

7 Minutes of 19th March and 14th April 2008

The minutes of these two meetings were considered. Minute 161.3 of the meeting held on 19th March 2008 was amended to show the cost of roof repairs at the Sports & Social Centre as £2,500 not £25,000.

RESOLVED:

- a) that, with the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting on 19th March 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record;
- b) that the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 14th April 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record.

8 Appointment of Committees and Working Groups

Council reviewed and agreed the membership of Council committees and working groups, including the appointment of non-Council members where applicable. Cllr Freeman's appointment to Committees was deferred until the next meeting to allow him time to decide where his interests lay.

RESOLVED: that the appointment of Councillors and others to serve on Committees and working groups be agreed as shown in Appendix A.

9 Appointment of Representatives on outside bodies

RESOLVED: that the appointment of Councillors and others to serve as representatives on outside bodies be agreed as shown in Appendix B.

10 Annual Parish Meeting on 21st April 2008 – public questions

Council received details of the questions raised at the Annual Meeting by members of the public. Most of these had been answered at the time, including one relating to a pilot scheme to reduce street lighting overnight which had been answered by County Councillor Peter Martin. There were two items to be followed up by the Parish Council – these concerned the future of the Old Tea Rooms at Runsell Green, and the possible redevelopment of garages in Rumsey Fields by the Chelmer Housing Partnership. The Clerk confirmed that enquiries were in hand.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

Cllr Berlyn left the meeting temporarily at this point to receive an urgent phone call, and the Chair was taken by the Vice-Chairman.

11 Parish Councillors' Allowances

Further to Minute 70 of the meeting of the Council held on 28th January 2004, members considered whether they wished to change the current policy of not paying allowances to councillors. It was noted that no monies had been budgeted for allowances in 2008-09.

RESOLVED: that the present policy of not paying allowances to councillors be continued.

In response to a question, it was clarified that this decision did not affect Councillors right to claim travelling expenses incurred on Council business.

Cllr Berlyn returned and resumed Chairmanship of the meeting.

12 Review of Parish Plan 2003

Cllr Alan Wells, who had agreed to take the project forward, presented a report on his research and this was discussed. The review group would be a village body and would need its own bank account. As the RCCE had lost its funding for Field Officers it could no longer provide help and advice free of charge. Other matters discussed included insurance implications and the possibility of the Group's applying to an outside body such as Awards For All for a grant. Members noted that the Parish Council has already earmarked £1,500 in its reserves as a grant to the Group. Cllr Wells agreed to seek advice from the Council's bankers on the banking arrangements, and the Clerk would set up a meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk and Cllr A Wells arrange to meet with a representative of Barclays Bank to seek advice on banking facilities for the Review Group.

13 Tennis Club Lease

No further contact had yet been received from the Club regarding the lease. The information was noted.

14 Reports from village organisations

14.1 Landisdale Charity: Cllr Keeler reported that the last meeting of the Committee had been postponed following the death of one of the residents;

14.2 Danbury Society: Cllr Bolwell said that the Society had agreed to pay a small sum each year towards the cost of the Christmas Tree at Eves Corner. The Chairman asked Cllr Bolwell to convey the Council's thanks to the Society;

14.3 Twining Association: Cllr Whiteing informed members that on the coming weekend Danbury would be hosting a visiting group of 15 people from Altenglan. A number of activities had been arranged for the visitors. Cllr Whiteing noted that the number of people prepared to make and host the biennial exchange visits was falling as members grew older, and the future of the Association was uncertain;

14.4 Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr Whiteing reported that email bulletins had been resumed. PCSO Linda Samways was now back on duty after sick leave.

14.5 Neighbourhood Action Panel (Police): The Clerk reported that the last meeting had not been properly advertised. A timetable of future meetings was now being set.

15 Publicity

15.1 Danbury Times: Cllr Wood invited members to put forward ideas and suggestions for consideration by the Publicity Group when planning the next issue of the newsletter;

15.2 Danbury visitor leaflet: :The Publicity Group would be reviewing the leaflet in September in case a reprint was required;

15.3 Medical Centre planning application: The leaflet publicising the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on 19th May had been available at the Annual Parish Meeting and had now been delivered to all households and businesses in the village.

15.4 Request for article about the Parish Council: The Council had been asked to submit an article on its main achievements to go in a book looking at the main accomplishments of Quality Parish Councils in Essex. The article and an accompanying photo was needed this month for publication in September by EALC.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk and Cllr Wood agree an appropriate article for Danbury.

15.5 Publicity event at the RHS Garden, Hyde Hall: The Council had been offered the opportunity of a display table at Hyde Hall on the morning of Friday 23rd May 2008 as part of a publicity event organised by the Essex Tourism Association. Cllr Wood offered to attend with publicity material on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Wood's offer to represent the Council at the event on 23rd May be accepted with thanks.

16 Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2008-09

Council considered the appointment of an Internal Auditor for the current year, and noted that the External Auditor had been appointed by the Audit Commission.

