

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd January 2017
at The Old Pavilion, Main Road, Danbury, CM3 4NQ

Present: Norman Bartlett (NB)
Jenny Bucknell (JB)
Elly Bunn (EB)
Dan Carlin (DC), Danbury Parish Councillor
Judith Clacy (JC)
Sue Dobson (SD)
Irene Guidotti (IG)
Stephen Holland (SH)
Martin Lister (LS)
Gilly Lutton (GL)
Lesley Mitchelmore (LM), Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator
Anthony Rogers (AR)
Mark Scofield (MS), Hands Off Danbury Action Group
Roger Sheriff (RS)

Observing: Two members of the public, one being Josh Woolliscroft (JW) from Snapdragon Consulting

Agenda Number	Agenda Item	Action
1.	Apologies for Absence	
	Apologies were received from Gill Fletcher, John Steele and Steve Arthurs	
2.	Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items	
	No interests were declared. Members who are also members of other groups in the parish were asked if they wished to be listed as representing those groups. NB who is also Chair of the Danbury Society declined as he is not representing the Danbury Society at the Steering Group. MS stated that he was proud to be the Chair of Hands Off Danbury and that this could be listed against his name in the minutes.	
3.	Public Participation Session	
	2 members of the public were in attendance. 1 stated that he wished to observe the meeting and was interested as he had been involved in compiling the Danbury Framework. The Chair extended an invitation to him to join the Steering Group.	
4.	Minutes	
	The minutes from the meeting of December 5 th were circulated and attention drawn to an amendment from the previously circulated copy. The minutes were signed as a true record of that meeting.	
5.	Action Points Arising from the Minutes – not otherwise listed on	

	the agenda.	
	The coordinator reported that all action points from the previous minutes had been completed except for providing copies of the CPRE Neighbourhood Planning Booklet to members.	
6.	Governance	
I.	<p>The amended draft constitution was circulated and attention drawn to an additional amendment to the wording at point 36.</p> <p>One member requested that the roles of the Parish and Chelmsford City Councils be included in the constitution and not as an appendix.</p> <p>The Coordinator recommended that Steering Group meetings and not Working Group meetings would be open to the public to enable the Working Groups to explore and discuss ideas. Proposals and recommendations from these groups can then be discussed publicly at the Steering Group Meetings. Members agreed and the Constitution will be amended accordingly.</p>	<p>Coordinator</p> <p>Coordinator</p>
II.	<p>The Code of Conduct was adapted from the Danbury Parish Council Code of Conduct. Members discussed item point 2.4 relating to Confidentiality and Third Party Access to information.</p> <p>Q. As a volunteer group, should we be expected to be bound by confidentiality?</p> <p>A. Whilst this is an open and transparent process, there may be times when this is necessary – for example in relation to contact details of individuals. The Coordinator will clarify this.</p> <p>Q. Are we bound by the Freedom of Information Act and if so how?</p> <p>A. The coordinator will consider this.</p>	<p>Coordinator</p> <p>Coordinator</p>
III.	<p>In response to concerns about certain personal information and signatures potentially being published on the website, the Coordinator has set up two registers of interests. One will contain summary information from declaration forms and the other member’s addresses. Addresses will only be released if it is necessary and appropriate to do so.</p> <p>Q. What happens if I have an investment package that includes investments in property companies etc. but I am unaware of them?</p> <p>A. The declarations of interests are to the best of your knowledge.</p> <p>Q. So, being a householder is an interest?</p> <p>A. When discussing specific sites, members need to declare if they live close to any sites that may be under discussion.</p>	
7.	Feedback from the Coordinator	
I.	The Coordinator explained the steps involved in the Neighbourhood Plan Process and where the steering group is within that. Please see the feedback report attached.	
II.	The coordinator explained how the funding process works – please see the feedback report attached - and proposed that if an application for funding is ready before the next the meeting that the Steering Group authorise her to proceed. Members Agreed.	Coordinator

