

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A Quality Council



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the held on Monday 8th June 2015 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury

Present: Cllr Mrs A Chapman (Chairman, ex officio), Cllr A Allen (Vice Chairman), Cllr Berlyn (ex officio), Cllr D Carlin, Cllr Mrs B Hallett, Cllr A Keeler, Cllr R Wakefield.

In attendance: Mrs H Mayes, Assistant Clerk
Three Residents

1 Election of Chairman for 2015/2016

Cllr Mrs Hallett proposed Cllr Mrs Chapman. This was seconded by Cllr Wakefield. No other nominations were received and Cllr Mrs Chapman was elected unopposed.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Mrs Chapman be elected Chairman of the Environment Committee for the municipal year 2015/16.

2 Election of Vice Chairman 2015/2016

Cllr Carlin proposed Cllr Allen. This was seconded by Cllr Wakefield. No other nominations were received and Cllr Allen was elected unopposed.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Allen be elected Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee for the municipal year 2015/16.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mrs Gardiner.

4 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.

5 Public Questions (Time limited to 15 minutes)

One resident had attended to observe the meeting as she was interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. Two residents had attended to volunteer as a Footpath Officers.

The Committee agreed to bring forward the Footpaths item (minute 7) for discussion. Both residents spoke briefly about their interest in the local footpaths and Members agreed unanimously to appoint them both as Footpath Officers for the Council. The Environment Committee thanked them for volunteering for this role. The Assistant Clerk would pass on contact details for both residents and also find out if any training was available from Essex County Council.

RESOLVED: that both residents be appointed as Footpath Officers for the Parish Council.

One resident left the meeting at 7.35pm

6 Minutes of the Environment Committee

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd March 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

7 Footpaths

7.1 Footpath Officer Report

This item had already been discussed (see Minute 5).

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

7.2 Parish Paths Partnership 2015/16

Guidance notes were circulated to Members regarding the types of work that can be undertaken by the Parish Paths Partnership 2015/16. The Assistant Clerk was asked to send this document to the new Footpath Officers and to find out who covers volunteers for insurance purposes.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk was asked to send this document to the new Footpath Officers and to find out who covers P3 volunteers for insurance purposes.

8 Bus Transportation – Transport Partnership Meeting

The Maldon meeting was due to be held on 11th June. Caroline Lambert was happy to attend this and future meetings as the Parish Council's representative. She had also sent a report from the Dengie Hundred Bus User Group for Members information.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

9 Highway Matters

9.1 Reduction of Speed Limit to 30mph on Woodhill Road

The Assistant Clerk had contacted the Essex Police Casualty Reduction Unit who advised that they would not provide comments or support for a scheme until a submission is made due to resources. Essex Police advised that incident data could be found online at www.essexworkstraffweb.org.uk. The information given was for road traffic collisions which resulted in injuries. The website showed that on Woodhill Road between the junctions of Penny Royal Road and Woodhill Common Road, the following incidents were recorded as slight injury. There were no fatal or serious injuries recorded.

- May 2010 (2 incidents)
- September 2010
- January 2011
- November 2011
- June 2012
- March 2014

Members discussed this issue further. It was felt that the developments in Maldon may increase the likelihood of accidents and it might be better to request a change to the speed limit once additional traffic was generated. Essex County Council had criteria to determine speed limits based on the number of incidents over a five year period which had resulted in people being killed or seriously injured. Some Members felt that a request should not be made at this time and that if the road becomes busier it could slow the traffic down anyway.

There was discussion about which sections of Woodhill Road would benefit from a change to the speed limit. The original request related to the stretch from Well Lane towards Sandon. Some Members felt that if the speed limit was 30mph, more people would exceed the limit. Others felt that if it was reduced to 30mph, the vehicles which drove to the limit would slow down others. It was unanimously agreed that no submission be made at the present time but that the item be considered in six months at the Environment Committee Meeting in November.

RESOLVED: that no submission was made at the present time but that the item be considered again at the Environment Committee Meeting in November.

9.2 Little Baddow Road: Essex County Council (City of Chelmsford) (Waiting, Loading and Parking Consolidation) (Variation No.42) Order 20 – papers attached

A Traffic Regulation Order had been received regarding extension of the double yellow lines at Little Baddow Road. Members unanimously agreed comments to be sent to Essex County Council.

