



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2007 at the Parish Office

Present: Councillors D. Whiteing (Chairman), A. Keeler (Vice Chairman),
S. Berlyn (ex officio), D. Bolwell, J. Langley, J Thomson,
M. Wood (ex officio)

In attendance: Assistant Clerk, Facilities and Mr J Bowen

Public Question time Five Members of the Public were present

The following items were brought to the Council's attention:-

- Follow up meeting re the new medical centre – is there going to be one arranged and when / Intentions for use of existing medical centre site – are these known yet / Are there any proposals for change of use
- Proposed resurfacing of car parks and whether they are going to be marked out to increase efficiency with more car parking spaces / If project does not go forward what would be the alternatives
- PC Agendas and when they appear on notice boards and web site

63 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

64 Declarations of Interest.

Cllr J Wells declared a prejudicial interest in item 47.2.8 due to resident who has written to the Parish Council being a customer of her business.

65 Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 17th October 2007

Minute 58 re New Tetra Pak Recycling Scheme under this item should read 'A new beverage 'carton' recycling scheme had been introduced by Chelmsford Borough Council.

RESOLVED: that the amendment be noted and Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th October 2007 were approved and duly signed as a correct record.

66 Footpaths

66.1 Parish Paths Partnership

Cllr Bolwell had nothing further to report.

66.2 Footpath 18 The Heights to Beaumont Park

Clerk had chased this item again. The site would again be included in the maintenance programme for 2008 – 2009 and would have to stand against all other maintenance schemes and would be judged on classification and degree of repairs. Cllr Bolwell confirmed that the steps could be hazardous in icy weather, and felt that this matter should be raised as a health and safety issue following concerns raised by officers that they were dangerous in icy weather. All members agreed.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk contact Essex County Highways again raising this matter now as a health and safety issue.

66.3. Footpath 19

Members considered the response from Essex County Council and the Guidance Note on the upkeep of Elm Hedges.

Members felt that Essex County Council had given a very full response, and it did not raise any more questions, and the guidance note was enlightening.

Cllr Bolwell confirmed that hedge management had now been undertaken, there were no problems with the footpath, and the matter should now be considered closed.

Cllr M Wood proposed that Essex County Council's response be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs J Wells and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED: that Essex County Council's response be accepted.

66.4 Footpath 17

The Footpaths Officer had re-checked this area and maintained that the area was solid and level and therefore was not a priority at the moment. Should this section of path be resurfaced in the future it was felt that the area through the Church grounds should be completed which would require the permission of the Church. Matter had been referred to St Johns Church to decide whether any further action be taken, and it had been confirmed by the warden that it was not a problem at the moment and would continue to monitor.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

66.5 Footpath behind St Cleres

Several trees had been sawn off along this footpath and no one could ascertain who had carried out the work.

It was agreed that this was not a footpath issue.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

67 Highways Matters

67.1 Community Speed Watch

The Clerk had approached Woodham Walter Parish Council who were prepared to share the speed gun. The Clerk had also contacted the resident who was prepared to help and he was still willing to, but may only assist with the rotas. Essex Police had confirmed that the device at Woodham Walter could be shared, and also that they would fund 4 reflective jackets and 2 Community Speed Watch Signs plus a 3 hour training session. A minimum of 6 volunteers would be required at the road side on the following speed limits during the hours of daylight – 30mph and 40 mph. A request had been made for volunteers in the Danbury Times, that was currently being delivered to Danbury residents.

A decision by Resources was yet to be confirmed regarding the reduced budget for 2008 – 2009.

RESOLVED: to keep this item on the agenda.

67.2 List of Roads for Repair

67.2.1 Junction of Southview Road and Woodhill Road – stated would not occur in this financial year.

RESOLVED: Members considered this should be escalated

67.2.2 Woodhill Road which did not receive attention under A414 Roadworks – stated would not occur in this financial year
RESOLVED: To be kept on Agenda

67.2.3 Little Baddow Road including Eves Corner (2008 – 2009 Budget).
RESOLVED: To be kept on agenda.

67.2.4 The Ridge Little Baddow is being completed (2007 – 2008 Budget).
RESOLVED: To be kept on agenda

67.2.5 Millfields and Mill Lane where potholes developing – this has now been done.
RESOLVED: To be removed from Agenda

67.2.6 Gay Bowers Lane/Mill Lane lack of yellow lines at the end of the pavement. Hashed white lines to be painted across Gay Bowers Lane.
RESOLVED: To be kept on Agenda.

All the above items had been chased with the Essex County Highways.

The following roads for repair had not appeared on this agenda :-

- a) Elm Green Lane – although unclassified does have a lot of traffic
- b) Riffhams Lane – had been resurfaced but still large hole in the middle which fills with water.

Members considered that individuals should raise individual concerns and would probably get a better response from ECC / BC than PC.

- c) Outside Vicarage had been resurfaced, but there was a large hole on the other side of the speed bump near the entrance to the funeral directors who had said they would keep an eye on the roads.

Members considered this area should go on a list for investigation and that a sub-list was needed.

Members considered that Woodhill and Southview needed to be escalated.

