

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A Quality Council



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the held on Monday 30th November 2015 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury

Present: Cllrs: Mrs A Chapman (Chairman, ex officio),
A Allen (Vice Chairman), B Hallett, A Keeler, P Sutton

In attendance: Mrs H Mayes, Assistant Clerk

45 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs S Berlyn, D Carlin, Mrs Gardiner and R Wakefield.

46 Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. They were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they had not previously notified her about it.

No interests were declared.

47 Public Questions

There were no members of the public present.

48 Minutes of the Environment Committee

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

49 Footpaths

49.1 Footpath Officer Reports

One of the Footpath Officers had submitted a report which was circulated. The other Footpath Officer had confirmed that he did not have any issues to report and was continuing to monitor issues that he had already sent to ECC.

Item 2 on the report was regarding an exposed pipe leading from Footpath 20 to the beacon (permissive path). The Footpath Officer was concerned it may become a trip hazard in the future. The Assistant Clerk had mentioned this to the Groundsman and he had advised that he had put the path in originally and was aware of the pipe running across. He would monitor the area to ensure that it was not causing an issue.

Cllr Allen advised that there were faded no cycling signs on the fingerboard where footpath 17 meets 19 which could be replaced.

Cllr Keeler had visited Hyde Lane regarding the suggestion to connect footpaths 42 and 44. Although there was a grass verge, it was fairly narrow and had a large ditch running alongside. Therefore, it did not appear that it would be a feasible place to construct a new footpath or footway and a request had not been sent to the LHP for this.

Cllr Keeler had also observed pedestrians walking along Bicknacre Road towards Gay Bowers Road (see minute 54.1.1) and it appeared that they were not having any issues. Cllr Keeler would visit the area for a closer look.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

49.2 Footpath 17

A resident had sent an email regarding this footpath and requested further woodchip. Members noted that the path is a muddier now but that it is still usable. Members felt that if the area deteriorated the Parish Council could consider adding some more chippings if these could be obtained from Ben Oates. However, the Groundsman had advised that due to his current work schedule and the Reparation Team not coming every week it was unlikely that he would be able to do this until the new year. Members agreed that it would not be practical to do the whole path, just to top up the area already trialled. The Assistant Clerk was asked to write to the resident to advise this and also to reiterate that it is a footpath, not a paved path and therefore it should be expected that the surface could become muddy during poor weather.

RESOLVED: that the resident is advised that it may be possible to carry out this work in the new year depending on the availability of wood chippings and labour from the Groundsman and the Reparation Team.

49.3 ECC Public Rights of Way Officer

The following had been received from the PROW Engineer, West & South Essex after a request for updates on outstanding footpath reports.

The area in which Danbury falls does not currently have a Public Rights of Way Inspector and issues in this area have been forwarded to me. I have managed to view some of the issues you note but I have been extremely busy as I manage a number of officers over a very large area.

Works in the Danbury and Chelmsford area have however suffered from some delivery of work issues due to authorisation of contractual duties with Chelmsford City Council. These matters are causing a back log of work to accumulate but once the discussions have been completed, it is hoped that such works can continue in earnest.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

50 Bus Transportation – Transport Partnership Meeting

A report had been sent from the Parish Transportation Representative following a Dengie Hundred Bus Users Group meeting on the 14th October 2015.

The dates of the next round of meetings were circulated. The Maldon meeting would be held on Tuesday 2nd February and the Transportation Representative would attend.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

51 Highway Matters

51.1 Strategic Road Network Improvements in Essex & Suffolk

Notification had been received from Highways England regarding improvements to the A12 during 2015/2016. The Assistant Clerk was asked to check if the London bound slip road at the Sandon/A12 junction was to be resurfaced as it had been coned off for some time.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

51.2 Condition of Road and Footway Surfaces in West Belvedere / Dockwra Lane / Belvedere Road

These roads were all reported to ECC due to the poor condition (photos taken by Cllr Mrs Chapman). A response was received from ECC advising that no work was being prioritised at these locations and the next inspections would take place in April 2016. If there were specific areas of concern, these would have to be reported individually to ECC for an inspector to assess.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

51.3 Reduction of Speed Limit to 30mph on Woodhill Road

This item was requested to be considered again at the November Environment Committee (see minute 9.1, 8th June 2015). Members discussed whether it would be useful to wait for the Maldon developments to progress to see how this affected the traffic movements and volumes. The Assistant Clerk advised that she had checked online and no further accidents had been recorded since June 2015. Members felt that it would be useful to see if a traffic survey could be carried out at this point to measure the vehicles on this road.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk requests that a traffic survey be carried out at this location.

