

## DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

*A Quality Council*



### ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

#### **Minutes of the meeting of the held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011 at the Committee Room, the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury**

Present: Cllrs A Keeler (Chairman), S. Berlyn, D. Bolwell, Mrs S J Court, Mrs A Chapman, J Thomson, M Wood

In attendance: Mr J Bowen (Danbury Society), Cllrs A Allen and J Scott

Mrs Margaret Saunders, Clerk to Danbury Parish Council

#### **56 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Arthur Pemberton

#### **57 Declarations of Interest**

Members were reminded that they were required to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they knew they had in 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 to leave the room if the interest was a prejudicial one. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

None were declared.

#### **58 Public Question Time**

Cllr Allen spoke in Public Question Time regarding cycling on definitive footpaths and that there had been a recent spate of anti-social cycling. He was requesting the Environment Committee to seek support for no cycling signage. He explained that Essex County Highways attitude towards this had not changed in 20 years and they had tried to avoid the issue stating that it was a civil issue with regard to the danger to pedestrians. Having requested cyclists to dismount you just received verbal abuse. Mountain bikers were being controlled by the National Trust on Danbury Common. A request was also made to remove the words mountain biking from the next issue of the Danbury Times. He did not wish to see an escalation of mountain biking.

This item was to be discussed later in the Agenda and is reported under Agenda Item 62.2.

#### **59 Minutes of Environment Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011 be approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **60 Strategic Plan for Environment**

Further meetings of the Working Group have been held and a proposal will be taken to Parish Council...

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **61 Deforestation at Lingwood Common Little Baddow**

Cllrs Keeler, Bolwell and Kennewell had attended a site visit with the National Trust Warden who had explained the project which was extremely interesting.

The Chairman of Environment felt that it had set alarm bells ringing when the National Trust had talked about felling trees. It was planned to make an area of shaded lowland heathland and that this was a good area to establish this. There was some spindley trees to dispose of and there would be bonfires when they were taking the trees out. The area was being taken down to top soil. The heather seeds were covered up and will grow through. It was hoped to take photographs before and after. Footpath 13 down to Riffhams Lane may become straighter. The Clerk would issue a photocopy of the plans to all Councillors with these Minutes.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk photocopy the plans for the deforestation at Lingwood Common Lt Baddow with the Minutes.

## **62 Footpaths**

### **62.1 Danbury Youth Camp and park - footpath opposite Riffhams Lane**

The footpath was now number 15 of 49 schemes.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **62.2 Cycling on Footpaths**

Correspondence had been received and the information from Essex County Council had been circulated to Members.

Members debated this subject. In the notes from the Essex County Council it did say that cycling could be permitted if the land owner had agreed to this. Discussions took place regarding no cycling signs. A red circle surrounding the cycle normally meant that cycling was prohibited.

Cllr Bolwell put the following proposal to request Essex County Highways to place cycling prohibition notices at all intersections and each end of footpaths adjacent to waymarks or finger posts. This was seconded by Cllr Thomson

Cllr Mrs Chapman requested an amendment to remove the words at all intersections this was seconded by Cllr S Berlyn. 4 people voted for the amendment and 1 against and 2 abstained. Therefore the amendment was carried.

Therefore the proposal was to request Essex County Highways to place cycling prohibition notices at each end of footpaths adjacent to waymarks or finger posts. 6 members were for this proposal and 1 against.

RESOLVED: that Essex County Highways is requested to place cycling prohibition notices at each end of footpaths adjacent to waymarks or finger posts.

### 62.3 Report by Footpaths Officer Cllr Bolwell

Cllr Bolwell reported about the waymark on footpath 13 and 14 in Lingwood which had fallen or broken and the preferred location would be further from the footpath.

RESOLVED: that this item be passed to the District Officer at Essex County Highways.

### 62.4 Report from Cllr Thomson and Cllr Bolwell re Path behind St Clere's Way

Cllr Thomson had looked at old maps and had inspected the boundary of the housing development. The boundary had been broken due to the housing development. Members discussed this item.

Cllr Mrs Chapman made the following proposal: no documentary proof of ownership of this piece of land existed therefore no steps to be taken by Parish Council

This was seconded by Cllr Wood. 5 members were for the proposal and 2 against.

RESOLVED: that as no documentary evidence exists of ownership of the path behind St Cleres Way no steps can be taken by Parish Council.

## 63 Highway Matters

### 63.1 Essex County Council Highway Matters

Items for Report	Authority Sent to	Work Completed
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 has been logged as system reference 1845815 and has been allocated to New Roads and Street Works Inspector for assessment. This 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	This has been logged on the system as reference 1845840 a site inspection has been complete and the vegetation was found to be overgrown however it is believed not to be highway land a boundary check has been requested to establish ownership to request the owner to cut back vegetation. This had not been completed.
Elm Green Lane – parking resulting in break up of verge edge.	Passed to Essex County Council several times	This has been logged as 1845819 a site inspection has been carried out, however regrettably this does not meet the investigatory level as determined by the ECC Maintenance Strategy

Items for Report	Authority Sent to	Work Completed
		However the area will continue to be monitored. This had not been completed
Pillar box (this area is where the safety marks run to the road)	Groundsman Monitoring	Groundsman to re-investigate
Butts Lane/Hopping Jacks Lane at junction – holes in road. One dealt with, the other outstanding.		This has been logged as reference 1845816 a site inspection has been carried out however, regrettably this does not meet ECC investigatory level as determined by their Maintenance Strategy. Still outstanding.
Eves Corner Parking Bays road surface		This has been logged as 1845817 a site inspection has been carried out however, regrettably this does not meet ECC investigatory level as determined by the Maintenance Strategy. ECC appreciate that the area does not look aesthetically pleasing but they are only able to take action on defect which meet the guidelines in the Strategy. This had now been completed.

### **63.2 Speed Limit B 1418 Oak Corner to Bicknacre**

A member of the public had raised again the speed of the traffic using the stretch of road. In 1990 a diversion of the road was planned to make the road straight but this had never occurred. The documentation had been forwarded to the Essex County Highways. Essex County Highways had stated that this was a policing matter which could be addressed by Speedwatch which the Parish Council had already researched and could not find enough people to carry out the Speedwatch Surveys. The Clerk had forwarded this information to the PCSO's to see if they could help.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **64 Signage Items on Highways as follows:**

#### **64.1 Well Lane**

Signage was on Essex County Council's list.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **64.2 Sightlines at Cherry Garden Lane (As referred from Planning Committee)**

It had been confirmed that the Parish Council's request to improve the signage (left hand turn – side road ahead) at the western junction of Cherry Garden Lane and Maldon Road had been added to ECC list. All signs had to adhere to the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002, which is a statutory document.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **65 Localism small scheme list when opened is as follows:**

##### **a) Runsell Green Reduction in Speed Limit**

This item had been confirmed as being on the list for consideration but with no timescale.

##### **b) Well Lane – Zebra Crossing**

##### **c) Gating Signs**

##### **d) Footpath – Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road**

##### **e) Installation of Bollards**

The Clerk was unable to write to the owner of the house as it was empty. The Clerk wrote to Cllr Martin to see if he could help. His suggestion was help through the PCSO's which had already been suggested. No further action could be taken.

##### **f) Speed Reduction in Woodhill Road (to be added when scheme opens)**

#### **66 Quarries**

**66.1 St Clere's Hall** There was nothing further to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

##### **66.2 Royal Oak Quarry**

Members were still concerned regarding the condition of the road outside the Royal Oak Quarry. Members wished the Clerk to write to complain about the condition of the road.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk write to Royal Oak Quarry regarding the condition of the road.

**66.3 Sandon Quarry** There was nothing further to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**66.4 Proposed site at Tyndales Farm** There was nothing further to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

##### **66.5 New proposed site at Whitehouse Farm, Woodham Walter**

Members were concerned that if this site was removed whether Tyndals Farm would move up the list. Questions were raised regarding the "No Quarry signs" which had sprung up in the village. Cllr Bolwell proposed that the Parish Council leave the signs as they are. This was seconded by John Thomson 6 people voted in favour of leaving the signs as they were and 1 abstained.

RESOLVED: that a) the comment is noted.  
b) No action be taken regarding the quarry signs

## **67 Bus Shelters.**

**67.1 Bus Shelter at The Avenue (Maldon Side)** The light had not yet been connected. 2 panels were now out of the bus shelter the Clerk was investigating how to put them back.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

**67.3 Bus Shelter outside nr Service Station (Chelmsford Side):** The light had not yet been connected.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **68 Neighbourhood Action Panel and Police**

Danbury is the only parish together with Sandon and Little Baddow that was continuing with these meetings. The next meeting was to take place in December.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **69 Climate Change/Green Group**

**69.1 Green Group:** No further meetings of the group had been held.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **69.2 Climate Change:**

Nothing further was reported.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **70 Danbury Times**

Cllr Mrs Chapman reported that the Danbury Times would be printed next week and circulated the week of the 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2011. Cllr Mrs Chapman had also revamped the rounds.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **71 Danbury Common/Cyclists**

Updates to the end of October 2011 had been received from the National Trust who was monitoring the effects of cycling on The Common.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **72 Oilets, Belvedere Road**

No further information about the future of the building was available. The Clerk was requested to write again.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk write again. *(Before a letter could be written a proposal had been received from Chelmer Housing Partnership which would be taken to the Planning Committee)*

## **73 'Keep Danbury Tidy' Posters**

This item had not been moved forwarded.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk be requested to move this item on.

#### **74 Hedging Surveys**

Some councillors were completing hedging surveys in Danbury. The members were linking together and plotting the areas they were completing.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **75 Budget for 20 12 - 2013**

A draft budget had been circulated. Members removed the £100.00 for grit.

A unanimous decision was made that the Environment Committee draft budget for Resources would be £2210.

RESOLVED: that the draft Environment Committee budget request would be £2210.

#### **76 Snow Clearance within the Village Referred from Parish Council/Gritting**

This item had been referred from Parish Council. Members discussed the use of a snow plough for clearing the village. Members unanimously agreed that there be no snow clearance by the Parish Council within the village.

A request had been made by a member of the public for a grit bin in Southview Road/Woodhill Road. Unfortunately the Essex County Highways were not installing grit bins this year. The request would be forwarded to Facilities Committee for a site for grit bags.

RESOLVED: that a) there will be no Snow Clearance completed by the Parish Council within the village

b) The request be taken to Facilities Committee for a request for grit bags  
(Cllr Pemberton is currently undertaking a survey of hot spots)

#### **77 Living Landscapes**

Cllr Thomson had no updates but it was proceeding slowly.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **78 Hedging from Danbury Society**

John Thomson reported that the Danbury Society was prepared to complete a survey of overgrown hedges and report them to Essex County Highways. The clerk requested that she be copied into the reports so that she would know if any hedging reports were made to her.

RESOLVED: that the Danbury Society be thanked for completing this work and that the Clerk be copied into notifications.

#### **79 Matters for Report.**

No reports were made.

#### **55 Dates of next meeting for 2012**

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 27<sup>th</sup> June, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 5<sup>th</sup> December

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Cllr Alan Keeler  
Chairman

.....  
Signed

.....  
Date