RESOLVED: that the following comments be sent to Essex County Council.

The Parish Council strongly objects to the double yellow lines being put in as the current yellow lines are rarely enforced. Therefore, they would not serve any purpose. We also object to the installation of the pre-signals as this will cause traffic to back up and gridlock the area around Eves Corner and adjoining roads. The map is incorrect as there are no existing parking bays as shown outside 15, 17 and 19 Little Baddow Road.

One resident left the meeting at 8.10pm.

9.3 Highways matters (reported items)

The items below had been reported and updates requested. Where a P3/ P4 defect had been raised, the issue in question did not meet the criteria for immediate repair and repairs would be undertaken in line with the on-going works programme.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Footway at junction of Maldon Road and Hyde Lane	surface around postbox becomes muddy/slippery when wet. Level is not sufficient for drainage. Drains appear blocked.	ECC		2235103 2247252 - drains	08/06/15 to be removed from the agenda and monitored by the Parish Office. 2/3/15 still muddy. 1/12/14 still bad condition (JT) 24/11/14 no update 8/9/14 rang for update still remains low priority defect. 04/12/13 JT reported area has been cleaned but still an issue. 22/10/13 drains now cleared and P3 low priority defect raised for dropped kerb to be raised to prevent pooling. 4/9/13 JT reported drains were still blocked. 10/7/13 inspected and assessed. 4/7/13 Blocked drains reported 09/05/13 area has been inspected and assessed. Have requested ECC Highways if they can help again.
Runsell Green	Street light not working	ECC	06/09/2013	20076141	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	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 boundary's. 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.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Landisdale	Uneven footpath outside 7,8 & 9	ECC	15/01/2014	2289623	08/06/15 to be removed from the agenda and monitored by the Parish Office. 27/1/15 still low priority to be reviewed 2015/16. 21/11/14 No updates. 9/5/14 does not meet criteria. low priority defect raised. 29/04/14 & 21/01/14 inspected and assessed.
St Cleres Way	Concrete posts are leaning over causing a hazard	ECC	23/05/2014	2330013	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.
Tyndales Lane	Flooding due to blocked gullies	ECC	21/08/2014	2352218	08/06/15 to be removed from the agenda and monitored by the Parish Office. 23/02/15 does not meet criteria. Will be monitored and reviewed for 2015/16 schedule. 15/2/15 has been inspected again. 08/10/14 still investigating. 21/8/14 being investigated
Beaumont Park/Well Lane	Overhanging tree branches	ECC	09/09/2014	2355805	31/3/15 work to be carried out soon. 17/2/15 being investigated. 20/1/15 to be investigated. Reported by resident.
Footpath 1	Fingerpost missing	ECC	09/12/2014	2373828	15/5/15 no prow officer for Danbury yet. Still waiting for updates. 9/12/14 to be inspected. reported at Env Com
Moors Bridge Lane	Waymark missing/down at entrance to Lingwood Common	ECC	26/01/2015	2383932	08/06/15 to be removed from the agenda 7/4/15 inspected and does not meet criteria to be fixed. 6/2/15 to be inspected. Reported at Env Comm
Horne Row	Road/Bridleway in poor condition. Erosion of road due to flooding. Potholes	ECC	20/02/2015	2386662	8/6/15 There was a question over whether it was ECC responsibility or not. Resident believes road is adopted but ECC don't. Resident researching further. 20/2/15 to be investigated. Reported by resident.
Moors Bridge Lane Footpath 59	Handrail on footbridge broken	ECC	01/04/2015	2394825	8/6/15 remove from agenda. 07/04/15 inspected and does not meet criteria for immediate repair. reported by Maria
Mill Lane	30mph sign has been knocked down	ECC	07/04/2015	2395440	1/6/15 raised as defect and sent to engineering team. reported at Farmers Market

