

COUNCILLOR DERYK EKE, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT AND STANSTED AIRPORT

COUNCIL REPORT, 21 JULY

Infrastructure –

I attended a meeting of the NEPP Joint Parking Committee on 25th June and still chasing final approval of funding for expansion of Stansted car parks.

The easing of parking restrictions due to Covid 19 have been withdrawn and full restrictions reinstated as of 6th July.

Government made funding available to make walking and cycling in towns and cities easier post lockdown as a boost to local businesses. However the implementation of walking and cycle paths across Uttlesford remains outstanding.

In contrast, a new guidance document issued by the DOT gives a number of measures under the heading “Reallocating road space” to facilitate cycling such as:

- Reducing speed limits: 20mph speed limits are being more widely adopted as an appropriate speed limit for residential roads, and many through streets in built-up areas. 20mph limits alone will not be sufficient to meet the needs of active travel, but in association with other measures, reducing the speed limit can provide a more attractive and safer environment for walking and cycling.
- Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones: restricting access for motor vehicles at certain times (or at all times) to specific streets, or networks of streets, particularly town centres and high streets. This will enable active travel but also social distancing in places where people are likely to gather.

I have written on several occasions to ECC requesting action and to provide a breakdown of the funding from central government and where this money has been spent in Uttlesford.

Disappointingly, at a meeting with ECC Highways and the SW County Councillor on 7th July, it was confirmed the funding is focussed on the main urban areas in Essex and not on Uttlesford!

In addition it was confirmed that no capital funding is available for cycling schemes in Uttlesford, mainly because in ECC’s view, in rural areas there would be too little usage of these facilities. However there is no evidence that ECC could provide to back this up. This issue will be pursued vigorously.

Transport – A further meeting of the Uttlesford Transport Forum was held on 29th June by Zoom.

ECC are submitting a bid to the DFT Rural Mobility Fund to set up and pilot a demand responsive minibus service in central Essex. Following input to a meeting I attended held in February, the pilot scheme area now includes a large portion of rural Uttlesford and hence I have issued a letter supporting the bid.

On 29th June I attended the first Transport East Portfolio Holders meeting. This is a group representing Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk County and District Councils with the aim of developing transport strategies together with delivery and investment plans for our region.

Stansted Airport – The consultation on Future Airspace at Stansted Airport is on-going with various Focus Groups representing stakeholders such as general public, elected representatives, business, aviation, consultative bodies and national organisations taking part. There have been several meetings of the Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG), attended by myself via zoom, to review the process and provide constructive comment

The airport has now finished Step 1B – Design Principles, after completing engagement with local communities and other stakeholders for this first stage, they have submitted the proposed Design Principles to the industry regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) for review. The Design Principles report and all accompanying appendices can be viewed on the CAA's dedicated airspace change portal.

At a recent meeting of STACC the airport management team gave an update of the restart of flying operations, the plan being to get to 40% of last year's levels by Oct 2020, mostly from Ryanair.

Currently Ryanair, Easy Jet, Pegasus and Turkish airlines are some of the carriers who have re-started operations and early indications are they have load factors in excess of 70%.