

Danbury Parish Council
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 13th July 2022 at 7.30pm at Danbury Parish Council Office,
Main Road, Danbury, CM3 4NQ**

Present: Cllr Mrs A Chapman (Chairman), Cllr G Chapman, Cllr A Keeler, Cllr N Orange

In Attendance: Mrs M Dyer (Assistant Clerk), Mrs L Mitchelmore (Assistant Clerk)

District Cllr R Ambor

District Cllr Ms Scott

A Member of the Public

22/23.17 Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Mrs Chapman nominated Cllr Mrs Hallett to serve as Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee for the current municipal year, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman. There were no further nominations and Cllr Mrs Hallett was elected unopposed.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Mrs Hallett be elected to serve as Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee for the municipal year 2022-23.

22/23.18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Berlyn and Cllr Mrs Hallett

Cllr Mrs Chapman thanked Mrs Mitchelmore for all her hard work as Clerk to the Environment Committee and welcomed Mrs Dyer to the role.

22/23.19 Declarations of Interest

Members are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they know they may have in items of business on the meeting's agenda. They are reminded that they will need to repeat their declaration at the appropriate point in the meeting and leave the room if the interest is a prejudicial one. Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time. Members have dispensation to discuss and vote in respect of matters relating to the Precept and the DCA.

There were no declarations at this point.

22/23.20 Public Question Time

Members of the public are invited to address the Council, give their views, and question the Council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration (at the discretion of the Chairman). Members of the public may not take part in the Council meeting itself. At the close of this item members of the public will no longer be permitted to address the Council unless invited to do so by the Chairman. The session will last for a maximum of 15 minutes with any individual contribution lasting a maximum of 5 minutes. Members of the public should address their representation through the Chairman of the meeting.

District Cllr Ambor and District Cllr Ms Scott spoke about correspondence/conversation relating to the non-cutting of common land by Chelmsford City Council (CCC) on Maldon Road in front of residential properties, causing distress to the property owners as the uncut grass is attracting vermin and litter. The District Cllrs were advised that whilst it is Common Land, Danbury Parish Council has taken responsibility

for the trees, but that CCC cuts the grass and that the current policy of CCC is to only cut grass as is necessary for safety matters such as sight lines etc. Cllr Ambor advised that whilst they generally support this new CCC Policy, they will take the matter up with CCC as it is distressing for these residents.

Cllr Ambor and Cllr Ms Scott then left the meeting.

The Member of the Public present then spoke in support of rewilding, advising that wildlife is also having to adapt to climate change, citing the creation of 'Nature Strips' in Australia which gives birds for example somewhere to rest on, or near to, the ground; no mowing will also provide food for birds and other creatures. The Member of the Public then asked if Parish Council litter pickers could be asked to clear litter from the long grass on the area on Maldon Road referred to by the District Cllrs earlier, but was advised that as this was alongside a 40mph road a specialist company would have to be employed. The Member of the Public then spoke about her concern re recent works in the Parish by a private contractor who had not appeared to have heeded to the law relating to carrying out works to vegetation during nesting season and advised that Essex County Council (ECC) Legal Team had been notified.

The Member of the Public then left the meeting.

22/23.21 Minutes of the Environment Committee dated 16 May 2022

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 16 May 2022 were approved and signed as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Keeler, seconded Cllr Chapman and all agreed.

22/23.22 Actions

Actions from the minutes were noted.

Cllr Chapman provided an update re Speedwatch advising that the three remaining members of the Speedwatch team were no longer able to continue and that 6 -8 new members were needed if Danbury Speedwatch is to continue. It was agreed that this would be conveyed residents via social and printed media.

22/23.23 Grass Cutting

Members considered the report suggesting particular areas on Dawson Memorial Field where grass cutting could be reduced to address climate change. Members were all in agreement but advised that cuttings/wildflowers must be taken away in September near the edge of pitch 2. Rattle to be sown to stop grass growing but will encourage wildflowers. Quote to be obtained from the Contractor.

22/23.24 Hedge Planting at the Old Pavilion

Members considered a report to plant a hedge at The Old Pavilion. Following lengthy discussion of the options and consideration of the restrictions due to underground electric and gas pipes, Cllr Chapman proposed that a 3 metre hedge be planted at a 2 metre distance from the gas pipeline, distanced from the streetlamp, and that the rest of the area would be left to rewild. This was seconded by Cllr Orange. Three Members were in agreement, one Member abstained.

RESOLVED: a 3 metre hedge be planted at a 2 metre distance from the gas pipeline, distanced from the streetlamp, and that the rest of the area would be left to rewild.

22/23.25 Items for Consideration from the Land Management Budget

Members had been advised that the Land Management budget currently stands at £498.10 and that there were two projects for consideration: Hedgehog Tunnels at a cost £150 and repurposing the Beacon Brazier

Basket at a cost of £800. Following consideration Members were all in agreement that due to costs and there not being a suitable location to re-site the Beacon Brazier Basket, that it should be sent to a scrap merchant; Members requested that the hedgehog tunnels be brought back to the next meeting for further consideration.

RESOLVED: that the Beacon Brazier Basket be sent to a scrap merchant.

22/23.26 The Glebe Path between the Dawson Fields and Footpath 17

Members considered a proposal from Cllr G Chapman to make The Glebe, a permissible path that is leased to the Parish Council, a Public Right of Way (if permission from the landowner was forthcoming). Following discussion, it was agreed that no further action be taken at this time.

22/23.27 Local Highways Panel Request (LHP)

Members had been supplied with details of a request from a resident for the Parish Council to submit a request to the LHP for a pedestrian crossing and 30mph speed limit on the Maldon Road in the vicinity of Runsell Green. Following discussion, it was agreed that no decision would be taken until the results of the A414 Safety Review are available as previous requests had been refused in the past as they did not meet the criteria.

22/23.28 P3 Sub-committee

Cllr G Chapman outlined to Members the recent works undertaken by four members of the P3 group, including clearing vegetation and installing signage.

22/23.29 Environment Committee Strategic Plan

Members requested that this be brought back to the next meeting for Members to consider any actions.

22/23.30 ECC Winter Salt Scheme

Members noted that ECC has been advised that Danbury would be participating in the scheme for 2022/23 and that the salt would be delivered September/October.

22/23.31 Pond Clearance

Members noted the three dates booked with TCV for works with one day at Runsell Green and two days at Eves Corner.

22/23.32 Matters for Report (for information only)

Various matters were reported:

22/23.32.1 Two potholes had been reported for action to Cllr Spence for inclusion in his report to ECC Highways

22/23.32.2 That the Hoynors/Mill Lane path had been submitted for inclusion for action on the Street Cleansing Day on 2nd November 2022

22/23.32.3 An update was given regarding the walkable verge on Penny Royal Road, part of the LHP works

22/23.32.4 Update re the vegetation issue at Pedlars Path impacting on some properties in The Hawthorns

22/23.32.5 A green 'living' roof had been installed on a 'shed' at Poulton Portables, which may be of interest in regard to some of the Parish Council Bus Shelters roofs.

22/23.32.6 Concern was expressed that 4 out of the 15 semi-mature trees in the Community Woodland had died apparently due to lack of watering by the supplier.

22/23.33 Matters for Communication

The following matters from the meeting were identified for communication to residents:

22/23.33.1 Details of the pond clearing days to be publicised plus the opportunity to assist with the works.

22/23.33.2 Appeal for new Speedwatch team members.

22/23.34 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 September 2022

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm

Signed: Chairman..... Date: