



Minutes of the Meeting on 25 November 2009 at 7.45pm in the Parish Office

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

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

100 Opening remarks

The Chairman welcomed Maria Dyer to her first meeting of the Parish Council since joining the staff on 1st November 2009.

In view of the extensive agenda, the Chairman indicated that he would be changing the order of items from the Agenda paper to ensure that the most urgent matters were decided.

101 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs S Freeman and M Telling.

102 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.

No interests were declared.

103 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

104 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2009 be approved and signed as a correct record.

105 Power of Well Being: Local Govt & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

A decision on whether to adopt this power had been deferred from the previous meeting to allow councillors time to digest their training and study the documentation. Danbury had now satisfied the four conditions required to be eligible to adopt the Power. These were:

- Publication of a statement of Community Engagement
- A qualified Clerk
- Two-thirds of vacancies filled at ordinary elections

- 80% of councillors (12 in the case of Danbury) trained in the use of the Power of Well Being

If adopted, the Power would be exercised until the next Annual Meeting in a year of ordinary elections.

Most members felt that the new power would be helpful to the Council and give greater flexibility than the current Section 137 regulation in the financing of local projects. In answer to a concern about accountability, it was noted that expenditure would still be debated and agreed by Parish Council, which was accountable to the electorate. After discussion Cllr Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Wood, proposed that the Power of Well Being be adopted. The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by 11 votes to 1.

RESOLVED: that, having met in full the criteria under the relevant legislation, Danbury Parish Council will exercise the Power of Well Being for the remainder of the current administration.

106 Precept for 2010/2011

106.1 Small Grants Scheme – Requests for 2010/11

Council received the report of the Grants Working Party and the recommendation of the Resources Committee regarding the award of grants. Five requests had been received. Resources recommended that the proposed payment to the Village Hall be withdrawn as the request exceeded the amount needed (it included VAT) and the form was incorrectly completed having only one signature. The proposed grant to the Rainbows was conditional upon the group opening a bank account.

In answer to a question, the Clerk confirmed that all recipients of grants for the current financial year had submitted invoices.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations of Resources Committee for the payment of grants for the financial year 2010/11, including the exclusion of the Village Hall, be approved and the following grants made to local organisations under the powers stated:

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Section 19 and Local Government Act 1972 Section 214(6)

i)	Parish Church of St John Baptist, Danbury	For maintenance of Church Green and the churchyard	£1,500
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Power of Wellbeing (Local Govt & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007)

ii)	Danbury Community Transport	Towards annual costs	£500
iii)	The National Trust	For management of land at High Common	£300
iv)	First Danbury Rainbows (new to Danbury)	For a cupboard, laminator, guillotine and camera	£300
		Total	£2,650

106.2 Approval of Precept for 2010/11

The Chairman of Resources Committee presented the Budget Precept Request totalling £183,000 for 2010/11, an increase on 2009/10 of 5.17%. Resources had considered for some time and had reduced several budget requests in order to balance the books and keep the increase in the Precept close to 5%. Members complimented the Resources Committee on its conscientiousness in making difficult decisions and the Clerk was thanked for her work on the budgets and accounts. The point was made that councils with expanding populations benefitted from increasing Precept income, whereas the population in Danbury was stable – which was what residents wanted.

Cllr Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Thomson, proposed that the recommendation of Resources Committee regarding the Precept be approved, and this was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that Precept request for the financial year 2010/11 be set at £183,000 (see Appendix)

107 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 of the opinion of the Council advisable that the Press and the Public be instructed to withdraw.

108 Lease – Royal British Legion

A meeting had been held at the Parish Office on 19th October 2009 between representatives of the RBL and members of the Parish Council. The Leases Working Group had met subsequently and Council now received the Group's report and recommendations. After discussion Cllr Clacy proposed that the recommendations be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations of the Leases Working Group be accepted in full and that a further meeting be arranged with RBL to explain the position.

