



## UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Felsted & Stebbing Ward

District Councillors Sandi Merifield & John Evans



### DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT: FEBRUARY 2023

Cllrs. Sandi Merifield and John Evans are pleased to present their Monthly Report to the Parish Council.

This Report is much shorter than our previous editions but nonetheless, we hope that it will contain references to some activities and progress in Uttlesford which will be of general interest to Members and residents. The report does not contain exclusively Parish specific information but nonetheless provides a means to be kept up to date of the wider District wide picture and useful in that sense.

#### STANSTED – NORTHSIDE – EMPLOYMENT SITE

Last week, UDC's Planning Committee granted planning permission for a large new brown-field business park located at Northside, which is the area once occupied by the former Terminal Building and satellite buildings lying to the northwest of the airfield, adjacent to the long term parking facilities. It is a 150 acre/62 hectare site and will provide 200,000 square metres of new business space and being right on major communications corridors will attract many companies in the distribution and storage sectors. Importantly, thousands of local jobs will be created, in both the construction phase and the long term.

This is good news both for employment opportunities and also for the district generally in the context of the Local Plan since (like it or not) Government Policy requires Uttlesford to find places for new jobs as well as to match the housing numbers that they demand councils approve. As Portfolio Holder, John spoke at the Committee Meeting, being supportive of bringing back into use this underused brown-field site.

Now that the site has been approved, UDC is continuing to work with the pension and investment fund developer to ensure that, in addition to distribution and logistics buildings, sufficient space will also be provided for small start-up and incubator businesses; and to make sure it is a quality development which meets required infrastructure, environmental and other planning obligations.

Since this is likely to be the largest application of its type in the District for many years, residents might be interested to read more of the background to the application which will be found here:

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- UDC Planning Committee presentation of the proposals  
[https://publicaccess.uttlesford.gov.uk/online-applications/files/F74AE305D67F0D29256BB52EA3305208/pdf/UTT\\_22\\_0434\\_OP-COMMITTEE\\_PRESENTATION-3994422.pdf](https://publicaccess.uttlesford.gov.uk/online-applications/files/F74AE305D67F0D29256BB52EA3305208/pdf/UTT_22_0434_OP-COMMITTEE_PRESENTATION-3994422.pdf)
- Site summary and planning officers report from UDC Planning Committee meeting:  
<https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s30992/Northside%20draft%2016.01.2023%202.pdf>
- Planning Application (UTT/22/0434/OP) on the UDC website:  
<https://publicaccess.uttlesford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=R7AHSSQN01O00>

### **RURAL LIVING - COST OF LIVING SURVEY**

A further survey is being consulted upon and while these might not always appear of immediate significance to us, in these times of economic hardship, we think it is important that we make the community aware of a Cost of Living Rural Household Survey which is now underway.

The **Rural Services Network** in partnership with the **Citizens Advice Rural Issues Group** has launched this Survey, since independent research commissioned last year shows rural areas are suffering more acutely from the cost-of-living crisis compared to urban areas. To lend more weight to the argument for more funding for rural areas the purpose of the survey is to understand more about rural household budgets and specific pressures. Access to the survey can be made at:

[The survey can be accessed through this link](#)

At the risk of repeating this entry, but we think it bears repetition given the very difficult economic conditions being faced by many, we would like to commend again the UDC website which itself contains a number (11) of points of reference and advice to those who might be in need of cost of living support. It is updated as further elements of support become available or are changed. In addition to the practical measures and other advice given by UDC, we continue to support the excellent work of *Citizens Advice*. The UDC link is here:

[Cost of living support - Uttlesford District Council](#)

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### **MEMBERS' INITIATIVE FUNDS**

We have been able to use our Members' Initiative funding in this municipal year covering requests made to us both from both Felsted and Stebbing and as anticipated in our last Report, the following is a list of the sectors of the Communities to whom funds have been allocated/their purpose this year.

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Parish Council	Large capacity enclosed public litter bin to be located inside the main play area, benefitting all who use the play area by making it a cleaner/ safer environment.
Local Charity	Providing weekly family activities, warm space, children's meal and refreshments for parents /carer.
Primary Education	Contribution towards creation of wellbeing/memorial garden
Parish Council	Contribution towards adult gym equipment
Uttlesford Charity	Fuel poverty
Uttlesford Charity	Food Poverty

Requests for support arising in the next municipal year can of course be submitted to those Councillors who will be elected at the Election on 4 May 2023.

### **UTTLESFORD - BUSINESS AWARDS**

It may be that many local businesses are not fully aware of the existence of **Uttlesford Business Awards**, which aim to recognise innovation and excellence within Uttlesford, so we take this opportunity of giving it some additional prominence.

The scheme covers a wide range of industries and businesses across our district, its purpose being to acknowledge and encourage entrepreneurship. The Parish Council as well as residents and the candidates themselves of course are invited to enter or nominate businesses and individuals who deserve to be noticed for their approach to business.

There are 12 awards available to be awarded across 3 categories, further details of each award are found in the following link together with the required criteria for entry. The closing date for entries is **Sunday 19 February 2023**.

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## [The Uttlesford Business Awards - Uttlesford for business](#)

The categories/topics are wide-ranging and include the following head lines/themes:

### **ENTERPRISE Uttlesford**

Recognising entrepreneurs and the people behind the business

- >> Innovation Business
- >> Uttlesford Rising Star
- >> Online Business
- >> Community Impact

### **GO GREEN Uttlesford**

Awarding innovative sustainability solutions within business

- >> Environmental Impact
- >> Reduction of single use plastic
- >> Energy Saving
- >> Green Construction

### **SHOWCASE Uttlesford**

Identifying businesses that encompass our heritage and culture

- >> Made in Uttlesford
- >> Taste of Uttlesford
- >> Retailer of the Year
- >> Health & Beauty

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS GENERALLY**

Relatively few members of the public, perhaps very understandably, have the chance to attend Uttlesford Council or Committee meetings in person but we remind all that the business of Council and Committees is now accessible via remote link via ZOOM and which we would encourage residents to view as opportunity presents itself.

Additionally, in terms of accountability, residents might like to know that Cabinet members periodically are asked to appear before members of the Scrutiny Committee to describe the work of officers and of themselves and to provide answers to pending questions reported upon.

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The most recent Scrutiny Committee meeting was held on 31<sup>st</sup> January and a link to the business before it and to the zoom recording is found here:

[Agenda for Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 31st January, 2023, 7.00 pm - Modern Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/agenda-for-scrutiny-committee-on-tuesday-31st-january-2023-7.00-pm)

The topics covered in the evening included reference to the draft UDC Budget for 2023/2024 and also the improvement actions taken to date, and yet to be completed, in relation to the work of the Planning department – so there is a lot of information to be derived from these papers and the meeting itself which we think will be of value to many.

### **RECYCLING FACILITIES**

Residents might not yet have come across a “Service Announcement” issued by Essex County Council relating to the requirement of pre-booking for access to the recycling facilities operated by them. Further details are to be found here:

<https://www.lovesessex.org/news-and-ideas/essex-recycling-centre-booking-system/>

From Monday 13 March 2023, residents visiting Essex County Council (ECC) recycling centres will need to book in advance and while this is said to be a trial arrangement, having been trialled at the Rayleigh Recycling Centre, residents might have views as to whether it is necessary or suitable in our area. Residents will be able to book their slots in advance from Monday 27 February.

These trials are said to be “effective in smoothing the pattern of demand across operating hours and reducing queues and congestion both in and around the sites”. We wonder however if making access to the centres more difficult might lead a greater degree of fly-tipping on our rural quiet roads than ever. Perhaps responses to the trial arrangement will be appropriate in due course. Meanwhile, if residents wished to make a direct response, they might wish to know that the ECC Cabinet member responsible (Waste Reduction and Recycling) for introducing the new scheme is Cllr Malcolm Buckley whose e mail is [cllr.malcolm.buckley@essex.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.malcolm.buckley@essex.gov.uk) .

### **PLANNING – NATIONAL POLICY MATTERS GENERALLY**

We are pleased to accept the invitation of your Planning Sub-Committee to join members at their next meeting to review and discuss the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill. For cross reference to our last Report, the relevant links to some of the matters under review are found here and in particular the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy>

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together with a mark-up of the current NPPF showing the proposed amendments to it:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1126647/NPPF July 2021 - showing proposed changes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126647/NPPF_July_2021_-_showing_proposed_changes.pdf)

### **OUR ASSISTANCE**

Of course, we are always incredibly happy to hear from any parish councillors and residents and very pleased to meet them, whether at our Surgery meeting held in the URC prior to your monthly meeting or otherwise, should there be anything they think we can help with or answer any questions.

Cllr Sandi Merifield

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Cllr John Evans

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