	<p>The Coordinator was asked to read the following statement from the Parish Clerk:</p> <p>“Parish Council cannot fund expenditure by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Expenditure of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group must be approved by the group as per their own constitution which has been agreed. Grant funding needs to be applied for to cover these costs. The Parish Council has funded the salary of the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator. It is essential that retrospective expenditure is not applied for.”</p> <p>Q. What will the funding be for, will it be listed out?</p> <p>A. Yes, it will likely include funding for the website, room hire, printing and resources for any public exhibitions to be held within the next six months.</p>	
III.	<p>The schedule for the proposed insurance policy was circulated. The Coordinator explained that it had been recommended by the parish Council’s insurance Broker and checked by JS who had experience from the insurance industry.</p> <p>Q. What is the group’s legal status?</p> <p>A. We checked this with the insurance broker and will be insured as a not for profit organisation.</p> <p>Q. What is the premium and do we require all of the items listed in the schedule?</p> <p>A. The premium is £165. It is a best price policy and so items included aren’t flexible and removing them would not alter the premium.</p> <p>As insurance is considered, by the funders, to be the statutory duty of the Parish Council, this cannot be grant funded and so will be funded by the Parish Council.</p> <p>The members agreed to proceed with the insurance policy.</p>	Parish Clerk
IV.	The Coordinator attended a coffee morning for Neighbourhood Plan Groups on 16 th December and met with members of groups from South Woodham Ferrers, West Mersea and Boreham.	
8.	Feedback from the Communications Working Group	
I.	The Chair proposed that the group have a specific spokesperson/press officer. Members agreed that this should be shared between the Chair and Coordinator. The coordinator will put together a media policy for the group.	Coordinator
II.	It was suggested that point 4 of the Terms of Reference be amended to insert the words ‘Communications Strategy’. Subject to this change the Terms of Reference was proposed by DC, seconded by SH and unanimously agreed.	Coordinator
	The Communications Working group have met twice and their report was circulated to the Group. SH, the Chair of the group recommended that the branding be Danbury Neighbourhood Plan with the strap line: ‘Our Parish-Our Future.’ The group discussed whether this should be ‘Our Parish’ or ‘Our village’ and agreed to stay with ‘Our Parish.’	
	The Working Group identified a need for training prior to holding	Communication

	<p>public engagement events. The RCCE can provide this for £125 or we could provide it as a workshop in house. Members decided to provide this in house.</p> <p>Q. Who will lead this – will it be DC? A. Yes, DC is prepared to lead it.</p> <p>DC has produced a ‘guidance’ sheet relating to neighbourhood plans which can be circulated when it has been finalised.</p>	Working Group, DC, Coordinator
	<p>SH recommend that the Group use Weebly to set up its own website for the reasons set out in the Working Party Report.</p> <p>Q. How long lived is Weebly? A. We believe that Weebly will be long lived.</p> <p>Q. Can you put in links? A. Yes.</p> <p>Q. Who will update the website? A. The website will be easy to update but we will need a process for it.</p> <p>Members agreed to use Weebly and thanked SH for his hard work.</p> <p>Q. Do we need to add a ‘Chair’s emergency action’ to the constitution so items that must be agreed/actioned/published between meetings can be resolved? A. Yes, that is a good idea – it can be added to the constitution.</p> <p>Q. Wouldn’t that be at odds with point 6.3 of the Communication Working Group’s terms of reference? A. It would be an exception to the rule.</p> <p>Q. How will the community communicate with us? A. We will look at this as a part of the communication strategy</p>	Communication Working Group, DC, Coordinator Coordinator Communication Working Group
9.	Next Steps	
I.	The Chair proposed that we set up a working group to research and review existing plans and consider what information exists and can be reused, what needs to be updated and new areas for evidence gathering. SD, GL, NB and IG volunteered to join this group.	Coordinator, SD,GL,NB,IG
II.	The Chair proposed that we set up a working group to work on the Visions and Objectives survey and questionnaire. This could build on the 20/20vision survey that was carried out by Danbury Parish Council and completed in 2010. SD, SH and JC volunteered.	Coordinator, SD, SH, JC
10.	Questions/Comments from the Public	
	<p>Q. I was surprised that this meeting seemed to be primarily focused on the process. A. We are at an early stage of the process and so building the foundations of the Neighbourhood Plan and Steering Group. The Chair extended an invitation to the member of the public to attend the Group’s workshop if he so wished.</p>	Coordinator
11.	Items for the Public/Press Release	
	We haven’t got an initial media statement yet of how the group is progressing. DC is in the process of producing an initial	DC, Communication Working Group,

	communication but it has yet to be finalised.	Coordinator
12.	Items for the Next Agenda	
	<p>Q. Will working groups be given guidance on what they need to work on?</p> <p>A. Yes</p> <p>Q. Should we be attending Chelmsford City Planning Meetings?</p> <p>A. It isn't necessary but can give an insight into how planning applications are considered.</p>	
13.	Dates of Next Meeting	
	20th February at 2pm and 20 th March at 7pm, both at the Old Pavilion, Main Road, Danbury, CM3 4NQ.	
14.	Timetable of Meetings	
	It was proposed and agreed that meetings take place on the 3 rd Monday each month. The coordinator will check dates around Easter and adjust accordingly.	Coordinator, SH