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Hopping Jacks Lane (Butts Lane to Simmonds Way)	Footway in poor condition	ECC	10/03/2015	2396414	1/6/15 raised as defect and sent to engineering team. reported as maintenance as not accepted as LHP
Southview Road	Footway broken up / weeds	ECC	10/03/2015	2396420	8/6/15 remove from agenda. 01/05/15 No further action. Road had annual inspection on 13/4/15 and no defects that met ECC minimum criteria were found. reported as maintenance as not accepted as LHP
Millfields	Footway uneven/mossy	ECC	10/03/2015	2396421	8/6/15 remove from agenda. 14/4/15 assessed - does not meet criteria - to be monitored. reported as maintenance, not accepted as LHP
Footway between Poplar Farm and Overshot Bridge	Footway overgrown with vegetation due to soil washing down	ECC	31/03/2015	2396422	7/5/15 being investigated. LHO will get Highway rangers to side verge and see what surface is there. reported by resident
Main Road (between Clovers & Riffhams Lane)	Footpath reduced by vegetation growth	ECC	20/04/2015	2397637	1/6/15 raised as defect and sent to engineering team. reported by resident.
St Cleres Way	area near footpath 17 is uneven (near to steps)	ECC	26/05/2015	2403638	26/5/15 to be inspected. reported by resident.
93 Main Road outside Rectory Farm House	Bollards on grass verge removed by resident and holes filled	ECC	19/05/2015	2402745	8/6/15 Members advised bollards put into preserve sightlines by ECC originally. 1/6/15 ECC checking ownership of land. 26/05/15 being investigated
Maldon Road - Tesco	Pothole on footway at exit of petrol stations	ECC	14/05/2015	2401941	reported by resident.
20 Pedlars Path	Verge has been destroyed by parked vehicles, is muddy with several holes	ECC	26/05/2015	2403962	28/5/15 to be inspected. photograph left anonymously in post box

Members agreed that items which have been determined as low priority defects be removed from the agenda and monitored by the Assistant Clerk periodically.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

10 Chelmsford Local Highways Panel (LHP)

The minutes for the meetings of 28th January and 17th March 2015 were circulated.
RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

11 Local Highways Panel Requests

The current position of the scheme requests were listed below.

11.1 Schemes for consideration by the Committee

Footway between Overshot Bridge and Poplar Farm, Bicknacre Road.

The Assistant Clerk had contacted the LHP Liaison Officer who had viewed photographs of the area. He would arrange for the Highway Rangers to side the footway to determine if there was anything of substance underneath. If there was nothing of substance then it could be referred for consideration by the LHP if it was a regularly used path. The resident had been notified and would inform the Parish Office when the work was carried out.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

11.2 Schemes currently submitted to the LHP

11.2.1 Parking Issues in Well Lane/The Heights: An email had been received from a resident regarding the parking issues at this location. The LHP Liaison Officer had sent the following comments following a request to consider other options for easing parking issues at this location.

The LHP scheme proposal has been reassessed by our LHP validation team and they have advised that from a network management point of view the existing parking could be seen to provide a degree of traffic calming. If parking was removed the route could become more attractive to traffic as an alternative route avoiding the A414 through Danbury and this could lead to an increase of traffic speeds along it. We would appreciate the thoughts of your Parish Council on this.

Members continued to have strong concerns regarding safety at this location. Vehicles sped up to get past the obstructions along Well Lane and it was felt that this increased the likelihood of accidents, particularly due to the high levels of activity at the Outdoors Centre, school and businesses. Well Lane is still used as cut though regardless of the amount of parking along it and the volume of traffic would only increase over time. The road was not suitable for volume of traffic it carried. It was felt that parking restrictions could impact the businesses in the area although it was some of the newer businesses that had contributed to the problem. Some people did not use available parking near the units and chose to park on the road. Peak times remained a particular issue and the overhanging vegetation was also an ongoing concern. Members were also concerned about the proposed removal of the mini roundabout in Well Lane at the junction with the A414 as this had improved traffic flow. The proposed T junction would cause traffic to back up further along Well Lane. Cllr Mrs Chapman offered to take some more photographs of the area and it was unanimously agreed these should be sent to ECC along with the above comments which would be approved by the Chairman of the Environment Committee prior to sending.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Mrs Chapman takes photographs of the area and agrees comments (as per the Committees concerns) with the Assistant Clerk to be sent to ECC.