- RESOLVED: that a) the above items to be included on next agenda as matters for investigation and part of a sub-list
b) Woodhill Road and Southview Road to be escalated.

67.2.7 Verge Defects Butts Lane

The verge defects in Butts Lane have now been repaired.

67.2.8 Griffin Hill

A resident had written to the Parish Council regarding the limited vision for traffic coming up the hill and requesting signage. The Clerk had written to Essex County Highways, apparently there is a list throughout the County where flashing signs are being installed, but it is not thought that this area is on the list as speed has not been an issue in this area.

The Chairman read extracts from the resident's letter to members, and also Essex County Highways' response. It was agreed that this was a County Highways matter and there was nothing that the Parish Council could do.

RESOLVED: Clerk to write to resident confirming that the matter had been discussed by members who agreed that there was nothing that the Parish Council could do as this was a County Highways matter.

68 Quarries

68.1 St Clere's Hall

The Clerk had contacted Chelmsford Borough Council and Essex County Council regarding the condition of the A414 and to date no written replies had been received. Although verbally it had been ascertained that there were no wheel washing facilities at the plant and that there were two companies based on the site. Further reports of debris on the road had been received from Members of the Parish Council, one who sustained a cracked windscreen caused by a stone from that stretch of road.

Members commented that there had been a tremendous increase in the number and size of the lorries travelling between St Cleres and the A12, and having received a Gold Award for the company should be more responsible.

Members felt that with mud and stones on the road this was a health and safety issue and the Parish Council should now write to Essex County Council Licensing citing health and safety.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk write formally to the Essex County Council Licensing citing the health and safety issues that the owners of the quarry are creating by wheels and the backs of lorries not being washed before leaving the site, leaving mud on the road and loose stones such as pea shingle falling off the tail gates, and the road not being swept and cleaned by them regularly.

68.2 Royal Oak Quarry - nothing further to report

68.3 Sandon Quarry - nothing further to report

69 Parishes Transportation Group

69.1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th October, 2007 were circulated.

69.2 The next meeting to be held at Danbury Parish Council on Tuesday 8th January to be chaired by Cllr S Berlyn.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

70 Bus Shelters

70.1 Bus Shelter at Eves Corner by the Pond

Clerk had confirmed roof planks had now been repaired, but had cost more because they had become worse since first inspected and quotation to repair given. Cost was £350 instead of £250, and this additional cost was ratified by the committee.

RESOLVED: that the cost of the roof plank repairs in the bus shelter a Eves corner be ratified.

70.2 Bus Shelter at The Avenue (Maldon side)

This item had been chased again with Essex County Highways.

70.3 Power to Bus Shelter outside Service Station (Chelmsford side)

This item had been chased again with Essex County Highways

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

71 Neighbourhood Action Panel

71.1. This was a resolution was put forward to Parish Council from Facilities

Cllr A Allen proposed, and Cllr D Powell seconded that the Parish Council agree in principal to the provision of a Youth Shelter, subject to equipment being acceptable to Danbury Parish Council and in a location which is acceptable to the Parish Council.

It had also been decided to leave a budget figure out for the “teen shelter” and to attempt to apply for grants.

RESOLVED: that Facilities Committee request Parish Council on the 5th December, 2007 to approve the above proposal.

A letter had been received from Section Inspector of Essex Police at South Woodham Ferrers and this was circulated at the meeting for members to consider and respond.

71.2 NAP Meeting

Cllr Langley reported on Meeting of 31st October, 2007. He had attended without knowledge of a formal agenda. The chairmanship of meeting he attended was unclear. There were a mixture of issues raised at the meeting, that should have been an informal meeting and not Parish Council issues.

Youths had been asking direct questions to Cllr Langley about a youth shelter. The PCSO had undertaken to write the minutes, but he had not seen them and was not sure that they had been done. There were action points that were not on an agenda.

Cllr S Berlyn was unhappy about the time of the next meeting, which he thought was at 5pm – asked to be reminded by e mail date and time of next meeting.

RESOLVED: that a) at the Parish Council Meeting on the 5th December a decision would be made regarding the proposal to provide a youth shelter.

b) Cllr Langley to be clear prior to attending future meetings of the following:

- i) Minutes of previous meeting
- ii) Agenda
- iii) Who was attending
- iv) Whether PC were prepared to provide a youth shelter and where it was to be sited.

c) to defer response to Inspector Killgillan until after the PC Meeting on the 5th to determine and ratify decision and response to letter.

72 Street Light Belvedere Area

This had been forward by the Neighbourhood Action Panel. There had been no specific lighting request for the area, just that it was dark and it had been one of a number of issues on a ‘wish list’ that had been compiled by NAP in a brainstorming session.

Members confirmed that £2,000 had been requested, but Resources had removed and there was therefore no budget to fund this.

RESOLVED: that NAP were made aware that we do not have any budget for street lighting as this is an Essex County Council responsibility.