109 Car Park and Drainage Project – Phase 3

The Clerk's written reports were received. The Clerk had applied for a grant from the Community Initiatives Fund but it would be some time before the outcome was known. Even if a grant were awarded a Public Works Loan would still be necessary, and the Clerk explained the process and the likely annual payments.

Following the Tender process a meeting had taken place with the Council's Consultants to consider the way forward, as the costs were much higher than expected. The recommendations brought forward from that meeting were considered by the Council and a number of possible options were discussed. At the end of discussion the proposal below was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED: that the information and recommendations received be referred to the Drainage & Car Parks Working Group for consideration with no pre-conditions, and that the Consultant be invited to attend the first meeting of the Working Group.

110 Re-opening of the meeting to press and public

Confidential business having been concluded, the Chairman opened the meeting again to the press and public.

111 Membership of Council

111.1 Vacancy for a Councillor

No request was received by CBC for a bye-election and applications had therefore been invited to fill the vacancy by co-option. The closing date was 11th January 2010 for consideration at the Parish Council meeting on 27th January 2010.

111.2 Request for Leave of Absence

Cllr Freeman had unfortunately found it necessary to work away from the area for six months and had therefore requested leave of absence for this period.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Freeman be granted leave of absence until the Annual Parish Council meeting to be held on 5th May 2010.

112 Parish Plan Review

Cllr Pemberton updated members on his work in relation to the review, including ways of keeping costs down. He suggested using an amended version of the original questionnaire which might be circulated with Danbury Times. Workshops would need to be held, by area or group, to re-evaluate the existing Plan and look at what had been achieved under the Action Plan. Members felt it was important to have representatives of the village on a Parish Plan Group, but no-one had yet come forward.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted and that Cllr Pemberton be thanked for his on-going work.

113 Reports from Village Organisations

113.1 Landisdale Charity

Cllr Keeler reported that he had been unable to attend the meeting of Trustees held on 18th November 2009.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

113.2 Twinning

Cllr Whiteing drew attention to information in the newsletter which was emailed to members.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

114 Leases – Tennis Club

The Tennis Club met on 8th October 2009 to discuss the lease and the Clerk had written to the Chairman to ask about the outcome. A reply was awaited.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

115 Publicity

The Autumn 2009 edition of Danbury Times had been published and was being distributed. The Clerk had sent letters of thanks to the residents who had assisted with deliveries around the village.

Cllr Wood said that the village tourist leaflet, first published several years ago, needed updating and reprinting. He proposed that the cost of reprinting be taken from the 2009/10 Publicity Budget and this was agreed.

RESOLVED: that the cost of reprinting the Danbury tourist leaflet after it had been revised be taken from the earmarked Publicity Budget for 2009/10.

116 Emergency Planning/ Pandemic Flu Planning

Cllr Pemberton had written an article in the latest Danbury Times encouraging residents to put their names forward as volunteers in the event of an emergency. As regarded the Flu Pandemic, local GPs now felt the situation was under control. Links to the appropriate contacts for flu queries had been placed on the village website. The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Chelmsford Borough Council requesting details of anyone in the village who could help in an emergency.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

117 Reports from Council Committees

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

117.1 Resources

Cllr Whiteing, Chairman of Resources Committee, reported that the External and Internal Audits had now been completed.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

117.2 Planning

Cllr Allen, Chairman of Planning Committee, reported that the Committee had supported Chelmsford Borough Council's objections to the housing proposals in the East of England Plan Review. CBC was carrying out several consultations in relation to the Local Development Framework, and he encouraged members to try to attend the drop-in Exhibition at Danbury Library on 10th December 2009. Items discussed at a recent CBC Planning Forum were reported, including the information that a review of the online planning system was being carried out and an upgrade would take place around March 2010 which should simplify access for Parish Councils. There was nothing to report regarding the Danbury Planning Framework as comments were awaited from CBC.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

117.3 Facilities

Cllr Hawkins, Chairman of Facilities Committee, reported as follows:

117.3.1 Bowling Green

The Council was updated on a problem affecting one area of the bowling green and the appointment of a consultant to investigate. Two possible consultants had given their views on the investigations needed, one having particular expertise in relation to bowling greens. Any remedial work would need to be undertaken outside the bowling season and would not be carried out until after Summer 2010. The Council's insurers had been approached as to whether the work would be covered, and a reply was awaited.

RESOLVED:

a) that Total Turf Solutions be appointed at a cost of £795 + VAT to investigate the problem area of the bowling green once a reply had been received from the Insurance Company;

b) that a meeting be arranged with the Bowling Club to update them and that they be informed that only normal winter maintenance would take place this year.

117.3.2 Ponds

The conservation group BTCV was working in conjunction with the Parish Council to complete weed-clearing works to Eves Corner Pond as part of a three year plan.

Work would be carried out on Thursday 14th January 2010 from 10.30am–10.45am and on Friday 15th January 2010 at around 10.30am. Requests for volunteers from the village to assist in the work had been published in local publications and in Danbury Times. Several councillors indicated that they wished to be involved.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

117.3.3 Runsell Green

Facilities Committee had agreed that the required tree works at the Runsell Green Pond be carried out.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

117.4 Environment

Cllr Keeler, Chairman of Environment Committee, reported that the National Trust Warden and representatives of mountain bike cyclists using Danbury Common had attended the last meeting of the Committee to discuss the activities which were permitted and the problems caused by cyclists parking on Copt Hill. It had been agreed to hold a meeting on site involving the Parish Council, ECC, residents and cyclists. A speaker from the Energy Trust had attended the same meeting to advise the Council on ways of making the village 'greener'.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

118 Parish Council Charters

118.1 Part I of the Charter

The final draft of Part I of the proposed Charter between Chelmsford Borough Council and the Parish and Town Councils in the Borough had been circulated. Comments must be submitted by 16th December 2009. The document was discussed and proposals for some changes to the wording were agreed.

RESOLVED: that the agreed comments be submitted in response to the consultation.

118.2 Part 2 of the Charter

Further to Minute 83 of Parish Council (30th September 2009), a meeting had been arranged with Cllr Whitehead, Leader of Chelmsford Borough Council, Cllr Galley, Vice-Leader, and two Borough Council officers to discuss Part 2. This was an exploratory meeting and would be held at the Parish Office on 14th December 2009.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

119 Danbury Park Forum

Cllr Keeler reported on the meeting and walk around the Park held on 27th October 2009, which had also been attended by the Clerk and Cllr Thomson. Cllr Keeler was optimistic that the Parish Council's concerns about commercialisation of the Park had been taken into account, and much of the Park would remain unchanged although some of ECC's plans would be implemented. The next meeting of the Forum would take place in May 2010.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

120 Larger Local Councils Forum – 16th October 2009

Cllr Telling and the Clerk had attended the meeting. The meeting had included a presentation on the grants available to councils.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

121 Mid-Essex Area Forum – 12th November 2009

Cllr Clacy reported that he had been unable to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

122 Mid-Essex PCT

In a written report, Cllr Telling said that approaching 90 delegates attended the meeting on 23rd September 2009, the majority being representatives of organisations other than local councils. A District Councillor from Maldon raised the issue of resources for the town and was informed that there was the possibility of a new hospital being in place at Maldon in about five years time. Cllr Telling had received a copy of the PCT's Annual Report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

123 Public Conveniences in Danbury

The response of CBC to the letter sent following the last meeting of the Parish Council was received and noted. Options for a way forward were considered and a variety of views were expressed and suggestions made. In view of pressure of time the Chairman proposed that this item be deferred to the next meeting. In the meantime members were asked to send their comments to the Clerk and to indicate any further information they felt was needed in order to assist discussion.

RESOLVED: that the public conveniences be discussed again at the January meeting and that members send their views to the Clerk and indicate any matters they wished to be investigated before the meeting.

124 Revision of Standing Order 63

RESOLVED: that in view of the pressure of business this item be deferred to the next meeting.

125 Training

The Chairman of the Council had completed his Chairman's modules of training on 25th November 2009.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

126 Parish Office/Meeting Room

RESOLVED: that in view of the pressure of business this item be deferred to the next meeting. Members were asked to bring the papers already circulated to the meeting in January 2010.

127 NALC Chief Executives Report September 2009

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

128 Name of the Parish Council

RESOLVED: that in view of the pressure of business this item be deferred to the next meeting.

129 Mayor's Community Evening

The Mayoral Working Group at Chelmsford Borough Council had agreed that the annual Community Evening would be replaced by a series of smaller events hosted by the Mayor in the Mayor's Parlour. The first of these events had been held on 11th

November and was for Veterans. Future events would be held within the current Mayoral year to recognise those who had made a contribution to community life in the areas of sport, the homeless, caring, and the young uniformed organisations.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted, and that members send the names of people who might be put forward for a Community award to the Clerk along with some text indicating why they should be proposed.

130 Matters for information (report only)

130.1 Essex Tourism

The Annual General Meeting of the Essex Tourism Association Ltd on 3rd November 2009 had debated whether to join Essex County Council’s new tourism partnership, set up to assist in the delivery and strategic management of tourism across the County. The Clerk was seeking to discover the outcome.

130.2 ‘Trading Standards & Wellbeing’

This organisation had produced a free 2010 Doorstep Calendar for the elderly and other vulnerable people in Essex, which gave helpful information on dealing with junk mail and doorstep traders and how to retain independence at home. The Clerk asked members to let her have details of anyone known to them who might benefit from a copy of the calendar.

130.3 First Danbury Scouts

As part of their Queen’s Scout badge, some of the Scouts had renovated and repaired the Scott Slaughter memorial seat at the front of the Sports Centre. The Council had provided the materials. The work had now been completed and the seat re-installed. A letter of appreciation and thanks had been sent to the group for their hard work. The Chairman suggested that a Parish Council Certificate might be designed to be presented in such circumstances.

RESOLVED: that the information in items 130.1 to 130.3 above be noted.

131 Dates of forthcoming meetings

Wednesdays 27th January, 31st March and 5th May 2010.

Business having been concluded, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.12pm.

Signed: Cllr S Berlyn, Chairman

Date:

Danbury Parish Council Budget Precept Request 2010 - 2011

Parish Council 25.11.2009

	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	Increases
Environment	2600	2100	-500
Facilities	78060	90089	12029
Resources	37818	37037	-781
Grants	1850	2100	250
Community Bus	800	500	-300
Drainage Fund in Resources	10000	0	-10000
Planning Documents Earmarked			
Administration	81000	83091	2091
Sub Total	212128	214917	2789
Monies taken from Reserves	5000	0	-5000
Interest	2000	400	-1600
Predicted Income	31805	31367	-438
Sub Total	38805	31767	

173323

183150

Precept Request**174000****183000****5.17% increase**

Resources Committee held on 18th November made the following changes:

- a) £10,000 was taken from the Resources budget for refurbishment of the Parish Office
This project would now have to move to a later time.
- b) A debate took place regarding the DCA budget it was tried to leave this at £25,000
- c) £10,000 was taken out of the Car Parks and Drainage Fund
This was on the condition that the earmarked funds for the project was not touched.
- d) The Bowling Green amount for additional works was cut to £3,000 from £5,000
- e) £1,000 was cut from the IT Capital Budget
- f) The grants working party suggestion was cut by £750.00
- g) The war memorial budget was cut to £250.00
- h) The DCA budget was eventually cut to £22,500
- i) The Elections budget of £500.00 was cut.