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator Feedback for Meeting on 23rd January 2017

The Process

There are a number of key milestones that we will work towards as a part of the Neighbourhood Plan Process and I am in the process of putting together and costing out the project plan.

The main steps, as identified by the RCCE are as follows.

Getting Started – completed

Getting Organised – where we are now

Develop Communication Strategy – Covered partly by working party feedback but I will be working with them to formalise a strategy for the next meeting, where we will set out who will be communicated with and at what points along the process and a timetable for events. The working party has a proposal for the establishment of our website. I am going to modify the Danbury Parish Council Media Policy for the Steering Group. We have some opportunities for public engagement coming up. We have been invited to speak at the Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting in 24th April.

The Chelmsford City Preferred options consultation has been moved back and will be in April/May.

The evidence list of community involvement has been created and is being kept up to date.

Determine local skills, expertise and training needs – skills audit complete, communication group identified requirement for training session/workshop in Neighbourhood Plans before public engagement. We may need to contract an external company to carry out sustainability, environmental and equality appraisals – particularly where these need to be independent.

Creating a time plan and project plan , prepare a budget – this is work in progress and am currently costing out resources and waiting for feedback from City Council re site appraisals and environmental appraisals – as to whether we need to do additional work or whether sufficient has been done already as a part of the local plan process.

Secure funding – available via locality/mycommunity.org.

Establish a focus for evidence gathering – 1st one is vision and objectives based on work previously done by Danbury parish Council for their 20/20 vision community consultation exercise which was completed in 2010.

Preparing an Evidence Base – what we are moving into

Look at sustainability appraisals and equality impact assessments

Create a profile of the community (I have information for this)

Audit existing infrastructure and designations (i.e. wildlife sites, conservation areas etc) (review Danbury Framework and Chelmsford City local plan documents – to see what already exists and identify additional work requirements.)

Look at existing planning applications and outstanding permissions, and sites presented through call for sites as a part of the Chelmsford City Plan.

Consider whether to approach landowners in an additional call for sites or whether existing potential sites in the local plan are sufficient.

Carry out surveys and needs assessments – first one will be Visions and Objectives consultation.

Drafting Proposals.

Finalising the plan

The plan needs to be submitted to Chelmsford City Council for Validation and then to an Independent Examiner. Once it has passed these milestones it will go to Public Referendum.

Resources and funding – how the process works

Funding for neighbourhood plans is available through Locality. As the parish Council is the qualifying body and this is a relatively small area, we are able to apply for a maximum of £9000. However, this is only until 2018 and Locality are unable at present to tell me what the situation will be beyond that date. (Hopefully, new funding schemes will be put in place.)

We must use any funding provided within six months or by the end of the financial year (March 31st) whichever falls first. If we don't use all of the money granted in that time we will either have to pay it back (as would be the case at the end of the financial year) or request that we can transfer it to another part of the project.

We can only apply up to 4 times and the minimum application must be for £1000. The application has to be costed out specifically and at the end of the period, we have to produce a report showing how the money has been used.

We have to apply up to 4 weeks in advance of needing the funds although we can apply from January 27th for funds for 1st April. We cannot apply to be reimbursed for funds that have already been spent. This is why there are guidelines in the constitution relating to expenses and expenditure.

If I am in a position to put an application for funding in for the first six months before the next steering group meeting, is the group happy for me to go ahead or wait until the next meeting. As long as I get the application in by the end of February, we should get funds in for April.

I have been asked by the Parish Clerk to inform the group of the following:

“Parish Council cannot fund expenditure by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Expenditure of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group must be approved by the group as per their own constitution which has been agreed. Grant funding needs to be applied for to cover these costs. The Parish Council has funded the salary of the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator. It is essential that retrospective expenditure is not applied for.”

As the Insurance is an item which cannot be paid by the grant funding the Parish Council has made a special exception to pay for this item and I anticipate that it will be in place from 23rd February.