

Danbury Parish Council
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held remotely on 16 November 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs: S Berlyn, A Chapman (Chairman, ex officio), B Hallett (Vice-Chairman), L Anstee, G Chapman, A Keeler

In Attendance: Mrs L Mitchelmore (Assistant Clerk), Ms M Harper (Clerk)

20/21.37 Apologies for Absence

None

20/21.38 Declarations of Interest

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

None

20/21.39 Public Question Time

Members of the public are invited to address the Council, give their views and question the Council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration (at the discretion of the Chairman). Members of the public may not take part in the Council meeting itself. At the close of this item members of the public will no longer be permitted to address the Council unless invited to do so by the Chairman. The session will last for a maximum of 15 minutes with any individual contribution lasting a maximum of 5 minutes. Members of the public should address their representation through the Chairman of the meeting.

None

20/21.40 Minutes of the Environment Committee

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 14 September 2020 were approved and would be signed as a true record.

20/21.41 Actions from the Minutes

The actions from the minutes were noted.

20/21.42 Trees and Open Spaces

20/21.42.1

It was noted that a resident's fence had been damaged by overgrown vegetation on Parish Council Land. The fence would be replaced at a cost of £580 inc VAT and a strip of vegetation removed at a cost of £120 ex VAT to avoid any recurrence – as approved by the Clerk and Chair of the Committee. The vegetation in proximity to the fence would be managed to avoid it overgrowing in the future.

20/21.42.2 Tree Survey

The Annual Tree Survey Report was not yet available; however, the Assistant Clerk had met with the surveyor and discussed any significant additional works that may have been required for trees

over and above that included in the budget from the Survey conducted in October 2019. Additional costs were estimated at £1,200-1,300. Some of the work may be required in the current financial year, for which there was £1000 available in the tree budget and funds had been included in the 21/22 budget proposal for unplanned tree works.

20/21.42.3 Land Owned/Leased/Maintained by the Parish Council

Members received a draft document detailing the land owned/maintained by the Parish Council and how it is managed. The seat around the tree at Runsell Green would be included and the birds on Eves Corner pond were Moorhens and not Coots. A preview link of an interactive map of the trees and land owned/maintained had been shared with Members and would be published when completed. The Assistant Clerk was commended for her work on the document and map.

20/21.42.4 Griffin Meadow Lease

Members considered whether to continue the existing rolling lease arrangement at £715.00 per annum or negotiate a new 5- or 10-year lease and agreed that there would be no benefit to entering into a new fixed term lease arrangement.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would continue the rolling lease arrangement at £715.00 a year.

20/21.42.5 Trees at Eves Corner

Members considered a report regarding the trees at Eves Corner. Five trees had been identified in the October 2019 tree survey as requiring mulching and one also needed to have its stake and mesh guard removed. The trees were young trees that were struggling to thrive. Whilst the National Trust were responsible for maintaining the trees, they had indicated that no funding was available this year unless the trees posed a hazard risk.

Cllr G Chapman suggested that an additional tree had a metal guard around it that should also be removed. It was agreed that the works would be undertaken at a cost of £40 exc VAT and that the metal guard on tree T4 would be removed if the additional cost was acceptable to the Clerk and Chairman of the Environment Committee.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council would instruct JCM Services to mulch five trees at Eves Corner and remove the stake and mesh guard from one, as recommended in the October 2019 Tree Survey, at a cost of £40.00: and that the metal guard would be removed tree T4 if the cost were acceptable to the Clerk and Chairman of the Committee.

Proposed: Cllr A Chapman, seconded: Cllr G Chapman and all agreed.

20/21.43 Footpaths Officers' Reports

The report from the Footpath Officer that the finger post at Footpath 58 was on the ground was noted. This had been previously reported to Essex Highways.

20/21.44 Collation of Popular Walks in Danbury into a Book

Members considered whether to collate popular Danbury Walks collected from Danbury Residents into a book. This could compliment the Danbury Society Circular Walks maps that Cllr G Chapman

was working towards reprinting. Members were concerned that with the number of projects that were planned in the coming year they would not be able to collate the walks and produce the book. As the idea of the book of popular walks had been initiated by the Danbury Community Initiative Group, the Clerk suggested that a working group could be formed to collate the walks and members agreed. Members of the Community Initiative Group or residents could be invited to form the group and a request for volunteers could be made at the Community Initiative Meeting the following week. Cllr G Chapman would be happy to assist in an advisory capacity.

