



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 25th November 2015 at 7.30pm
at The Old School House, Main Road, Danbury**

Present: Cllrs S Berlyn (Chairman) A Keeler
 Mrs A Chapman (Vice Chairman) B Kennewell
 A Allen P Sutton
 Mrs B Hallett M Telling
 G Gardiner M Wood

In Attendance: Mrs M Saunders, Clerk
 Mrs H Mayes, Assistant Clerk
 City Councillor Richard Ambor
 2 Members of the Public (Representing Danbury Fireworks Event)

A fire test was held prior to the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the Members of the Public to the meeting and advised that City Councillor Ambor would be the first point of contact for any Danbury issues in future.

96 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Carlin, Mrs Gardiner and Wakefield.

97 Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests they had in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. They were reminded that they would need to repeat their declaration at the appropriate point in the meeting and leave the room if the interest was a pecuniary one. Unforeseen interests must similarly be declared at the appropriate time. Councillors had a dispensation to speak on any items regarding the Danbury Community Association Trust Limited – Danbury Sports and Social Centre and the precept.

None were declared.

98 Public Question Time

No one wished to speak at this point.

99 Danbury Fireworks

Cllr Allen confirmed to those present that his concerns related to the unexpected closure of Well Lane for the firework event. He advised that he had recently had a conversation with Nick Binder of the South Essex Parking Partnership. It appeared that the organisers had spoken to Chelmsford City Council, the Police and ECC but not advised residents or the Parish Council which he felt was unacceptable as the fireworks already caused an unnecessary disturbance. Mr Binder had advised that notices were posted in the area (Cllr Allen had not seen any locally) and that there was no requirement to advertise the closure in the press. He advised that the Parish

Council should have been informed (a link was subsequently found on the CCC website and posted to the Parish Council website). The closure had enabled Well Lane to be used as bus drop off and pick up point although there were bus stops along the A414 that could have been used, with cones used to prevent parking in Well Lane itself. Although there was no legal obligation to consult, he felt it would have been courteous to advise residents and the Parish Council of the closure. Although access was given to residents living off Well Lane, the road closure was an inconvenience to local residents and the wider community.

Cllr Allen felt that the outdoor advertisement rules and noise requirements were not being met. There was parking chaos in Elm Green Lane, Parkdale and Mildmays. which was difficult for residents and visitors. Damage had been done to Elm Green which the Groundsman had needed to repair and two posts had been removed to enable access to the green.

Cllr Allen considered that the event was now too large for the venue and should be at a location where there is parking capacity. He thought it likely that, in the future, ECC would make more use of the Danbury Outdoors site. He wished for the following questions to be answered:

- How would parking be handled in future?
- What guarantees were there that the situation would not happen again?
- Why were residents and the Parish Council ignored?
- Why was there damage and chaos around Elm Green?

Cllr Allen thought that the Parish Council should be sending a message to ECC and CCC that, to protect the rural ambiance, there should be no further intensification of use of Danbury Outdoors.

Other Members made the following comments:

- There was a yellow sign placed at top of Well Lane advising of the closure.
- It would have been dangerous not to have closed the road due to the use of the buses.
- The closure of the road for commercial purposes should be resisted.
- Elm Green had been roped off in previous years but this was not done this year. There was concern on the night from residents regarding pedestrian safety and the Police had been contacted. If the weather had been worse, there could have been substantial damage and it should be noted that the Remembrance Service took place the next day.
- Residential roads were always used for parking during this event and the parking was often bad.
- There was uncertainty if the Park and Ride system had worked. More advertising may have been needed to make people aware of this new facility.

The representative from Danbury Fireworks then addressed the meeting. He advised that this was the first time that he had been asked to speak about the firework event in the fifteen years that he had been involved as there had not been any issues raised in the past.

He confirmed that Well Lane was closed under Section 21 Temporary Road Closure Provisions on safety grounds and that consultation had taken place with Chelmsford City Council to achieve this. There were up to 7,000 people expected to attend and the parking system was changed as the field had become unmanageable due to wet conditions in previous years. In order to utilise the Park and Ride, they had to put in safety provisions for users and make a decision where buses could load and unload. They had considered using the current bus stops on the A414 but this would have meant several buses stopping and people using the crossing which would have held up traffic on the A414. This was not considered the best solution and so Well Lane was closed to enable the buses to be stacked and kept separate from other vehicles and people. He took on board that the organisers could have liaised with Parish Council but reiterated that he had sought the appropriate permissions from the relevant authorities to close the road. Well Lane was closed from 4.30pm until 10pm and there had only been one issue with someone wishing to use the road during that time. Generally, most residents did not have an issue with the closure.

