



**Cold Norton's Annual Parish Meeting
Held at 8 pm on Wednesday 9th April 2014
At Cold Norton Village Hall**

THOSE PRESENT: Parish Councillors:
Mr J Archer (also a District Councillor)
Mrs S Garnham
Mr S Rivers (Chairman)
Mr P Wakeling

Mrs. P. Channer, County Councillor
Ms S White, District Councillor
PCSO Mick Youd
PCSO Sofia Bishop
Mr J Lucas, Chairman of Trust, Stow Maries Aerodrome
Mr I Dallinger, Stow Maries Aerodrome
Mr S Warburton, Stow Maries Aerodrome
Mrs. M. Dyer (Parish Clerk) and 26 Members of the Public

WELCOME

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Stewart Rivers welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologising that the APM was being held in The Norton Meeting Room due to refurbishment of the main hall floor. Mr Rivers advised a change to the order of the agenda and invited the Police Representatives, PCSOs Mick Youd and Sophia Bishop to speak first so that they could leave to attend to other duties.

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE POLICE

PCSO Mick Youd reported on the crime figures to the year ending 31st March 2014, advising:

- In the Purleigh District overall crimes down 7.65% (111 less crimes)
- Vehicle crimes down 42.7% (from 75 to end March 2013 to 43 to March 2014)
- Criminal damage up 25% (increase of 9 crimes)
- Anti-social behaviour down by 8% (from 161 to 148)

Traffic Police are now based in South Woodham Ferrers, which will now give increased coverage in this area.

Questions were then invited from those present:

Question: Which number should you call re possible burglary 101 or 999?

Answer: 999 if the burglary is in action.

Question: Police coverage in Cold Norton?

Answer: Varies, but summer evenings (twilight hours) ad hoc patrols at playing fields

Question: Dumping of asbestos – who should this be reported to?

Answer: Local Council Environmental Health Department

Mr Rivers thanked the Police for attending this meeting. PCSOs Youd and Bishop then left.

PRESENTATION FROM MR JEREMY LUCAS, STOW MARIES AERODROME

Mr Rivers then invited Mr Jeremy Lucas, Chairman, Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome (Charitable Trust) to speak: *“Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome - Safeguarding its Future” – a review of the past 18 months, the WW1 centenary, the work being carried out by English Heritage and future development plans.*

Mr Lucas started by advising that the Aerodrome is now owned by a Charitable Trust, set up a year ago when one of the original owners wanted to withdraw his funds to ensure the future of the site. Prior to this the site was Grade 2 listed which meant that the buildings are protected against demolition and alterations are limited (English Heritage). The Trust approached the Heritage Lottery Fund for guidance regarding funding, and was directed to the Heritage Memorial Fund and the Angel Award Lloyd Webber Fund for funding assistance to rescue the buildings and with a loan from ECC and MDC, plus a grant from English Heritage the Trust has been able to purchase the Airfield – 17th December 2013 the Trust took possession of the Airfield, whose objective now is to protect the aerodrome.

Mr Lucas then spoke about The Heritage Partnership Agreement between English Heritage, Maldon District Council and the Trustees of Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome; this will allow planning applications already approved to be valid for 10 years instead of the usual 3 years to allow sufficient funds to be raised for the works.

In relation to the Charitable Trust, Mr Lucas advised that there are 6 Trustees at present, three ex ECC Cllrs, a Farmer, a Chartered Surveyor and a retired senior RAF Officer.

Taking a brief look back at the Aerodrome's history, Mr Lucas advised that in September 1916 the Aerodrome came into use and this continued until 1919 when it was closed down. It was never adopted as a WWII airfield, just left and used by a farmer. What makes Stow Maries Aerodrome unique is the number of WWI buildings that had no changes made to them. It will however take between 5 and 10 years to restore the site to how it was back in 1919.

In regards to the future the plan is to apply for more grants from the English Heritage Fund and that in 18 months' time there will be sufficient monies to start the works, which will be tackled in 'installments'. Some of the works will be undertaken by volunteers, but some will need specialists. The plan is to extend what is currently available for the public to visit to encourage people to revisit to see the improvements and additions.

The Trustees are considering having some small engineering firms on the site who would offer apprentice schemes – these will not only help the local economy but would also help in grant applications.

Mr Lucas then finished by announcing that there would be a 'Fly In' on the weekend of 10th and 11th May 2014 and on 28th June 2014 the Maldon Armed Services Day would be held at the Aerodrome.

Mr Lucas then invited questions:

Question: Are there, or will there be, original aircraft from WWI at the Aerodrome?

Answer: Not many, but there are reproductions, a lot of which are in New Zealand. The Film Director, Peter Jackson, is a WWI Aircraft enthusiast and he is considering bringing some of his collection to Stow Maries. Ultimately the plan is to rebuild the original wooden hangars for the planes, but meanwhile will be putting up temporary smaller hangers for events being planned in the near future.

Mr Rivers thanked Mr Lucas for coming along.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Professor Barclay, Mrs Jennings and Mr Litscher.

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL 2013

Cllr Mr Wakeling proposed that these be approved, Cllr Mrs Garnham seconded the proposal, which were then duly signed as a correct record by Cllr Mr Rivers

THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT BY CHAIRMAN MR STEWART RIVERS

Mr. Rivers started his report by confirming the current **Parish Councillors**: John Archer, Les Barclay, Philip Wakeling, Sue Garnham, Charles Litscher, Von Jennings, and himself Stewart Rivers, supported by the Parish Clerk, Mrs Maria Dyer, introducing those Cllrs present and advising that the Parish Council meets monthly, except August, on the first Wednesday of the month and that all meetings are open to the public.

Regarding **finance** Mr Rivers advised that at year end there was £14,912 in the Parish Council account, that there remains about £7,000 underspent on the Village Hall project which is to be spent, hopefully this year, on improving the toilets and that the PC has a planned reserve of £5,500. This year's **precept** was set at £23,000 which is a rise of £1,000 and we have made all attempts to keep the increase as low as possible without impacting upon the services we provide, taking into account inflation and other increased costs. The precept covers a whole range of tasks such as providing street lighting, grass cutting, the village caretaker, insurance, costs of administration and the Clerk as well as the village hall loans.

Moving onto planning Mr Rivers advised that the Parish Council had been asked to comment on 43 **planning applications** – an increase of 13 over the previous year. 2 were subsequently withdrawn by the applicants and on one CNPC did not comment. Of those that the Parish Council considered: 28 applications - the PC did not object to; 14 applications - the PC made objections and 1 application – the PC made no comments. Of the 40, Maldon District Council (MDC) supported 31 applications, but did not support 7 and the decisions are still being awaited on a further 2 applications. Mr Rivers advised that whilst MDC has not completed its Local Development Plans (LDP) the Parish Council will continue to use the current **Parish Council Planning Policies** linked to the results of the **Village Survey** as the basis for planning comments, and that hopefully Councillor Ms Sue White may be able to give us all a further update in her District Councillors report.

Moving onto **Highway Matters** the Chairman advised there have been a number of highways issues over the year which the Parish Council had referred to Essex County Council Highways Department, with the Clerk maintaining a list of these issues and regularly

updating the Parish Council. Some of these issues included flooding along the Latchingdon Road, various pot holes, the condition of some of the public footpaths around the village and the traffic light phasing at the bridge near The Norton Public House.

Mr Rivers reported that there had been a **Police Speed Check** on Friday 14 March between 12 and 1pm where 100 vehicles had been checked and the highest speeds recorded were 33mph. The Chairman went on to say that the Parish Council would continue to ask the Police to maintain a presence especially around the school at their start and end periods. The footpath (20) gate at Crown Road is awaiting repair and reinstatement by the landowner as soon as the ground dries out.

The Village Hall – as advised earlier in his report Mr Rivers had stated that there was just over £7,000 underspent on the Village Hall Project and that the Parish Council is currently in negotiations for refurbishment of the toilets and hopes to have these works completed by the end of the year. However we are still trying to obtain further grant funding to complete this project. Mr Rivers made an appeal for more support for the Village Hall Management Committee in the form of committee members.

The next topic covered related to **Anti-Social Behaviour** and Mr Rivers reported that there had been a number of incidents of criminal damage over the past year within the village, including damage to the fences and some equipment on the playing field. This damage had now been repaired, but the funds had to come out of the precept and we are all in turn paying for it. More recently there had been a spate of damage to the polytunnel on the allotments and the deliberate blocking of a drainage ditch on footpath 19 at the rear of properties on the lower Latchingdon Road which could cause potential flooding to adjacent properties.

Mr Rivers then turned his attention to **Open Spaces**, advising that Cowpiece Nature Reserve continues to be maintained by the Village Caretaker and others and I would like to thank Councillor Charles Litscher and our Village Caretaker Mr Roy (Whizz) Wiseman for all their hard work. I am sure that there are others who help and I would like to thank them all for their hard work. Our Village Caretaker continues to maintain the areas around the play equipment on the playing fields, and conducts regular litter picks around the village.

Next Mr Rivers spoke about **Public Rights of Way** (footpaths), advising that the Parish Council continues to work hard with the Essex County Council Public Rights of Way Officer to maintain all of our local footpaths and rights of way. By now everyone will have received their copy of the **Cold Norton Footpaths Map**, which was produced last year. If anyone needs further copies please see us after the meeting and we can give you another copy.

Mr Rivers advised that the **village website** had fallen into disrepair and that the current website programme was no longer supported, but that work was currently being undertaken to renew and re-vamp the village website. Ultimately we are looking to develop a new website which will be easier to maintain and have much more local information on it and hopefully will be more accessible to our residents.

In relation to **salt bags**, Mr Rivers reported that once again Essex County Council had provided the village with a tonne of salt; these had been distributed, but luckily we did not have to use them, but the continued wet spell had caused more problems with flooding in the village rather than by ice. Mr Rivers then thanked Cllr Charles Litscher for all his help in organising this and for storing many of this years unused bags and expressed his thanks to all the other villagers who have assisted with this operation and requested that they keep the bags just in case we do not get another supply for next winter

Mr Rivers finished his report by firstly thanking Cllr Philip Wakeling for being Chairman for the period 2010 to 2013 and on a number of occasions before that too and then thanking his fellow Parish Councillors and both our District and County Councillors for all their hard work and support over the past year and without whom the Parish Council could not operate.

Mr Rivers then expressed his thanks to the Parish Clerk, Maria Dyer, for working tirelessly often behind the scenes, by making many phone calls to various District and County Departments, chasing up letters and running the day to day activities of the Parish Council and without her the Council could not operate.

VILLAGER OF THE YEAR

This award had been created by the Parish Council in 2011 to recognise services to the village.

Mr Rivers announced that this year the accolade was to go to Debby Guppy for all her hard and ongoing work, as Chairman of The Norton Community Pub Committee to ensure the future of this village asset.

REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MS SUE WHITE

District Cllr Ms White started her report talking about **The Norton Community Pub**, advising that we (at MDC) had been working closely with the Cold Norton Parish Council, Paul Guppy and local residents to try and secure the future of the pub; firstly to obtain the status of Community Asset and more recently to check the Unilateral Undertaking with the owner, which is currently being investigated by Essex Legal Services.

Moving onto **water** related issues District Cllr Ms White advised that Anglian Water is currently undertaking extensive surveys in the district, particularly focusing on North Fambridge and Southminster and the positive point that AWA had finally admitted that there are serious infrastructure issues in the local area. The Surface Water Management Plan is progressing, and ECC is the lead flood authority working on a plan to map flooding and surface water issues so that ditches and culverts which have become overgrown or blocked can be cleared out, as these appear to be contributing factors to surface water flooding. District Cllr Ms White advised that she is the MDC Representative on the **Essex Flood Management Plan** so if residents know of any problems to contact her.

Regarding the **Local Development Plan** (LDP) Cllr Ms White advised that LDP is almost ready for submission to Planning Inspectorate and that it is hoped that it might be heard by late summer (2014).

Youth Services – Cllr Ms White advised that ECC is under tremendous pressure financially, but is still delivering services, only in a different way, with more emphasis being on training volunteers rather than directly providing services.

Regarding **parking** Cllr Ms White announced the re-introduction of six FREE 30 minute 'Pop and Shop' spaces in Butt Lane Car Park and no increase in the all-day parking charges.

Cllr Ms White finished her report by saying how excited the district was to have a **Royal Visit** on the 29 January this year.

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS PENNY CHANNER

Cllr Mrs Channer started her report advising she is a dual hatter Cllr for ECC and MDC, but this evening would be reporting on County matters and that 2014 was the **125th anniversary for ECC**.

This current financial year 2014/2015 Essex County Council has managed to deliver a **0% increase in Council Tax**, just as the authority did for the last financial year and the previous two prior to that. Like other local authorities ECC last year faced a considerable

challenge and will be facing budgetary issues again this year, so will be concentrating on frontline services. Revenue Support Grant: the financial settlement from the government was approximately £232M for 2013/14 and £29.1m less for 2014/15 at £202.1M. By 2017 the gap between the money we have and the money we need will grow, we will see a savings requirement of at least £235M.

With regards to **Adult Social Care** Cllr Mrs Channer advised that In 2013/14 ECC delivered some strong outcomes: eliminating waiting lists for occupational therapy assessments, increasing investment in Reablement Services and reductions in the number of older people admissions into long term residential care. There had also been a significant fall in the number of working age adults admitted to residential care and a move into the community via the Supported Living Project. The provision of social care services is a statutory duty for the Council and is provided under the Health & Social Care Act. With pressure from an increasing ageing population and inflation, ECC is maximizing funds by joining up services with health partners.

