



**Cold Norton's Annual Parish Meeting  
Held at 8 pm on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
At Cold Norton Village Hall**

**THOSE PRESENT:** Parish Councillors:  
Mrs S Garnham  
Mr B Haydon  
Mr C Litscher  
Mrs V Jennings  
Mr S Rivers (Chairman)  
Mr P Wakeling (Vice Chairman)

Mrs. P. Channer, County Councillor  
Ms S White, District Councillor  
Mrs. M. Dyer (Parish Clerk) and 34 Members of the Public

**WELCOME**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Stewart Rivers welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the proceedings for the evening, advising that the order on the agenda would be altered as some of the speakers had other commitments/meetings to attend

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr John Archer

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015**

Cllr Wakeling proposed that these be approved; Mrs Sue Capp seconded the proposal, which were then duly signed as a correct record by Cllr Rivers.

Mr Rivers then invited Mr Brian Haydon to talk about The Norton

**THE NORTON: "SAVING THE VILLAGE PUB" - A POTTED HISTORY & "MEET THE NEW TENANTS"**

Mr Haydon started by saying that The Norton 'belongs to the community' due to the tremendous amount of work taken to get to this point where there are now professional tenants - Boris and Nora – running The Norton and that Boris will speak later.

Thanks must go to Paul and Debbie Guppy, who were unable to be here tonight and all the other members of the committee including Sue Capp who is here tonight.

Mr Haydon then gave a potted history:

- Easter 2007: The Norton was closed and the owner wanted to replace the pub with houses and flats. The village and the PC were opposed to this
- 2009: a TV company who wanted to make a programme about the closure of rural pubs
- June 2009: committee formed and satellite TV programme "Save our Boozer" was made an aired; talks took place with the owner
- August 2009: pub reopened run by volunteers – the first community pub in the south
- 2010: talks started with owner re a new lease
- November 2010: negotiations ongoing linked to a planning application - a compromise which would see a mix of housing on part of the car park but retention of the pub
- 2010/2011: volunteers continue to keep the pub operating; limited company set up – community ownership of a community asset - £125,000 raised through shares, which then allowed the 'company' to get a mortgage and to buy the pub in November 2014
- Having secured ownership a tenancy was sought by the committee and....
- In 2016 Boris and Nora were warmly welcomed to The Norton and on 27<sup>th</sup> April Boris and Nora will be opening The Norton's new restaurant.

Mr Haydon then introduced Boris.

Boris started by thanking all the people responsible for saving the pub and said he felt lucky to be here and was very touched by all the support and the warm welcome they had received. They had 'arrived' at the end of February and had been working on the building to achieve a contemporary look, which would be reflected in the drinks and wines available – both Boris and Nora have a background in wine. Aim is to make The Norton a destination pub. The plan with the restaurant is to have a small menu using produce from local farmers, bakers etc. A key feature will be a central 'community table' to reflect the community spirit, so people can all sit together. Boris thanked everyone again for such a warm welcome from the village.

Mr Rivers thanked Boris for coming to the meeting.

The next person to speak was District Cllr Ms Sue White

### **REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MS SUE WHITE**

District Cllr Ms. White started by saying how pleased she was to see a young couple taking on the tenancy of The Norton. Regarding the **Local Development Plan** Ms White advised that a new Inspector had been appointed and a reassessment would now take place; some developments would have an effect on villages such as Cold Norton which would see increased traffic going through the village. Maldon District Council is increasing **parking charges** and imposing charges in evenings and weekends. The **Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday** would be celebrated in the District with a Plaque and the Beacon would be lit.

The Police were unable to send a representative, but had provided a report, which was read out by Mr Rivers

### **ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE POLICE**

In the last year there have been 106 incidents reported to Police from the Cold Norton area. These range from RTCs to missing person, concerns for persons welfare and animal related incidents right through to criminal matters which go on to be recorded as a crime.

Crime wise there has been 41 offences reported in Cold Norton, among those are 4 assaults (likely to be domestic related,) 1 house burglary, 5 burglaries of an outbuilding or shed, 7 criminal damages and 11 thefts.

District wide we have seen an increase in crime of 1.1% in the last year which equates to about 25 extra offences. We have had quite a big rise in reported violent crime (28.9%) which I believe to be related to increased confidence in the reporting of domestic incidents. Domestic related offences are now a massive part of the forces day to day work. On the other hand the district has seen a large drop in theft related offences, some 157 less reported crimes than the previous year.

Mr Rivers reminded residents that crimes can be reported on line and that ECM (Essex Community Messaging) is a service that keeps the public informed about the kind of policing and community safety issues which may affect us. Residents can sign up for free at [www.essex.police.uk/ecm](http://www.essex.police.uk/ecm) to receive accurate and up-to-date information, crime prevention advice and notifications from Essex Police, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Neighbourhood Watch (NHW).