The organisers confirmed that 1000 people had used the Park and Ride and it was felt that it had been successful. It was advertised in the media, on flyers and on tickets and there was a cost of £3 per car. Good feedback had been received from the people that had used it and they hoped to expand it next year. They were advised to have three buses but used seven which enabled them to clear the venue within forty minutes at the end of the evening. The parking issues may have arisen from a number of people who turned up on the night unaware of the change in parking arrangements. It was hoped that next year people will be more aware of the Park and Ride facility and use it. The organisers were not authorised to deal with traffic or parking on the surrounding roads but would ensure next year that Elm Green was fenced off.

They advised that they had not received any complaints from the Police and only one complaint after the event to Chelmsford City Council Environment Health Section. They had not received any complaints from other sources.

Cllr Allen noted that 7000 people was greater than the population of the village. He understood that numerous complaints had been made in the past about the amplified music played either side of the fireworks. He felt that Chelmsford City Council had refused to do anything about the noise in the past.

The organisers advised that the event had become smaller as previously there had been up to 11,000 people attending. The event adhered to the rules laid down by Chelmsford City Council and they made every effort to minimise noise by changing the direction of the speakers. The closure of Well Lane was notified in advance to residents and businesses in Well Lane who were also offered free tickets. The organisers advised that they were residents themselves and that the event raised funds for the local Scouts and were returned back into the local community.

The Chairman asked the organisers to take back the issues raised for further discussions and requested that the Parish Council was notified in advance about plans for the next firework display.

Both of the organisers left the meeting at 8.04pm.

100 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14th October 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

101 Councillor Vacancies and Appointment to Committees

101.1 There were still councillor vacancies to be filled by Co-option.

101.2 Cllr Sutton wished to join Environment and Facilities Committees. This was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Sutton be appointed to the Environment and Facilities Committees.

102 Post Office

The Clerk had been in contact with the Chief Executive at the Co-op. They were still in discussions with the Post Office regarding the Post Office remaining in its current location.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

103 Reports from Village Organisations

Cllr Keeler advised that he had attended the AGM of the CPRE. Attendees had walked along the Chelmer and had a talk with slides and a video on the work of the Chelmer Navigation. This was followed by the AGM. Cllr Keeler advised that the talk was very interesting and the speaker (Roy Chandler) might be suitable to speak at the Parish Council APM in April.

Cllr Berlyn advised that he had attended part of the Danbury Society's AGM last week.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

104 Strategic Plan Working Group

No further meetings had been held, although all committees had been asked for input into the plan. The Facilities Committee had gone through the list of projects which was circulated to Members. Cllr Allen proposed that this was forwarded to the Strategic Plan Working Group and this was seconded by Cllr Wood. All were in favour.

RESOLVED: that the list of projects was forwarded to the Strategic Plan Working Group.

105 Grants (General Power of Competence)(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012/965

It had been recommended from the Resources Committee, under the Power of Competence, to grant St John the Baptist Church £1500 towards the works to Church Green. Cllr Kennewell proposed that £1500 was granted to St John the Baptist Church for the works on Church Green. This was seconded by Cllr Allen and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that £1500 was granted to St John the Baptist Church for the works on Church Green under the Power of Competence. .

106 Precept Request

The Resources Committee discussed the precept on the 18th November and a spreadsheet had been circulated to the Council. Cllr Kennewell advised that the precept request was for £189,735 which was a 1.2% increase on the previous year. The Committee had aimed to retain an increase within a 2% limit. This was not a requirement but the Committee believed it was fair to residents and the Parish Council as some costs would increase. Cllr Kennewell proposed that the precept request for 2016/2017 was £189,735. This was seconded by Cllr Wood and all were in favour.

RESOLVED: that the precept request for 2016/2017 would be £189,735.

107 Leases

107.1 The Tennis Club

Members were advised that the lease had now been completed.