RESOLVED:

a) that Messrs Heelis & Lodge be appointed as the Council's Internal Auditors for the municipal year 2008-09;

b) that the appointment by the Audit Commission of Mr Alun Williams, of its Limited Assurance Specialist Unit, as the Council's External Auditor for a five-year period commencing with the 2007-08 accounts be noted.

17 Appointment of Solicitor for 2008-09

The Council's solicitors for a number of years had been Messrs Hill & Abbott and it was proposed that they be reappointed. Cllr Powell suggested that the appointment should be reviewed every so often and alternative quotations sought to ensure good value. It was agreed that this be done before the 2009-10 municipal year.

RESOLVED:

a) that Messrs Hill & Abbott be appointed as the Council's solicitors for 2008-09;

b) that alternative quotations be obtained before the Annual Council meeting in May 2009.

Note: Following the meeting the Clerk checked the financial regulations. Solicitors are specifically exempted from the requirement to put contracts out to competitive tender – see paragraph 11.1 a(ii).

18 Drainage/ Car Parking Project

18.1 A report on the current position of Phase 1 and Phase 2 was received, including revised dates for the tendering process for Phase 2. There would be an Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm on Wednesday 18th June 2008 to appoint a contractor for Phase 2.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

18.2 At the request of Cllr Powell, the agreed 'wish list' of works to Dawson Field, adopted under minute 36 of the meeting of Parish Council on 27th July 2005, was circulated. Cllr Powell was interested in the provision of an all-weather pitch, which was shown as priority 2 to be considered along with the drainage of pitch 2. It was pointed out that an all-weather pitch had been discussed with the Consultant and at meetings of the Project Group and had been eliminated on grounds of cost. There were also concerns about the necessary lighting and fencing in the conservation area. Cllr Powell proposed that, in the interests of clarity, reference to an all-weather

pitch should be removed from the 'wish list'. This was seconded by Cllr Wood and the vote was carried by 6 votes to 1 with 4 abstentions.

RESOLVED: that reference to an all-weather pitch be removed from the Dawson Field 'wish list' of projects.

19 Emergency Planning

There was nothing further to report.

20 Mid- Essex Area Forum: 23rd April 2008

In the absence of Cllr Clacy the report on this meeting was deferred.

21 Code of Conduct Training

The Clerk had attended a training session on the revised Code of Conduct and her report on the procedures for dealing with complaints was received. A paper on declaring interests at meeting was circulated, and members were reminded that they should regularly review their entry on the Register of Interests and contact the Clerk if there were any changes.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

22 Quality Status

New guidelines had been brought out for the CiLCA qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration). In order to maintain the Parish Council's Quality status the Clerk was required to pass an additional course module on the 'Power of Well Being'. It was agreed unanimously that the Clerk should take the module and that the costs should be met by the Council.

RESOLVED: that, in order to maintain Quality status, the Clerk be asked to undertake the additional course module with the costs being met by the Parish Council.

23 Reports from Committees

In addition to the minutes received, the following reports were made:

23.1 Resources: The Committee was continuing to discuss the possible future use of the British Legion hut as the Parish Council office and was working on a three-year financial forecast;

23.2 Planning: At the request of the Parish Council (minute 149 refers) the Borough Council had been asked whether the new signs at Danbury Country Park required planning permission. CBC had confirmed that the signs had 'deemed consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007'. Cllr Allen reported that ECC would be asked to consult the Parish Council on such matters in future. He also reported that he and other councillors had met with the new owners of the Danbury Park Conference Centre site to discuss their proposals for development, and he felt that councillors queries had been taken on board.

23.3 Environment: Cllr Keeler reported that the Climate Change Working Group had met for the first time. It had decided not to enter Danbury in the new Green Village competition this year but to review the situation next year.

23.4 At the request of a member of the public, the Environment Committee had looked again at the question of creating a pedestrian access to St John's School between numbers 27 and 29 Hopping Jacks Lane. The Committee had asked Parish Council (minute 125 of 16th April 2008) to confirm its previous decision (minute 155 of 28th March 2007) to oppose the new entrance. Cllr Keeler made a proposal to this effect, and this was seconded by Cllr Bolwell and carried by 10 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: that Danbury Parish Council is opposed to the creation of a pedestrian access to St John's School between numbers 27 and 29 Hopping Jacks Lane.

24 Danbury Country Park Forum

A meeting of the Forum was to be held on Wednesday 28th May 2008 and would be attended by Cllrs Keeler and Thomson. There would be a guided walk around the Country Park followed by the formal meeting in the Parish Office.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

25 Civic Service – 8th June 2008

Any councillor wishing to attend the Civic Service in Chelmsford Cathedral was asked to contact the Clerk.

