

DANBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A Quality Council



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the held on Wednesday 3rd July 2013 at the Committee Room, the Old School House, Main Road, Danbury

Present: Cllr Mrs A Chapman (Chairman), Cllr A Allen (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Mrs C Jacobs, Cllr P Howe, Cllr A Keeler, Cllr W Scaife, Cllr J Thomson, Cllr Wood

In attendance: Mrs H Mayes, Assistant Clerk

27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Berlyn

28 Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests they knew they had 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 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.

No interests were declared.

29 Public Questions (Time limited to 15 minutes)

There were no members of the public present.

30 Minutes of the Environment Committee

The Assistant Clerk was requested to change the minutes to show Cllr Mrs Chapman as Chairman and Cllr Allen as Vice Chairman.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record.

31 Footpaths

31.1 Paths for Communities Grant Scheme

There have not been any further suggestions of schemes

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

31.2 Footpath Officer

Cllr Howe reported that he had walked most of the central paths and generally the footpaths were very good around the parish. Footpaths 14 and 15 had now been cleared. The small trees had been pollarded and vegetation cleared to make the path passable.

Cllr Howe also reported the following issues which were to be notified to ECC.

- The surface of footpath 59 is hazardous as it is part concrete and the slabs are broken up.
- Where footpaths 33 and 28 cross, the waymark needs replacing as it has sunk into ground.

Cllr Howe also raised concerns regarding footpath 5. It is dangerous to cross the road where this path ends at the A414 to join footpath 4 which starts opposite. The traffic is very fast at this point and visibility is poor. Cllr Howe suggested deviating footpath 5 so that it ends at the entrance to Danbury Palace. This was a safer point to cross and there was a pavement on the other side of the road. Some Members did not think this would be possible as it was private land and also if the development goes ahead this would create more traffic. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk contact ECC to see if this is a viable proposal.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk reports the footpath issues discussed to ECC.

31.3 Footpath from Allotments to footpath 16

Documents had now been submitted by the Definitive Map Officer for a new instruction for the creation of the above footpath. Once the path is adopted by ECC the Public Rights of Way Officer would look to improve the surface. It was agreed that the Committee would prefer woodchip rather than a hard surface. The Assistant Clerk would recommend this to the Public Rights of Way Officer once the path is adopted.

RESOLVED: to recommend the use of woodchip on the path surface to ECC once it is adopted.

32 Parish Transport Meetings

The meeting of the Chelmsford and Basildon area was held on 11th June 2013 and the Maldon area on 6th June 2013. Cllr Scaife reported that discussions were held regarding the unreliability of the number 31 bus (this was documented in the minutes circulated of the Parish Transport Meeting). Cllr Allen had also given Cllr Scaife details of issues he had experienced with this service. Cllr Scaife would feed this back to First Bus at the next meeting. Reasons given by First Bus for this issue were that they were short of buses or have to swap buses. If anyone had any other issues to report with this service they should forward them to Cllr Scaife. Cllr Scaife also reported that Travel with Hunney are no longer operating the evening service and it has gone back out to tender.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33 Highway Matters –

33.1 Double yellow line requests for the Junction of The Avenue and Maldon Road and Well Lane:

No further updates had been received.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33.2 Request for yellow lines outside St Johns School: A resident recently attended the Farmers Market and requested that yellow lines be put in outside St Johns School (Waterworks side). Cllr Scaife also had concerns about the junction of Butts Lane which is very hazardous to pull out of, especially around peak times. He would support the request for yellow lines. Members felt that this junction was generally unsafe and it might be a suitable request for the Local Highways Panel. A suggestion was made to request parking restrictions at certain times of the day. Cllr Scaife proposed that yellow lines be requested and that the junction is referred to the LHP to see if improvements could be made. This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed. The Assistant Clerk was asked to notify the resident who originally reported the issue.

RESOLVED: that the request for yellow lines be sent and a submission made to the LHP to address safety concerns at the junction.

33.3 Footway in Hopping Jacks Lane:

This item had now been added to ECC's Capital List for future consideration as it could not be carried out by the LHP. There were no further updates. Cllr Scaife had recently noted that West Belvedere road and pavement were in poor condition.

RESOLVED: that the Assistant Clerk reports the condition of West Belvedere to ECC.

33.4 20mph Speed Limits:

A briefing from Cllr Bass regarding 20mph speed limits was circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33.5 Highways matters (reported items)

The items below had been reported and updates requested.

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Footway at junction of Maldon Road and Hyde Lane	Surface around postbox becomes muddy/slippery when wet. Level is not sufficient for drainage. Cllr Scaife reported drains also appear blocked.	Groundsman monitoring		2235103	09/05/13 area has been inspected and assessed. Have requested ECC Highways if they can help again.
Southview Road	Japanese Knotweed present where property has been demolished	ECC & Essex Police	05/09/2012	89329	17/6/13 Planning Enforcement have requested owner to tidy site. 15/05/13 also reported to EH and Planning Enforcement as neighbours complaining about condition of site. 1/3/13 emailed for update. 7/1/13 emailed ECC for update. 9/11/12 Inspection carried out. Liaising with the Consultant Arboriculturist to determine if any action to be taken and ownership of land. 23/10/12 emailed ECC for update. Update from AC - Police Wildlife Liaison Officer will be visiting when next in area. Also reported to ECC as encroaching onto footway. Knotweed is a civil matter - neighbour would need to take action if knotweed encroaches into her property. Reported to AC by resident.
Copt Hill	Street light not working (only one in road)	ECC	05/11/2012	no ref given	1/3/13 emailed lighting for update. 07/12/12 update lamp not drawing power due to faulty wiring in new cell. Referred back to manufacturer. Will chase up. 6/12/12 update requested from ECC Lighting. reported by resident
Slough Road	Footpath 55 requires an additional waymark	ECC	20/12/2012	2201895	15/04/13 ECC have requested further information from Landowner. 06/02/13 & 02/01/13 due for inspection. reported by landowner

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Mill Lane	Street light on left hand side before The Avenue is not working	ECC	04/02/2013	no ref given	Reported by resident at Farmers Market
Capons Lane	Surface water drain blocked	ECC	31/01/2013	2210577	21/2/13 due for inspection. Copies of letters sent to Parish Council. Reported to CCC in error so have reported direct to ECC.
Main Road	pothole opposite entrance to DCA car park	ECC	20/03/2013	2224768	22/3/13 has been inspected and assessed. due for inspection.
Butt Lane	Pavement is crumbling and there is a 2 to 3 inch drop from the boundary of the drive to the pavement.	ECC	02/04/2013	2227575	8/4/13 inspected and assessed. letter from resident - reported to ECC.
Hyde Lane (at top of Dilstons)	Large pothole around a manhole cover	ECC	08/05/2013	2235783	09/05/13 been inspected and assessed. Reported by resident.
Main Road	Belisha beacon not working and obscured by vegetation	ECC	17/06/2013	2243598	20/6/13 to be visited and assessed. reported by AK
Church Green	2 blocked drains	ECC	17/06/2013	2243676	20/6/13 to be visited and assessed. Reported by resident at Farmers Market
Footpath 22	Bridge needs repair/replacement	ECC	30/05/2013	2240193	reported by footpath officer

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

33.6 Highways matters – (completed/no further action)

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
Well Lane	30mph missing (post remains in place)	ECC	13/12/2012	2200738	13/03/13 email from ECC to say issue resolved and work completed. 1/3/13 emailed for update. 9/1/13 inspected and assessed. 13/12/12 due for inspection. reported by resident at Farmers Market
Mill Lane	30 mph sign fallen under hedgerow from Mill Lane to Hyde Lane	ECC	05/11/2012	94408	28/3/13 work completed 1/3/13 emailed for update. 07/01/13 emailed ECC for update. 09/11/12 Has been inspected and assessed. 05/11/12 resident reported sign has been removed but not replace. New report made to ECC,
Hyde Lane	before junction with Mill Lane, Pothole in road around manhole cover	ECC	04/02/2013	2211596	19/6/13 email from ECC issue now resolved. 19/02/13 Repairs planned and placed in programme of works. Reported by resident at Farmers Market
Main Road	2 potholes in road shortly before turning to Riffhams Lane	ECC	01/02/2013	2210952	10/04/13 included in planned programme of works. 20/03/13 & 21/02/13 has been inspected and assessed.
Junction of footpaths 12&15	Waymark post has rotted at base	ECC	19/03/2013	2224308	22/04/13 completed by ECC. 19/3/13 due for inspection. reported by footpath officer
The Heights/St Cleres Way	Steps & footpath at FP 17 towards churchyard are difficult to use in wet/icy weather	ECC	07/01/2013	2204613	03/05/13 No further action to be taken by ECC. 06/02/13 due for inspection. 24/1/13 ECC to investigate ownership of land. 07/01/13 due for inspection
Belvedere Road	Overgrown hedge outside 20	ECC	22/05/2013	2238769	24/05/13 assessed and hazard has either been resolved or does not meet ECC investigatory levels. reported by PH
Footpath 16	Potholes in the footpath	ECC	19/03/2013	2224304	24/06/13 The Footpath Officer has walked this footpath and it is adequate for pedestrian access. 19/03/13 due for inspection. reported by footpath officer

Location	Issue	Reported to	Date first reported	Reference No	Outcome
The Heights/ St Johns Church	Footpaths 17, 18 & 20 and steps at The Heights. Potholes throughout footpath	ECC	07/05/2013	2235394	24/6/13 the Footpath Officer has walked this footpath and it is adequate for pedestrian access. 07/05/13 being assessed. reported by resident at APM.
St Cleres Way	Footpath 17 is wet and muddy making it difficult to walk the path	ECC	01/05/2013	2234613	20/6/13 currently being adopted by ECC. Once adopted ECC will look to improve the surface. 01/05/13 being assessed. reported by resident

Cllr Allen agreed that the steps at footpath 18 were dangerous in wet and icy conditions. Notices had been put up and handrails were in situ. The surface and slope of the individual steps contributes to the difficulty of use of the steps in poor conditions.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

34 Chelmsford Local Highways Panel (LHP)

The last meeting was held on 19 June 2013. The minutes of the meeting of 24th April 2013 were circulated. The Assistant Clerk had contacted Cllr Bass to invite him to a future meeting and was informed that this request had to be sent to an alternative email address. No further response had been received. The Clerk and Chairman had met with Cllr Spence, Leader of Essex County Council, and discussed the concerns that the Parish Council had regarding the LHP and Highways structure.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

35 Local Highways Panel Requests/Localism small scheme list

Each Parish was able to submit three schemes for consideration. Members discussed submitting schemes to ECC as no response had been received from Cllr Bass to discuss the LHP at a Parish Council meeting. Members agreed to submit three schemes from the list and a discussion was held to decide which schemes to submit.

35.1 Runsell Green Reduction in Speed Limit: This proposed reduction had received objections and was now undergoing a Cabinet Members Action process to be determined. There were no further updates.

35.2 Footway Mayes Lane, Penny Royal Road, Woodhill Road: Members felt that a new footway at this location would be beneficial to residents.

35.3 Installation of Bollards – Parking on Verge 87 Main Road: The Highways Liaison Officer was submitting a Scheme Validation Request.

35.4 Speed Reduction in Woodhill Road. ECC had advised that if the Parish Council wish to pursue this issue it should be referred to the LHP. Members felt that following the briefing from Cllr Bass on 20mph speed limits it was unlikely that this would be progressed.

35.5 Traffic Lights at Tesco Express: ECC had advised that if the Parish Council wish to pursue this issue it should be referred to the LHP. Some Members had experienced issues with drivers going through red lights when pulling out of the Tesco garage and felt that a traffic light pointing towards garage would be useful. Some Members were concerned that this would cause confusion to pedestrians and drivers regarding traffic priorities.

35.6 Installation of posts on grass verges at Hoynors and Gay Bowers: ECC had advised that if the Parish Council wished to pursue this issue it should be referred to the LHP.

35.7 Uneven footway at Mayes Lane: ECC had advised that if the Parish Council wish to pursue this issue it should be referred to the LHP. Members felt the condition of this footway was very poor.

Members had already resolved to submit a scheme for safety issues at St Johns School and Butts Lane junction. Cllr Allen proposed that the footway at Mayes Lane and the construction of a new footway between Penny Royal Road and the Cricketers Pub be submitted to the LHP. He also proposed that the traffic lights outside Tesco be a reserve scheme if one of the original ones was not suitable. This was seconded by Cllr Wood and agreed unanimously. The Assistant Clerk was also requested to ask for the current schemes list.

RESOLVED: to submit the damaged footway in Mayes Lane and the new footway from Penny Royal Road to the Cricketers Pub to the LHP in addition to the scheme already proposed at Butts Lane/St Johns School.

36 Signage Items on Highways as follows: (Items to note no change)

These items were considered as part of minute 35 as they would need to be submitted to the LHP for further action if required. Some work had been done at Cherry Garden Lane in the past.

36.1 Well Lane

Signage on Essex County Council list.

36.2 Sightlines at Cherry Garden Lane

No further update.

RESOLVED: to include these items onto the list of potential schemes for the LHP.

