



Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th May 2011 at 7.45pm in the Committee Room at the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury

Present: Cllrs S Berlyn (Chairman) B Kennewell
 M Wood (Vice Chairman) A Pemberton
 D Bolwell D Powell
 Mrs A Chapman W Scaife
 H Clacy M Telling
 A Keeler J Thomson

In attendance: Mrs M Saunders, Clerk
 Mrs E Blyth, Assistant Clerk

Cllr Berlyn welcomed members to the Annual Parish Council, the first Council meeting since the recent elections. He gave a particular welcome to new councillors Brian Kennewell and Bill Scaife, and to Arthur Allen who had returned to the Council after a break.

1 Election of Chairman

Cllr Wood nominated Cllr Berlyn to serve as Chairman of the Council for the current year and this was seconded by Cllr Telling. There were no further nominations and Cllr Berlyn was elected unanimously.

RESOLVED: that Cllr S Berlyn be elected to serve as Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2011-12.

2 Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office

Cllr Berlyn signed the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office.

3 Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Berlyn nominated Cllr Wood to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the current year, and this was seconded by Cllr Powell. There were no further nominations and Cllr Wood was elected unanimously.

RESOLVED: that Cllr M Wood be elected to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2011-12.

4 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs A Allen and Mrs S-J Court.

5 Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they were required to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they knew they may have 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.

Cllr Clacy declared a personal interest in item 26 below relating to the Danbury Medical Centre by virtue of being acquainted with the developers.

Cllr Scaife declared a personal interest in item 31 below relating to Danbury Library by virtue of his wife being a member of the library staff.

6 Public Question Time

Former parish councillor Mrs Caroline Lambert had asked to attend the meeting to talk about environmental issues and the forthcoming Annual Clean-Up day in the village on Saturday 18th June. Mrs Lambert reminded members of the history of the litter pick which had started in 1994 and had included the local schools. As a new councillor she had been inspired by a seminar given by the Tidy Britain Group. She felt that the litter-pick had educational value for children in relation to litter and recycling. Recently the schools aspect had been taken over by the Borough Council, but the last Clean-Up day had attracted 26 people including members of the local Scouts. Mrs Lambert encouraged Council members to participate in this year's Clean-Up Day.

In discussion it was noted that several individuals in the village had been provided with litter-picking devices and were regularly cleaning up their own roads. Availability of litter bins was important, and Mrs Lambert pointed out that some seats in the village did not have bins. She hoped that a bin could also be provided in the new bus shelter on Maldon Road. Members thanked Mrs Lambert for attending and she then left the meeting.

7 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2011 be approved and signed as a correct record.

8 Appointment of Committees and Working Groups

The Council reviewed and agreed the membership of its committees and working groups for the coming year. The new councillors were encouraged to attend a range of meetings before deciding on Committee membership. The Strategic Plan Group was added to the list. The Standing Orders Revision Group was removed as it had completed its work.

RESOLVED: that the appointment of councillors and others to serve on committees and working groups be approved as shown in Appendix A, and that the appointment of new members to Committees be deferred until the July 2011 meeting.

9 Appointment of Representatives on outside bodies

Representation of the Council on outside bodies was reviewed. The Parishes Transportation Group and Olletts (sheltered housing) were removed as no longer applicable. The Clerk was asked to check with Mrs Lambert that she was prepared to continue as the Council's representative on the Village Hall Committee. Mr Whiteing had indicated that he was prepared to continue as the Neighbourhood Watch Representative.

Several members were interested in the role of Footpaths Officer. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Bolwell continue as the appointed Footpaths Officer and that other councillors report any issues or concerns to Cllr Bolwell and the Clerk.

There was a discussion as to whether to appoint a new representative to the Landisdale Charity in view of the possible conflict of interest in relation to the Charity's plans for new build almshouses. Cllr Berlyn proposed that no further

representative be appointed and this was seconded by Cllr Telling. In a vote the motion was carried by 8 votes to 3 with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: that the appointment of councillors and others to serve as representatives on outside bodies be approved as shown in Appendix B, and that no additional representative be appointed to the Landisdale Charity at the present time.

10 Parish Councillors' Allowances

Further to Minute 70 of the Parish Council meeting on 28th January 2004, the Council considered whether to continue its policy of not paying allowances to members. No monies had been placed in the budget for this item. Cllr Powell proposed that allowances should not be paid in the current year. This was seconded by Cllr Wood and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that no allowances be paid to councillors in the current year.

11 Power of Wellbeing

In order for the Council to retain the Power of Wellbeing at least 12 members must have received training. The new councillors would therefore need to be trained. The Power of Wellbeing gave the Council additional powers to finance projects for the benefit of the local community. Cllr Pemberton proposed that the Council should retain the Power of Wellbeing. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Powell and passed by 11 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: that training be arranged for the new councillors so that the Council could retain the Power of Wellbeing, costs to be taken from the Training Budget.

The Clerk was investigating training options through EALC and hoped to arrange a joint session with another council, as last time.

12 Councillor Dispensations for members of Sports & Social Centre

Councillors who were members of the Sports Centre required a dispensation to allow them to vote on matters relating to the Centre. Existing dispensations would expire on 5th July 2011. The Clerk confirmed that all councillors who were members had filled in application forms for the dispensation and these would be considered by the CBC Standards Board in June.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

13 Strategic Plan for the Council

Comments from Cllr Wood on the proposed Plan were circulated. Cllr Wood urged Committees to complete their own reviews as soon as possible so that the Strategic Plan Group could consider them. Ideas and comments should be sent by email to Cllr Wood and the Clerk. There was some discussion of Quality Council status and the Clerk offered to provide notes on this to the Strategic Plan Group.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

14 Reports from Village Organisations

The agenda for a meeting of Landisdale Charity Trustees on 11th May 2011 had been circulated. There were no further reports.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

15 Leases

15.1 Tennis Club lease: A copy of the draft lease for the former Parish Office was expected from the Council's solicitor by the end of the week;

15.2 British Legion lease: The RBL lease would terminate on 30th June 2011. The Clerk had advertised for a group who would like to rent the building.

RESOLVED: that the information in 15.1 and 15.2 be noted.

16 Publicity

16.1 Danbury Times: Members agreed that it would be sufficient to provide information about new Council members in The Journal and Contact magazine rather than considering an extra edition of the newsletter. After discussion Council asked the Strategic Plan Group, as part of its deliberations, to look at alternative formats and other options for the newsletter, bearing in mind the Quality Council requirements, and to bring a proposal to the July meeting of the Council. The staff were asked to look into alternative printing options.

RESOLVED: that the Strategic Plan group bring a proposal for the way forward with the newsletter to the July meeting and that the staff investigate alternative printing arrangements.

16.2 Danbury Leaflet: Members agreed that a meeting should be arranged to begin revising the leaflet.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk arrange a meeting of Danbury Leaflet revision group.

17 Appointment of Auditors and Solicitor

17.1 Internal Auditor: Members noted that Heelis & Lodge had provided a good service to the Council and that their price was comparable to an alternative local company.

RESOLVED: that Heelis & Lodge be appointed as the Council's Internal Auditors for 2011/12.

17.2 External Auditor: The Audit Commission had appointed Jackie Bellard of its Horwich, Bolton, office as the Council's External Auditor for 2011/12.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

17.3 Appointment of Solicitor: Members agreed that hourly rate quotations be obtained from other solicitors for comparison purposes and that other councils be approached regarding their solicitor appointments, this information to be brought to the July meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk obtain alternative quotations from solicitors and seek information from other Parish Councils and that the Council discuss the matter further at the July 2011 meeting.

18 Vacancy for Parish Councillor

Fourteen members had been elected on 5th May 2011 in an uncontested election, leaving one vacancy on the Council.

RESOLVED: that the procedure to co-opt a further councillor be put in place.

19 Reports from Council Committees

19.1 Resources: No meeting had been held in April 2011. The visit by RBS Solutions regarding the end of year accounts would take place on 23rd May 2011.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

19.2 Planning – Danbury Planning Framework SPD: Jenny Robinson of CBC Planning had met with the Planning Framework Group on 10th May to advise on printing and circulation options and the ways in which CBC could help, eg with proof-reading. CBC would need around 50 copies of the document and could provide the Parish Council with 100 CD copies. The document would also be available for consultation and download on the CBC website. CBC would like a formal launch event for the Framework, and members agreed that ideally this should take place at the same time as the formal opening of the new Parish Office and Children’s Centre.

The original plan of the Council had been to circulate the Danbury Planning Framework to every house in the village. The Working Group were concerned that this might not be appropriate in the current financial climate, and in discussion members agreed with this view. Three quotations had been obtained for varying numbers of copies and for digital or litho printing and these were reported to the Council. The Working Group had concluded that litho printing was preferable to achieve a quality publication. After discussion Cllr Clacy proposed that around 300 copies be printed, with the Clerk determining the final number on the basis of quotations received; and that the Framework be made available on the Parish website and advertised in The Journal and Danbury Times. This was seconded by Cllr Wood and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

a) that around 300 copies of the Danbury Planning Framework be printed using litho printing, the exact number to be determined by the Clerk on the basis of quotations received, and that the document be placed on the village website and publicised through The Journal and the Danbury Times;

b) that, timescales permitting, the Framework be formally launched at the opening event for the Parish Office and Children’s Centre.

19.3 Facilities: The Car Parks & Drainage Project was nearing completion. Posts had been installed at Elm Green to prevent parking on the village green. Work was on-going in relation to trees and other matters, and the Committee was looking at ways of upgrading the play area.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

19.4 Environment: There were plans to update and reprint the Parish Footpaths map and this was being looked into. ECC had agreed to meet 50% of the cost.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

20 Revision of Standing Orders/ Financial Regulations

The full revision of these documents was completed in January 2011. Terms of reference of Committees were being considered as part of the ongoing work on the Strategic Plan. The Clerk reported that details of a further change to Standing Orders had just been received and would be reported at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

21 Danbury Country Park Forum

A new contact person had been appointed by ECC and it was hoped that a meeting of the Forum would take place in July 2011.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

22 Parish Council Small Grants Scheme

At its meeting on 27th October 2010 the Grants Working Party had asked Parish Council to determine whether the Small Grants Scheme should remain in place in the current economic climate. Only one grant had been awarded for 2011/12. In discussion members felt that the Council should continue to support local organisations through the scheme when it was able to do so.

RESOLVED: that the Small Grants Scheme be continued.

23 'Living Landscapes – A Vision for the Future of Essex'

This item was placed on the agenda at the request of Cllr Chapman and Cllr Pemberton following discussion at Environment Committee on 4th April 2011. Information on this national project had been circulated was also available online at www.essexwt.org.uk/protecting_wildlife/living_landscapes. The Essex Wildlife Trust had identified 80 wildlife areas in the County and produced a draft Vision Document for each, including Danbury Ridge (no 42).

Members spoke strongly in support of the Living Landscapes initiative. Cllr Thomson, who was a member of the Danbury Ridge Reserves Committee of the EWT, agreed to clear with EWT that he could be involved in the project on behalf of the Council. Members agreed that Environment Committee should continue to monitor the project.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council strongly supported the Living Landscapes project, that it wished Cllr Thomson to represent it on EWT in relation to the project, and that the Environment Committee continue to monitor progress.

24 Snow Clearance in the village

In view of the amount of business on the agenda it was agreed that Cllr Clacy's suggestion that the Parish Council consider buying or leasing a snow plough be deferred.

RESOLVED: that the matter be deferred to the next meeting.

25 Annual Civic Service – Sunday 19th June 2011

Details of the Service at Chelmsford Cathedral had been circulated. Members who wished to attend were asked to notify the Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

26 Proposal for 100 hour Pharmacy at Danbury Medical Centre

A decision on the 100 hour licence application was expected early next week.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

27 Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Essex County Council had confirmed that it was not permissible to plant a rose bed at Elm Green as the intended purpose of a village green was for outdoor activities.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted and that Environment Committee be asked to consider an alternative way of marking the Jubilee.

28 Councillor Surgeries

Volunteers were needed (2 per session, including at least one experienced councillor) for the Farmers' Markets on Saturdays 4th June, 2nd July, 6th August, 3rd September, 1st October. Members were asked to let the Clerk know when they could help.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

29 Christmas Card Competition

Members agreed unanimously that the Christmas Card competition in local schools should be repeated in 2011.

RESOLVED: that the competition be held again in 2011.

30 Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity

This document had been circulated for information. Cllr Clacy suggested that paragraphs 13 and 26 were of particular interest.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

31 Review of Library Service

Cllr Scaife repeated his declaration of a personal interest in this item (item 5 above).

The reply of the ECC Director of Libraries & Culture to the Council's consultation response had been circulated. Members felt that the letter was not clear and did not answer all the points made by the Council. They also wished to know when the outcome of the consultation would be known.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk reply to the letter on the lines agreed.

32 Parish Office/ Meeting Room

The office move took place on Wednesday 13th April 2011 and the first meeting held in the new premises was the Planning Committee on 18th April. The staff felt that the move had improved working conditions as well as being more convenient for residents and providing better meeting facilities. The Clerk reported that the cost of the move had been within the £5,000 budget, with the largest item being Solicitor's fees.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted, and that the Clerk and staff be thanked for the efficiency with which move had been organised and executed.

33 Car Park/ Drainage Project

33.1 The Clerk updated the Council on the progress of the works. She had met with the consultant and contractor regarding snagging concerns. Issues to be resolved included a problem with the fixing of the lighting bollards in the upper car park.

The consultant had recommended that the first half of the total payment should be made to the contractor as more than half the work had been completed. Cllr Thomson proposed that the payment be made and that snagging items be detailed in an accompanying letter. This was seconded by Cllr Keeler and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the payment of the first half of the contract be paid and that snagging items to be addressed be listed in an accompanying letter.

33.2 A letter of complaint had been received from a member of the Danbury Bridge Club who felt that the Club had been discriminated against in relation to parking for disabled members while work was taking place on the car parks and at the rear of the Sports Centre. The letter was discussed and a response agreed.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk reply to the letter in the terms agreed.

34 Matters for Information (for report only)

The Chairman referred to the recent retirement from the Council of a long-term member and reminded the meeting that it was Council policy to make a formal presentation to members retiring after at least 10 years. Members agreed that a presentation be made and that the Clerk and Chairman take this forward, the money being taken from the Chairman’s allowance.

35 Dates of Parish Council meetings in 2011

- 22nd June 2011 (7.30pm prior to Resources Committee) to ratify 2010-11 accounts
- 27th July 2011
- 28th September 2011
- 30th November 2011

Business having been concluded, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.40pm.

Signed: Cllr S Berlyn, Chairman

Date:

Danbury Parish Council

Appendix to the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11th May 2011

**MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS
FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2011–2012**

The Parish Council Chairman (Cllr S Berlyn) and Vice-Chairman (Cllr M Wood) are *ex officio* members of all Committees.

Environment Committee

Cllr D Bolwell
Cllr Mrs A Chapman
Cllr Mrs S-J Court
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr A Pemberton
Cllr J Thomson

Additional member:

Mr J Bowen (Danbury Society)

Planning Committee

Cllr D Bolwell
Cllr A Allen
Cllr Mrs A Chapman
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr M Telling
Cllr J Thomson

Additional Members:

Mr J Alexander
Mr P Walton (Danbury Society)

Publicity Working Group

Cllr A Allen
Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr Mrs A Chapman
Cllr M Wood

Drainage & Car Parks Working Group

Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr H Clacy
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr A Pemberton
Cllr D Powell
Cllr J Thomson

Leases Working Group

Ex-Officio:
Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Facilities
Committee
Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr M Wood

Facilities Committee

Cllr A Allen
Cllr Mrs A Chapman
Cllr H Clacy
Cllr Mrs S-J Court
Cllr A Pemberton
Cllr D Powell
Cllr M Telling

Resources Committee

Ex officio:
Chairman of Environment Committee
Chairman of Facilities Committee
Cllr H Clacy
Cllr A Pemberton
Cllr D Powell

Grants & Donations Working Group

Cllr A Allen
Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr H Clacy
Cllr D Powell
Cllr M Wood

Danbury Planning Framework Working Group

Cllr S Berlyn
Cllr A Keeler
Cllr M Telling

Strategic Plan Group

Cllr Mrs A Chapman
Cllr A Pemberton
Cllr W Scaife
Cllr M Wood

Danbury Parish Council

Appendix to the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11th May 2011

**APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES
FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2011-2012**

Assoc of Chelmsford District Parish Councils (ACDPC)	Cllrs S Berlyn and the Clerk
Contact Magazine & The Journal	The Clerk
Danbury Community Association	Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Facilities
Danbury & District Twinning Association	Cllr D Bolwell
Danbury First Responders	Cllr S Berlyn
Danbury Lakes Forum	Cllrs A Allen, A Keeler and J Thomson
Danbury Society	A Councillor, as required
Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)	<i>ex officio</i> the Chairman and the Clerk
Danbury Ridge Reserves Committee, Essex Wildlife Trust	Cllr J Thomson
Emergency Planning Officer	Cllrs A Pemberton
Health Representative	<i>Vacancy</i>
Landisdale Charity	Mrs L Guest
Mid-Essex Area Forum	Cllr H Clacy
Neighbourhood Watch	Mr D Whiteing
Parish Footpaths Officer	Cllr D Bolwell
Police	A Councillor, as required
Neighbourhood Action Panel	Mr D Whiteing
Public Transport	Cllr J Thomson
Village Hall	Mrs C Lambert
Youth Representative	A Councillor, as required