



Cold Norton's Annual Parish Meeting
Held at 8 pm on Monday 9th May 2011
At Cold Norton Village Hall

THOSE PRESENT: Parish Councillors:
Mr. J. Archer (also a District Councillor)
Professor L. Barclay
Mrs. G. Gold (Vice Chairman)
Mr. P. Guppy
Mr. C. Litscher
Mrs. A. McDonald
Mr. P. Wakeling (Chairman)

Mrs. P. Channer, County Councillor
Mrs. M. Dyer (Parish Clerk) and 25 members of the public

APOLOGIES: Essex Police

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on 5th May 2010 were approved and signed as a correct record.

THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT was given by Parish Council Chairman, Mr. Philip Wakeling, as follows:

Mr. Wakeling welcomed everyone to the meeting, which had followed the Annual General Meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee. Mr. Wakeling then introduced the Councillors and thanked them all for their contribution, especially Mrs Gloria Gold and Mrs Alison McDonald who had both stood down. Congratulations were extended to Les Barclay who had celebrated 40 years as a Councillor for Cold Norton. Mr Wakeling advised that the Parish Council now only has five elected members and that if anyone is interested in becoming a Councillor to fill one of the two vacant seats they should let the Clerk know. Thanks were then given to District Councillors John Archer and John Sears; Mr Wakeling welcomed Sue White who was now a District Councillor together with John Archer for the Purleigh ward. Mr Wakeling also welcomed County Councillor Mrs Penny Channer, a guest speaker at the meeting.

Mr Wakeling then spoke about **financial matters**, advising that the high balance of £23,000 remaining at the end of the financial year to 31st March 2011 was due to the village hall project and the retainer which is held back from the contractor as is normal practice in a major project pending final inspection. Mr Wakeling advised that budget breakdown figures are on display this evening and informed the residents that the Precept for 2011-12 had been set at £21,500, an increase of £1,000 due to the Village Hall Project. Residents were

advised that the Parish Council accounts are audited annually and are available for inspection.

Moving onto **planning matters** Mr Wakeling advised that the Parish Council had considered 23 planning applications in the past year, of these Maldon District Council had upheld the Parish Council's decision on 18 applications, in relation to four of the applications MDC disagreed with the Parish's opinion and for one application the Parish Council did not comment on. The majority of the applications related to alterations to existing houses. There were two major applications, the first for a 80 bed hotel, which the Parish objected to, but MDC granted permission and The Norton's application to build 5 cottages, which the Parish Council had not objected to as it would have provided long term security for the pub, was refused by MDC. Mr Wakeling advised that a breakdown of all applications was available to view at the end of the reports.

The next topic to be covered was **highways and road safety**, Mr Wakeling listed areas that had been the subject of works or discussions with ECC Highways Department, namely pram ramps at St Stephens Road completed, flooding on footpath behind Latchingdon Road resolved, change of 'urban' type signs at Three Ashes Corner to more appropriate rural signage completed, water adjacent to the railway bridge, street lights, speeding and various footway repairs. Mr Wakeling concluded this section by advising that the Parish Council had objected to the new system introduced by ECC for reporting highways matters, which had resulted in loss of direct contact with Highways' Officers and Engineers.

The **Village Hall** was the next subject to be reported on. Mr Wakeling advised that the Parish Council supported the Village Hall Management Committee with 2 Parish Councillors attending VHMC meetings. In regards to the Village Hall Project a snagging meeting had taken place the previous week with the contractor and defects such as the blotchy paintwork and knots on the new window frames will be attended to, plus minor electrical jobs and adjustments to doors. Once completed and the final paperwork relating to the asbestos removal received the project would be signed off. In relation to legal matters Plot 207, part of the land the Village Hall sits on, this has now been resolved and the paperwork to confirm Parish Council ownership completed. Mr Wakeling thanked the Paul Guppy and the VHMC, especially Mrs Chris Edwards, for all their hard work.

Mr Wakeling then briefly talked about the on-going **vandalism** in the playground and the Parish Council had requested more police presence in the village.