The Clerk explained that the Community Initiative Group was formed by Community Groups and that whilst it was attended by Cllrs Hallett and Anstee and chaired by Cllr Berlyn, it was not a formal group of the council.

20/21.45 Bus Transportation

The report from the Passenger Transport Representative was noted.

20/21.46 Highways Matters

The updated list of reported highways items was noted and completed items removed.

20/21.47 Chelmsford Local Highways Panel (LHP)

20/21.47.1 LHP Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 17 September 2020 were received and noted. The next meeting of the LHP would be held on 18th March 2021.

20/21.47.2 LHP Request LCHE152104: The Heights Service Road

Members received and considered a report into the progress of the LHP application to make The Heights Service Road one way with a lay by, and consider any additional evidence that could be provided. The Parish Councils' representative on the panel, Cllr Daden had suggested that the Parish Council meet with County Cllr Spence to discuss how the scheme could be moved forward and to provide additional evidence for the need for the scheme. This was in light of the cost of the scheme which at £81,500 was a significant proportion of the Local Highway Panel's annual budget.

Members considered complaints received from residents since the LHP application had been submitted, including the most recent which had been received in the week prior to the meeting.

It was agreed that:

- 1) County Cllr Spence would be invited to discuss the LHP application with the Committee before the next LHP meeting scheduled for 18th March 2021.
- 2) more recent evidence would be provided, including photographs of the current parking situation in the Well Lane and The Heights areas.

20/21.47.3 LHP Request LCHE192040: A414 Danbury Route Based Strategy Study

Members considered a suggestion from County Cllr Spence that the Parish Council contribute 50% of the cost (a cost of £12,500 to the Parish Council) of the Route Based Strategy Study to improve the chance that it would be successful through the LHP process. There were concerns about the cost and implications for the 2021-22 precept request and that there were no guarantees that any subsequent recommendations from the study for A414 improvements would be funded.

Cllr G Chapman proposed that the decision be deferred until further information was available about the early years' construction phase transport route for the new Bradwell B Nuclear Power Plant, however Cllr A Chapman stated that increasing traffic on the A414 would still be a problem despite any decisions made about the transport route for Bradwell B. It was suggested that this could be discussed with County Cllr Spence, along with the LHP request for The Heights Service Road and members agreed. The decision was deferred until next year.

20/21.47.4 LHP requests updates

It was noted that application LCHE192024 (safety aspects of pedestrian crossing adjacent to The Bell) had received funding to conduct a pedestrian/vehicle conflict study as a part of the validation process. Both this application and LCHE192025 (Safety aspects of crossing at Well Lane) were awaiting a programme date for the pedestrian/vehicle conflict study.

20/21 48 21/22 Environment Committee Budget - Appendix 9

The proposed budget for the financial year 21/22 was considered and amendments made, reducing the budget from £17,099.05 To £13,599.00. It would be recommended to the Resources Committee for recommendation to the Parish Council for approval.

RESOLVED: that the amended Environment Committee budget proposal of £13,599.00 for the financial year 21/22 be recommended to the Resources Committee for recommendation to the Parish Council for approval.

Proposed: Cllr A Chapman, seconded: Cllr Hallett and agreed by majority vote.

20/21.49 Matters for Report (for information only)

The Assistant Clerk reported that:

- i) Bakers of Danbury intended to place a banner advertising the Farleigh Hospice Christmas Tree Recycling Scheme, alongside the Dawson Memorial Field Hedge at Eves Corner between the 16th December and 5th January. Permission had been applied for from Essex Highways to move the banner closer to the road for a week during that time.
- ii) a quote had been requested for works to either secure or remove the railing at Eves Corner that had become detached from the concrete bollard and risked swinging into the pavement.
- iii) Cllr Anstee reported that the Chartered Association of Building Engineers had awarded Danbury Park School a Highly Commended in the Built Environment Sustainability Awards.

20/21.50 Date of next meeting

A date in January would be confirmed.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.17pm.

Chairman

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Signed

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Date