

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29 January 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs J Armstrong, G Chapman, P Churchouse, B Hallett, M Hessing (Vice Chair), A Keeler, L Naggs, N Orange, U Rasiule and P Sutton

In attendance: Ms M Harper (Clerk), Essex County Councillor J Spence and 9 members of the public

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Hessing as Vice Chairman in the absence of the Chairman

24/25.84 Apologies for absence

Cllrs Berlyn and A Chapman

24/25.85 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.

Cllr G Chapman advised of an interest in agenda item 24/25.88

24/25.86 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.

Members of the public expressed their concerns regarding the speed limits around Danbury Commons and requested that the Parish Council support their application to Essex Highways for the limits to be revised due to the safety concerns for vehicles and pedestrians

Essex County Councillor John Spence (Cllr Spence) noted his support for the proposal of revised speed limits and commended the residents on their research and consultation. Cllr Spence advised Members that the budget setting carried out recently by Essex County Council (ECC) had been difficult due to the increases affecting businesses including the rise in national insurance contributions and that the inclusion of ECC in the first wave of devolution/local government reform was still to be confirmed. Cllr Spence updated Members on the proposed works at Papermill Lock, confirmed that he was still pursuing the upgrades for the crossing near The Bell/Danbury Park School and advised that the final report regarding St Peter's Hospital was due at the end of March but the working group had recognised the challenges and were looking at service provision

24/25.87 To approve Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting held 27 November 2024

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27 November 2024 be approved and signed as a true record

24/25.88 Speeding concerns in Danbury Common

Following consideration of the resident's concerns regarding speed limits along Bicknacre Road through Danbury Common and discussion on the safety issues, Members agreed to support the proposal for Essex Highways to revise the speed limits.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council would support the proposal from residents to address speeding concerns in Danbury Common, proposed by Cllr Armstrong and seconded by Cllr Sutton, all agreed

24/25.89 Reports from Committees

24/25.89.1 Community Engagement

The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted. The Committee Chairman reminded councillors of the Easter Fayre taking place on 5 April and requested that volunteers contacted the Clerk

24/25.89.2 Environment Committee

The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted. The Committee Vice Chairman noted that the gate at the footpath near the Church allotments was being installed, that the trees had been received for the Community Woodland and that further updates on the crossing at The Bell/Danbury Park School were being waited for

24/25.89.3 Facilities Committee

The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted. The Committee Chairman advised that the car park management system was going live on 1 February and that following consultation a small number of businesses had been allocated parking. It was further noted that the recent playground inspection had only highlight low risk items

24/25.89.4 Health & Wellbeing Committee

The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted

24/25.89.5 Leisure Centre Committee

The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted. The Committee Vice Chairman noted that the finances were slowly improving, membership numbers were up, the bar refurbishment was nearly complete and a staff uniform was being introduced

24/25.89.6 Planning Committee

- 24/25.89.6.1 The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted. The Committee Chairman advised that a response had been submitted to the Danecroft application and the meeting had been attended by a number of residents who raised concerns. It was further noted that a public meeting was to be held on Sunday 2 February at 2pm in the Leisure Centre in relation to the Tyndale Farm application
- 24/25.89.6.2 RESOLVED: that, for the purposes of correct governance, Danbury Parish Council are no longer members of the Hammonds Farm Joint Working Party but will send designated Members to the Little Baddow Hammonds Farm Working Party as Representatives on an Outside Body, proposed by Cllr Churchouse and seconded by Cllr Hallett, agreed
- 24/25.89.6.3 Cllr Hessing advised that a Kings Counsel had been asked to review the revised Local Plan at Regulation 19 to compare it to the previous reports obtained by the Working Group in terms of procedural matters and the consultants had been asked to review the traffic information. It was noted that leaflets advising of the application for an industrial area adjacent to the A414 .which was part of Chelmsford City Council (CCC) Local Plan 16b, were in the office if any councillors were able to distribute them in the village. Cllr Hessing also advised that a number of public meetings were planned including a meeting at the Leisure Centre on 14 February. Cllr Armstrong advised that the CCC Planning Portal has failed on a number of occasions recently but emails to the planning officers would also be viewed as part of the responses.

24/25.89.7 Resources Committee

- 24/25.89.7.1 The minutes of the last meeting as published were noted. The Committee Chairman advised that the budget had been reviewed and that a working party had carried out a review of saving accounts and the Committee had approved additional accounts. It was noted that due to the council's income it was not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme
- 24/25.89.7.2 RESOLVED: that the Parish Council agreed the continued use of variable direct debits and standing orders for utility supplies, recycling collection, photocopier, salaries, Information Commissioners Office and IT Support, proposed by Cllr Churchouse and seconded by Cllr G Chapman, all agreed

Cllr G Chapman left the meeting

24/25.90 Money towards 'No to Hammonds Farm'

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council agreed to releasing £1,000 of the monies allocated to support the No to Hammonds Farm working party, proposed by Cllr Sutton and seconded by Cllr Hallett, agreed

24/25.91 Standing Orders

RESOLVED: that delegated authority would be granted to the Clerk to sign the agenda for Extra Ordinary meetings, proposed by Cllr Churchouse and seconded by Cllr Rasiule, all agreed

24/25.92 Donation Money Projects

24/25.92.1 It was agreed that the proposed project to survey all the ancient trees in Danbury would be referred to the Environment Committee in order that they can meet with the consultant to obtain further information and details on the extent of the survey to be undertaken and the mapping software in order that the Parish Council could consider the project at a future meeting. An update on the projects was provided

RESOLVED: that the approved projects would be referred to the relevant committees to oversee the implementation, proposed by Cllr Armstrong and seconded by Cllr Hessing, all agreed

24/25.92.2 RESOLVED: that the YMCA Youth Club project plan and revised budget be approved, proposed by Cllr Naggs and seconded by Cllr Rasiule, all agreed

24/25.93 Budget and Precept 2025/26

RESOLVED: that the following budget be agreed and the precept for 2025/26 be set at £412,344.00, proposed by Cllr Orange and seconded by Cllr Churchouse, agreed

Community Engagement - £14,996.00

Environment Committee - £14,605.00

Facilities Committee –£56,900.00

Health & Wellbeing Committee - £425.00

Leisure Centre Committee - £114,000.00

Parish Council Reserves - £10,000.00

Resources Committee - £208,194.00

Cllr Hessing thanked the Clerk and Committees for their work on producing the budget

24/25.94 Reports from Village Organisations

Cllr Hessing noted that the Little Baddow Carers Group was going well

24/25.95 Community Engagement

The Youth Club and precept would be communicated to residents

24/25.96 Matters for Report (for information only)

Committee Chairmen were reminded that the annual reports needed to be sent to the Clerk by 17 February

Cllr Armstrong advised that CCC were interested in starting a discussion with the Parish Council on the 40 plus pieces of land that they owned in Danbury. Clerk to arrange an Extra Ordinary Meeting on 17 February for Members to discuss

Cllr Armstrong noted that the Parish Council may wish to consider the purchase of a speed indicator device from the donation monies

Cllr Hessing asked that Accessibility Training for Councillors be added to the next agenda

Cllr Hessing advised that planting had started at the site of the Solar Farm

24/25.97 Dates of next meeting

Wednesday 26 March 2025 at 7.30pm

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.31pm.

Chairman

Date