

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL
MANEA PIT MEETING
2nd October, 2007.

Present: S Emery, D Cole, K Risbridger, P Jolley, C Barnes, A Desborough, M Archer.
Apologies – W Palmby

Christmas Tree – update – FDC say the decision about siting will have to be a joint one between Hazelmere and Mr Ollier (Open Spaces Officer).

Concerning adoption of the site – FDC cannot accept the proposals submitted by Hazelmere – suggests joint meeting with all parties to discuss.

Mr Archer and Mr Jolley felt the Parish Council should take over maintenance. Some councillors felt this would be dependent upon upkeep costs. Clerk to find out what Hazelmere's plans are – since council met with their representative some 18 months ago and agreed the site should be kept open with only one/two new trees and some shrubs planted and plaque "Dick's Garden".

To discuss matter at next meeting.

Pavilion Cleaner - Ms Boardman submitted resignation – Clerk advertised job – 2 applications - Alma Ryman of 28 Westfield Rd and Cheryl Howlett of 3 Wisbech Road – Clerk has prepared job specification – rate of pay agreed at £6 per hour – to give successful application a month's trial. Mr Emery proposed Mrs Ryman be offered the job, seconded by Mr Archer.

Insurance - Quotation from Suffolk Acre in sum of £1360.65 – proposed by Mrs Desborough this be accepted, seconded by Mr Risbridger. Cheque to be forwarded for renewal.

Playing field grass - aerating – Grass Mechanic has tried to do the work on the grass but was unsuccessful because of poor root structure. Recommends a more regular cutting regime along with twice-yearly aeration programme and at least three visits with a slitter. He has a machine but this will be increased cost of some £1000,. Council took his comments on board but owing to financial restrictions would look at having this work carried out in the next financial year. In the meantime to ask Groomfields to "spike" the field which would be at a much lower cost implication.

Open Spaces - open meeting held – very negative responses from residents both of Hutchinson Close and Rutland Way to the proposals for this open space. Council will await outcome of meeting from FDC. The original developers, Matthew Homes have indicated that as long as the money is spent in Manea for the benefit of local people they have no objection to it being spent elsewhere rather than this green area in Rutland Way/Hutchinson Close.

Manea Pit

Health & Safety Report – implications – Angling Club have offered to assist with maintenance to the access areas. Discussion followed – the following being raised:

- if pit is purchased will it be open to the general public
- timescale of the work involved in complying with health & safety recommendations
- If to be used only for fishing should Parish Council run it themselves rather than lease to Angling Club?

- How will funding be raised to make improvements and fund the recommendations.
- If Angling Club do not have the lease they will be reluctant to undertake voluntary work. Mr Emery felt council should not alienate the fishing club.
- If council run it themselves it could incur administration costs – Angling Club at present have a bailiff system – does council have manpower to undertake this – although Mr Jolley offered his assistance in this respect.
- If council proceeds with the purchase – Mr Archer felt council should ensure they get “best value” for the village
- Mr Barnes, Mr Cole, Mr Emery felt the recommendations from the health & safety report were not massive jobs and could be undertaken by a working party over a period of weeks.
- To work out costing for work by a) contractor as opposed to working party. To ask Mason Bros for an estimate for the work – to ask Mr Hawes (who owns a fishing facility) for an estimate of costing for signing and lifebuoys.
- Mr Archer and Mr Jolley felt a public meeting should be called.

There followed discussions on the way forward – as per

- To meet with Angling Club Chair and Secretary to see what help they would be willing to offer
- To arrange a Parish Biodiversity Surgery with Michelle Russell, representative from Wildlife Trust and District Council together with Mr Cliff Carson and Mr J Reeves (RSPB) to identify what assistance can be given
- What is parish council’s vision for the pit development – fishing – birdwatching – caravan – camping on the land adjoining?
Councillors to bring forward their own vision.
- Mr Barnes raised question of siting of new village hall – he felt the playing field a suitable place – could be made into area of conservation – with meeting room – panoramic views over pit area –
- Annual costs for maintenance if purchased would include insurance – some admin of say £20 per week – around £1000
- Financial implications would be the loss of interest – difference of funding between sale of allotment income and purchase of pit – need to find some £3000 from contingency parish funding.
- In the event the pit purchase does not proceed – what would be money be used for? The allotments were sold for this, therefore the money must be used for a capital project for the benefit of the village of Manea.
- To look to put together a presentation and take this to the village in the early part of the New Year 2008.
- To decide how this will be done – an open meeting or referendum – which would involve similar costs as election ie in the region of £1500.

Clerk to reply to Solicitors who have sent the final draft of the Lease Agreement – that council wished to delay matters until the above has been finalised.

Signed Dated