107.2 The Old Pavilion

The Parish Council were awaiting comments from the DCA. Unfortunately one of the directors had been ill.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

108 Reports from Committees

108.1 Resources Committee

Members were advised that:

- The Lone Workers Policy had been reviewed and the Parish Council were requested to adopt the Policy. Cllr Allen had questions regarding working at height regulations, the Groundsman's ability to hear his mobile phone whilst operating noisy machinery and the practicality of using a window in the event of a fire if the fire exit could not be used. The Clerk advised that the Council was required to have a Lone Workers Policy and that no major changes had been made from when it was last approved. Any suggested improvements could be looked at next time. Cllr Kennewell proposed that the Lone Workers Policy be adopted and this was seconded by Cllr Gardiner. There were nine in favour and one abstention, therefore the Lone Workers Policy was adopted.
- The budgets and budget spends were circulated to all Members with the Resources Agenda and Members were advised to keep these documents for future meetings.
- The Internal Audit was completed on Wednesday 4th November 2015. The Internal Auditor had also visited on 19th May 2015 and there were no recommendations on both occasions. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for achieving two good internal audits and an unqualified external audit.
- Information Technology: the Resources Committee had been considering
 - using fibre optic cable for the broadband
 - using the Cloud to store the Parish Council work instead of the server.
 - linking the telephone system to the computers.
- The Clerk advised that the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders would need to be reviewed at the next Parish Council meeting in January.

RESOLVED: that

- a) the Lone Workers Policy be adopted by the Parish Council
- b) the internal audit information with no recommendations was noted by the Council therefore there were no actions to be taken.
- c) the other information be noted.

108.2 Planning Committee

Members were advised that:

- A Tree Planting Grant had been requested from CCC for two Cherry Trees for the Project Danbury flowerbed.
- Cllr Berlyn had attended the launch of BIMBY (Beauty in My Backyard). This would be launching formally in 2016 and contained a toolkit for making a plan for the parish. This was similar in some respects to a Neighbourhood Plan.
- CCC had begun consulting on the New Local Plan for nine weeks from the 19th November. There would be a drop in session on the 10th December at Danbury Village Hall between 11am and 1pm. A second session had been organised at the request of the Parish Council, which would be on the 5th January 2016 between 6pm and 8pm. There were other drop-in exhibitions around the Chelmsford District on different dates and times. A flyer had been included in the Danbury Times with details of the consultation and exhibitions. The Parish Council would be responding to the local consultation. It was suggested that an extraordinary Parish Council meeting may need to be held to agree comments to be submitted. This could be held on the 18th January prior to the Planning Meeting.
- £5000 was requested from Resources towards a Neighbourhood Plan (if one was agreed in the future). Grants might also be available towards this. It was felt that a Neighbourhood Plan may now be required due to changes in Government Policy. The RCCE had offered to speak to Councillors about producing Neighbourhood Plans and the Assistant Clerk was looking into arranging this.
- Cllrs Allen, Berlyn, Keeler and Telling were attending the CCC Parish Forum on 8th December.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

108.3 Environment Committee

Members were advised that:

- There had not been an Environment Meeting since the last Parish Council meeting.
- Project Danbury – the bed had now been dug and manure put in. It was hoped that planting would be able to take place in the spring.
- Cllr Mrs Chapman, the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk had attended a Highways Briefing at CCC on the 27th October.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

108.4 Facilities Committee

Members were advised that:

- A new drainage pipe had been installed into the pond at Eves Corner. The Clerk had resolved the most recent issues with the pond and confirmed there were no blockages.
- CCTV was awaiting permission from Essex County Council regarding the installation of a receiver of the Old School House.
- The Tree Survey was in hand.
- The Old Pavilion works were reported under Agenda Item 15.

- The winter salt programme was continuing this year. Anyone who wished to volunteer should contact the Parish Office. Councillors were delivering letters to locations where volunteers are required.
- Carols Round the Christmas Tree was being organised by the local churches on Wednesday 16th December 2015 at Eves Corner at 7.30 p.m.
- Cllr Keeler advised that there was an issue with the new DCA toilets where the light did not come on as you enter. The Clerk advised that this was a known issue due to the location of the sensor and this would be rectified.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

109 Communications Working Group

The notes from the meeting held on 19th October 2015 were circulated. Invitations had been sent to sixty local businesses to attend an afternoon event with refreshments. Unfortunately, there had not been enough response to move this forward and the event had been cancelled. Alternative options would need to be considered.

Schools Visits: Three Councillors had visited St Johns Primary School. The format had been changed and the session went well as the class had prepared questions. There had not been a response from the other school yet.

APM: The Clerk had been trying to contact the Medical Centre regarding speaking at the APM but this was proving difficult. The schools had not responded about providing a choir.

ID Badges: New photo ID badges had been purchased from Chelmsford City Council. There was a cost to replace these so Councillors were requested to ensure that they are always handed back to the office after use.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

110 Toilet Refurbishment

The toilet work was completed on the ground floor ready for the Crafts Fair on Saturday 14th November 2015. The contractors would then move on to upper floor and finally to the Old Pavilion in December.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

111 A414 Road Works

The traffic lights were still to be commissioned at Eves Corner. The latest information was that there had been some delays with BT connecting a line to the signals to enable ECC Highways to access and monitor the junction. This appeared to now have been resolved. CCTV cameras were also required so that the signals could be monitored from the traffic control centre. These were to be installed in the near future. Investigations were still ongoing regarding the signal head outside Bakers. This needed to be resolved prior to the commissioning of the installation.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

112 Danbury Medical Centre

A March completion date was still expected. Some tree works had been requested to improve sightlines at the entrance.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

113 Essex County Council / Fire and Rescue Volunteering Scheme

113.1 Further to Minute 93 of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th October 2015, paperwork was circulated that was received from Essex County Council after the meeting.

Members considered if there was anything that the Parish Council could contribute to community schemes which could be reported back to Essex County Council. It was felt that there were already a lot of community projects being done in and around Danbury and Members were not sure if there was a need for further initiatives. Members agreed unanimously that the Clerk should contact County Cllr Spence and advise him that a number of the examples given were already in place within Danbury and that the Parish Council felt that Danbury was more resilient than most villages. At the present time the Parish Council did not see a need to expand on any items but would consider again in the future.

RESOLVED: that Members felt that a number of the examples given were already in place within Danbury and that Danbury was more resilient than most villages. At the present time the Parish Council did not see a need to expand on any items but would consider again in the future.

113.2 Essex Fire Service and Essex Police Volunteering Scheme

Documents explaining the scheme were circulated to Members. Members discussed the scheme and some felt it offered a good service and were in support of it. Others felt that it was a cost cutting exercise which was trying to fill the gap left by the reduction in Police Officers and PCSO's. It was noted that Fire Officers already visited properties to carry out fire prevention work and that this may not be the best use of a fully trained Fire Officer if a civilian could be trained in this work.

The Parish Council could advertise this scheme to the public in the usual ways i.e. noticeboards, website, Facebook. The Scheme Co-ordinator could go directly to local publications such as The Journal. Members agreed unanimously to publicise the scheme to the parish.

RESOLVED: that the Essex Fire Service and Essex Police Volunteering Scheme was publicised to the parish.

114 Danbury Times

The latest edition had been delivered to the office and Members were asked to take their rounds for delivery. Cllr Mrs Chapman may require assistance if some of the usual volunteers were unable to help this time.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

115 Councillors' Surgeries

Members volunteered to attend the Farmers Market in 2016 as follows:

6th February: Cllrs Telling and Keeler

5th March: Cllrs Mrs Chapman and Hallett

2nd April: Cllrs G Gardiner and Mrs A Gardiner

7th May: Cllrs Allen and Wood.

Further volunteers would be required for the rest of the year. Members were asked to contact the Clerk if they could assist.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

116 Emergency Planning Representatives

Cllr Telling would be attending training at the City Council in the new year.
RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

117 Cllr Spence’s Monthly Report

An update had not been received.
RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

118 Danbury Leaflet Reprint

The Clerk advised there was enough money in the budget to print 1000 further copies of the leaflet. Members were asked to contact the office with any updates to the leaflet. Cllr Mrs Chapman proposed that following any alterations, 1000 copies of the Danbury Leaflet were printed. This was seconded by Cllr Telling and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that a further 1000 copies of the Danbury Leaflet are printed at a cost of £280 plus artwork, following any alterations made.

119 Matters for Report (for information only)

Cllr Berlyn advised that the First Responders had attended five hundred calls so far this year. It had previously taken seven years to reach five hundred calls and this demonstrated how well used and vital the service was to the village. Cllr Berlyn had sent an email of congratulations but would like the Parish Council to consider if they could recognise this achievement. Suggestions of a letter of commendation or an article in the Danbury Times were made. This item would be placed on the next Parish Council agenda for further discussion.

120 Date of Meetings in 2016

27th January, 16th March, 27th July, 28th September and 30th November.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 18th April 2016 commencing at 8 p.m.

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL 11th May 2016

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.11pm

Signed: Cllr S Berlyn, Chairman

Date: