

## DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7pm By Zoom

**Present:** Parish Cllrs: S Berlyn (Chairman), Mrs A Chapman (Vice Chairman), Mrs L Anstee, J Armstrong, G Chapman, Mrs M Hessing, Mrs B Hallett, A Keeler, J Thombs.

Chelmsford City Council (CCC): Cllr Richard Ambor

Essex County Council (ECC): Cllr John Spence

Plus, approximately 24 Members of the Public.

**In attendance:** Ms M Harper (Parish Clerk), Mrs M Dyer (Assistant Clerk) and Mrs L Mitchelmore (Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator & Assistant Clerk).

#### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Stuart Berlyn welcomed all the Members of the Public present and advised that the meeting was being recorded to ensure an accurate record of all questions raised. He then welcomed County Cllr John Spence and District Cllr Richard Ambor and invited them both to speak.

##### **1.1 County Cllr John Spence**

County Cllr Spence started by praising the Danbury PC Cllrs and staff, stating that Danbury PC is one of the most innovative councils amongst the 400+ in Essex. County Cllr Spence then acknowledged the excellent work done by Danbury volunteers regarding COVID-19 and staffing the COVID-19 vaccination centre. He then went onto talk briefly about the issues in Danbury: traffic, parking issues at The Heights, funding to review the A414 to identify what fixes are needed to alleviate congestion; he also advised that works to widen A12 were about to start and that it was essential that there is a good junction at Hatfield Peverel to reduce traffic through Danbury. He then thanked Cllr Berlyn and Ms Harper. Questions to Cllr Spence were then invited – there were none.

##### **1.2. Cllr Richard Ambor**

Cllr Ambor thanked Cllr Spence for all he does and stated that we are very fortunate to have him as our County Cllr with his drive and the effort he makes on our behalf. Questions to Cllr Ambor were then invited – there were none.

At this point Cllr Mrs April Chapman interrupted the meeting and advised that Cllr Stuart Berlyn had joined Danbury Parish Council in 1993 and in 2000 had become Chairman so in May will have been the Chairman for 21 years.

Cllr Mrs Chapman thanked him for his long service and he was presented with an engraved glass tankard (by his wife). Cllr Berlyn was clearly surprised and was

momentarily stuck for words!! He then thanked everyone, past and present Cllrs, and staff.

Cllr Mrs Chapman then continued by announcing a second commendable achievement by Cllr Alan Keeler, who had become a Parish Cllr 30 years ago and, in that time, had served on many committees including time as a Committee Chairman (engraved glass tankard was delivered to Cllr Keeler after the meeting)

## **2. Approval of Annual Parish Meeting Minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

Cllr Keeler proposed that the minutes be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Chapman and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Cllr Berlyn then invited Mrs Sue Dobson to speak.

## **3. Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Update:**

Mrs Sue Dobson, Chairman Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Mrs Dobson started by advising that back in March 2020 (just prior to lockdown) the Steering Group (SG) agreed to suspend SG meetings so that work could progress on the writing of the Plan itself and the site allocation work. An enormous amount of work has now been done both by the sites team and the plan writing team. Inevitably the events of last year put a hold on some of the work which was ongoing as several Steering Group Members were involved in other voluntary work related to the pandemic, which meant that we were unable to move forward very much during the first half of that year. However, as lockdown became the 'new normal' the group found ways to meet virtually and recommenced work on both the plan writing and the sites allocation.

Mrs Dobson then gave a brief overview of the progress of each of those teams, advising that the plan writing group compiled a considerable amount of background information on Danbury – both from an historical perspective and for the present day and these together with writing draft policies will make up the majority of the Plan. These have been based on the agreed Vision and Objectives which were drawn up following the first consultation in 2016, and overwhelmingly supported by residents in the second questionnaire in 2018. Responses to these questionnaires have guided and informed the draft Plan document and essentially form the basis of the Plan, along with the requirements laid down by both Chelmsford's and National planning policies.

The Steering Group have now agreed to appoint a Planning Consultant who will review and edit the Plan ready for the required Regulation 14 Consultation. The Planning Consultant will also provide professional services post-consultation which will enable the Plan to move forward towards the last stage – the Referendum. This professional help will mean that the Plan which is finally submitted for consultation will be compliant and robust and less likely to come up against any issues during the review stages.

The Regulation 14 consultation is key as this is where the Plan is publicly consulted upon and subsequently referred to the Planning Inspector, who will judge whether or not the Plan is sound and appropriate to progress forward to Referendum. The consultants will deal with any issues raised by the Inspector and the Regulation 14 process – the Steering Group felt that having professional advice here was particularly important. Once that stage is completed, a Referendum is held where all residents can vote whether or not to accept the Plan. A majority ‘yes’ vote will mean the Plan is finally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by CCC.

Mrs Dobson reminded everyone that a significant part of the Plan, of course, is the requirement to allocate sites for around 100 homes as laid down in the adopted Chelmsford City Council adopted Local Plan, and this is where the sites group have been involved. Residents will remember the original ‘Call for Sites’ back in 2017 where a number of prospective sites came forward, some of which were immediately rejected as they did not comply with the policy requirements of CCC. The Group commissioned various reports – including a Housing Needs Assessment, Minerals, Landscape appraisal reports, heritage reports and highways reports – to name a few. Initial engagement with landowners/developers took place where potential schemes were put forward, and these were considered alongside the other information gathered.

The Group have also had significant engagement with both Chelmsford City Council Planning, heritage officers and ECC Highways and are now in the process of compiling an Allocation Options Report which will identify the suitability of each site, and whether the site is allocated, on reserve or rejected. The Group will then engage with the landowners of the allocated sites so that a draft allocation of housing can be prepared and write site-specific policies which will go into the Plan.

Once this stage is completed, Mrs Dobson advised that the Steering Group intend to hold a public meeting with an exhibition and have a three-week consultation period, prior to progressing to the Regulation 14 consultation. This will give residents the opportunity to comment on the proposals before going forward to formal consultation - hopefully in person rather than virtually, but this will of course depend on the requirements at the time.

Mrs Dobson then invited questions – there were none

#### **4. Public Consultation on Public Works Loan in relation to the purchase and installation of play equipment on Dawson Memorial Field.**

Cllr Berlyn advised that there was not a sufficient ‘play offering’ for children and that the Parish Council is consulting the whole village, including children and the local schools. The Parish Council doesn’t have funds for this project, but would be able to borrow £100,000 through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) as the two loans previously taken out through the PWLB for the car parks works had now been paid off and the annual repayments to borrow £100,000 for the play project would be less than for the car park loans. So far around 75% of respondents to the consultation were in support of the loan. Cllr Berlyn went on to say that designs had been received earlier in the day from Chelmsford City Council from four companies - children will be asked to give their opinions. The PWLB survey runs to 18<sup>th</sup> May

through Monkey Survey; Cllr Berlyn advised those present how they could access the survey i.e., Danbury Parish Council website, Facebook, Contact magazine.

Cllr Berlyn then invited questions. There was just one:

Question: Are there plans for additional car parking and toilet facilities?

Answer: No, not at the moment, only concerned with the PWLB at this point.

## 5. Questions/Comments for the Parish Council

Comment: Everyone's attention should be drawn to the fact that Chelmsford City Council will be consulting on a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) re solar farms between 3<sup>rd</sup> May and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Answer: The Assistant Clerk, Planning, responded that the Parish Council was aware and when received it would be taken to the Planning Committee.

## 6. Chairman's Concluding Remarks

As part of his concluding remarks, Cllr Berlyn outlined the achievements of the Parish Council in the last year:

- 6.1. Land Slip – contractor has been appointed, works will take 3-4 weeks, should be finished by end of June, when works to the bowling club can be completed and the path reinstated.
- 6.2. Anti-social behaviour – the Parish Council is working with Essex Police and is paying for extra patrols
- 6.3. Health & Well Being Committee - have set up a support group for carers on Zoom – contact the parish office for details. Once lockdown is finished, Sessions will be face-to-face which will be much better
- 6.4. Danbury COVID-19 Volunteers – started by Cllr Mandy Hessing; this group has continued to work and offer support and is now assisting with the vaccination programme. Grateful thanks to Cllr Mrs Hessing and all the volunteers.

Questions were invited re any of these items – there were none.

Cllr Berlyn then thanked everyone for attending and for his and Cllr Keeler's gifts.

The meeting closed at 7.37pm

Signed.....  
Chairman of the Parish Council