

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

From the January 2021 Meeting

Parish Council Meetings: at present these are being held remotely by ZOOM. Local councils have the powers to hold public meetings remotely by using video or telephone conferencing technology currently until 7th May 2021, so until this time PC meetings will continue to be held remotely by ZOOM. However, the process of delegated power still applies, so some decisions may still be made through this process and then ratified at the next PC meeting. Delegated power has been granted to the Clerk, who is the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer of the Parish Council (Current Legislation States: *Responsibility for the performance of statutory functions and powers of a Local Council may be delegated to its staff (Local Government Act 1972 S101 (1) (a))*). This does not mean that the Clerk is making the decisions, but essentially this means that the Clerk emails to the Cllrs information relating to a decision to be made/opinion to be given – the Cllrs email back their opinion and the Clerk then makes the appropriate response, which as in meetings would be based on the majority opinion.

County Cllr Report: County Cllr Mrs Channer regularly sends Parish Councils reports from ECC – the latest had been sent on 11th January 2021. At the meeting County Cllr Mrs Channer just highlighted a couple of topics from the latest report, namely that the MDC offices are used as a vaccination centre and that she is immensely proud of the way that ECC was handling matters relating to COVID-19 and expressed thanks to the District and Parish Councils for all their assistance and for co-ordinating volunteer groups. County Cllr Mrs Channer also reminded Members that both MDC and ECC are now in the process of setting budgets for the next financial year.

The following were not raised at the meeting but were included in the report and may be of interest: Essex County Council is providing extra funding to city, districts and boroughs in the county to help people who need to self-isolate to stay at home. Essex County Council's Covid-19 contact tracing service, which operates with the help of partners in city, borough and district councils in Essex, is proving to be a huge success with 86 per cent of cases closed and 93 per cent of contacts traced. Essex County Council launched ahead of Christmas, a Christmas free school meals programme and sent out vouchers to parents of eligible children and to qualifying young people. It meant the families of 35,000 children and young people had £30 per child to spend on food over the two-week holiday. A Government grant has been awarded to Essex County Council and seven of the county's city, district and borough councils to install insulation and energy efficient heating in Essex homes. To be eligible for up to £10,000 grant, homes to be improved should be currently rated as Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) E, F or G and the household income below £30,000. Residents can check their eligibility for the funding and, if applicable, apply for the grant by emailing Aran Insulation at info@arangroup.co.uk or calling 0800 587 7795. A new £1million loan fund to help business during the current Covid-19 restrictions has been unlocked thanks to a £200,000 investment from Essex County Council. Businesses in Essex which need financial support are urged to apply to this loan fund, which has been specifically ring-fenced for use by firms in the county. Love Essex is set for a busy start to 2021. Late January will see the introduction of a series of short educational films which will inform viewers on how to compost at home, and why it is important to do so.

If you would like a full copy of the ECC report, please contact the Clerk.

Planning Applications: Two planning applications were considered by the Parish Council at this meeting, namely: 20/011871/WTPO PP-09248271 31 St Stephens Road: Oak T1 reduce by 2 metres; remove deadwood. The Members had no Objections to these works providing they are in line with the MDC Tree Officer. The second application considered was: 20/01348/COUPA PP-093588771 Barn at Little Cooks, Lower Burnham Road: change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling house. The Members had no objections.

Appeal Decisions: Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/D/20/3255400 Application No19/01270/FUL: Oakwood Manor, Station Road: Proposal: Section 73A application for the siting of 2 No. mobile homes. Appeal dismissed.
Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/D/20/3245694 Application No19/01013/OUT: Land adjacent Glen Loy, Latchingdon Road: Proposal: Outline application for one detached dwelling and garage with all matters reserved except for access. Appeal dismissed.

Planning Decisions: (covering the period w/e 11th December 2020 to w/e 8th January 2021): there were 4 decisions advised by Maldon District Council (MDC) during this period, namely: COUPA/MAL/20/01054 Barn at Little Cooks, Lower Burnham Road: Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to Dwelling houses (Class C3), and for building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion. MDC had advised Planning Application required and refused (the Parish Council had no objected to this application). WTPO/MAL/20/00826 Honfleur, 2 Ferris Avenue: T1 Horse Chestnut - Reduce back from building by 1.5m, crown lift to 5m. T2 Oak - Reduce back from building by 2m, crown lift to 5m. T3 Hawthorn - Removal of dead wood and reduction of height by 1.5m. MDC approved these works (the PC had not objected). HOUSE/MAL/20/01046 Anholt 64 Latchingdon Road: Raise the existing roof ridge height, pitched roof front and rear dormers and additional gable front extension and rear extension and external alterations, and proposed double garage. MDC approved these works (the PC had not objected). PDE/MAL/20/01202 1 Clarke Rise: Proposed single storey rear extension with a flat roof and roof lantern which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 5m, height to the eaves would be 2.90m and the maximum height would be 3.10m. MDC refused planning permission (the PC had not been invited to comment on this – supplied for information only)

Planning applications and decisions: if you would like to see full details of any planning application, please contact the Maldon District Council offices on 01621 854477 or visit the web site www.maldon.gov.uk .

