

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A Quality Council



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the held on 9th September 2009 at the Parish Office

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

In attendance: Clerk and Cllr Allen
Norman Bartlett from Danbury Society

26 Shirley Lucas, from Essex County Council – Parish Paths

Shirley was part of the Essex County Council Community Action Team dealing with Rights of Way network. The Parish Council were seeking clarification about the scheme and how it operates. The Definitive Map which is held in the Parish Office shows the Parish Paths, Public Footpaths and Definitive Rights of Way. Some of the Open Access Permissive Paths are looked after by the National Trust. Footpaths are usually shown by a finger post or way-marking. The Essex County Council Highway Authority is responsible for the maintenance and surface of the paths. Land owners are responsible for hedges on either side. If a tree falls across the path the Essex County Council can help with removal. The width of the footpath is 1 metre cross-field and 1.5 metres field edge. A bridleway can be 2 – 3 metres. Some paths are denoted by Ancient Rights of Way, hedges and ditches can be historic features. If there is a query regarding land ownership this can be investigated. A lot of change has happened since the 1950's when the paths were first marked. Some times a developer left greenery and no one bought a strip of land. The surface material that Essex County Council use are road planings which are recycled free from Essex County Council Highways. The planings are the right size and shape to form a solid material. Ditches which are clogged and overhanging can be cleared by the Parish Paths.

Members were concerned regarding the use of road planings. It was explained that when they go first down they can be ugly but when weeds etc grow through they knit together and form a harder surface. Pea shingle has been used in more sensitive areas in Danbury. Footpaths should be used only for passage by foot only and should be a beaten earthfield footpath firming up the base if more traffic.

Concerns were also raised regarding cyclists using these paths as they were dangerous as modern bicycles were very quiet and fast. Discussion took place regarding the no cycling signs and some work was going to be done on this aspect.

The budget for the whole of Chelmsford Parish Paths was £10,000. Danbury had a grant of £250.00 for identified work to place planings in muddy patches on footpaths 17 and 18 which was yet to be decided. Further discussion was to take place regarding this.

Shirley was thanked by the Chairman of Environment for attending.

27 Speaker Sarah Martin PCSO and Sergeant Perry Land regarding speeding

PCSO Sarah Martin had taken speed checks along Little Baddow Road at several times. She had to count 100 cars. The checks were mainly taken from Danbury to Little Baddow direction. The checks were not enforceable as taken by a Community Support Officer although letters could be written in the same way as Community Speed Watch. It was felt that because the PCSO was in uniform the speeds would have been less. Concerns were raised that exact speeds were not given and they do not say which emergency vehicles were. It had been hard to understand the data received from the Data Recorder. Location for standing had to be safe to take the speeding checks. At the time this information was taken the speed limit was 40 mph and not 30 mph which it has now been reduced to. At peak times it would be impossible to speed along this road. The Neighbourhood Action Panel had been held on the same night and due to the works in Little Baddow Road it was asked which other roads should speeding be checked there had been no suggestions. The Committee suggested that they stand on Bicknacre Road near the National Trust entrance as there was room to stand safely here.

PCSO Sarah Martin and Sergeant Perry Land were thanked for attending by the Chairman of Environment Committee.

They both left the meeting at this point.

28 Andrew Vale from Essex County – Highway issues

Dawn Johnson had offered to come to this meeting but was away on holiday and Julie Ebbage was unable to come so Mr Andrew Vale had come to talk about highway issues.

Speeding Woodhill Road Bicknacre Road had been addressed by the Police.

Road surfaces on Penny Royal Road, the humps and bumps were not taken out due to economic restraints so therefore the road dressing was cut back so that reconstruction of the footways at St Cleres Way and Mildamys could be completed.

The A414 has problems with the manhole covers as they could not get hold of Cast Iron covers. The covers had been replaced several times. There would be scheme of works down to The Palace including the trench line at Riffhams Lane but this work was not unexpected due to the number and quantity of vehicles which pass along the road.