51.4 Highways matters (reported items)

The items below had been reported and updates requested.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Runsell Green	Street light not working	ECC	06/09/2013	20076141	30/11/15 to be moved from agenda to defects sheet. 23/11/15 no further update 3/9/15 still with supplier. 15/4/15 issue now with power supplier to resolve. 09/02/15 listed on ECC website as known problem. 26/1/15 Street light has been damaged in accident and needs replacing. Report again. 9/5/14 chased with street lighting. reported by AC
Well Lane	Overhanging vegetation obscuring sightlines	ECC	01/10/2013 05/05/2015	2265542 2400129	30/11/15 move from agenda to defects sheet – send reminder to Danbury Outdoors/Danbury Park to check and cut any overgrown vegetation. Yellow lines outside the gym would help. Does not meet criteria/to be monitored. 5/5/15 overgrown hedge reported by resident at Farmers Market - to be inspected. Send to ECC under ref 2400129. 2/3/15 concern that when leaves appear, sightlines will be obscured. 11/02/15 Advised by Country Park that Well Lane/Woodhill Road verges and trees were cut back by ECC. Country Park will also monitor boundaries. Essex Outdoors have cut back their boundaries and will monitor. 26/1/15 AC advised worse area was on the Essex Outdoors side of the road on the bend opposite Mynard Way.
St Cleres Way	Concrete posts are leaning over causing a hazard	ECC	23/05/2014	2330013 / 2429631	28/10/15 to be inspected. Further photos sent - new ref 2429631. 14/09/15 The Assistant Clerk would take photographs and send again. Posts were leaning further over. 11/9/15 rang ECC have asked for Prow to contact with update. 25/8/15 more information req. 6/8/15 owner disputing ownership of posts. 15/5/15 no prow officer for Danbury yet. Still waiting for updates. 10/2/15 Owner has been contacted in regard to removal of posts. 26/06/14 ECC to contact owner to request removal. 23/05/14 to be visited and assessed.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
St Cleres Way	area near footpath 17 is uneven (near to steps)	ECC	26/05/2015	2403638	12/11/15 rang highways still awaiting inspection - email sent to highways. 11/9/15 still to be inspected - chased with ECC. 26/5/15 to be inspected. Reported by resident.
Latchettes, Lt Baddow Rd	Residents have turfed over footway	ECC	13/07/2015	2412193	30/11/15 Removed from agenda. 24/11/15 From ECC: This matter has been fully investigated by our senior inspector and they have found there is no evidence to suggest new turf has been laid at this location. When an inspection of the area was carried out it would appear to be growth from the adjacent verge. Following a highway boundary request we are unclear of the footway boundary at this location so we are unable to confirm the size of the footway prior to the growth of grass. As there is no highway safety issue at this location at this time no further action will be taken, however we will continue to monitor at the situation. 28/10/15 still being investigated.. 22/7/15 to be inspected. Reported by resident.
Junc footpath 16/17	Oak Tree - deadwood branch hanging down	ECC	22-Jul	2414074	12/11/15 still awaiting inspection - email sent to highways 11/9/15 still to be inspected - chased up. 22/7/15 to be inspected. reported by AC
Little Baddow Rd	Flooding between Jnc of Eves Corner/Lingwood Cl - gully blocked	ECC	25/08/2015	2419700	30/11/15 Removed from agenda. 24/11/15 Raised as defect and passed to engineers to program in work. Reported by SB
Junc Pedlars Path/Mill Lane	Kerbs loose and turned over	ECC	26/08/2015	2419773	30/11/15 Removed from agenda. 21/09/15 inspected - action required - defect raised. 26/8/15 to be inspected. reported at Farmers Market - already reported to ECC
Maldon Rd from east end of Mill Lane to Hyde Lane	Footway poor condition/overgrown with weeds & obstructed with vegetation	ECC	11/09/2015	2422402	12/11/15 defect raised P3 priority. reported by footpath officer AM

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Colemans Lane	Bridleway surface has washed away leaving large holes up to 6inch deep	ECC	22/09/2015	2424098	30/11/15 Removed from agenda 25/11/15 ECC confirmed that a meeting had taken place to discuss the various issues along the lane and discussed both public rights (the bridleway (no.14) and private rights (private vehicular traffic and drainage). Ideas are being considered to help the surface condition along the lane which does involve some work to the drainage (which should help eliminate the problems encountered). 22/9/15 to be inspected. Reported by resident.
Penny Royal Road	Tree obstruction footpath 52	ECC	24/09/2015	2424596	12/11/15 still awaiting inspection - email sent to highways. 24/9/15 to be inspected. Reported by resident.
Mill lane	Overgrown hedge/verge opp The Avenue towards the A414	ECC	28/09/2015	2424995	30/11/15 Removed from agenda. 12/11/15 action required, P3 priority defect raised. reported by resident.
Woodhill Rd/Well Lane	Fly tip - car mats etc	CCC	06/10/2015	SS791793	30/11/15 work completed. reported by AC
Woodhill Rd	Sign down	CCC	20/10/2015	N/a	30/11/15 work completed. 3/11/15 new nameplate on order. reported by AA
Butts Lane	Street light not working o/s No 1	ECC	03/11/2015	20204669	reported by resident
Cherry Garden Lane	2 potholes	ECC	12/11/2015	2431767 / 2431768	30/11/15 BH advised ECC had inspected pothole not reported. She would report other potholes and flooding at Cherry Garden Lane/Maldon Rd. reported by BH
Eves Corner	Lt Baddow Rd sign damaged	ECC	20/11/2015	2433102	reported by resident

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

52 Chelmsford Local Highways Panel (LHP)

The most recent meeting was held on 2nd September 2015 and the minutes were circulated.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

53 Highways Briefing for Parish Councils

Cllr Mrs Chapman, the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk attended the briefing on 27th October 2015. A copy of the handout and the LHP section of the presentation was circulated. Cllr Allen noted that Parish Councils were identified in the documents as being consultees which had not occurred when Well Lane was recently closed. He asked if the Committee could consider road closures in the village at the next Environment Committee. This was in order to formulate a Parish Council viewpoint for the future that can be put forward to the local authorities and organisers of events.

