

## **COLD NORTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **THE MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 7 APRIL 2005, in the Committee Room of the Village Hall**

**THOSE PRESENT:**

**Councillors:**

Mrs. A Allen  
Prof. L Barclay  
Mr. C Litscher  
Mr. P Wakeling

**In attendance:** Four members of the public, P.c. P Hughes, and  
Mrs. M Bryant (Parish Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** received from Mrs. S Garnham. Mrs. G Gold, and Mr. J Archer.
2. **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING** of the Parish Council held on Thursday 3 March 2005 – were approved as a correct record, and signed accordingly.
3. **AFFORDABLE HOUSING** – The Clerk had agreed with Ms Nicola Plumb from the District Council that she should attend a later meeting, since it had transpired that there would not be a full attendance of Parish Council members to this meeting. Ms Plumb will be invited to speak at the June meeting (the May meeting being the Parish Council's AGM).

**ACTION CLERK**

#### **FINANCE**

**Payments** – the following invoices were approved for payment.

4. Mrs M Bryant – office expenses/supplies from 25.02.05:to 27.03.05 (copy herewith): £25.46 (£23.34 net). Cheque No. 237.
5. E-on Energy – street lighting energy March 2005: £19.70 (£18.76 net). Cheque No. 238.
6. Maldon District Council – Dog waste bin installed March 2004: £64.93 (£55.00 net). Cheque No. 239.
7. The Ramblers' Association – annual subscription: £24.00. Cheque No.240.
8. P H Coote Ltd – further to Minute No. 417 of 3 March 2005 – extra payment of £100.00. Cheque No. 241. (This refers to Minute No. 417: - "P H Coote – repair of 3 no lamp heads (as Minute No 294[b] of 9 12.2004): £307.56 (£261.75 net). Cheque No. 232". The invoice had been miss-keyed as £100 less.)
9. Essex Wildlife Trust – membership renewal: £35.00. Cheque No. 242.
10. **Grass Cutting quotations**

Members had received quotations from three contractors. The Parish Council agreed that the contract for the grass cutting for Cold Norton for the 2005 season should be awarded to Mr. Bradley Faulkner, who should be asked to start as soon as possible.

**ACTION CLERK**

11. **Financial Statement** - not available, since April is the first month of the new financial year. The balances at bank are to be reported to the next meeting.

**ACTION CLERK**

12. **Quarterly grants consideration** – five letters had been distributed to members. It was agreed that consideration of these should be postponed until the May meeting.

**ACTION CLERK**

13. **Grant from Essex County Council of £1,000** – A letter had been received from the Leader of the County Council, confirming that the Parish Council "... will receive a grant of £1,000 either to improve your IT capacity where this option is preferred, or otherwise to support the work you are carrying out for your community. The E.A.L.C. will distribute this money directly to your council on our behalf early in the new financial year." The Parish Council agreed that a decision on how this money should be allocated should be deferred until after the appointment of the new Parish Clerk, in case the purchase of IT equipment should be needed at that time. The letter is to be copied to members for the next meeting.

**ACTION CLERK**

## PLANNING

14. **Maldon District Council Decisions** – a detailed list had been distributed to Members. A summary follows: -

- **FUL/MAL/04/00153. Three Rivers Golf and Country Club.** Retrospective application to retain telegraph poles and netting erected to prevent damage from stray golf balls, to houses and traffic. Parish Council recommendation had been “not harmful – approve” - March 2004 meeting. District Council Decision – APPROVED.
- **FUL/MAL/05/00141. Two Oaks 24 St Stephens Road.** Mr & Mrs D Barker. Two-storey side extension. Parish Council recommendation had been “not harmful – approve”. District Council decision. APPROVED.
- **FUL/MAL/05/00173. Stow Bullocks, Stow Road.** Mr & Mrs Nunney. Garden Wall. Parish Council recommendation had been to refuse consent – 3.3.05 meeting. District Council decision – REFUSED.
- **FUL/MAL/05/00051. Old Whitmans Farm Cottage, Hackmans Lane,** Purleigh. Jana Lynn. Additional use of residential property for the sale and breeding of up to 20 dogs. Parish Council recommendation had been “not harmful – approve” – 3.3.05.meeting. District Council decision - APPROVED.
- **ADV/MAL/05/00088. Great Canney Farm, Hackmans Lane,** Purleigh. Erection of 6m flagpole with flag displaying company logo (amended plans had also been received). Parish Council recommendation had been to refuse consent - 3.02.05 meeting. District Council decision - APPROVED.