Southview Road and Woodhill Road junction problem with parking. It was hoped that the variation would come to fruition. It was a very large Traffic Regulation Order. Essex County Council had no problem with the order but it was waiting an outcome with the Essex County Council meeting.

A 414 Hyde Lane levels on pavement by Post Box. This area in winter became covered in slimy mud. It needs to be flush with the road surface. The kerb line would have to be raised by 6mm plus or minus 5.

Complaints had been received regarding the junction with the Runsell Lane and the Ridge. It was explained that this was a Bennett junction. Several of these junctions had now been turned into T junctions. It had become very tight now the new kerbing

had been installed. In rush hours there was a lot of traffic frequenting this junction and it was causing a problem. The engineer stated that this would be investigated.

A request was made for Eves Corner to be resurfaced under the road works in Little Baddow Road. It is hoped that this area will be completed at the same time.

Bus Shelter Chelmsford bound that requires electric will be taken forward. The Bus Shelter Maldon bound will be investigated. The new location suggested by Parish Council was not safe as it was too near Belvedere Road and Hoynors and would cause a safety problem. It is hoped that there will be telemetry on all bus routes soon.

Andrew was thanked by the Chairman of the Environment Committee for attending.

Shirley Lucas and Andrew Vale left the meeting at this point.

29 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr J Langley and outside representative John Bowen.

30 Declarations of Interest

Members are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda. They were reminded that they will need to repeat their declaration at the appropriate point in the meeting and to leave the room if the interest is a prejudicial one. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

None were declared.

31 Public Question Time Limited to 15 Minutes

Four Members of the Public were present.

- Question raised regarding the surfacing Eves Corner was this to be completed as part of the works to Lt Baddow Road answered by Highways representative.
- Question expressed concerns regarding the speed of traffic in Lt Baddow Road felt threatened as they walked along at 7.30 p.m. To ask Police if they can complete some sort of speeding survey after the new road has been completed.

32 Minutes of Environment Committee held on 10th June, 2009,

Minute 1 and 2 were altered Cllr A Keeler was voted as Chairman of the Environment Committee and Cllr J Langley was voted as Vice Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED: that a) the minutes of the meeting of Environment Committee held on 10th June, 2009, subject to the above amendment be approved and signed as a correct record.

33 Footpaths

33.1 Parish Paths Partnership

Danbury had a grant of £250.00 which was available for works through the Parish Paths Partnership.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33.2 Footpath Map to be placed on Web-Site

This was being dealt with by the Assistant Clerk.

RESOLVED: that this information be noted.

33.3. Footpath 17 and 19

The footpaths Officer at the Essex County Council had been round placing no cycling signs on way-marks. Foliage had been removed covering one of the signs at the end of footpath 17. This item was discussed with the representative from the Parish Paths.

RESOLVED: that this information be noted.

33.4 Report from Footpaths Officer

This was dealt with under the Parish Paths talk at the beginning of the meeting.

33.5 Annual General Meeting to be held on 17th September, 2009

Cllrs Bolwell and Pemberton would be attending.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33.6 Access Footpath A414 opposite Riffhams Lane

The Clerk had written to the Footpaths Office (Public Rights of Way) at Essex County Council regarding this item.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33.7 Footpath 25 – Bridleway

Works had been completed at Ludgores Lane near the Ford.

RESOLVED; that the information be noted.

34 Highways Matters

34.1 List of Roads for Repair

i) Little Baddow Road including Eves Corner

Under repair at the current time. Trying to complete Eves Corner under the works.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

ii) Sign and posts outside public conveniences

These have been repaired.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

iii) Sign at Danbury Palace

This has been removed.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

iv) Hyde Lane/Maldon Road

The levels and wet weather slime by pillar box. The matter was being investigated by Essex County Council.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

v) Complaints had been passed to Essex County Council re rattling ironwork on A414

Complaints had been passed to Essex County Council for action.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

34.2 Runsell Green

Residents had been complaining about the parking on Runsell Green. The Clerk had written to one firm and they have assured the Parish Council that they will not continue. The groundsman had also spoken with owners of cars and requested that they refrain from this practise.

The Clerk had obtained a price for a sign which can go on the back of the current notice board to say "Danbury Parish Council by Order No Parking on the Green" the cost of such a notice would be £60.96 VAT. Members considered this request and agreed to the purchase of the sign.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk purchased the sign to the value of £60.96 to be placed on the back of the noticeboard.

35 Quarries

35.1 St Cleres Hall

Correspondence had been sent. No further correspondence received.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

35.2 Royal Oak Quarry

Arrangements were being made to set up a meeting. Essex County Council to host the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

35.3 Sandon Quarry

Nothing further to report.

35.4 Proposed site at Tyndales Farm

The next phase of the consultation will be early in 2010.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

36 Parishes Transportation Group

36.1 Minutes of the Meeting of the 7th July, 2009.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

36.2 Next Meeting Blue Boar 13th October, 2009

Cllr Berlyn was tasked to attend the next meeting to ascertain whether the Parish Council should take any further part in this group.

RESOLVED: that a) Cllr Berlyn bring to next meeting the results of the next meeting
b) to decide whether the Parish Council should remain a member of the group.

37 Bus Shelters

37.1 Bus shelter opposite The Avenue (Maldon side)

Details of a location further along had been forwarded to Highways. The Highways representative did not think this was an alternative due to safety reasons. The residents in the original location had to be written to and was still under investigation.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

37.2 Bus Shelter near the Avenue (Chelmsford Side)

The light still needs to be fitted. Essex County Highways were aware.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

37.3 Bus Shelter Contract

The bus shelter contract is being run by Mr Armstrong's two daughters since his death. Public Liability is in place.

Resolved: that the information be noted.

38 Neighbourhood Action Panel and Policing

Cllr Whiteing had attended the NAP meeting prior to the Environment Meeting.

There were only 8 crimes in the Danbury area 4 suspicious, 2 criminal damage, 1 car tampered with and 1 theft.

Speeding was discussed.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted

39 Climate Change

No Members had not brought any items to the meeting and no further meetings had been held of the Green Group with the EALC.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

39.1 Energy Savings Trust

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

39.2 Green Village Competition

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

40 Danbury Times

Cllr Wood explained that the first meeting had been held for the next edition.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

40.1 Any items to be placed in Danbury Times

This was to be a new heading for all Agendas under the Danbury Times for Councillors to bring ideas for items to be placed in the Danbury Times.

The Chairman of the Council requested speeding as an item for the Danbury Times.

RESOLVED: that a) this item be placed on all Agendas.
b) Speeding was requested as an item

RESOLVED: that the information is noted.

41 Bus Passenger Transport

No matters for report.

42 Hyde Lane – Speed Limit Request

The Clerk circulated documentation received from Essex County Highways regarding a request for a change in speed limit in Hyde Lane. Members noted the request.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

43 Scheme Selection Process from Essex County Council

Members put forward the following four items:

- a) Speed reduction Runsell Green
- b) Continuation of footway Woodhill Road to the cricketers and to include as far as the National Trust Car Park
- c) A414 From Footpath 8 alongside the road to the bus shelter to make a pavement.
- d) From junction of Butts Lane to Simmonds way resurfacing footpath along Hopping Jacks Lane

RESOLVED: Members agreed to submit items a, b, and d. or if possible all of the items

44 NEAT Newsletter

The Clerk circulated this for information.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

45 Matters for Report only

The Chairman of the Council reported that he had received complaints regarding the volume of rubbish on the length of Copt Hill to entrances to the Common by cyclists. To request Richard Wallace from the National Trust to attend next meeting so that it can be ascertained what rubbish bins were available.

46 Dates in 2009

14th October, 2nd December.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.12 p.m.

Cllr A Keeler, Chairman

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Signed

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Date