ECC has created **The Social Impact Bond**, raising millions to finance interventions of vulnerable children to keep them safely out of care. This innovation won ECC the 'Municipal Journal Award for Innovative Finance and in the past 2 years has reduced the number of children in care by 25% - built largely upon the 'Looked after Children's' Strategy, giving the children a better chance of a good education, less chance of offending behaviour and an increased chance of employment and independence.

Education and Learning - the budget of £39.8M in 2013/14 resulted in increases in Primary Schools achieving Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths – now in line with national average. Re secondary schools increase also recorded with the percentage of pupils achieving at least 5 A*-C Grades for GCSEs rising to 59% from 50.2% in 2009.

Moving on to **Highways**, Cllr Mrs Channer advised that the total budget for 2013/14 was £171.1M part of which was utilised to facilitate the expansion of the Sandon **Park and Ride** site, to add another 250 spaces to the existing site. The total number of spaces is now approximately 1,475 making it one of the largest sites of its kind in the country. During the storm of October and again in the first week of December, teams from across the organisation were called upon to help deal with the severe weather and flood warnings forecast. Mrs Channer touched on **part night lighting** with switch off between the hours of midnight and 5am saving tax payer millions of pounds from reduced energy bills and helping to improve the environment in the process.

The **highways budget** was used to maintain 5,100 miles of roads, 1500 bridges and other structures plus 4000 miles of public rights of way. It has to operate a gritting route that covers 2,000 miles, 40% of the Council's network each year; maintain more than 120,000 street lights, 11,000 illuminated signs and 6,000 illuminated bollards.

The Libraries, Communities and Planning Portfolio Budget for 2013/14 of £20.5M covered a large range of services including the running of 74 **libraries**, 11 mobile libraries and the **County's Record Office**.

With regards to **Public Health and Wellbeing** Cllr Mrs Channer advised that the budget for 2013/14 was £26.4M and that 2013/14 saw the successful transition of Public Health responsibilities to the County. The **Care Bill** currently going through Parliament will place new duties on Councils which in Essex could add over £40M in additional costs in 2015/16 alone, without full funding to meet these costs.

Trading Standards aims to help local people get a fair deal when buying goods and services, support Essex businesses in compliance with legislation, business growth and tackling rogue traders to ensure a fair market place.

With reference to **Waste and Recycling** Cllr Mrs Channer advised that this department ran a budget of £66.3M during 2013/14, which the department in addition to the disposing of waste aims to change the way waste is managed, minimise landfill and drive new initiatives, with the aim of encouraging waste prevention and greater levels of recycling and composting. Construction has commenced on the **Mechanical Biological Treatment** facility, which when completed and anticipated to be operational in the summer of 2014 will be capable of treating up to 417,000 tonnes of municipal waste a year

The Economic Growth & Infrastructure Portfolio worked to create the right environment in which businesses can start and flourish and during 2013/14 achievements included supporting **662 apprenticeships** across various sectors.

Referring to Cllr Ms White’s report re **Youth Services**, Cllr Mrs Channer expanded by advising that ECC had worked hard to reduce the number of young people not in education, training or employment and by working closely with Essex Businesses ECC had set up an Employment and Skills Board, so that ECC now has a business view of where there are skills gaps and opportunities and has invested £1M as a sign of the County Council’s commitment.

Cllr Mrs Channer then listed the **seven aspirations/outcomes** that ECC had agreed as its goals to achieve over the following year and beyond:

- 1. That children in Essex get the best start in life.
- 2. That people in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing.
- 3. That people have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong learning.
- 4. That people in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm.
- 5. That we have sustainable economic growth for Essex communities and businesses.
- 6. That people in Essex experience a high quality and sustainable environment.
- 7. That people in Essex can live independently and exercise control over their lives.

Cllr Mrs Channer concluded by advising that one of her areas of responsibility is within the **‘Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee’** which is concerned with older and younger people in relation to health and environment and helping people to stay in their own homes.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

At the end of the reports questions/comments were invited:

The one topic raised was ‘potholes’: patching of potholes instead of repairing properly, the facility on the ECC Web Site to report potholes (Track & Trace) and that potholes were not only on the roads but also on the footways, citing the one outside the village school.

County Cllr Mrs Channer responded, advising that Cllr Rodney Bass had put extra money into the Highways budget, but that the weather had caused major problems and that there are guidelines re potholes and what makes a ‘priority pothole’.

On a positive note it was announced that 30mph was being introduced through Stow Maries.

The meeting was closed at 9.25pm - all present were invited to stay for refreshments, and advised that the Councillors and Guests would all be available to talk to on an informal basis.

Chairman..... Date.....