The Assistant Clerk was requested to obtain information on the procedures for road closures for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk was requested to obtain information on the procedures for road closures for the next meeting.

54 Local Highways Panel Requests

Members were asked if they wished to submit any new schemes to the LHP. Any schemes would need to be submitted before March 2016 in order to be considered in 2016/17.

The current position of the scheme requests are listed below.

54.1 Schemes currently submitted to the LHP

54.1.1 Footway between Overshot Bridge and Poplar Farm, Bicknacre Road

This had been passed to the LHP scheme validation team under reference LCHE152110. This proposed scheme would now feature on the Chelmsford City LHP Potential Schemes List and would be shown as In Validation.

54.1.2 One Way System to exit The Heights

This had been passed to the LHP scheme validation team under reference LCHE152104. This proposed scheme would now feature on the Chelmsford City LHP Potential Schemes List and would be shown as In Validation.

54.1.3 Parking Issues in Belvedere Close

The LHP had advised that they could not assist with this request as it did not relate to public highway (CCC own the verges). CCC had advised that they did not have the budget to carry out this work but if funding could be found, they would not have any objection in principle to the scheme (subject to planning permission). The Assistant Clerk had been contacted recently by a new resident to the Close about this issue and subsequently City Cllr Ian Wright made enquiries with Cllr Madden (Chair of the LHP). Cllr Ambor had now offered to find out further information as he was a member of the LHP.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

54.2 LHP Agreed Schemes

54.2.1 New Footway Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road

The finish date was February 2016. No start date had been given.

54.2.2 Bend improvements/railings outside 56 Main Road:

The finish date was June 2016. No start date had been given.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

55 Quarries

55.1 St Clare's Hall: There was nothing to report.

55.2 Royal Oak Quarry: There was nothing to report.

55.3 Sandon Quarry: There was nothing to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

56 Living Landscapes

Cllr Mrs Hallett advised that the next meeting would be held in January but an update had been received from Essex Wildlife Trust. The articles placed in The Journal and the Danbury Times regarding barn owl boxes had resulted in some interest from landowners and these were being looked at for suitability. Cllr Mrs Hallett was meeting two volunteers at Moores Bridge Lane to see if this area would be suitable for a barn owl box (Parish Council land). There were still some problems identifying landowners for hedgerow surveys although three landowners had recently given permission. Cllr Mrs Hallett would ask if there were any particular areas in Danbury that required identification. Work parties had planted hedgerow at Pleasant House Farm and scrub clearance had taken place at Backwarden Nature Reserve. EWT had received some complaints about the scrub clearance and had been explaining to people why it was needed. EWT were looking for more ideas for conservation projects this winter for the working parties.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

57 Information Board at St Johns Church

The CCC Museums Manager had confirmed that the new board had been installed on the 30th November.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

58 Danbury Common

The Head Ranger had not been able to contact the resident who made the original complaint about cyclists in Copt Hill. He has visited the area but could not see anywhere that required additional posts other than at the entrance to the bridleway. He has asked that the Parish Office pass on any complaints from residents to him to deal with in the future. Members asked that if any complaints were passed to the National Trust, that an update of the result of the complaint was notified back to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

59 Project Danbury

Cllr Mrs Hallett advised that she would contact Dobies Seeds as they had donated plants for other community gardens in the past. Cllr Mrs Chapman confirmed that they had already received several donations of suitable plants including a rose from the WI and a possible grant from CCC towards the Cherry Trees. There had also been three offers of sponsorship. The aim was to plant the bed in March. The Assistant Clerk was requested to arrange a meeting of the group at the end of January/beginning of February. The Allotment Association had volunteered to assist with digging and St Johns School were interested in helping to plant in the spring.
RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

60 Matters for Report (for information only)

Cllr Allen asked if the Danbury Park Forum was still active. The Assistant Clerk advised that a recent email had been received to update the membership and it was advised that the forum would take place in the spring.

Cllr Allen circulated some photographs of cyclists riding two abreast along Woodhill Road and holding up traffic. He thought it would be useful for the Committee to discuss this issue at the next meeting to consider contacting local organisations to ask them to promote considerate cycling on the roads. This would be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Keeler advised that his neighbour was concerned about four houses being built at Chamberlains Farm, Sporhams Lane. The Assistant Clerk would add this to the next Planning Agenda.

61 Dates of Meetings for 2016

25th January, 7th March, 16th May, 18th July, 10th September, 21st November.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm.

Cllr Mrs April Chapman
Chairman

.....
Signed

.....
Date