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

Mr. Rivers started his report by introducing the current **Parish Councillors** present, namely: Philip Wakeling, Sue Garnham, Charles Litscher, Von Jennings, Brian Haydon and himself Stewart Rivers. He thanked them all for their work and support and thanked the Parish Clerk, Mrs Maria Dyer, who is contracted to work 12 hours a week for the Parish Council. Mr River advised that the Parish Council meetings are public meetings usually held on the first Wednesday of the month.

In regards to **finance** Mr Rivers advised that at year end there was £17,712.45 remaining in the Parish Council account. Parish Council monies are used to cover Public Works Loans taken out for various projects – the last loan was taken out to install solar panels at the Village Hall, which have proved to be a good investment as they last year generated £600 profit. PC monies also covers the costs of street lights, grass cutting, the village caretaker, insurance and administration This year's **precept** was set at £22,161 a reduced figure to the previous year which was £24,700.

**Planning applications:** Mr Rivers advised that in the year from April 2015 to March 2016 the Parish Council considered 34 planning applications (26 in the previous year) of these 34, Cold Norton PC had no objections to 23 applications, objected to 8 applications and did not submit a view on 3. Of the 31 the PC submitted comments on MDC agreed with the Parish Council's view for 25, disagreed on 3 and two decisions are still awaited from MDC. Mr Rivers spoke briefly about a planning framework, but advised that to produce a Neighbourhood Plan would be too costly, so the Parish Council would continue working with residents views expressed in the latest village appraisal when considering planning applications.

Regarding **Highway Matters** the Chairman advised that speeding through/in the village and pot holes continue to be issues of concern – potholes are referred to Essex County Council Highways Department for action. A Cold Norton Road Safety Plan had been produced which will be used to work with local agencies to implement changes and the school re parking issues.

Turning to **anti-social behaviour** Mr Rivers advised that current concerns are nitrous oxide cartridges around the village and ball damage to the windows at the village hall. Thanks were given to Carole Kirk in her role as **Neighbourhood Watch** Co-ordinator for passing on relevant information to keep residents vigilant and Roger Hawes for publishing useful information/warnings in the village magazine The Beacon.

**Cowpiece Nature Reserve** – this is looking very good at the moment thanks to the Village Caretaker, Mr Roy ‘Whizz’ Wiseman and Cllr Charles Litscher. Residents were reminded to report any issues at Cowpiece or the playground to the Clerk

Next Mr Rivers advised that the **ditch survey** undertaken by Cllrs Mrs Sue Garnham and Mr Litscher in conjunction with ECC had now been completed. This would now allow ECC to pursue landowners if they allow their ditches to go into ‘disrepair’. **Salt bags** had again been supplied by ECC for use in inclement weather.

Seniors **Coffee Mornings and Lunch Club** started the previous year continued to be successful due to the dedicated team of Sue Garnham, Chris Edwards, Von Jennings and Sheila Pomfrett, who set up and continue to run this popular fortnightly ‘club’.

Mr Rivers then reiterated his thanks to his fellow Cllrs – all volunteers.

The final speaker of the evening, Mrs Penny Channer, was then introduced.

### **COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT – COUNTY COUNCILLOR MRS PENNY CHANNER**

County Cllr Mrs Channer started by talking about **ECC Finances** advising that the reduction in the government grant had placed considerable pressure on ECC. Whilst ECC had not increased Council Tax since 2010/11 it had not been possible to freeze it this year and in February an increase of 1.99% had been agreed, plus a further 2% to pay for social care funding – however this 2% will not cover all costs that are expected. Net cost of services for 2016/17 is £935million – similar level of spend as in 2015/16, despite the loss of grant between the two years. ECC had saved £521million in the past 6 years.

Plans to give people in Greater Essex a bigger say in how their local areas are governed got underway in 2015/16 as part of the **devolution deal**. Transferring power and money away from Westminster is part of the deal being explored by Councils, and authorities across the county during last year met with senior Westminster officials to look at what this could mean for Greater Essex in the future. There has been recognition that decisions that impact people and businesses are better made at a more local level. In September, all 15 district, borough, city, county and unitary authorities in Greater Essex wrote to the Government to express their interest in exploring this opportunity. A website [www.greateressex.org](http://www.greateressex.org) has been launched to keep residents and businesses updated with progress on the project.

ECC will convert some 19,000 of all **night street lights** to LED, saving approximately £600,000 a year as a result of savings in energy and maintenance costs, as well as carbon taxes. The authority is investing £9.2M in to the project, £4.3M of which will be funded by an interest free Government Loan.

ECC backed the plans for another **Thames Crossing** linking Tilbury in Essex with Gravesend in Kent which would create an additional 25,000 jobs and lead to the construction of an extra 21,000 homes.

**Drainage** - during the winter months, landowners were urged to check their **drainage ditches** and make sure they were cleared and make sure they do not cause flooding on the public highway. It advised landowners with ditches on or adjacent to their properties to have a regular maintenance programme in place.

