

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5th December 2016,
at 10am at the Old Pavilion,
Main Road Danbury, CM3 4NQ

Present: Stephen Arthurs (SA)
Norman Bartlett (NB)
Stuart Berlyn (SB), Chairman of Danbury Parish Council
Elly Bunn (EB)
Dan Carlin (DC), Danbury Parish Councillor
Judith Clacy (JC)
Sue Dobson (SD)
Jill Fletcher (JF)
Irene Guidotti (IG)
Stephen Holland (SH)
Gilly Lutton (GL)
Lesley Mitchelmore (LM), Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator
Jenny Robinson (JR), Chelmsford City Council
Anthony Rogers (AR)
Margaret Saunders (MSa), Danbury Parish Council Clerk
Mark Scofield (MS)
Roger Sheriff (RS)
John Steele (JS), Danbury Parish Councillor

Observing: Josh Woolliscroft (JW), Snapdragon Consulting

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Jenny Bucknell, Martin Lister and Sue Whatling.

2. Introductions

Those in attendance introduced themselves to the group. JW from Snapdragon Consulting explained that he was attending to observe the meeting in order to understand the Neighbourhood Planning Process more fully, and that he was retained by the development company 'Hill'. The Group agreed that in the spirit of openness and transparency, it was important that developers, landowners and consultants observe meetings if they so wish. (Consultants and developers may be asked to contribute to meetings where appropriate.)

3. Declarations of Interest in Items Appearing on the Agenda and to Consider any Conflicts of Interest That May Arise.

No declarations of interest in agenda items were made. The Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator explained how important it is to recognise that this needs to be an open and

transparent process and that is about the whole village and not individual views and agendas.

4. Election of Chair

Nominations for Chair of the group were invited, and as none were forthcoming, MSa recommended SD to the group. This was seconded by DC and JC and the group voted unanimously in favour. SD took the Chair and was thanked for accepting the role.

5. Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning

The Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator gave a brief overview of the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan and what it may contain, taken from CPRE (Campaign to protect Rural England) in partnership with NALC (National Association of Local Councils), *How to shape where you live: a guide to neighbourhood planning*, page 12-13:

'A Neighbourhood Plan Can...

- Decide where and what type of development should happen in the neighbourhood.
- Promote more development than is set out in the Local Plan.
- Include policies, for example regarding design standards that take precedence over existing policies in the Local Plan for the neighbourhood – provided the Neighbourhood Plan policies do not conflict with the strategic policies in the local plan.

A neighbourhood Plan cannot...

- Conflict with the strategic policies in the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority.
- Be used to prevent development that is included in the Local Plan
- Be prepared by a body other than a parish or town council or a neighbourhood forum.

Typical things that a neighbourhood Plan might include...

- The development of housing, including affordable housing and bringing vacant or derelict stock back into use.
- Provision for businesses to set up or expand their premises
- Transport and access (including issues around roads, cycling, walking and access for disabled people).
- The development of schools, places of worship, health facilities, leisure and entertainment facilities, community and youth centres and village halls.
- The restriction of certain types of development and change of use, for example to avoid too much of one type of use.
- The design of buildings

- Protection and creation of open space, nature reserves, allotments, sports pitches, play areas, parks and gardens, and the planting of trees.
- Protection of important buildings and historic assets such as archaeological remains.
- Promotion of renewable energy projects, such as solar energy and wind turbines.'

Questions were invited from members.

Q: Please could members have a copy of the CPRE booklet.

A: The Coordinator will look into this but will also send out links to resources for members to read. JR also offered to supply resources to the Coordinator. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator, JR**

Q: What happens to the Danbury Framework?

A: DC explained that the Danbury Framework will be used until 2021, but will then be taken over by the Neighbourhood Plan.

Q: How does the neighbourhood differ to the Chelmsford City Plan? What is the point of a Neighbourhood Plan?

A: JR explained that the latest draft of the Chelmsford City Local Plan preferred options will be out for consultation early next year. There has been a call for sites and the City Plan looks at that, housing numbers and benefits for the community.

Through the Neighbourhood Plan, Danbury can choose where development can go rather than the City Council. The benefit is that the Neighbourhood plan can have the backing of the community and can be adopted when it is ready, at which point the Danbury Framework will be downgraded. The Neighbourhood Plan will be a part of the City Plan and they will all be linked together.

The timetable for the City Plan is out and aims to be completed by 2018. The newest plan will take precedence over existing ones. Members requested a copy of the Chelmsford City Plan Timetable. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**

Q: The Neighbourhood Plan is encouraging and putting us forward for development.

A: DC explained that when the framework ends in 2021, we will need a Neighbourhood Plan to replace it. JR stated the more parishes get involved in their own future, the better as the whole community can be involved. If the Neighbourhood Plan is in place, Danbury will benefit from more money from the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) for the community.

Q: Is this democratic as this group isn't elected whereas the Parish Council is.

A: SD explained that this is about the whole community and the neighbourhood Plan Coordinator stated that this is where the communication strategy and consultation is important.

Q: Will the current national policy persist after 2021

A: We have no way of knowing what will happen after 2021 and can only go by current policy.

Q: Will the City Council sift through the Neighbourhood Plan?

A: The City Council will assist and advise (via the Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator) on what is possible/practical.

Q: Will the City Council take the Neighbourhood Plan in account when making planning decisions?

A: JR stated that the neighbourhood Plan becomes a part of the City Plan once it has been adopted.

6. Governance

I. Draft Constitution

Members received a copy of the draft constitution. The Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator explained that point 35 would be amended as the Parish Council Insurance will not cover the group. This will be clarified at the next meeting. Advice received by the RCCE recommended that the group consider whether it would be appropriate to hold an AGM and whether to specify the length of service of the Chair.

The following comments and proposal were made:

- i. It does not state that there would be liaison with Chelmsford City Council.
Response: It is covered under point 6 although it doesn't explicitly mention the City Council.
- ii. At point number 12, there is no mechanism stated by which a member may be asked to leave the group. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator to add this in for the next meeting.**
- iii. The group agreed that the constitution should state that working groups meetings should also be open to the public. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**
- iv. The group agreed to adopt the Parish Council system for allowing members of the public to speak at meetings but also include a caveat that allowed for the Chair's discretion. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**
- v. Point 23 was clarified, whereby non steering group members could be co-opted onto working groups. This will enable the group to benefit from local expertise.

- vi. Amend point 4 to include the phrase '....and other interested parties.'
Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator
- vii. IG proposed that the Steering Group Quorum be amended to 5 and that for Working Groups it be 3. This was seconded by SH and unanimously agreed.
Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator
- viii. The group agreed to insert the word sustainable into 6.ix so that it would read: '....a sustainable, balanced and thriving community'. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**
- ix. Two proposals were made to alter the wording for 6.ix:
RS proposed that the words 'promote growth' be replaced by 'consider development'. This motion was lost by 3 votes in favour to 8 votes against.
SH proposed that the words 'promote growth' be replaced by 'consider growth.' This motion was carried by 8 votes in favour to 3 votes against.

It was resolved that sentence 6.ix read: Consider growth that that is suitable for Danbury Parish as part of maintaining a sustainable, balanced and thriving community. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**

II. Code of Conduct

Members had previously received a copy of Danbury parish Council's Code of Conduct but as this leant heavily towards Councillors; a new Code of Conduct reflecting the Steering Group was circulated. Members will review for the next meeting. **Action: Steering Group Members**

III. Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interests forms were circulated. It was explained that in the spirit of openness and transparency, it is important that members complete a declaration of interests form, declaring any interests that may impact on the Neighbourhood Plan. The form may be published on a Neighbourhood Plan website if the Group decides to create one. Signatures will be redacted if this is the case.

[Q: Do we have to publish addresses?](#)

A: The neighbourhood Plan Coordinator will look into this.

IV. Expenses Procedure

The procedures by which expenses can be claimed were circulated and explained by the Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator. Funding can only be obtained for future spending and not for money already spent and so it is important that all expenditure is agreed in advance by the Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator in partnership with the Financial Responsible Officer for Danbury Parish Council.

MSa and SB left the meeting.

7. Next Steps

I. Membership

The anonymised skills audit and interests form was circulated so that members can identify where gaps may need to be filled either now or at a later stage in the process. Members may also consider whether there are any local groups/societies that need to be considered. It was noted that there was no representation from local businesses.

II. Branding

The neighbourhood Plan Coordinator recommended that the Steering Group find a way of 'branding' the group so that any communications are immediately recognisable and distinct from the Parish Council. This could be done as a part of the Communications Strategy.

III. Communications Strategy

Members discussed possible avenues for communication and the importance of going out to residents rather than waiting for them to come to us. Suggestions included the Essex Chronicle, Supermarkets, The Journal, Radio Stations and GP surgeries. They also considered a website and Facebook page. A Working Group will be set up and MS, DC, JF, SH, EB, DC and JC volunteered to join.

IV. A Review of Existing Plans

This will be brought back to the next meeting.

V. Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives

This will be brought back to the next meeting.

8. Items to be included in the next agenda.

The following items will be included in the next agenda:

The amended Constitution

The new Code of Conduct

Revision of existing plans

Vision and objectives

Additional Items not listed on the agenda:

Agreement to share email addresses amongst the group. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**

Register the group with the Chelmsford City Plan for updates. **Action: Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator**

9. Date of Next Meeting

23rd January at 7pm at the Old Pavilion, Main Road, Danbury, CM3 4NQ

10. Timetable of Meetings

The Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator will liaise with SD and SH to produce a schedule of meetings and will bring this to the next meeting.