**Planning Applications received by the Parish Council** – the following applications were considered, and the responses are as indicated: -

15. **FUL/MAL/05/00245. 14 Howe Green Road, Purleigh.** Mr B Baxter. Formation of dormers to provide room in roof space. Parish Council’s response – not harmful – approval recommended.

16. **FUL/MAL/05/00264. Gt Canney Farm, Hackmans Lane.** Change of use of unit for ancillary storage in connection with the operations of the adjacent unit for sale and distribution of electronic components. Parish Council’s response: –

*“Cold Norton Parish Council objects to the proposals contained in the above application and recommends that the District Council should REFUSE CONSENT.*

*Reasons for this recommendation are: -*

- *There is concern about the viability of the group of craft premises in that removing one would dilute that overall use - the remaining craft units may not survive without others around them.*
- *There is concern that the result could be a quasi-industrial estate with only one or two craft workshops*
- *This site, in its elevated position, is arguably the most sensitive site of Cold Norton.*
- *There is more general concern about the associated vehicle movements of warehouse storage.”*

17. **TPO/MAL/05/00330. 19 Station Crescent.** Graham Cornell. Fell Oak tree. Parish Council’s response: -

*“Cold Norton Parish Council objects to the proposal for felling an oak tree and to any removal of the TPO, as detailed in the above application, and recommends that the District Council should refuse consent. Although the Council would share the concern of the applicant with the damage to his property, a professional assessment of the causes of the damage and of the possible effect of the removal of the tree has not been provided.*

*However, the Parish Council would have no objection to necessary maintenance work on the tree, reduction of the canopy, or removal of surplus and damaged branches.”*

18. **AGR/MAL/05/00335. Land Off Burnham Avenue.** Blackwater Baling. Proposed storage barn for straw and hay. Weekly List dated 31.3.05. Parish Council’s response: -

*“When considering the above application, Cold Norton Parish Council repeats its previous views, i.e.: -*

*The Parish Council objects to the proposed building in the location and of the size indicated. The Parish Council therefore recommends that the District Council should REFUSE CONSENT, for the following reasons: -*

- *Choice of position: - There is concern about the proposed location, in the most prominent point of the field. The Parish Council is anxious to see that the visual amenity of the area is protected.*
- *It is anticipated that there is bound to be a track leading up to the proposed barn across the field.*
- *Size: - The proposed building seems to be disproportionately large for the size of the field, which leads the Parish Council to think that the barn may be used for agricultural products from other locations. There is consequently concern about increased road traffic along the soft-surfaced Burnham Avenue.*

- *The factors listed would all make the building visually intrusive.*

*However in discussions with the applicant it seems that he would be amenable to changing the location of the barn within the field and this is likely to result in a more favourable view from the Council."*

19. Letter from Government Office for the East of England – **Appeal by OCA UK Ltd against the refusal of consent to fell one ash and one oak tree at the front of 12 and 14 St Stephens Road.**

Prof. Barclay noted that if the agenda item was anything more than to receive a factual report, he would declare an interest. However the letter was purely factual. It was noted that the appeal had been dismissed. The letter will be circulated to members.

**ACTION CLERK**

**HIGHWAYS AND ROAD SAFETY**

20. **Essex County Council – Locally Determined Budget**

Further to a request from the Clerk, Sean Purcell of Essex County Council Highways and Transportation had sent a copy of the Locally Determined List, which had been updated in October 2004. Mr. Purcell confirmed that he will ensure that the Parish Council is sent a new copy of the list, when it goes to Maldon District Council committee in May.