Recognising the importance of Economic Growth, ECC worked hard last year to deliver growth through increasing access to work and job creation - approximately 1,500 jobs were created and approximately 539 **apprenticeships** supported.

Turning to **Broadband**, Mrs Channer advised that phase 2 of Superfast Essex is about to start.

**Waste management** continued with funding from the 2015/16 budget to deal with increasing volumes of waste. 749,000 tonnes of waste were disposed of in 2015/16. Funding was also directed to the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) Waste Plant and the Waste Transfer Stations. The MBT build was completed and starting operating and two transfer stations were completed so that five are now fully operational. The volume of waste is an issue for the Council with housing growth across the County and continued economic recovery drive up waste volumes.

**Schools** – figures published in January 2016 indicated another rise in the % of GCSE pupils achieving five or more A\* - C grades from 56.4% in 2014 to 58.4 in 2015. There was also an increase at primary school level in pupils achieving level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths skills by 2% to 81%. There were also increases at both primary and secondary school levels in Ofsted ratings. School attendance in Essex is also up. A campaign to attract more teachers to Essex was launched in January and over the next 5 years ECC plans to spend about £200million to meet the need for the thousands of new school places.

**Adult Social Care** – budget for 2016/17 was increased by £10million to £414million; 2015/16 saw a reduction in waiting time for assessments and reviews, helping vulnerable adults with learning skills for everyday living, There has been a fall in working age adults admitted to residential care – staying in the community via the initiative ‘INCREASING Independence Strategy’. The population of older people is expected to grow by 9% in the next ten years, which will necessitate an increase in adult social care.

**Health Checks** – 50,000 carried out in 2015/16 on people aged 40 – 74. The ‘Healthy Living Campaign’ offers support via its website for people wanting to lose weight. The Healthy Child Programme for ages 0 – 5 transferred from NHS responsibility to the ECC.

The **Children and Families** budget for 2015/16 was £116m. The number of children in care to a now stable 1010. Essex now has one of the lowest children in care per 1,000 population ratio in England. Work has been undertaken to promote the Council’s Internal Foster Carer Scheme, but at least 40 new foster families are needed across Essex in 2016 to provide stable and loving homes to children and young people as current foster families retire, plus carers are needed for new specialist schemes for children with specific needs. 50% of the young people coming into care in Essex are aged 14 and above and therefore ECC needs to recruit foster carers who can provide homes for teenagers. Safe and secure homes for children with disabilities as well as large sibling groups also remains a priority for 2016.

The **Transport, Planning and Environment** portfolio revenue budget was £32M in 2015/16 and encompassed a multitude of services with Passenger Transport being by far the largest service. The Council has conducted several consultations in 2015/16 including one with regard to the Dengie Bus services. This budget also covers country parks and visitor centres, 16 million concessionary pass passenger journeys each year, maintaining the former Olympic sites, operations re Planning, Flood Management and Energy Resilience, Customer Services Centre and 275,000 active library members.

An officer at Essex County Council was honoured in the **Queen’s New Year’s Honours** list. Lorraine King, Civic Services Officer at ECC was made a Member of the Royal Victorian Order for her work on behalf of the Lieutenancy in Essex, in particular her role making arrangements for numerous Royal visits. The award is made by the Queen to people who have served her or the Monarchy in a personal way.

Mrs Channer finished by reminding residents that ECC’s ‘**Keep Me Posted**’ can be utilised to receive email news and alerts on topics of interest – to sign up follow the link on: [www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)

Mrs Channer then invited questions:

**Installation of speed check cameras:** Mrs Channer advised that if the Parish Council could part fund that a request could be made through The Highways Panel. Mr Rivers reminded Residents that last year the PC had tried to get Speed Watch operational in the village, but only one volunteer came forward – ten are needed to be trained to use the laser gun. Mrs Channer suggested that the PC contact the Safer Essex Partnership (SEP) to arrange for some ad hoc speed checks – Mrs Channer is working with SEP re issues on Fambridge Road.

**Large Lorries coming through village:** an increase had been noted. Mrs Channer pointed out that there are no restrictions re vehicle size through the village, but that there is a traffic plan re vehicles going to the wind farms – MDC should be notified if it vehicles connected with the wind farm projects. Concern was expressed re possible stress on the bridge.

**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 award was being made to Darren Skitmore for his work on the Village Hall Management Committee, taking on the role of Chairman, even though he works full time and has a young family, Darren undertakes his role with no fuss, just quietly gets on with many of the manual jobs at the hall himself. *(Unfortunately Darren couldn't attend the APM so would be presented with the Villager of the Year shield at a future Village Hall meeting by Mrs Garnham)*

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

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

Only one topic was raised regarding blocked drains on the north side of Latchingdon Road from Burnham Avenue to Country Produce. Clerk to report to ECC Highways.

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The meeting was closed at 9pm - 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.....