

District Councillor Monthly Report

Lawford, Manningtree & Mistley

August / September 2020

Acorn Village

As we all know Acorn Village Charity is a fantastic asset in our community, providing dedicated day-to-day support to its residents and others within the local community who have learning disabilities. It is also a significant employer in the Three Parishes.

Acorn Village heavily depends on the income from its public-facing enterprises, such as its shops and tea rooms. Despite accessing the available Government grants available, the Coronavirus Epidemic and the connected restrictions, has resulted in a severe financial strain. This has been threatening their ability to provide its normal services in the future.

You are most likely aware that all District Councillors were allocated £1,000 as an emergency fund to allocate in areas of immediate need, resulting from the Coronavirus Pandemic. Carlo, Val and I decided to pool this sum and provide Acorn Village with the cumulative £3,000.00. We are assured that this provide some urgent and positive support during a very difficult time for them.

COVID 19 Support Etc.

Although we all welcome the lifting of some restrictions, the District Council continues to provide local support to the most vulnerable people in our district. Many council staff are still diverted from their normal tasks to provide this vital support.

You will be aware from reports in the media that there has been a spike in COVID 19 (Coronavirus) cases in Harwich and Clacton. The District Council emergency team is working with identified groups in those areas. The good news is that since the 4th August to today (9th August) there have been just two new reported cases in the district.

However, please do not be complacent. I know the sun is shining, our beaches are inviting, and some pubs and restaurants are open. Although these are positive signs

do please continue to exercise social distancing, wear a mask where you must and where it's appropriate to do so, and wash your hands regularly.

Council Business

The District Councillors have still not been able to meet collectively and in public for some time. The next scheduled Full Council Meeting is due to be held on the 15th September. However, as advice and restrictions seem to change by the hour, we wait for further guidance nearer the time.

Many of our normal council committee meetings are now held remotely and in accordance with emergency legislation. This is far from ideal and is no permanent substitute for all meetings, many of which should still be held collectively and in public. However, this is the best we can achieve at this time.

You can listen in to these committee meetings by accessing through the TDC website.

Planning

(1) Anchor Public House (20/00662/FUL)

The owner of the Anchor Public House in Mistley has submitted a planning application for a change of use from a Public House status to Residential. The intention being to convert the existing building to two residential units.

Mistley Parish Council Planning Committee has decided that they will object to this application. Their objection has been registered on the District Council Planning Portal.

Mistley Parish Clerk has formally asked me to 'call-in' the application, in order that it is not subject to the Delegated Powers Decision process. I have 'called-in' the application as requested.

(2) Lawford C of E Primary School (20/01000/CMTR)

It is proposed to extend the school to provide eight classrooms, a library, two SEN rooms, a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), associated parking, cycle provision etc.

This is a much-needed major extension to the school. In the period of consultation your District Councillors submitted supporting reports. After all, its difficult to constantly complain about the lack of educational facilities in the area, and then fail to support the plan to provide more educational facilities in the area!

(3) Land South of Long Road Lawford (20/00782/OUT)

An Outline Planning Application has been submitted to provide up to a further 76 dwellings to the Lawford Green site, which is already under construction.

Mistley Parish Council (Planning Committee) has submitted an objection and the application is yet to appear on Lawford Parish Council Planning Committee's agenda. I have suggested that Mistley Parish Council discusses the situation with Lawford Council, in whose parish the development is proposed.

It is likely, due to the size of the proposal, that the application will in any event be heard by the Planning Committee.

(4) Additional Single or Pair of Dwellings

- 69 Hungerdown Lane, Lawford (20/00978/FUL) – Single Dwelling
- 55 Harwich Road, Lawford (20/00935/OUT) – Single Dwelling
- 59 Harwich Road, Lawford (20/00810/OUT) – Single Dwelling
- 58 Harwich Road, Lawford (20/00687/OUT) – Single Dwelling
- 83 Hungerdown Lane, Lawford (20/00658/LUEX) – Mobile Home
- Crossways, Wignall Street, Lawford (20/00768/FUL) – Two Dwellings

All the above for the consideration of Lawford Parish Council

(5) Crown Building – (Former Secret Bunker) Mistley (20/00648/FUL)

An application to vary conditions 2,4 & 5 of the original appeal approved application. To amend approved details.

I have asked the TDC Planners how the constructed building or buildings differ from the approved plans. I await a response.

(6) Government White Paper - Planning

The Government has now released its white paper on planning. More details will be given to councillors next week during a Full Members' Briefing.

The initial Government information (Planning for the Future) is attached in a PDF document.

Local Government Reform

The Government is shortly to publish a white paper entitled Devolution and Recovery, which will focus heavily on Local Government Reform. This is potentially going to have a fundamental effect on Tendring District. It is clear that the Coronavirus Pandemic has changed the thinking about how essential services and support should be locally provided in England.

The Government has asked Chief Executives and Council Leaders about how the structure of Local Government can be reformed. It is clear from those early discussions that the current multi-tiered structure is considered not fit for purpose.

In Essex we have a population fast approaching two million. We also have one of the most complex local government structures in the UK – one county council, 12 district councils (some of which are borough or city councils), two unitary councils and hundreds of Parish and Town Councils.

It is anticipated that there will be a period of public consultation after the white paper is released. The earliest it is anticipated any changes being implemented is in two to three years' time.

Anti-Social Behaviour & Criminal Damage

There continue to be incidents of ASB in all of our parishes. However, it has been good to see the Police in evidence as I travel around.

Manningtree High School has suffered serious incidents of Criminal Damage. This totally mindless vandalism is undermining the school's efforts to open and welcome new pupils in September.

These suspects are local, and they are destroying the fabric of our community school and making the environment unsafe for our children. If you have any information regarding the people responsible, please contact the police.

Alan Coley – District Councillor

09 August 2020

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

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.