Open spaces were covered next: working with Pre School for their outdoor play area, retendering for the village grass cutting resulting in Maldon District Council's Parks Maintenance department being appointed; Charles Litscher and Alec Paul have been refurbishing Cowpiece Nature Reserve, whilst the Village Caretaker, Dave Bull, continued to tidy up and maintain the other areas around the village. The Allotments are being run very successfully and they are now owned by the Parish Council.

Mr Wakeling then moved onto **Footpaths – Public Rights of Way**, advising that ECC legal Services had reviewed the Definitive map and all of FP28 was now included, together with the footpath across the golf course. The route along the railway bridge behind Ferris Avenue and Station Crescent was now confirmed as a public road. Local farmers and the PRoW Officer keep footpaths open and walkable for all. The footpaths map is being worked on by Roger Hawes who is the P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) representative for Cold Norton.

The final topics Mr Wakeling mentioned were the **Village Plan** which be formed from the results of the questionnaire which will be distributed later in the year and **The Norton** – the Parish Council has endeavoured to support the Pub Committee, Mr Wakeling thanked them for their efforts which hopefully will be successful.

Mr Wakeling then thanked Maria Dyer for her work as Clerk to the Council and reminded those present that there are two vacant seats on the Council.

REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MR. JOHN ARCHER

Cllr. Archer commenced his report talking about **financial matters** advising that the Council tax remains the same as last year as Maldon District Council is being very prudent and careful in respect of using its reserves and is hoping to initiate shared services with other District Councils.

In regards to **Stow Maries Aerodrome**, Cllr Archer advised that the recent open day was very well attended and that a few months previously had seen the unveiling of a First World War Memorial. Cllr Archer expressed his congratulations to Russell Savory for renovating and opening up this historic site.

Cllr Archer advised that planning permission has been given for a new **Veterinary Hospital** to be built in Purleigh.

Regarding local **transport** Cllr Archer announced that the new **Dengie Dart** service starts on 13th May 2011 – a partnership between ECC and Arrow Taxis, which amongst other services will offer the facility of a direct transport service to Broomfield Hospital, booked by phone.

Moving onto **Bradwell Power Station**, Cllr Archer advised that this is still in its 'shutting down phase' and that at this point there is no news of a replacement power station in this area.

District Cllr Archer went on to say that on a positive note it was a very historic year for the Maldon District as **Her Majesty the Queen** made a very successful visit to Maldon and surrounding areas.

The next topic Cllr Archer covered was in regards to the Crouch Harbour Authority in Burnham and the Crossrail/RSPB Project, advising that it is still awaiting the first ships to arrive from the Crossrail Project with the excavated materials which will be used at **Wallasea Island Nature Reserve**. There will be a visitor centre at Wallasea Island. Cllr Archer went on to add that there will be a new Patrol Boat.

Cllr Archer then went on to thank **John Sears** for all his hard work as joint District Councillor for the Purleigh District, and to welcome Ms. Sue White to the role.

The final topic to be covered by Cllr Archer was **highways**, advising that Cllr Norman Hume had now authorised a 30mph speed limit for Stow Maries and that the problem with the traffic lights in Cold Norton had been reported to ECC Highways Department.

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS PENNY CHANNER

Cllr Mrs. Channer started by advising that Essex County Council had set a new record with a 0% Council Tax increase and went on to advise that the Leader of ECC has set out a list of 10 **pledges**, which include **putting customers first; delivering value for money** with a goal of saving £50 million from back office and procurement processes in 2011/12; **supporting vulnerable adults** and their carers; **maintaining and improving highways** - £4 million set aside to fix potholes and other damage; **promoting economic growth** by investing £1 million to help Essex companies to create jobs; **promoting public health and wellbeing** with more sport and health related activities for 30,000 young people.

Cllr Mrs. Channer then went on to talk about **ECC Transformation Programme**, which is in its third year, which continues to develop working partnerships and sharing/trading services to generate income to the County. In 2011-12 there will be further reductions in operating costs with a **new web site** which offers the facility for direct action and **flexible working for**

staff allowing them to work from various locations using secure remote access which will increase productivity and reduce property costs.

Moving onto '**The Year Ahead**' Cllr Mrs. Channer said that ECC would continue to lead the way in forming a new kind of public service through community empowerment and reducing costs and bureaucracy through partnerships with other public sector agencies. **The Big Society – Good for Essex** prospectus was launched in March which details how ECC will build social capital, transform services and empower communities.

In terms of the past year Cllr Mrs. Channer admitted it had been a busy year with the challenge of budgets, but the ongoing **transformation programme** had produced some significant achievements: ECC Finance team won the ECO Enterprise Award for **saving CO2**; substantial savings due to improvements in postal practices; ECC became the first public sector organisation to gain the **Quality in Credit Management accreditation**; plus unlike many other counties **Essex libraries are staying open**; increase in number of **apprenticeship places from 1,000 to 1,750**, with Essex winning a grant of £375,000 specifically to **create female apprenticeships**; **Village Agents** continued to be successful and celebrated their 1200th referral.

Cllr Mrs. Channer finished her report by advising that on 1st April 2011 responsibility for **street parking enforcement** was transferred to 2 parking partnerships which will produce back office savings in the region of £1 million. These partnerships will consist of Members of District and Borough Councils.

There then followed a comment from a member of the audience thanking ECC for making the facility of reparation services available from The Probation Service. This was followed by a question asking why weren't all the money saving practices mentioned this evening put in place before. Cllr Mrs. Channer responded by saying that there is a constant review in line with technology changes – technology accounts for a lot of which is now possible.

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE POLICE

Police Sergeant Phil Morley had supplied a written Maldon District Police Report – May 2011, this was read out by Mr. Wakeling:

Comparison to Last Year

Between the 1st of April 2011 and the 9th of March 2011 Essex Police dealt with 10,528 crimes of which 2,837 were detected giving an overall detection rate of 26.95%. This is an overall reduction in Crime of 422 crimes from the previous year.

For the same period the Central Division, which is made up of the Chelmsford, Braintree, Uttlesford and Maldon Districts, dealt with 1,930 crimes, detecting 543 of those, giving a detection rate of 28.13%.

For the same period the Maldon District dealt with 217 crimes, detecting 60 of those, giving a detection rate of 27.65%. This is a reduction of 28 crimes compared to the same period in the previous year.

Neighbourhood Resolutions

As previously reported Essex Police have introduced 'Neighbourhood Resolutions' this year. This allows Officers to deal with minor incidents in another manner provided the aggrieved party / Victim is happy with this. It may be that they just want an apology or an item repaired or replaced rather than going through the judicial system. Since the 1st of April 2011 eleven of these have been completed within the Maldon District.

If this figure were to be included in the detected rate it would move the Maldon District to 32.72% (just under one in three crimes detected).

Current Crime Trends

Since the 1st of April this year Essex Police have received 16 calls from the Cold Norton postal district. Two of these calls related to criminal offences these being a theft from the golf club and a burglary to a garage.

Unfortunately the Maldon District continues to be plagued by incidents of Acquisitive Crime (Theft from cars, garages, sheds etc.). Over the last weekend there were 12 offences of theft from motor vehicles in the Bradwell area all of which had been left unlocked and with valuable items left in the cars. In addition to these offences we have also seen a number of items stolen from gardens in the last few weeks such as plant pots and metal items.

Another crime that has seen an increase is the theft of heating oil from domestic houses. There are ways of protecting Oil tanks by putting up fences around the actual tank, by using padlocks on caps and through defensive planting in the area.

Please accept my apologies for not being able to be with you this evening but I hope this report is of some use. If you have any questions for me please feel free to contact me.

VILLAGER OF THE YEAR

Mr. Wakeling explained that the Parish Council had decided to create a special award to recognise services to the village. It was agreed that the first person to receive this award should be Mr. Alec Paul for all the work he does around the village, especially by the bridge where he has created a little garden and at the Cowpiece nature reserve.

Unfortunately Mr. Paul was unable to be at the APM, but there was much applause – agreement that he was indeed a worthy recipient of this award.

QUESTIONS

At the end of the reports there was an open session of questions and discussions.

There was just one topic raised: this was the speeding issue along the stretch of Stow Road near Hagg Hill. A speed survey had been undertaken and 80% of vehicles were found to be driving in excess of the 40 mph limit. A resident commented that even though there are plans to make the whole area 30 mph how will this have any affect if people do not comply with the 40 mph, and further commented that even a school bus had been recorded going over the 40 mph.

The meeting was then closed at 8.45pm - 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.....