Matters noted on the Locally Determined List just received: -

Shown as "being investigated": -

- "Latchingdon Road – Widen existing footway between bridge and Country Produce. Land acquisition required", and
- "Latchingdon Road – Zebra crossing near St Stephens Road. Funding from safer journeys to school."

Shown as "Yet to be started": -

- "Fambridge Road – Extend speed limit from Palepit to St Stephens." (See also Minute No. 23 below.)

The Clerk was asked to note to Mr. Purcell the Parish Council's understanding that in fact the zebra crossing has been agreed and is imminent.

**ACTION CLERK**

21. **Letter from Dengie Hundred Group of Parish Councils** – notifying of a meeting with Essex County Council and Police at the Parish Assembly of Mundon on Tuesday 17th May at 7 pm in the Victory Hall, Mundon. The Parish Council is to be reminded of this at the May meeting.

**ACTION CLERK**

22. **Request for 40mph speed limit to south of Palepit junction** – response from Essex County Council.

The letter confirmed the fact that the road does not meet the County Council's scoring criteria for a speed limit, and that *"It is possible that, if the entire area that is currently subject to a 40 mph speed limit was scored in accordance with the current policies, then they would not meet the current criteria"*

A letter from the Parish Council is to seek better warning signage for the junction of St Stephens Road with Fambridge Road, and also better management of the sight splays at that junction.

**ACTION CLERK**

23. **Traffic Management Strategy for Essex** – proposed presentation – letter from Maldon District Council plus District Council summary.

This Strategy is referred to in Minute No. 444 of 3 March 2005. The Clerk had distributed to members the summary of the Strategy, written and kindly provided by a District Council officer. A presentation on the document had been given by Rosemary Wilkins of the County Council on Tuesday 5 May 2005, attended by Mr. Archer, Mr. Cooper, and Mrs. Bryant, whose report was distributed to Parish Councillors at the 7 May meeting. A copy of this report will be **appended** to the file copy of these minutes. Two matters of particular relevance to Cold Norton were noted: -

- County routes – the Strategy says *"Upgrade all B roads to Quality Plan standard"* within 20 years – the Clerk had asked is this mandatory – e.g. the parish councils may not want the county route through Cold Norton and Stow Maries to be upgraded. Response: - this road is adequate for its purpose. The Clerk had therefore asked about the possibility of traffic calming on such a road, since the Strategy says *"motorised vehicular traffic will generally take precedence over the other modes on these routes"*. Response – there is flexibility on PR2 routes, and traffic calming is already being done on some.

- HGV bans – very difficult to police (cameras cannot be used – vehicles must be followed) – therefore they are resisted by the County Council.

The meeting was closed for a short time to allow P.c. Hughes to speak with the Parish Council members.

24. **VILLAGE HALL - REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES** - No report, since there had not been a recent meeting.

25. **Village Hall project**

The following points were noted/discussed with members

1. At the last Village Hall project meeting the Chairman suggested that a team of people is needed to help with the grant funding applications (that is in addition to the people needed to locally raise money).
2. Mrs. Dyer is producing a publicity leaflet to be delivered to each house in the village.
3. Although the Clerk is retiring, she confirmed that she is willing to take an active part in the grant fundraising (on a voluntary basis), and to that end she has made enquiries about what is available and when are the deadlines for applications.
4. The book that she had been asked to buy from the ACRE (Funding from Charitable Trusts for Village Halls and Community Centres”), has been revised, and will be available by mid-April, when a copy will be purchased. The Parish Council also confirmed that a second copy of Keith Derry’s book ““The Key to Successful Fundraising for Church and Community Projects” should be purchased.

**ACTION CLERK**

5. The Clerk regretted that Sue Moody from the RCC (who had been giving valuable advice on the Village Hall project and grant funding matter) is on long-term sick leave.
6. Lottery funding is undergoing change. Therefore since January 2005 it had been necessary to delay application – advice is that information will be available at the earliest end May, so cannot apply before June.
7. Maldon District Council application – estimates are required for this, which would cost as much as the District Council can give in grant funds. (This had been established after discussion with the architect.) Members suggested that the applications to such smaller grant funders should be delayed until after the lottery fund application result was known. The Clerk had been unable to ask this question of Sue Moody and, when she had discussed this with the architect, he had given the opposite advice. The Clerk will seek to clarify this.

**ACTION CLERK**

8. County Council grant – needs application by V.H.M.C. The contact person at County Council had been on annual leave, so the up-to-date situation cannot be checked, but the Clerk had information on file from 2003 indicating that security of tenure must be proved (by a lease for at least 28 years, for a peppercorn rent). Estimates for such a lease were provided. Councillors were of the firm view that the Village Hall Trust deed should suffice for this purpose. The Clerk recalled that the County Council had previously denied this suggestion, but she will enquire again when the County Council contact has returned from leave.

**ACTION CLERK**

9. A spreadsheet was distributed to members, detailing the amounts to be obtained from grant funders to meet the sum required under Option 1 (as 6.00 of Feasibility Study – see Minute No. 433 of 3 March 2005). The Clerk had added a separate column to indicate amounts potentially available after her discussions with grant funders. The sum that the architect had proposed in the Feasibility Study, by way of PWLB loan via the Parish Council, had also been included. The Parish Council asked that this sum be ignored, since no decision has yet been made on this.

**ACTION CLERK**

10. Village Hall Extension project: - It was agreed that Mr. Wakeling make a presentation about the extension scheme to the Annual Parish Meeting, which would confirm the approval of the scheme previously indicated by the public consultation. In the presentation he would seek offers of help in making grant-funding applications and in local fund-raising.

26. **VANDALISM/POLICE MATTERS**

Mrs. Allen reported that Village Hall users are suffering from noise caused when children kick balls against the Village Hall doors on the north side of the building. This is to be referred to the Village Hall Management Committee.

**ACTION V.H.M.C. REPRESENTATIVES**

27. **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT** – Both District Councillors were attending a full District Council meeting, therefore no report this month.

## OPEN SPACES

### 28. Nature Reserve

**Fencing** - A letter from Manor Fencing & Construction Ltd had been received confirming that Manor Fencing will "supply the materials for the works quoted on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2005, for the sum of £500.00 + VAT. This can be taken from the prize money of £500.00 as agreed."

**Sign** – Mr. Litscher displayed the sign for the Nature Reserve, manufactured at no cost to the Parish Council (letter of thanks required – Clerk to consult with Mr. Litscher).

**ACTION CLERK**

**Opening Ceremony** – The Parish Council decided to delay the opening ceremony until the week commencing 25 April 2005, so that arrangements can be made to include the local primary school. Mr. Alec Paul is to be invited to attend, and a presentation oak tree is to be purchased. An inspection of the site will be made and, if work is necessary, the newly appointed grass cutter will be asked if he would be able to include that work.

**ACTION CLERK**

Prof. Barclay offered to dig the hole for the tree, and to do some strimming, on Saturday 23 April, and would be grateful for help if others are available. Mrs. Allen had noticed a large oil drum that had been dumped on the site, and she kindly offered to ask her husband to remove this.

### 29. Playing Field

Mr. Wakeling noted that children are playing golf on the playing field (against the bye-laws). This is to be noted in the Beacon magazine.

**ACTION CLERK**

## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

### 30. Footpath along the disused railway line

A letter had been received from The Planning Inspectorate, confirming that the public inquiry will open at **10 a.m. on Tuesday 24 May 2005 at Maldon Town Football Club**, Park Drive, Maldon. The letter states "If you do intend to speak at the inquiry it will be helpful if you are able to send to the Council and me (for the Inspector), a written statement of the case which you plan to present at the Inquiry." Mr. Litscher and Mr. Wakeling are likely to attend – the Clerk will liaise with them.

**ACTION CLERK**

31. Essex County Council letter – **Parish Paths Partnership** – informal presentation on Wednesday 18 May in The Training Room at Maldon District Council at 7 pm. The letter was passed to Mr. Wakeling.