37 Bus Shelters

Power to Bus Shelter outside nr Service Station (Chelmsford Side)

There were no further updates. This issue had been chased up again with ECC.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

38 Quarries

38.1 St Clere's Hall: There was nothing further to report.

38.2 Royal Oak Quarry: There was nothing further to report.

38.3 Sandon Quarry: There was nothing further to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

39 Danbury Country Park

There were no updates to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

40 Danbury Times

Cllr Mrs Chapman updated the meeting. The current edition was at the printers for the first proof to be sent. If anyone was due to be away either the week of the 15th or 22nd July, please let Cllr Mrs Chapman know and the boxes for delivery could be held back. Cllr Mrs Jacobs had tried to deliver to Quinlan Court but it was locked and she could not access the flats or see an area for them to be posted. The Assistant Clerk would ask the post lady how the block could be accessed. Cllr Wood confirmed that he had contacted a number of people regarding delivery of the Danbury Times but had so far been unsuccessful. The Communications Group would continue to work on this issue.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

41 Danbury Common/Cyclists

No recent update had been received.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

42 Hedging

There were no current hedging issues reported to ECC.

It was reported that at the corner of Well Lane, outside Danbury Park School, the vegetation is encroaching onto the footway. The Assistant Clerk would report this to ECC. It was also reported that the hedge at Belvedere Road had been cut back which had improved the access along the footway.

RESOLVED: that the vegetation at Well Lane/Danbury Park School is reported to ECC.

43 Living Landscapes

There were no further updates.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

44 Lingwood Common Lt Baddow

44.1 Heathland Restoration: There were no further updates received.

44.2 Village Green, Moores Bridge Lane: A resident had reported that the land adjoining Parish Council land in Moores Bridge Lane had had a gate put in by Essex and Suffolk Water during the recent pipeline works. There were concerns that this gate infers access across the registered Village Green and that there was a possibility of future development. The Assistant Clerk had met with the Agent on site and he would be contacting the landowner to discuss this further. The advice given by Essex County Council Legal Services was that it is an offence for someone to drive over registered land without permission.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

45 Litter Pickers

Letters had been sent to all the volunteer litter pickers to ask if they are still covering various areas of the village. Several responses had now been received and once all the information was received the Assistant Clerk would advertise for new volunteers. One litter picker had been returned. There was also an article going into Danbury Times requesting more volunteers.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

46 Signage at Eves Corner

The Customer Group Manager had now sent further information following the election of Cllr Bass as the new Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation. This outlined the advice that had been given to ECC Officers regarding outdoor advertisements. The Parish Council had been requested to direct any queries regarding signage to ECC. Members agreed that this seemed like a sensible solution to this issue although concerns still remained regarding utilities.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

47 Noticeboard at St Johns Church

Cllr Mrs Jacobs had contacted English Heritage who had confirmed that they did not have responsibility for the noticeboard. The Assistant Clerk would contact CCC and ECC to see if either Council would assist.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

48 Foul Water running across Well Lane

This issue was reported to Environmental Health who were already aware of it. There was a connection issue regarding the properties at the rear. Anglian Water had been notified and Environmental Health were awaiting an update from them. The Assistant Clerk would request an update from Environmental Health.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

49 UK Power Networks, Power cuts

Cllr Allen had provided a copy of a letter that he had sent to UK Power Networks regarding power cuts in Danbury. He reported that subsequently the Regional Manager had visited him to discuss the issue and had offered a compensation payment. Some residents did not experience any issues with power cuts in the village but this was because different parts of village were fed by different networks. The Regional Manager confirmed that they still had issues with people who refuse UK Power access to cut back trees interfering with power lines.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

50 Correspondence:

Traffic Lights outside Co-op: An email had been received from a resident regarding motorists going through red lights in the village.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

51 Matters for Report (for information only, including any Climate Change updates)

Members reported the following issues:

There had been an increase in parking on the grassed areas at Eves Corner. This area would benefit for two or three additional posts opposite the bank to prevent this. The Assistant Clerk would speak to the National Trust to see if further posts would be acceptable.

There had been no further issues with the Fish and Chip van parking in the top car park following a telephone conversation with the Assistant Clerk, Facilities.

There was concern about traffic and parking around Eves Corner becoming dangerous. A suggestion was made that it be changed into a one way scheme. This was also an issue that the school children had brought up when they visited the Parish Office. This suggestion had been discussed some time ago although it did not progress as it was deemed unnecessary and would increase traffic on Butts Lane. There were also discussions at that time regarding the Butts Lane junction next to St Johns School being made entry only although this was not pursued either.

It was reported that the grass was very high at the junction of Gay Bowers and Bicknacre Road which obscures vehicle sightlines. The Assistant Clerk would report this to ECC.

Cllr Allen reported that CCC would now only empty two brown bins even if more had been provided.

52 Dates of Meetings for 2013

Wednesday 4th September ph apologies, 23rd October and 4th December 2013.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25 pm.

Cllr Mrs April Chapman
Chairman

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Signed

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Date