

Danbury Parish Council
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022 at 7.30pm at Danbury Parish Council Office, Main Road, Danbury, CM3 4NQ

Present: Cllrs: S Berlyn, A Chapman (Chairman), G Chapman, A Keeler, N Orange

In Attendance: Ms M Harper (Clerk), Mrs L Mitchelmore (Assistant Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

22/23.01 Election of Chairman

Cllr Berlyn nominated Cllr A Chapman to serve as Chairman of the Environment Committee for the current municipal year, seconded by Cllr Orange. There were no further nominations and Cllr A Chapman was elected unopposed.

RESOLVED: that Cllr A Chapman be elected to serve as Chairman of the Environment Committee for the municipal year 2022-23.

22/23.02 Election of Vice Chairman

The election for Vice-chairman was deferred to the next Environment Committee Meeting.

22/23.03 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Hallett

22/23.04 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

22/23.05 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.

Members of the public raised their concerns regarding the delayed cutting of the grass at the Common Land along the Maldon Road between Belvedere Road and Little Fields. They understood that Chelmsford City Council had adopted a new Grassland Management Strategy but felt that it was not appropriate in this residential area which now looked unkempt and untidy with ivy, weeds, litter and dog mess being left in the long grass. When the grass was cut, if the cuttings were not taken away, it would dry and blow around.

Cllr A Chapman had visited the area and counted 9 different species of wild flower including Speedwell, Mallow and Shepherd's Purse. It was explained that Chelmsford City Council had been asked to delay cutting the grass to allow new bulbs that had been planted to die back before being cutting cut. Daffodils

had been planted to recognise the Marie Curie National Day of Reflection that took place on March 23 2022. Crocuses had been planted in partnership with the Rotary Club for their work to eliminate Polio. No Mow May was a campaign to reduce the pressure on insect populations.

The Parish Council were not responsible for cutting the grass and therefore had no budget to cut grass at that location. However, it may be possible to request that a strip is mown along the edges of the grass once the crocuses had stopped flowering.

22/23.06 Minutes of the Environment Committee dated 21 March 2022

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 21 March 2022 were approved and signed as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Orange, seconded Cllr Keeler and all agreed.

22/23.07 Grass Cutting

22/23.07.1 Members considered a request that the grass at Common Land adjacent Little Fields be cut before June. The matter had been with discussed with residents during public question time. Cllr Berlyn proposed that the Parish Council wait until Chelmsford City Council had cut the grass and discuss future cutting regimes with them. This was seconded by Cllr G Chapman who proposed an amendment that the Assistant Clerk check when the grass would be cut and inquire as to whether the cuttings would be taken away.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council would discuss future grass cutting regimes with Chelmsford City Council, double check when the grass would be cut at that location and inquire as to whether the cuttings would be taken away.

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

The members of the public left the meeting.

22/23.07.2 Members considered the Parish Council grass cutting regime in light of the new Chelmsford City Council Grassland Management Strategy. The Assistant Clerk would liaise with the Grounds Contractor to identify areas where grass cutting could be reduced. One area that could be considered would be the slope between Pitches 1 and 2 at the Dawson Field.

22/23.08 Actions

Actions from the minutes were noted. Cllr G Chapman provided an update for item 21/22.52.3. It would be possible to hold a Speedwatch session at Well Lane opposite the entrance gate to Danbury Country Park but it had yet to be arranged. It was suggested that an advertisement for Speedwatch volunteers be made available on the Parish Council table at the Jubilee Celebration.

22/23.09 Tree T5 Elm Green

Members received a report and considered a request from a resident for works to be undertaken to reduce TPO Tree T5 at Elm Green. The tree had been assessed by the Parish Council's Arboriculture consultant and quotes had been provided for works to the tree. The Consultant had reassured the resident that the tree appeared to be in good condition and that as it was subject to a TPO, any works would need to be sympathetic and have planning permission. Due to the costs quoted and that works to the tree would need to be undertaken outside of bird nesting season the Committee decided to wait for the annual tree survey to be conducted in June and consider including the works as a part of the recommendations of the survey.

22/23.10 Purchase of a Hose

Members considered Cllr G Chapman's request to purchase a 100-meter hose for the Dawson Field from the Land Management Budget to facilitate the watering of the new slips and trees at the land slippage area.

RESOLVED: that the hose and associated equipment detailed in Appendix 5 be purchased.

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

22/23.11 Hedge Planting at the Old Pavilion

Members received a report and considered Cllr A Chapman's proposal to plant a hedge outside the Old Pavilion along the boundary with the access to Frettons House to deter the public from cutting across the grassed area. Slips left over from the land slippage could be planted and a quote to dig a slit trench was in hand.

As a low-pressure gas pipe ran across the proposed location and there was a street light which would have an underground supply, permission would be required from Cadent to plant the hedge and information as to the location of the power supply to the street light investigated.

RESOLVED: to continue investigating the possibility of planting the hedge by seeking permission from Cadent and Openreach to plant the hedge and confirming the location of the electrical connection to the streetlight.

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

22/23.12 P3 Sub-committee

Cllr G Chapman reported that at its meeting held on 12 May 2022, the P3 sub-committee had agreed to submit a request to the Essex Highways Public rights of Way Officer to clear 5 areas of vegetation and install 4 replacement waymarker posts. Mr Masson had agreed to continue in his role as Footpaths Officer for the Parish Council.

22/23.13 Environment Committee Strategic Plan

The Committee deferred this item to the next Environment Committee Meeting scheduled for the 11 July 2022.

22/23.14 Matters for Report (for information only)

22/23.14.1 Road closures during the Ride London Event 27-29th May 2022 were noted. They could be found at the Ride London Website: <https://www.ridelondon.co.uk/>

22/23.14.2 Feedback from the Essex County Council Highways Liaison Officer that the walkable verge section along Penny Royal Road may need remedial works to install kerbstones was noted. It was anticipated that this would be referred back to the Local Highways Panel for funding at their next meeting in June.

22/23.15 Matters for Community Engagement

To identify any matters from the meeting for communication to residents

Clr A Chapman would produce an article about grass cutting, weeds and wild flowers for the next edition of the Danbury Times.

An advertisement for volunteers to join Speedwatch would be included on the Parish Council Facebook page.

22/23.16 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on 11 July 2022

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

Signed: Chairman.....Date:.....