

## DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

*A Quality Council*



## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### **Minutes of the meeting of the held on Monday 4 April 2011 at the Parish Office**

Present: Cllrs A Keeler (Chairman), D. Bolwell, Mrs A Chapman, A Pemberton, J Thomson, D Whiteing.

In attendance: Mr J Bowen (Danbury Society), Mrs E Blyth, Assistant Clerk

#### **100 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs S Berlyn, Mrs S-J Court, S Freeman and M Wood.

#### **101 Declarations of Interest**

Members are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda. They were reminded that they will need to repeat their declaration at the appropriate point in the meeting and to leave the room if the interest is a prejudicial one. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

No interests were declared.

#### **102 Public Question Time**

No members of the public were present.

#### **103 Minutes of Environment Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

Cllr Mrs A Chapman was added to the list of those giving apologies for absence.

RESOLVED: that with the amendment above the minutes of the meeting of Environment Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011 be approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **104 Footpaths**

**104.1 Footpaths Map to be placed on website:** This task had been passed to Lodge Information Services and should be dealt with shortly. Lodge anticipated that the cost would be about one hour of their time. The map would be embedded in a web page rather than simply being a link to a pdf file, though this could be included as well.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**104.2 Work Proposal for P3 for Next Year: Footpaths map:** A grant had been applied for in 2011–2012 to reprint the footpaths map as supplies were nearly exhausted. Essex County council would pay 50% of the cost with the Parish Council finding the rest. It was not yet clear how many copies ECC would pay for and so a quotation had been obtained for 1,000 copies at £474, 2000 copies at £612, and 3000 copies at £750.

After discussion members agreed that the reprinting should not take place until the map had been updated. It was agreed that this be discussed again at the June

meeting and that the Clerk be consulted regarding the procedure for updating the map

RESOLVED: that the footpaths map be updated before reprinting and that the matter be discussed again at the next meeting following advice from the Clerk on the required procedure.

**104.3 Danbury Youth Camp and park – Request for a footpath on the south side of the main road running east from opposite Riffhams Lane:** This was with Essex County Council. Members were concerned that the approval process might take a considerable time. It was suggested that the manager of Danbury Outdoors be approached about the possibility of the public walking over part of its land (which also belonged to ECC).

RESOLVED: that the manager of Danbury Outdoors be asked to give permission for part of its land adjacent to this stretch of road to be used by pedestrians.

**104.4 Overgrown trees on Footpath 17:** (Minute 79.3 of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011 refers) This was being dealt with by the Tree Officer at Essex County Council.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**104.5 Footpaths Officer's Report:** Cllr Bolwell asked for his report to be a regular item on the Environment Committee agenda, and this was agreed. He reported that the Public Rights of Way Officer at ECC would be replacing broken waymark signs in Cherry Garden Lane. This would not be done under the P3 agreement.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted, and that Footpaths Officer's Report become a regular item on the agenda.

## **105 Highway Matters**

**105.1 Parishes Transportation Group:** The Secretary of the Group had written to all participating Councils bringing them up to date with the current state of play and asking for views on whether the Group should continue or be disbanded. Cllr Berlyn, who had represented the Parish Council on the Group, had responded giving his view that the Group should disband as it was unlikely to achieve anything positive in the current financial climate. In discussion members of the Committee agreed with this position.

RESOLVED: that the Committee recommended that the Parishes Transportation Group be disbanded.

**105.2 Zebra Crossing, Main Road outside Danbury Park School:** The signage had been completed.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**105.3 Mayes Lane flooding:** The Engineer had visited and cleared the area again.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**105.4 Eves Corner parking spaces:** Repairs had been requested but were still awaited. This had been raised again by a member of the public at the Annual Parish Meeting.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**105.5 Traffic Orders:** There were none to report

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**105.6 Pillar Box, Hyde Lane:** Members reported that the problem was ongoing in wet weather. The Groundsman was monitoring.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**105.7 Signage on Woodhill Road:** Members were asked to let the Clerk know whether this work had been completed.

RESOLVED: that members notify the Clerk when the new signs had been installed.

**105.8 Speed limit signs, Well Lane:** These were on Essex County Council's list of works.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**105.9 Sightlines at Cherry Garden Lane:** Signs to improve safety at the western junction of Cherry Garden Lane and Maldon Road were on Essex County Council's list following issues raised by a resident.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **106 Highways – Small Schemes List**

**106.1 Well Lane Zebra Crossing:** This item would be placed on the Small Schemes List - Localism when it was opened by ECC.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**106.2 Runsell Green, reduction in speed limit:** No further information was available.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**106.3 Gating signs at ends of village:** These had been requested by the Danbury Society. Members agreed that this proposal should be placed on the Small Schemes List, though other items might be considered more urgent when the list was prioritised.

RESOLVED: that village gate signs be added to the Small Schemes List.

**106.4 Need for a footpath – Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road:** This item had already been included on the Small Schemes List. (It was also part of the Unilateral Undertaking for the Planning Application south of Shaftmoor.)

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**106.5 Proposal for 30mph speed limit through village:** This item had been raised at the Annual Parish Meeting. Members discussed it but did not agree. They felt that the existing 40mph limits at each side of the 30mph limit were adequate for traffic calming.

RESOLVED: that the Committee did not support this proposal.

## 107 Items Reported to Environment Committee

A resident had recently reported concerns about potholes at the Maldon Road end of Cherry Garden Lane and this had been raised with ECC Highways. The damaged road sign at Mildmays had now been repaired. The audible tone on the traffic lights at Eves Corner had been repaired and the timer checked.

RESOLVED: that the Cherry Garden Lane item be added to the list of reported works and that the items relating to the Mildmays sign and the Eves Corner traffic lights be removed.

The revised list is below:

Items for Report	Authority Sent to	Work Completed
Potholes in Cherry Garden Lane, Maldon Road end	Essex County Highways 29.03.2011	
Outside the Pharmacy Hopping Jacks Lane the tarmac had formed a pothole making it like a sleeping policeman and was dangerous	Essex County Highways 15.9.2010	This area possibly not owned by Essex County Council this is being checked. This area was outside the Medical Centre and still had not been completed.
Tree outside the pharmacy was covering a street light screwed to a telegraph pole	Passed to Essex County Highways Lighting Section 15.9.2010	These trees owned by the shops and a request for tree works has been received by Chelmsford Borough Council.
Cllr Mrs S J Court had received several complaints regarding dog fouling in the Avenue and Well Lane	Chelmsford Borough Council Dog Wardens	Referred to Chelmsford Borough Council [Note: Since the meeting dog wardens have inspected the area and additional notices have been installed.]

## 108 Quarries

**108.1 St Clere's Hall:** The following response was made at the Planning Committee meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011 to an application for mineral extraction (now ceased) and restoration of the land:

"We continue to be concerned about the volume of vehicle movements and the depositing of mud and other debris on the A414. If minded to approve, please include a condition that steps be taken before vehicles leave the site to ensure that debris on the Main road is kept to a minimum."

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**108.2 Royal Oak Quarry:** There had been no progress on arranging a meeting with Essex County Council regarding this site. Members reported that there had been activity at the quarry and a new lake had been created.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**108.3 Sandon Quarry:** There was nothing to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**108.4 Proposed site at Tyndales Farm:** The comments on the latest consultation, agreed at the last meeting, had been submitted to ECC and circulated to Councillors. The land, which was advertised for sale, was now 'under offer' and members requested that information be sought on the prospective new owner.

RESOLVED: that the agent, Sworders, be approached for information regarding the potential new owner of the land.

### **109 Bus Shelters**

**109.1 Bus Shelter opposite The Avenue (Maldon Side):** Essex County Highways had ordered the bus shelter.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**109.2 Power to Bus Shelter near Service Station, Maldon Road (south side):**

This was being incorporated within the works for the new bus shelter.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **110 Neighbourhood Action Panel and Police**

Cllr Whiteing had attended the last Neighbourhood Action Panel meeting, and confirmed that he would continue to attend when no longer a councillor and would report any significant items to the Parish Council.

Sandon Parish Council had instigated a Community Safety plan which incorporated Neighbourhood Watch and the Borough emergency planning. Members wondered whether this would be useful in Danbury and agreed that it be discussed further at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that an item on 'Danbury Community Safety' be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

### **111 Climate Change/Green Group**

No meetings had been held and no reports were made.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **112 Danbury Times and publicity leaflet**

The Spring issue of Danbury Times had been delivered to all Danbury households before the Annual Parish Meeting. The revision of the 'Discovering Danbury' leaflet would be taken up by new Council later in the year.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

Note: See also item 117.2 below for an item for Danbury Times agreed later in the meeting.

### **113 Bus Passenger Transport**

No-one was currently attending meetings as the Council's Transport Representative was unable to do so and was leaving the Council. Members were pleased to note that the Sandon Park & Ride facility would continue to operate on Saturdays at least

for the moment. The Assistant Clerk reported that she was looking into placing a link to ECC's public transport pages on the village website.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **114 Danbury Common/Cyclists**

A monitoring report from National Trust had been circulated. Members had not observed any problems when walking on the Common.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **115 Olletts, Belvedere Road**

There was no further information regarding the future of the building. All residents had now moved out.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **116 Essex Village Shops and Pubs Day: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

Cllr Thomson had attended this event. He reported that it had been interesting but not relevant to Danbury, being aimed at assisting villages which were campaigning to save their last shop or pub.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **117 Annual Litter Pick: Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

This would take place from 9am to 11.30am and those attending were asked to meet at the Parish Office (The Old School House, Main Road).

Cllr Bolwell circulated examples of small 'Keep Danbury tidy' posters which he had prepared, consisting of a photograph and a slogan. He suggested that local shops, and organisations such as the Library, could be asked to place a poster on their premises. Members agreed that this was a good idea and that it should also go in Danbury Times. Cllr Bolwell agreed to be involved in preparing and issuing the notices in consultation with the Clerk.

RESOLVED: that, in consultation with the Clerk, suitable notices be prepared and issued to local premises and placed in Danbury Times.

#### **118 Chelmsford Borough Council Hit Squad**

The Hit Squad would be in the village on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and would concentrate on Mill Lane.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **119 Essex Wildlife Trust: 'Living Landscapes – A Vision for the Future of Essex': Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

Cllr Keeler and Cllr Thomson had attended this meeting. They reported that the aim of the project was to improve the prospects for wildlife in the County by linking open spaces by 'corridors'. Essex Wildlife Trust had identified 80 wildlife areas, and Cllrs Keeler and Thomson had copies of the consultation document relating to number 42, Danbury Ridge. Cllr Keeler said that the document was full of interesting and detailed information but it was not clear what would happen next. The consultation ended on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011, and a further consultation document was expected in June.

In discussion the Committee agreed on the importance of this initiative and noted the importance of the local environment to residents as demonstrated in the Parish Plan

2003 and the recent Review. It was agreed that members take responsibility for circulating the two available copies of the Danbury Ridge document so that individuals could respond to the consultation if they wished. The single-page response form would be circulated to all members. The consultation was likely also to be available on the EWT website. Members asked that information be sought from EWT on the next stages of the project.

RESOLVED: that members circulate the Living Landscapes Vision document for Danbury Ridge among themselves to enable them to respond to the consultation, and that EWT be approached for further details of the project.

*Note: Information about the Living Landscapes project and copies of the Draft Vision document for Danbury Ridge are available at the following web address:  
[http://www.essexwt.org.uk/protecting\\_wildlife/living\\_landscapes/](http://www.essexwt.org.uk/protecting_wildlife/living_landscapes/)*

### **120 Proposal for a Shadow Local Healthwatch Organisation in Essex**

Under the Health & Social Care Bill currently before Parliament a Local Healthwatch Organisation would be created in each County and would take over the current role of the Local Involvement Network (LINK). Details of a proposal for Shadow Local Healthwatch organisations had been circulated to members.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **121 Orchards Past and Present – Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

Details of this national conference, to be held near Ledbury, Herefordshire, had been circulated.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **122 Strategic Plan for Environment Committee**

Cllr Pemberton expressed disappointment that this item was so late on the agenda, and members agreed to continue the meeting beyond 10pm in order to allow discussion. In a wide-ranging debate the following points were among those raised:

- Environment was an important committee of the Council not least because the local environment had been shown to be of great significance to residents;
- The strategic plan was an opportunity to develop a vision for how the Committee should move forward;
- Historically the Committee had been 'reactive', responding to matters brought before it. The strategic plan should encourage the Committee to be more proactive;
- There was a suggestion that Environment might take over some of the 'green' areas of responsibility (and budget) currently covered by Facilities, for example trees. This would require discussion with the Facilities Committee;
- The strategic plan should allow for the, as yet unclear, effects of the Government's Localism initiative, which might allow local councils to take on more responsibilities including 'green' issues;
- Any strategic plan should be enabling and should therefore be couched in broad terms so as not to restrict the Committee.

At the end of discussion members agreed give further thought to the future remit of the Environment Committee and that the matter be discussed again at the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> June. Ideas could be circulated by email for advance discussion. It was further agreed that this item be placed early on the next meeting's agenda.

RESOLVED: that members bring ideas for the remit of the Environment Committee to the next meeting, and that this item be placed early on the agenda.

**123 Matters for Report**

There were none.

**124 Dates of Meetings in 2011**

Wednesdays 8<sup>th</sup> June, 7<sup>th</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.20pm.

Chairman

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Signed

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Date