

Dear Takeley and Little Canfield Residents

I do hope that you are keeping safe and well. By the time you read this at the start of March we will know much more about how life is going to be for the next few months. We will be looking forward to pupils returning to school, to having a timeline for vaccinations and a timetable for gradually coming out of lockdown.

I must thank my Parish Clerks and Chairmen for all their work over the last few months with numerous flood issues, road closures, planning issues.. they all give so much of their time to keep residents informed and get problems sorted out. Many of them have children to be home schooled too! Road closures, particularly for Broadband installation have caused disruption across the area and very frustrating where residents already have alternative broadband provision. I have reported issues in Barnston and Dunmow and in White Roding where unfortunately the reinstatement of the pavement or verge has not been done well and we have instructed the company to return and make good.

Thank you too to all the volunteers. Across Essex in the latest shutdown 2500 people have volunteered to help at test and vaccination centres. Others continue to work quietly in the community making sure that young families, the elderly and vulnerable are alright. Thank you to you all.

The Highways panel meets in early March and looks to allocate funding to projects across the District. There have been three issues put forwards in Takeley which are speed limit signage on the south bound side of the B183 approaching the bridge, the relocation of the Bus Stop on Hall Road serving Molehill Green and concerns over drivers not slowing down for the Roding Drive Roundabout where a " build out" is being considered. In Little Canfield concerns have been raised about the speed and inappropriate overtaking on the B1256 as you leave the Dunmow West junction.

Council Tax meetings have been held at Uttlesford and at Essex. In Uttlesford the administration have increased Council tax by the maximum of £5 per band D property. This equates to 3.19%. At Essex the Conservatives have not increased Council Tax but are looking increase the Social Care precept by 1.5%. It has been a difficult budget to set with so much uncertainty on Council Tax and Business Rates income.

May 6th will bring local elections and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's election postponed from last year. Many will not have been vaccinated and I imagine there will still be social distancing measures in place. Councils are being given extra resources to assist with these. I am told you will be asked to take your own pen to the Polling Station! If you are concerned about voting in person you can, of course, apply for a Postal vote. These can be downloaded from the website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote> and then need to be sent back to Uttlesford District Council. Postal vote papers will be sent out around 16th April.

If there are any issues I can help with then please do get in touch

Susan Barker

Essex County Council susan.barker@essex.gov.uk 01245 23125