All Council Tax paying households within Tendring can register for the virtual permits which can be used at all TDC-run car park sites (except the Naze and Holland Haven) from 11am onwards.

They are valid from April 1, 2016 until March 31, 2017 – excluding **July** and **August**.

This year householders can apply for a permit for a second car at a minimal cost of £20 for the year.

Car owners from outside Tendring can also apply for a permit at the cost of £50 offering them the same advantages as residents.

## **CONCERNS OVER FUTURE FIRE SERVICE COVER IN PARTS OF TENDRING**

Serious concerns have been raised over future fire service cover for parts of Tendring.

Essex Fire Service is currently looking at three options which will save £10 million as it bids to reduce its annual budget by £7 million a year.

It is out to consultation and Tendring District Council (TDC) is worried that none of the options put forward are acceptable as they stand.

The Council's Cabinet endorsed a response to meet the consultation deadline of April 25.

It stated that: "The Council is not convinced that sufficient evidence has been provided that any of the three options would provide adequate cover in some parts of Tendring and that none of the options could be supported until it can be proven that the necessary recruitment for on-call coverage can take place."

**The Cabinet also pointed to fears from residents over the potential withdrawal of the Pinzgauer appliance, a smaller engine which is used to get into narrow streets in Manningtree and Mistley.**

**The appliance is also used to tackle blazes on farmland and is essential for rural communities.**

The Cabinet is keen to see the Fire Service gain access to all schools to carry out preventative work with schoolchildren as a small number have missed out.

It is also making it clear it embraces and supports the ethos of all emergency services exploring ways of working together.

Carlo Guglielmi, TDC's Cabinet Member for Asset Management and Corporate Services, said he was concerned about both Dovercourt and Manningtree Stations.

"There are not enough staff to cover at the present time and several measures are being looked at to increase the number of on-call firefighters," he added.

"They are looking at a new quick response unit and training staff currently carrying out admin duties. However, these are only in the pipeline and at an embryonic stage.

"One option seems to be preferred to others but I am very concerned to support anything that will leave parts of our District without enough cover.

**"It is also imperative that the Pinzgauer is replaced with a like for like appliance, given the nature of our location"**

***(As well as the TDC Cabinet Response, a formal objection regarding the potential loss of the Pinzgauer appliance from Manningtree was made by Alan Coley and Carlo Guglielmi – we presume MTC responded to the consultation and also objected)***

## **MAJOR DEVELOPMENT FOR MISTLEY GETS GREEN LIGHT**

An agricultural field on the outskirts of Mistley looks set to be developed for up to 135 homes.

Welbeck Strategic Land's proposal for the site south of Harwich Road was unanimously approved by Tendring District Council's (TDC) Planning Committee at a meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> April.

The nine hectare site lies outside the existing settlement development boundary but is proposed for inclusion in the new Local Plan to go out for consultation later this year.

The outline application includes allotments; children's play area; footways and structural landscaping; footpath and cycleway and a new access.

As part of the scheme the developer has set aside a plot which could be used as a new healthcare facility if required.

Gary Guiver, TDC's Acting Planning Development Manager, said a number of issues needed to be considered.

"These include the impact the extra traffic would have on the A137 and around the railway bridge crossing at Manningtree," he said.

"There is also the special habitat for birds at the Stour Estuary which although some distance away still needs to be taken into account. Natural England has raised no objection but the RSPB has objected."

Mr Guiver added that it is a very open cultivated site and a good landscaping scheme would need to be provided as part of the detailed layout for the development.

TDC received 25 letters of objection to the proposal and Mistley Parish Council also opposed it.

The Parish Council is concerned it would have a negative impact on a rural area and would also result in joining up part of the green gap between Mistley and Mistley Heath.

It also raised the issue of the extra traffic, although there were no objections from Essex County Council as the highway authority subject to conditions being imposed.

Amanda Woolmer, Headteacher at Mistley Norman Church of England Primary supported the application as there is capacity at the school to cope with the increase in pupils.

The plans were approved by seven votes to nil subject to a legal agreement being completed within six months to cover on site affordable housing; a contribution to health and education and a transfer of open space and allotments.

***(Some traffic calming along Trinity Road and Brook Street may have to be considered to dissuade motorists from the development taking a short cut to the railway station).***

## Events in the year:

- Clacton Airshow – This unique airshow took place again last August. This show is now one of the most successful held in the country. It had a record number of visitors which brought significant revenue into the district. Planning for this year's show is already well advanced.
- Travellers – Lawford and Manningtree saw minor illegal incursions of travellers on several occasions through the summer of 2015. Tendring District Council has established practices in place to apply legal 'Requirement to Leave' orders. Whilst these were successful, these incidents divert officer time and cost considerable sums of taxpayers' money on the clear up.
- Tesco Site – The former Tesco site in Station Road (Lawford and Manningtree) was eventually sold to Rose Builders. The District Council Planners will be working with the new owners in order to agree a development project for the land. It is envisaged that this will be a mixed use development, potentially providing a small number of dwellings, retail units and car parking. However at this time no decisions have been made.
- Dog Chipping - TDC have provided a free 'Dog Chipping' service throughout the year in preparation for the new legislation which came into force this month. Hundreds of dog owners across the district have taken advantage of this service.
- Council Tax – Tendring District Council, in common with the other Essex Authorities, was forced to increase council tax in order to address some of the shortfall in Government Grant.
- Black Rubbish Sacks – In order to save money after a reduction in grant, TDC reluctantly ended the free supply of plastic refuse sacks to households.
- Food Waste – A separate and specific grant was given to TDC to supply free food waste caddy liners for a year. This is an attempt to encourage the recycling of food waste which has seriously declined over the last couple of years.
- Crime – Non-Domestic burglaries and Retail Thefts were unfortunately high in number during the year. Some retailers were repeat victims on two or three occasions. It was seen by many as a result of the closure of Mistley Police Station and the withdrawal of local policing resources. It is extremely regrettable that after a continuous period of 162 years there are now no police officers stationed in Manningtree, Mistley or Lawford.
- Security – Town Councillors and District Councillors have been working closely with local traders and Careline Managers, in order to find inexpensive security solutions. Great progress is being made.

- Council Review – Tendring Councillors have initiated review of the council to be conducted by the Boundary Commission. It is anticipated that ward areas will change and there will be a reduction in the number of councillors.
- District Council Members – The political make up of councillors has changed since the election last year. Two new groups have been formed and there have been two resignations to date, resulting in two by-elections.

Alan Coley & Carlo Guglielmi