26 Parish Council Charters

CBC had responded to the Parish Council's enquiries by saying that it was undertaking research into how this issue had been dealt with by other district councils. CBC hoped that further information would be available at an evening for Parish Councils to be held in July 2008.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

27 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

27.1 A report from the EALC on the provisions of the Act which directly affected Parish Councils had been circulated.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

27.2 Cllr Allen voiced his concerns about some of the Act's provisions, which he felt were undemocratic. He referred particularly to the proposed inclusion in Parish Council membership of unelected members who would have a say in decisions affecting the electorate. He also had concerns about the financial provisions in the Act. Cllr Allen and others were unhappy with the removal of the duty of 'best value'. The Clerk pointed out that Parish Councils were awaiting further information and guidance.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted and further guidance awaited.

28 Matters for information (for report only)

Cllr Mrs Wells reported that the Parish Council's fee to the Parishes' Transportation Group was due.

Cllr Whiteing thanked all who had taken part in the annual litter pick, and asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs Lambert who had organised the event.

Cllr Whiteing also mentioned the application made by Mr Colin Budgey to ECC to have an area of land in Capons Lane registered as Common Land.

Cllr Bolwell requested help to install way mark posts under the Parish Paths Partnership, and Cllr Thomson agreed to assist.

The Chairman explained new guidance received from the EALC, as a result of which Public Question Time was now included within the agenda rather than before the start of the meeting.

29 Dates of forthcoming Council meetings in 2008

30th July, 24th September, 26th November

30 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: in accordance with S1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that in view of the nature of the business to be discussed it was in the opinion of the Council advisable that the Public and Press be excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw.

31 Bowling Club Lease

The Chairman reported on the current negotiations regarding the lease. Advice was being sought on a particular matter relating to VAT which needed to be resolved before the lease could be finalised.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

Signed: Chairman

Date:

Danbury Parish Council

Appendix to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th May 2008**MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS
FOR THE YEAR 2008-09**

The Parish Council Chairman (Mr S Berlyn) and Vice-Chairman (Mr M Wood) are *ex officio* members of all Committees.

Environment Committee

Cllr D Bolwell
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr J Langley *Additional member:*
Cllr J Thomson Mr J Bowen
Cllr A Wells (Danbury Society)
Cllr J Wells
Cllr D Whiteing

Facilities Committee

Cllr A Allen
Cllr H Clacy
Cllr F Hawkins
Cllr J Langley
Cllr D Powell
Cllr M Telling
Cllr J Wells

Planning Committee

Cllr A Allen
Cllr D Bolwell
Cllr H Clacy *Additional Members:*
Cllr A Keeler Mr J Alexander
Cllr M Telling Mr P Watts (Danbury Soc)
Cllr J Thomson
Cllr A Wells

Resources Committee

Ex officio:
Chairman of Environment Committee
Chairman of Facilities Committee
Cllr H Clacy
Cllr F Hawkins
Cllr D Powell
Cllr D Whiteing

Publicity Working Group

Cllr A Allen
Cllr S Berlyn/Cllr M Wood
Mrs C Lambert
Mr C Tressider
Cllr A Wells
Cllr D Whiteing

Grants & Donations Working Group

Cllr A Allen
Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr F Hawkins
Cllr D Whiteing
Cllr M Wood

Drainage & Car Parks Improvements
Working Group

Cllr A Allen
Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr F Hawkins
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr J Langley
Cllr D Powell
Cllr J Thomson

Climate Change Working Group

Cllr A Allen
Cllr D Bolwell
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr J Thomson
Cllr A Wells
Cllr D Whiteing

Leases Working Group

Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr D Hawkins
Cllr M Wood

Danbury Parish Council

Appendix to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th May 2008**APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES
FOR THE YEAR 2008-09**

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Assoc of Chelmsford District Parish Councils (ACDPC) | Cllrs S Berlyn, D Whiteing, and the Clerk |
| CBC Standards Committee | Representatives of all Parish Councils to be appointed by ACDPC |
| Contact Magazine | The Clerk |
| Danbury Community Association | Cllr S Berlyn / Cllr M Wood |
| Danbury & District Twinning Association | Cllr D Whiteing |
| Danbury First Responders | Cllr S Berlyn |
| Danbury Lakes Forum | Cllrs A Keeler and J Thomson |
| Danbury Society | Cllr D Bolwell |
| Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) | <i>ex officio</i> the Chairman and the Clerk |
| Essex Wildlife Trust, Danbury Ridge Reserves Committee | Cllr J Thomson |
| Emergency Planning Officer | <i>Vacancy</i> |
| Health Representative | <i>Vacancy</i> |
| Landisdale Charity | Cllr A Keeler, Mrs L Guest, Mr K Stebbings |
| Mid-Essex Area Forum | Cllr H Clacy |
| Neighbourhood Watch | Cllr D Whiteing |
| Parish Footpaths Officer | Cllrs D Bolwell and J Thomson |
| Parishes Transportation Group | Cllrs S Berlyn, S Freeman and J Wells |
| Police Consultative Committee | Cllrs D Bolwell, D Whiteing, M Wood, and the Clerk |
| Neighbourhood Action Panel | Cllr D Whiteing |
| Public Transport | Cllr S Freeman |
| Village Hall | Mrs C Lambert |
| Youth Representative | Cllr A Wells |