

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A Quality Council



Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on Monday 11th May 2009 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office

Present: Cllrs S Berlyn (Chairman)
 M Wood (Vice Chairman) J Langley
 A Allen A Pemberton
 D Bolwell D Powell
 S Freeman M Telling
 D Hawkins J Thomson
 A Keeler D Whiteing

In attendance: Mrs M Saunders, Clerk
 Mrs E Blyth, Assistant Clerk

27 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs H Clacy and Mrs J Wells.

28 Declarations of Interest

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

Cllrs S Berlyn, A Allen, D Hawkins, A Keeler, J Langley, D Powell, M Telling, J Thomson, D Whiteing and M Wood declared an interest in matters relating to the Sports & Social Centre by virtue of being members. All these councillors were covered by the dispensation agreed by the CBC Standards Board.

Cllrs D Bolwell and S Freeman expressed an interest in matters relating to the Sports & Social Centre by virtue of having recently become members. Application has been made to the CBC Standards Board for the dispensation to be extended to these councillors.

29 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

30 Exclusion of Press and Public

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

31 Development of Parish Council Properties

31.1 Development of the Sports and Social Centre

The Council received a report from the Clerk, information from the Essex Association of Local Councils and comments from the Parish Council's solicitor. Reference was also made to information presented by the Chairman at the Parish Council meeting on 28th January 2009.

There was an extended discussion of the issues raised regarding the future of the Centre. It was already Council policy that the building should not be sold, even if this were legally possible under the deed of gift. Members agreed that this policy be reaffirmed. Members also agreed that the Council had no wish to take over the running of the Centre and that they had confidence in the DCA as the tenant. The following resolutions were made:

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Parish Council does not wish to sell the Sports & Social Centre;
- b) that the Council does not wish to take over the running of the Centre except in exceptional circumstances;
- c) that the Council has full confidence in the current tenant of the Centre to provide sports and social facilities and ancillary community events.

After further discussion the following resolution was agreed unanimously:

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council will be pleased to receive from the Danbury Community Association (Trust) Ltd a written proposal for the development of the Sports & Social Centre. The proposal is expected to include full supporting documentation, including a business plan. The proposal should be subject to a formal presentation to the Parish Council at which any significant partners would be expected to be present.

31.2 Other Council properties and location of Parish Office/meeting room

The Council considered the present Parish Office building which served as both office accommodation and a meeting room. The building did not satisfy current legislation and was not large enough for full Council meetings or when a number of members of the public were present. Several options were considered, some involving other Council properties

31.2.1 British Legion building

Council received a recommendation from Resources Committee (minute 156 of 25th February 2009 refers) together with a report from the Clerk. A formal survey of the building had been carried out and had identified requirements for external and internal repairs. Most members had now had the opportunity to visit the building.

After discussion members agreed that the British Legion building was not suitable for conversion to a Parish Office and meeting room. The recommendations of the Resources Committee were considered, and it was noted that the 21-year agreement with the RBL was due to expire in October 2010.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Council did not consider the RBL building to be suitable for a Parish Office/meeting room, and that the office space and meeting room should not be in separate locations;
- b) that the Leases Working Group be authorised to commence negotiations with the Royal British Legion for the renewal of the lease;
- c) that RBL be informed that the renewal of the lease was dependent upon the completion of the required repairs, which were covered by the terms of the current agreement.

31.2.2 Sports and Social Centre

On the basis of a suggestion from the DCA, the Council considered the possibility of locating the office and meeting room in the Sports & Social Centre. After discussion, members agreed for a number of reasons that this would not be an appropriate solution.

RESOLVED: that the DCA be thanked for their suggestion but informed that the Council did not wish to move its office and meeting room to the Sports & Social Centre.

31.2.3 Other locations within village

At present there were no other known premises in the village which might be considered as possible accommodation for the Parish Office and meeting room. It was accepted that this situation might change and should be monitored.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

31.2.4 Development of Parish Office/meeting room

Council received a verbal report from the Clerk and discussed possible options for extending and improving the existing building in order to satisfy current legislation and allow the Council to serve the village as it wished to do and as was appropriate for a Quality Council. It was proposed that a Working Group be set up to carry out a feasibility study on options for extending the building.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Parish Council accepted that its current accommodation was inadequate;
- b) that a Working Group be established to conduct a feasibility study on extending the Parish Office and report back to Parish Council;
- c) that members of the Council should contact the Clerk if they wished to be part of the Working Group.

Business having been concluded, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.02pm.

Signed: Cllr S Berlyn, Chairman

Date: