

## DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

*A Quality Council*



## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### **Minutes of the meeting of the held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury**

Present: Cllrs: Mrs A Chapman (Chairman, ex-officio), Mrs B Hallett (Vice Chairman), S Berlyn (ex officio), C Baker, G Chapman, A Keeler, J Steele, J Thombs

In attendance: Mrs H Mayes, Assistant Clerk

#### **51 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **52 Declarations of Interest**

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests they know they might have 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 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. 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. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

There were no interests declared.

#### **53 Public Questions (Time limited to 15 minutes)**

There were no members of the public present.

#### **54 Minutes of the Environment Committee**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **55 Footpaths**

##### **55.1 Footpath Officer Reports**

One Footpath Officer had nothing to report and a brief report from the other Footpath Officer, Cllr Chapman, was circulated. Cllr Chapman advised that cyclists were using the path through the churchyard and cycling at some speed which could be dangerous to walkers. There had been a gate in the churchyard some years ago which was no longer in place. A gate or something similar was needed at the churchyard/allotment end to slow down people who were cycling through. The Assistant Clerk was asked to contact the Church to see if they would consider this request as it would be on church land.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk would contact the Church to see if they would consider installing a gate to slow cyclists using the path.

## **55.2 Footpath Maps**

Several Members had brought alterations to the map which were given to the Assistant Clerk to collate.

**Permissive Paths:** Further information had been received regarding the addition of the permissive paths to the map. The Parish Council would have to supply a pdf of the permissive paths that were required to be added and two provisional quotes had been obtained of £130 and £200. After some discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Steele would meet with the Assistant Clerk to look at the permissive paths and agree which should be sent over to the cartographer for reproducing onto the Footpath Map. A proof could then be taken back to the Environment Committee in January to decide whether to proceed.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Steele meets with the Assistant Clerk to agree which permissive paths should be included on the footpath map.

**Printing Costs:** Members were given the costs of printing different quantities of the map. It was agreed that 2000 would be printed by Colt Press Ltd at a cost of £672.00.

RESOLVED: that 2000 footpath maps be printed at a cost of £672.00.

## **56 Bus Transportation**

No further updates had been sent. The next meetings would be held in March 2018.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **57 Highway Matters**

### **57.1 Parking**

#### **i) Eves Corner Verge**

The Assistant Clerk had contacted SEPP with dates of forthcoming events at the village hall which had been noted. The SEPP had advised that they would, resources permitting; endeavour to send a mobile patrol out to check the location on these occasions. Members were urged to have the SEPP number to hand and report immediately if parking was observed at this location. Cllr Chapman had contacted the number recently after seeing vehicles parked on the verge at Eves Corner. It went through to ECC Highways who were helpful but did not have the mobile number of the Parking Enforcement Officer to enable them to be contacted straight away and attend the area. The Assistant Clerk was requested to contact ECC Highways and SEPP to ask why Highways do not have the mobile number of the Enforcement Team to be able to contact them out of hours.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk was requested to contact ECC Highways and SEPP to ask why Highways do not have the mobile number of the Enforcement Team to be able to contact them out of hours.

#### **ii) Update from SEPP**

The SEPP Manager had advised that in the last twelve months the enforcement team had visited Danbury 116 times. During the visits, they had carried out 115 observations, whereby a vehicle was noted parking in contravention of a parking restriction but the vehicle moved on before a PCN could be issued and the officers have issued 27 PCNs. Cllr Thombs advised that this seemed to be in line with the district wide figures given at the recent Highways Briefing.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **57.2 Highways Issues / County Cllr Spence**

Cllr Berlyn and Cllr Steele had met with Cllr Spence at the Highways Surgery. The list of topics had been circulated previously and an update given at the recent Parish Council meeting. The Assistant Clerk would again forward the comments received regarding the pre signals to Cllr Spence as part of the review of the new lights.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **57.3 Highways Briefing**

Cllrs Steele and Thombs attended a Highways Briefing on 16<sup>th</sup> November. The briefing was interesting and included car parking, parking enforcement and highways matters. Some of the other parishes raised concerns regarding the LHP and Ringway Jacobs and would like more information regarding costs of work. Parking issues at schools were discussed and the implementation of the new 3PR scheme which had been successful so far in some areas. This was an incentive scheme in which both the schools and the children had to participate. It was hoped this would be rolled out to other areas.