Precept 2021-2022: Prior to the PC meeting in December the Parish Council was in the happy position of not needing to request an increase in precept this year. Unfortunately, this position changed due to the need to give financial support to the Village Hall. During the pandemic, all income generating activity in the hall (clubs, classes etc) ceased apart from Pre School, therefore income has drastically reduced. At the same time, just as with homes and business premises, bills have needed to continue to be paid for the property and maintenance carried out. The hall was eligible for a £10,000 Grant of which some remains at present.

As it is uncertain when current restrictions will be eased sufficiently to allow a return to normal use of the Village Hall, the Parish Councillors therefore decided that an

increase in precept this year is necessary to have funds available to financially support the village hall if required. In making the calculation it has been assumed that 'normal activity' may not resume until at least September of this year (2021); £7,000 has been allowed for in the budget as possible support for the Village Hall.

The precept for this year has therefore been set at £38,189 an increase of £7,106 over last year; the portion of the council tax for Cold Norton for a band D property will be £76.77, as opposed to £62.26 last year - an increase of £1.21 per calendar month (or £1.45 if council tax payments are made over 10 months).

If some, or all, of the money set aside in the budget for the Village Hall is not required, this will be reflected in the precept calculation for the financial year 2022/2023; therefore, provided there are no further unexpected calls for finance, the precept figure would be reduced.

Vacancies on the Parish Council: these have now been filled. Mr Tim Dixon and Mr Phil Jacklin were unanimously co-opted onto the Parish Council and will join the other Cllrs at the February meeting. Your seven Parish Cllrs are now therefore: Brian Haydon (Chairman), Mrs Marion Gunn (Vice Chairman), Alex Romang, Jeremy Richardson, Mrs Joanne Luck, Tim Dixon and Phil Jacklin.

Power Cuts: the Members discussed and, whilst it is understood that the fault that caused major disruption over the Christmas and New Year period has been rectified, it was agreed that the Clerk should write to UK Power Network about this recent issue and to ask UKPN why the village has 'suffered' over a long time scale from many power cuts of varying time periods, and if this can be rectified long term.

Recycling Bags/.Green Food Waste Bags: As the village hall is closed if you need either pink or green recycling bags, please email the Parish Clerk: mariadyr30@yahoo.co.uk or the Chairman: brian.haydon@btinternet.com

Cold Norton Hub: The Hub is still here if you need help with shopping/posting letters or parcels/collecting prescriptions/dog walking/someone to talk to. Please contact Brian Haydon: telephone: 01621 829599; email: brian.haydon@btinternet.com or Maria Dyer: telephone: 01621 829566; email: mariadyr30@yahoo.co.uk

Maldon Community Coronavirus Response: this is also still operating; contact number is: 01621 851997.

Playground & Car Park (PCP) Project: see separate article in this issue.

Highways or Public Right of Way (Footpath) Issues: whilst the Parish Council will report these matters to ECC Highways when made aware of an issue, residents can report issues relating to footpaths or other highways issues (e.g. potholes, road signs, vegetation etc.) direct to highways via: <http://www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads.aspx>

Street Lights on Latchingdon Road: these belong to the Parish Council, so if you notice one isn't working please contact the Clerk.

Footpath Map: there is a full colour map which shows all the Public Rights of Way in our Village. If you would like a copy of this, please contact the Clerk and one will be popped through your letterbox (just keep your distance from other walkers).

Parish Council Meetings in 2021:

Wednesdays 3rd February, 3rd March, 7th April, 5th May, 2nd June, 7th July,
1st September, 6th October, 3rd November, 1st December.

These will be conducted remotely by ZOOM until further notice.

Members of the Public and Press are cordially invited to attend the meeting.

For log in details, meeting ID and password please contact the Clerk by email:
mariadyr30@yahoo.co.uk by 5.30pm before the meeting.

Annual Parish Meeting 2021: date still to be set, subject to COVID-19 restrictions.

To contact the Parish Council: please write to: The Parish Clerk (Maria Dyer), at Exordium, 30b Latchingdon Road, Cold Norton, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 6JG.

Email: mariadyr30@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01621 829566. Please note the Clerk works part time and will respond as soon as possible.