11.2.2 Parking Issues in Belvedere Close: As the verges were not part of the publicly maintainable highway (i.e. ECC owned), the request had gone to Chelmsford City Council to see if they would like to implement parking bays within the verges. An update had been requested.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

11.3 Schemes currently being undertaken by the LHP

11.3.1 New Footway Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road: This had been signed off by the ECC Cabinet Member for Highways and added to the Chelmsford City Approved Works Programme. No start date had been given.

11.3.2 Installation of railings outside 56 Main Road: This scheme was now classed as a high priority feasible scheme and included on the Safer Roads Potential Scheme List for investigation of bend improvements e.g. signage and railings.

11.3.3 St Johns School/Butts Lane Safety Issues: New bollards had been fitted.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

12 Quarries

12.1 St Clere's Hall: Nothing to report

12.2 Royal Oak Quarry: Cllr Wakefield was concerned about the condition of the road. Cllr Berlyn advised that he had recently spoken with the Agent for the quarry and the owner should be sweeping the road regularly. The quarry was looking at an alternative wheel wash to improve the cleanliness of the vehicles. Road sweepers had been seen through the village. The road was permanently stained and this could not be removed without resurfacing. Any quarry issues could be passed to Cllr Berlyn or the Parish Office to forward to the Agent for action. It was noted that Speedwatch had seen the same lorry pass several times which appeared to be empty although it was difficult to be sure. This could be a way of monitoring lorries in the future.

12.3 Sandon Quarry: Nothing to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

13 Living Landscapes

A meeting was held on 17th April 2015 but minutes had not been received. Cllr Mrs Hallett advised that she would attend the next meeting on Thursday. The group were still working on identifying landowners. Many people had been trained for hedge surveying but could not begin until further information was received. An article was due in the next Danbury Times.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

14 Information Board at St Johns Church

The CCC Museums Manager had confirmed that he now had a manufacturer and specification in place. The cost was £385 and he had asked if the Parish Council would consider paying half in return for adding the PC logo to the board. Some Members were concerned that this might indicate that the Parish Council funded the Church as it was located on Church Green. It was confirmed that the board belonged to CCC not the Church, and it displayed historical village information. It was suggested that along with the logo, CCC be asked to add wording that stated that the board was jointly funded by Danbury Parish Council in partnership with CCC. The Assistant Clerk would ask for a proof prior to manufacture. The Assistant Clerk advised that the Environment Committee had a budget for 'other' Environment costs of £150. The additional £42.50 could be requested from Resources.

Cllr Berlyn proposed that the Parish Council contributed half of the cost of the board provided that it stated that it was part funded by Danbury Parish Council and that £42.50 be requested from Resources. This was seconded by Cllr Allen and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council contributed half of the cost of the information board provided it stated that it was part funded by Danbury Parish Council and that £42.50 be requested from Resources.

15 Danbury Common

No updates to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

16 Project Danbury

Cllr Mrs Chapman confirmed that Cube were no longer able to work with the Parish Council. She had obtained advice from Hyde Hall which was to use weed killer to clear the area. This would be done in August. Scouts, Beavers & Cubs would like to be involved and Cllr Mrs Chapman had worked out a timetable for mid-September for them to help with planting, hoeing and spreading compost. Volunteers would be needed for digging prior to this. A rotavator may be required at a cost of approx. £60 to hire. The Assistant Clerk would arrange a meeting of Project Danbury.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted and a further meeting be arranged.

17 Matters for Report (for information only, including Climate Change)

All the dates for Parish Cleansing Days had been taken as the scheme was oversubscribed. The work requested for Danbury could not be carried out this year.

Cllr Berlyn advised that ECC Highways were planning to resurface the A414 from Eves Corner to Well Lane during the summer holidays. The pre signals would also be put in at this time. Details would be confirmed following the meeting with Highways. The road was in poor condition and required work as it was ten years since it had been resurfaced. It was not known if the road would be resurfaced towards Maldon.

The Community Bus was not permanently parked in the Parish Office car park. This was temporary whilst work was carried out at Church Green.

An area had been strimmed west of Boarded Well Cottages in Woodhill Road and left in a messy state (possibly National Trust land). It was not clear why this work had been carried out. Cllr Mrs Hallett offered to bring this up at the Living Landscapes Meeting on Thursday.

18 Dates of Meetings for 2015

14th September and 30th November 2015.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05 pm.

Cllr Mrs April Chapman
Chairman

.....
Signed

.....
Date