A further briefing had been advised on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at CCC. Members would inform the Assistant Clerk if they wished to attend.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **57.4 Highways matters (reported items)**

The reported items were circulated and updates given. Issues had been taken off the list where they had not met ECC criteria at present and would be monitored.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **58 Chelmsford Local Highways Panel (LHP)**

### **58.1 Minutes**

The minutes and report from the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September were circulated. The next meeting was due to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> December.

### **58.2 Parish Representation on LHP**

The response regarding parish representation/observation at LHP meetings was circulated. This was a decision taken by the Chairman of the Panel and was different in other LHP areas. Cllr Thombs advised that, at the recent briefing, other parishes were also asking about being more involved in the LHP. There was a general feeling amongst the parishes that there was not enough information available regarding costs.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **59 Local Highways Panel Requests - Schemes currently submitted to the LHP**

Updates from the Highways Liaison Officer were below in italics. Members agreed that the LHP priorities were for the new footway at Mayes Lane and the one way system at The Heights. The request for Riffhams Lane was pending and this request would be discussed again when the data was received.

### **59.1 Footway between Overshot Bridge and Poplar Farm, Bicknacre Road**

This would be removed from the LHP at the next meeting in December as requested by the Committee at the last meeting.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **59.2 One Way System to exit The Heights**

*The feasibility Study into the One-way system currently has a completion date of Quarter 4 2017/18, though I understand that a design engineer has started working on the study and I would be hoping to bring this completion date forward significantly. As soon as we have the study we will share it with your Parish Council for their comments.*

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **59.3 New Footway Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road**

*The footway is currently on the Chelmsford City LHP Approved Works Programme under the 2018/19 Rolling Programme, using reference LCHE163005. The Panel will be starting to finalise their 2018/19 Approved Works Programme at their December Panel meeting and subject to the agreement of the Panel we would be looking to implement this scheme in 2018/19.*

Members were unsure why this work had been downgraded to a walkable verge rather than a footway. Clarification was also needed on what a walkable verge was.

Members felt that it would be difficult to make this section a safe walkable verge. The Assistant Clerk was asked to contact the Highways Liaison Officer to confirm.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk was asked to contact the Highways Liaison Officer to confirm.

## **59.4 Additional Bollards at junction of The Avenue & Maldon Rd (Prevent footway parking)**

*Whilst consideration could be given to installing bollards on the footway we would have to off-set them from the kerb by a standard 450mm, which is the off-set used for any street furniture. This could still allow vehicles to mount the kerb and park. If parking restrictions were implemented they would apply to the rear of the highway boundary so any vehicle on the footway could be ticketed. We would suggest that this location would benefit from parking restrictions which could then be enforced against.*

The PC had already approached the SEPP for restrictions which had been declined.

Members agreed that the response from the LHP should be forwarded to the SEPP.

RESOLVED: that the response from the LHP should be forwarded to the SEPP.

## **59.5 Speed Reduction/HGV Turning Issues Riffhams Lane**

A traffic monitoring device had been installed in the location proposed by the resident who raised the original concerns. The data available once the monitoring is completed.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **59.6 Parking Issues in Belvedere Close**

The Assistant Clerk had contacted Cllr Ambor again but had not received any further updates as yet.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **60 Quarries (St Clere's Hall, Royal Oak & Sandon)**

No further updates had been received.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **61 Living Landscapes**

Cllr Mrs Hallett advised that she had attended a meeting last Friday. The reorganisation of Essex Wildlife Trust was progressing which should get some of the projects moving again. EWT had lost interest for some projects in the past as things were not getting followed up quickly enough.

As a result of the Danbury surveys, the group would start planting 350 metres of hedgerow in January and February at Speakmans Farm. There would also be planting at Brock Farm. EWT would provide the trees and volunteers would plant them. A question was raised regarding whether the landowners would be contributing financially as well. Cllr Mrs Hallett would find out at the next meeting. There would also be some planting carried out in Lt Baddow and across a field near to Cherry Garden Lane.

This issue of wildflower planting was raised again. EWT understood the Committees position regarding planting in high profile areas in Danbury but had asked if any other sites could be considered. There was an area by The Heights that was a possibility and also a section of Griffin Meadow. Griffin Meadow was leased to the Parish Council by the Diocese and managed by Strutt and Parker. The Groundsman cut the grass here. EWT advised that the mowing regime for wildflower planting was less onerous than regular grass cutting and they could advise the Groundsman on this. Members agreed that this could be explored further and the first step would be to check the terms of the lease to see if it would be permissible. If agreed, Members would like the EWT to be selective with the plants used to minimise the area looking untidy after the initial planting. Cllr Mrs Hallett would visit the site as well.

Cllr Mrs Hallett also advised that there was a funding scheme via ECC called CIF. Cllr Berlyn also advised there was a new fund which the EALC were managing on behalf of ECC which was for 50% shared in revenue expenditure rather than capital. RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk would check the lease agreement for Griffin Meadow.

## **62 Project Danbury**

Cllr Mrs Chapman advised that there was no budget for project Danbury for the next financial year.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **63 Wooden Posts**

Cllr Mrs Chapman reported that three of the posts at the entrance to the DCA car park had rotted and fallen over. The Groundsman had cleared them away and filled the holes. The rest were likely to become rotten in the near future. Members agreed that these should be replaced on a like for like basis as necessary. The Assistant Clerk was requested to see if similar sized posts could be obtained.

Cllr Berlyn advised that three square posts were needed at Eves Corner, opposite Heathcotes School and Bakers. A vehicle kept parking on the verge here

It was reported that there was a post at the bottom of Elm Green that also needed replacement. Cllr Steele had temporarily fixed it but a permanent replacement was required.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk investigates the installation of new and replacement posts at the above locations.

## **65 Advertisements**

Cllr Mrs Chapman was concerned about the number of advertisements being put up around the village. It had been agreed some years ago between the ECC and CCC that adverts could be put on Eves Corner verge (adjacent to the bus shelter) as long

as they were not overly large, did not obstruct sightlines and were left up for a minimal period. The DCA placed banners up against the hedge for some events. Recently there had been a number of signs for a Craft Fair attached to lampposts through the village. There was an issue with people who were trading or holding events in the DCA putting signs up by the flowerbed. One example was the knife sharpener who attended the Farmers Market who put a banner between the trees at the Old Pavilion. There were also A boards set up on Eves Corner.

Cllr Berlyn advised that that EALC were looking at areas where delegated powers could be given to parishes to remove signs. The signs would then have to be stored. This might help with the issues in Danbury. Signage on highways land was an issue due to the cabling that ran underground. CCC could get involved after a sign has been up for more than 28 days but it had usually been removed by then anyway. There were also rules for the Conservation Area. Some signs were put up for community reasons and also to promote local businesses.

Cllr Mrs Chapman felt that there was a case for not tolerating any adverts on street furniture and verges. It was suggested this might be something that could be addressed through Neighbourhood Plan. Members agreed that advertisers need to comply with the guidance and any non-compliance should be reported to the Office. RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**66 Matters for Report (for information only)**

A resident had contacted the office to advise that his granddaughter had narrowly avoided being hit by a car going through a red light at the Eves Corner pedestrian crossing. Unfortunately no registration details of the car could be obtained but the matter had been logged by the Police. Cllr Mrs Chapman advised that there would be a piece in the Spring Danbury Times advising people to report similar incidents to the police. Cllr Baker advised he had witnessed a near miss at the crossing near the Medical Centre. The beacons did not appear to be bright enough.

**67 Dates of Meetings for 2018**

29<sup>th</sup> January, 5<sup>th</sup> March, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1<sup>st</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.22pm.

Cllr Mrs April Chapman  
Chairman

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Signed

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Date