



**Minutes of the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at 7.45pm at The Old School House, Main Road, Danbury**

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

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

**163 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs S-J Court, J Scott and M Telling.

**164 Declarations of Interest**

Members were reminded that they must declare any personal or prejudicial 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 prejudicial one. Unforeseen interests must similarly be declared at the appropriate time.

No interests were declared.

**165 Public Question Time**

Two members of the public were present, one as an applicant for co-option to the Council and the other as an observer who might be interested in being a councillor.

**166 Minutes**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**167 Co-option of Parish Councillor**

Ms Jo Gable spoke about herself and her reasons for wishing to be a member of the Council. She answered questions from members, who had received her CV in advance. Ms Gable was thanked for her interest and advised that her application would be formally considered at the end of the meeting after the public were asked to withdraw (see minute 189 below). It was noted that the Council had two vacancies for councillors.

**168 Public Conveniences in Danbury**

The Council had been notified by Chelmsford Borough Council that the Public Conveniences would be demolished shortly after the end of March.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

## **169 Reports from Village Organisations**

### **169.1 Neighbourhood Watch**

The Co-ordinator's regular email updates had been received. There were no other matters to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **169.2 Twinning**

Confirmation had been received that the Chairman of the Parish Council was requested to attend a re-enactment of the signing of the Twinning document to commemorate 30 years. This would take place at 2pm at Eves Corner on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

RESOLVED: that the Council was happy for the Chairman to participate in this event.

## **170 Strategic Plan**

### **170.1 The revised Strategic Plan**

Cllr Kennewell proposed that this item be left to the end of the meeting so that it did not prevent discussion of other items as at the last Parish Council meeting. Cllr Allen wished to have a full discussion and seconded the proposal. In a vote, 3 members supported the proposal and 4 voted against, with 3 abstentions. The vote was therefore lost and the item was considered immediately.

Cllr Wood reviewed the history of the work on the Strategic Plan and reminded members that they had now had two opportunities to comment on the draft. The Strategic Plan Group had taken account of the comments made and now recommended that the revised Strategic Plan be formally adopted by the Council.

The Chairman asked each member in turn to give their views. Most members were happy with the document or suggested only minor amendments. There was some concern that specific projects were included under Facilities Committee but not in other sections. It was explained that these were included to support possible future payments under the Community Infrastructure Levy (formerly Section 106 payments). Cllr Allen expressed the view that the document was a 'vision statement' rather than a strategic plan as it did not describe how the aims within it would be achieved, and said he could not support it. When all members had given their views, Cllr Wood proposed that the Council adopt the Strategic Plan as presented. This was seconded by Cllr Scaife and a vote was taken.

Cllr Allen asked for a recorded vote. The voting was as follows:

In favour of the proposal: Cllrs Berlyn, Bolwell, Chapman, Keeler, Kennewell, Pemberton, Scaife, Scott and Wood.

Against the proposal: Cllr Allen. The vote was therefore carried.

RESOLVED: that the Strategic Plan 2011- 2014 be adopted by the Parish Council.

### **170.2 Committee Terms of Reference**

The revised Terms of Reference had been circulated previously but had not been adopted pending approval of the Strategic Plan. Cllr Pemberton proposed that the Terms of Reference be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Kennewell and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the Terms of Reference of Council Committees be adopted.

### **170.3 Communications Working Group**

The Strategic Plan Working Group had recommended that Parish Council set up a Communications Working Group to replace the current Publicity Group. It was explained that the purpose of the new Group would be to seek to improve the way the Council communicated with the village and to listen to feedback from the community and from schools and other groups. It would undertake a review of the Council's Community Engagement Strategy. The Group was not envisaged as initiating ideas but as finding the best ways to communicate the ideas and decisions made by Council and its committees. The Group should include the editor of the Danbury Times and no more than four other members of the Council.

After discussion Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Chapman, proposed that the Council set up a Communications Working Group. There were 7 votes in favour and 3 against, and the motion was therefore carried.

RESOLVED: that a Communications Working Group be established, with the membership being determined at the Annual Parish Council meeting in May.

### **170.4 'Branding' of the Parish Council**

Members agreed that this would be a suitable matter for consideration by the new Communications Working Group when established.

RESOLVED: that this item be referred for consideration by the Communications Working Group.

## **171 Reports from Committees**

In addition to the minutes which had been circulated, the following reports were made:

### **171.1 Resources Committee**

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council together with the Clerk had held interviews for a new Assistant Clerk. The post had been accepted by Hannah Mayes and she would commence her duties on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012 with a month's overlap with the current Assistant Clerk who was retiring on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Maintenance of the website was to be outsourced, and the Sue Lees Consultancy had been appointed to do this work for 3 months. Sue Lees would also be completing an audit of the Council's current requirements for the website, which was dated in style and needed renewing using up to date techniques.

RSOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **171.2 Planning Committee**

CBC's Site Allocations Development Plan Document was adopted in February 2012. There was no change to the defined settlement of Danbury.

Strong objections were raised to a planning application for a wind turbine at Paternoster Farm, which also received objections from many members of the public. The application had still to be determined.

The Committee discussed temporary outdoor advertisements in the village and agreed that local organisations should be reminded of the regulations.

CBC had placed a Tree Preservation Order on land to the rear of The Griffin pub which had been put up for sale by the Brewery.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **171.3 Environment Committee**

The Annual Litter Pick would be held on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2012 between 9.30am and 11.30am. Equipment would be supplied from the Parish Office.

Arrangements were being made to plant hedge screening along Danbury Park School's boundary adjacent to Footpath 8 in the near future.

The Parish Cleansing Day, when Chelmsford Borough Council's team come to Danbury, would take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2012.

A group of members was surveying the footpaths in relation to "no cycling" signs.

Highway Matters: Condition of the Road outside Royal Oak Quarry: A letter had been written to Essex County Council Highways.

The Clerk was trying to find a contractor to repair the bus shelter outside the RC church on Maldon Road.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **171.4 Facilities Committee**

The owner of the Fish & Chip van which was no longer allowed to park at Eves Corner had requested permission to park on Dawson Memorial Field on Fridays in future. The Committee had declined this request.

A new contractor, CRS Pitchcare, had been appointed to look after the cricket wicket.

Sports & Social Centre: A planning application would be submitted to move the rear fire exit staircase. Members authorised works to drainage channels at the front of the building plus plumbing works (mainly to the disabled toilets) and refurbishment of the showers.

A grant had been received towards Phase One of works to children's playground.

New goal posts had been installed on Pitch 3.

CBC Play in the Park sessions had been booked for the Easter and summer school holidays.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **172 Old School House – Essex County Council Lease**

The Tennis Club wished to extend their lease of the former Parish Office to 15 years in order to qualify for funding from the Tennis Association. The Clerk had approached Essex County Council regarding an equivalent extension to the lease on the Old School House office, and a response was awaited.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **173 Drainage and Car Park Project**

The Facilities Committee was looking at options regarding the problems of damage to the lighting bollards. The car park surface was being monitored and no problems had been reported.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **174 Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012**

Cllr Chapman reported that the lighting of the beacon in Danbury had been approved as one of the 2,012 beacons to be lit nationally on 4<sup>th</sup> June in honour of the Jubilee. The Sports & Social Centre had been booked for the evening for a 'bring and share' meal and the bar would be available. Emergency services had been informed, insurance arranged, and a plan was in place for the filling and lighting of the beacon at the allotted time. A letter was being sent to local schools, churches and other organisations requesting help and further ideas to mark the occasion. Publicity was in hand via Danbury Times and other publications and through posters, and it was hoped that the Danbury Players would be involved. The St John's Ambulance was being approached regarding a First Aider for the evening.

Cllr Chapman and her team were thanked for their work on the project. Cllr Berlyn suggested that the local First Responders group might be able to provide a First Aider.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **175 Danbury Times**

Cllr Chapman, as Editor, was congratulated on the successful recent edition of the Council's newsletter. Cllr Chapman thanked the Publicity Group and all who had delivered the Danbury Times around the village. Work would start in May on the new summer edition, due out in July.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

#### **176 Danbury Tourism Leaflet**

Cllr Bolwell had circulated a draft of the proposed leaflet to members and had received a number of comments in response. He now handed round a revised version for further comments. He had obtained two quotes for printing the leaflet, both within budget, and would obtain a third. Members were asked to agree the format and general content of the leaflet. Cllr Thomson proposed that the Council proceed with the publication, subject to approval of a proof. Cllr Keeler seconded the proposal and it was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: that the leaflet be finalised and published subject to acceptance by Parish Council of a final proof.

#### **177 Annual Parish Meeting, Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

The Chairman thanked all members for their help on the evening of the Annual Parish Meeting, in particular Cllr Bolwell for providing the sound system. It was suggested that the new Communications Working Group might consider whether any change was needed to the format used for some years now with village organisations providing stalls before the formal meeting.

Cllr Allen was concerned that a reference at the meeting to the Council's request to Chelmsford Borough Council that disabled parking spaces be created on the site of the public toilets might have raised expectations which would not be fulfilled. It was noted that the request had been made in response to the planning application to demolish the toilets, and was not a formal policy of the Council.

Questions asked at the meeting by members of the public regarding the purchasing of office supplies by the Council and access by the public to facilities at the Sports Centre when the toilets were closed had been answered at the meeting. A further

question had been asked about current traffic volumes on the A414, and members agreed that Essex County Council be approached for this information.

RESOLVED: that ECC Highways be asked to supply current information on traffic volumes on the A414 through the village.

### **178 Use of Village Sign images**

Danbury First Responders had asked permission to use a picture of the village sign on their website and literature. The Clerk reported that Little Baddow Parish Council, which had received the same request, had been able to supply a digital version of its village sign and had attached restrictions to its use. Danbury Parish Council did not hold an electronic version. In discussion members agreed that First Responders were free to take photographs of the village sign and that no restrictions should be placed on the use of the images.

RESOLVED: that First Responders be informed that the Parish Council had no objection to images of the Danbury village sign being used on its website and literature.

### **179 Consultation on plans for St Peter's Hospital, Maldon**

An information leaflet had been circulated about NHS Mid-Essex's plans for the future of St Peter's. The Assistant Clerk had attended the exhibition on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The historic main building on the site (formerly a workhouse) would be retained, but a new single building with additional parking space would replace the modern buildings currently at the rear. The new building had been designed for flexible use in order to provide maximum benefit from the space. All existing services at St Peter's would be retained and others would be added, including a Rapid Assessment Unit and more services for the elderly. The public consultation ended on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **180 Councillors' Surgeries**

Dates and staffing for forthcoming Farmers' Markets were agreed as follows:

7 <sup>th</sup> April	(Easter Saturday) Cllrs Bolwell and Telling
5 <sup>th</sup> May	Cllrs Keeler and Wood
2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Cllr Kennewell (further volunteer required)
7 <sup>th</sup> July	Cllr Scaife (further volunteer required)
4 <sup>th</sup> August	Cllr Chapman (further volunteer required)

RESOLVED: that members not named above let the Clerk know which dates they could attend.

### **181 Cllr Peter Martin's update**

Cllr Martin of Essex County Council had supplied his information updates for February and March and these had been circulated.

RESOLVED: that the updates be noted.

### **182 Royal British Legion hut – office chairs**

The Facilities Committee was working towards a solution to the future use of the building by village groups. The tables from the former Parish Office had been placed

in the building but chairs were required. The village hall was disposing of 100 chairs and had offered the Parish Council as many as it needed free of charge, though a donation to Village Hall funds would be welcomed. Members agreed that the chairs should be checked first by the Clerk and if suitable a donation of £30 be made for 30 chairs.

RESOLVED: that subject to inspection by the Clerk, 30 chairs be accepted from the Village Hall and a donation of £30 be made to Village Hall funds.

### **183 Open Spaces Society**

This item had been deferred from the last meeting. The Society had requested a donation in addition to the annual membership fee to support its work. The Society had provided legal advice free of charge to the Council a few years earlier in connection with a piece of common land at Lingwood, and members agreed that they wished to support the Society's aims.

RESOLVED: that a donation of £50 be made to the Open Spaces Society.

### **184 Chelmsford Borough Council New Awards Scheme**

The Council had resolved at the last meeting (minute 160 refers) to take no action in relation to this new scheme.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

### **185 Localism Act 2011**

#### **185.1 Localism and Neighbourhood Plans**

Articles on the Localism Act and on Neighbourhood Planning had been circulated to all members for information.

#### **185.2 New Code of Conduct for Members**

The new Code had to be adopted by the Parish Council by July 2012 and would replace the existing Code. The district councils in Essex were currently preparing a draft which Parish Councils would be able to use. Further information was awaited.

#### **185.3 The Power of Competence**

No information was yet available on this new power and how it related to the Power of Wellbeing. In order to become a Power of Competence Council the Clerk had to be trained in this new model, which would then become part of her professional CILCA qualification. Training had been booked for the Clerk and Chairman. A further requirement was that a minimum proportion of Members must have been elected at the 2011 elections, and at Danbury the figure was 80%.

RESOLVED: that the information in 185.1 to 185.3 above be noted.

(Following the meeting the Clerk was able to confirm that the requirement was for two-thirds of members to have been elected at the 2011 elections.)

### **186 Matters for Report (for information only)**

All members were aware that Chelmsford had been awarded City status as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the other successful applicants being Perth in Scotland and St Asaph in Wales.

The Danbury Brownies had sent a letter of thanks for the grant (approved in November 2011) which they had recently received from the Council.

BT had applied to Chelmsford Borough Council to remove the vandalised phone box opposite the Co-op in Danbury.

**187 Dates of Meetings in 2012**

- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – Annual Parish Council
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July
- Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September
- Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November

**188 Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED: in accordance with S1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that in view of the nature of the business to be discussed it was in the opinion of the Council advisable that the Public and Press be excluded and that they be instructed to withdraw.

The two members of the public left the meeting at this point.

**189 Co-option of councillor**

A secret ballot was conducted. The majority of members were against co-opting Ms Jo Gable as a member of Danbury Parish Council.

RESOLVED: that Ms Gable’s application to be a councillor was unsuccessful.

Business having been concluded, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

Signed: ..... Cllr S Berlyn, Chairman

Date: .....