73 Environmental Awards 2007

Correspondence had been received from Clive Willey thanking the Parish Council for putting forward his name for the award. He received an Award Certificate, a bagful of items with the theme of recycling and an unexpected Argos voucher for £25.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

74 Defra Ways to Tackle Climate Change

Cllr Thomson reported on the booklet which had been received from Defra, that contained a lot of information and statistics. There was a section on 'Taking Action by Parish Councils':-

- a) Solar Public Lighting - public areas / bus shelters. Another PC had received a 'Good Lighting Award' and we should find more information about this from the website
- b) Ground Force Heat Pumps – with an example of a Parish that had used this. It was environmentally friendly and cheap to run – car parks project was mentioned.
- c) Encouraging Local People – there is a website with more information
- d) Working with Partners – planning committees (quoting another council)
- e) Various – some relevant to Environment / Facilities / Planning

There was then much discussion and debate between Members about Climate Change.

It was also suggested that solar lighting could be considered within the Car Parking project.

Cllrs D Bolwell and J Thomson proposed that a copy of the Defra Booklet be issued to all Parish Councillors as it was an important issue, and would give members time to read it and make comment at the next Environment Committee Meeting. Item to be put on the next Environment Agenda – under the heading 'Environmental / Climate Change Issues'.

Some matters may be passed to Planning.

RESOLVED: that Clerk would obtain copies for all Councillors and J Bowen, and Environmental/ClimateChange item be put on future Agendas for further discussion as it is such an important issue.

75 Danbury Common

Correspondence had been received from the National Trust regarding a resolution to cycling issues on Danbury Common off Copt Hill and keeping Danbury Parish Council informed. A copy of the letter had been sent to members for comment.

The National Trust Coast and Countryside Adviser, who had experience of similar situations across the country had visited the site, and had suggested that The National Trust adopt the approach that various others had taken. That, with strict

conditions, rather than opposing and trying to stop these activities, The National Trust should embrace them by providing areas for this kind of countryside recreation.

Cllr S Berlyn proposed and Cllr D Bolwell seconded that the Parish Council support the Initiative. 8 were in favour, 1 against.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council support the initiative that, with strict conditions, rather than opposing and trying to stop these activities, The National Trust should embrace them by providing areas for this kind of countryside recreation.

76 Trees Triangle Gay Bowers and Capons Lane

This item had been referred from Planning Committee held on 5th November, 2007 Minute 181.1.

No Planning Application had been received as yet. Parish Council had approached the Tree Preservation Officer at Chelmsford Borough Council who ascertained the name and address of the owner and contact had been made and no planning development had been planned at the present time. This item had also been reported to Planning Committee on 19th November, 2007. Further correspondence had been received from Chelmsford Borough Council stating that there had been no breach of Planning Control.

Members considered that it was illegal to remove hedgerows, and that the Parish Council should write to Chelmsford Borough Council, quoting the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, and stating that there had been a breach of the regulations on the Hedgerow at the Triangle of land at Gay Bowers and Capons Lane.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council should write to Chelmsford Borough Council, quoting the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, and stating that there had been a breach of the regulations on the Hedgerow at the Triangle of land at Gay Bowers and Capons Lane.

77 Travel Plan for St John's Church of England Primary

77.1 Essex County Council had confirmed that signs relating to large goods vehicles would be erected.

Members asked for further clarification on where the signs were to be placed as Butts Lane was unsuitable for goods vehicles.

RESOLVED: that further clarification on the intended signs be obtained from ECC and item put on next agenda.

77.2 Also that the re-lining of the waiting restrictions would be pursued and completed.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

77.3 Letter had been received from a resident regarding Traffic Calming measures in Little Baddow Road, asking for Parish Council support to the suggestions.

The Chairman asked the committee's views to the suggested traffic calming measures. Councillors had visited the site and the committee agreed that they could not see a need for traffic calming measures, and did not see this as a solution to any

of the current problems. It was proposed that the Parish Council would like evidence of speeding before they could commit monies. It was considered that if traffic calming were put in it could become a safety issue for the children who attended the Primary School and that the situation could not be compared with Sandon as that was a Secondary School.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council respond to residents letter advising that:-

- i) Councillors had visited the site and the committee agreed that they could not see a need for traffic calming measures,
- ii) did not see this as a solution to any of the current problems,
- iii) Parish Council would like evidence of speeding before they could commit monies
- iv) it was considered that if traffic calming were put in it could become a safety issue for the children who attended the Primary School and that the situation could not be compared with Sandon that was a Secondary School.

78 Arqiva Emissions Report

Cllr Bolwell reported that he was reasonably happy with the report in the light of additional information he had received.

RESOLVED: that this would be confirmed in a letter he was putting together.

79 Matters for Report

Cllr Woods reported Fly Tipping on Dial Common, and an Oak Tree that had been taken down in Hopping Jacks Lane.

80 Date of Meetings for 2008

9th January, 5th March, 16th April, 11th June, 3rd September, 15th October, 3rd December.

Cllr D Whiting, Chairman asked that on the next Agenda the Committee elect a new Chairman of Environment, as he had been elected Chairman of Resources following the death of Cllr J Brooks.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55 pm.

D Whiteing
Chairman

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Signed

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Date