

Danbury Parish Council
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11 April 2022 at 8PM at Danbury Sports and Social Centre,
Main Road, Danbury, CM3 4NQ**

Present: Cllrs: J Armstrong, S Berlyn, A Chapman, N Day, B Hallett, N Orange
In Attendance: Ms M Harper, Mrs L Mitchelmore (Assistant Clerk) and 49 members of the public.

Apologies

Cllrs: C Chaney, G Chapman, M Hessing, A Keeler, P Sutton

County Cllr: John Spence

City Cllr Sue Dobson (Chairman of Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group)

1. Welcome and Introduction:

Cllr Berlyn welcomed members of the public to the meeting and proposed a minute's silence in respect of the Ukraine and absent friends.

2. Approval of Annual Parish Meeting Minutes 19 April 2021

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2021 were approved and signed as being a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Armstrong, seconded: Cllr Hallett, and agreed.

3. Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Update:

This item was moved up the agenda and presented by Cllr A Chapman as Sue Dobson, being a City Councillor, was unable to attend due to the local elections and purdah.

The Plan Writing and Sites Working Groups had been working hard to produce a draft plan and design guide with help and advice from Chelmsford City Council and several updated reports. They were planning to hold an exhibition on 13 and 14 May so that residents could see where around 100 new homes would be allocated and the reasoning behind the allocations. After the exhibition, the plan would be updated if necessary and subjected to formal consultations, the independent examination and referendum. Cllr A Chapman thanked the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator for the guidance and support that she had given the Groups.

Cllr Berlyn thanked the group for all their hard work and invited questions from the members of public.

A member of the public enquired as to whether once the areas had been decided, it would be fait a complis that houses would be built on those sites and whether there could end up being 300 rather than 100.

Cllr Chapman responded that there would not be more than 100 homes as each allocated site would have the number of designated homes for that site. There may be a slight change in numbers of perhaps one or two on each site. However, windfall sites were possible where small scale

developments could be found acceptable by Chelmsford City Council. Cllr Berlyn added that nothing could be guaranteed until the plan had been adopted.

A member of the public enquired as to whether there would be conditions for sustainability.

Cllr Chapman responded that sustainability had been incorporated but that the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan also incorporated Sustainability, for example that all new homes must have an electric vehicle charging point.

4. Guest Speaker:

Mr Bird gave a presentation about the Sustainable Danbury Group. Their definition of sustainability was living at one with the planet in a way that it would be there for us for 100s of years.

The Group was formed following a meeting with Essex County Council regarding community energy and initiatives – there were more 200 groups in the UK but none in Essex. There are many different projects owned by community energy groups including solar panel schemes and car sharing.

The Group was looking at potential local renewable and sustainable energy projects that could be owned by the community either entirely or in partnership with commercial entities. The Sustainable Danbury had become an incorporated Community Benefit Society which was profit seeking and not a charity but all profits would go back into the community.

The aims of the group were to:

- Give advice about renewable energy and energy efficiency – for example heat pumps.
- Promote recycling, repair and re-use
- Promote sustainable options for food and travel
- Increase interconnectivity for wildlife corridors in conjunction with the Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes.

The group were researching local renewable energy projects such as solar panels on schools, other buildings and energy storage options. Both St John's and Danbury Park Schools had solar panels on their roofs and had signed up to 'Let's Go Zero by 2030.' Projects could be funded by a community share offer where for a small investment, residents could have a say in projects. It would be a long-term investment, with monies being repaid once the capital had been paid down. Profits from these major projects would be kept in the community.

Cllr Berlyn thanked Mr Bird and invited any questions from the members of the public.

A member of the public enquired as to whether offers of improved house insulation funded by Government schemes were scams.

Mr Bird replied that schemes did exist and were offered to those with household incomes below £30,000. Delivery was through the Local Authority and funded by Essex County Council (ECC). The

Danbury Community Energy Group would become a referrer to help people to access grants, of which the Home Upgrade Grant was one. Warmworks had been contracted by ECC to administer the grants.

5. Questions for the Parish Council & Public Participation Session

The following questions were asked:

1. Is the footpaths map available only from the Parish Office?

There were now two maps available – a footpaths map and a circular walks booklet that had been recently updated by Cllr G Chapman. They were available from the Parish Office, Library and dispensers around the local area.

2. A number of questions were asked about the future of the Danbury Sports and Social Centre.

Cllr Berlyn referred to the statement included in the agenda packs. The Parish Council was in discussion with the Danbury Community Association (DCA) about how best to secure the long-term future of the Sports and Social Centre. Clubs hiring the Cricket Wicket and Football Pitches had been informed about changes to the booking system. No date could be given as to when a decision would be made regarding the future of the Sports & Social Centre. The long-term sustainability of the centre was a priority for the Parish Council.

3. Whose idea was it get the footpath installed from the Cricketers to Mayes Lane without consultation?

The Parish Council had requested a pavement there from the Essex Highways Local Highways Panel but due to the prohibitive cost, this was changed to a walkable verge. It was hoped that this would prove to be safer for pedestrians and it was funded by Essex County Council and not the Parish Council precept. It had taken several years for it to be approved.

6. Chairman's Concluding Remarks

Cllr Berlyn thanked the Parish Councillors, Clubs and Organisations and members of the public for attending the meeting. The Parish Clerk and Assistant Clerks were thanked, particularly for their work under difficult circumstances during the pandemic. Particular thanks went to the Clerk who had acted on behalf of the council under delegated powers when meetings had had to be suspended.

Attention was drawn to the new Men's Shed set up in partnership with Danbury Medical Centre and the Danbury Citizen's Advice Bureau. It was also the 20th Anniversary of the local First Responders and Cllr Berlyn thanked them for their services to the local community.

There being no more business to transact, the meeting was closed at 8.49pm.

Signed(Chairman) Date.....