32. **Footpath 26** – Mr. Wakeling reported that in the location near to North Fambridge Hall Wood, the bridge over the ditch needs repair, and the hedge badly need cutting back: - County Council to be informed.

**ACTION CLERK**

### 33. **VILLAGE CARETAKER**

It was noted that no applications have yet been received for this post, despite advertisements. The Clerk is to enquire with the newly-appointed grass cutting contractor whether he would quote an hourly rate for (e.g.) lopping trees and other gardening-type work.

**ACTION CLERK**

### 34. **NEW CLERK**

The Chairman reported that there have been three applicants for this post. The Parish Council agreed that interviews should take place in the near future, with the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, and Mr. Wakeling forming the interview panel. It was agreed that their subsequent recommendation could be conveyed to other Parish Council members (electronically where possible) to seek agreement prior to 27 April, to enable the appointee to take part in the briefing detailed below. If this timescale is not possible, then the panel's recommendation will come before the May meeting.

Essex Association of Local Council are holding the following briefing - "new Local Government Conditions of Service/Salary Scale", to be held on Wednesday 27 April – cost £10 per delegate. The Parish Council agreed that the new Clerk (if appointed) and the outgoing clerk should attend (necessary expenses to payable).

**ACTION CLERK**

35. **COLD NORTON'S WEBSITE**

It was noted that the most recent Parish Council reports have been included.

36. **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION** – The Clerk had entered Cold Norton into the Best Kept Village competition, by completing the Community Profile form and the entry form. However she had written to explain that she had not done the newly associated DEFRA Questionnaire, because she felt it unreasonable to answer what appeared to be many of the same questions again, especially when some seemed to have some politically correct agenda not relevant to life in Cold Norton – e.g. “*What is the attitude of your community to overseas visitors, people of ethnic minorities and seasonal workers?*” Parish Council members expressed support of the Clerk’s decision, and were satisfied to note that nevertheless the entry from Cold Norton had been accepted.

37. **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Maldon District Council Workshop offering guidance in the completion of application forms for Premises Licence Club Premises Certificates and Personal Licences (copied to the Village Hall Management Committee).
- Maldon District Council – Walks Diary April 2005 – copied to Parish Council members.
- Letter from Moat Housing Group – 10th Anniversary Celebrations
- Letter from RCC enclosing leaflet re event on Monday 25 April 2005 “Planning for Communities – Making the Links”.

38. **TRAFALGAR WEEKEND** – 21<sup>st</sup> to 23rd October 2005. Nothing further to report (registration had been done, and information had been circulated).

39. **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** on Tuesday 3 May

Final arrangements were approved. The Village Hall Management Committee will hold their AGM immediately before the Annual Parish Meeting. Publicity leaflets to be delivered to each home in the parish. Refreshments to be organised. Architect Mr. Bill Haward is to be asked if he can supply his display material. Mrs. Garnham had offered to provide display boards for this purpose. Framed scroll for presentation to Mr. Paul is to be organised. Mr Litscher was asked to bring the cup awarded by the EPCPA to the meeting. It was noted that the Parish Council would wish the Annual Parish Meeting to be totally non-political, despite the fact that it is to be held just two days prior to a general election.

**ACTION CLERK**

40. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** (“*Members are reminded that no decisions may lawfully be made under this agenda item - however matters may be discussed which involve exchanges of information only.*”)

A notice regarding lack of change to charges for the Beacon magazine was noted. The Parish Council is of the view that this magazine is extremely good value for money and that, in view of the fact that raises money for the church (and considering that a proportion of the parish precept is used for this purpose), it is to be suggested to the P.C.C. that there may be some merit in a small increase in the (presently) very minimal price.

**ACTION CLERK**

41. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:** - Dates scheduled are: - Thursday 5 May (and AGM), Thursday 2 June, Thursday 7 July, Thursday 4 August (if there is an August meeting), Thursday 1 September, Thursday 6 October, Thursday 3 November, and Thursday 1 December.