

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

24 NOVEMBER 2008 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Emery, Chairman; Councillors Archer, Barnes, Buckton, Mrs Desborough, Jolley and Risbridger.

Apologies: Councillors Cole and Mrs Palmby.

The minutes of the meeting of 27 October 2008 were confirmed and signed, subject to

- a correction to minute M12/08 (4) (b), by addition of the following words " approach to", to read "poor condition of the footpath along Station Road from the approach to the Wimblington Road junction to Charlemont Drive"
- a correction to the year quoted in Minute M19/08 (2) to read "2009".

M26/08 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Open spaces (minute M12/08 (3))

Station Road – the Clerk reported that he had sought to make further contact with Mr I Hunt, the Legal Services Manager at Fenland District Council, who had failed to respond to e-mails sent by the Clerk on 28 October and 17 November 2008.

Members expressed their serious concern regarding Fenland District Council's lack of engagement/communication with Manea Parish Council, not only in terms of this current situation but also the apparent cessation of the arrangement whereby the District Council assigned a member of the Corporate Management Team to act as a link officer to a Parish Council and for that officer to attend meetings of that Parish Council.

The Parish Council is aware of the District Council's desires to achieve effective three-tier working within the district and believes that this can only be achieved through a successful dialogue between the three tiers of local government, particularly between those councils at the "grass roots" within Fenland.

Members decided that a letter be sent to the Chief Executive at Fenland District Council, expressing the Parish Council's disappointment and concerns in this matter.

(2) Highway and drainage issues (minute M12/08 (4))

- a) School bus stop, High Street – the Clerk reported receipt of a letter of response from the Cromwell Community College, which detailed the action that it had taken to address the Parish Council's concerns.

Members reported that the school bus is not actually using the new bus stop allocated by the County Council but is collecting the pupils from outside 15 High Street, which is causing nuisance for the resident of that property.

Councillor Archer reported that he had arranged to meet, in the village, with an officer representative of the County Council's Education Transport Section the following week and that he would take the opportunity to raise this matter at that meeting.

Members decided that the current position be noted.

- b) Highways – the Clerk reported that the County Council had responded to the matter raised at minute M12/08 in relation to the poor condition of the footpath along Station Road. The response stated that although the matter would be examined, the relevant County Council budget for 2008/09 had already been committed in full.

Members consider that the current condition of this length of footway is dangerous and, therefore, the County Council should be asked to re-consider the matter.

Members mentioned the poor condition of the carriageway, by virtue of pot holes, at certain locations on School Lane and East Street.

Members decided that the condition of the carriageway in School Lane and East Street be drawn to the attention of Rod Marshall, of the County Council's Highway Division, for investigation/resolution and that he be requested to re-consider the decision not to undertake remedial works to the footway along Station Road.

- c) Sewage Treatment Works – further to minute M12/08 (4), the Clerk reported a response from Anglian Water in relation to his letters of 25 September and 29 October 2008.

In the response from Anglian Water, the company confirms that Manea Sewage Treatment Works is operating to full compliance with the relevant Environment Agency consents and that the tankering movements being seen by villagers are merely part of normal operations.

Members decided that the position be noted.

(3) Street lighting

Further to minute M22/08, the Clerk reported that the developers of Bedford View have responded to his letter, stating that the street lighting on this development would be operating fully on 2 December 2008. He reported also that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has informed the Parish Council that the new lamp column adjacent to 39D Westfield Road had not been installed by CCC.

On checking Parish Council correspondence, the Clerk was able to confirm that the lamp column had been installed by a private contractor on behalf of the Parish Council.

Members decided that the situation explained by the developer of Bedford Row be noted and that the contractor which had installed the lamp column adjacent to 39D Westfield Road be requested to re-locate the lamp column to a position which would not cause vehicular access difficulties for the occupiers of that property.

(4) Jointly Funded Minor Highway Improvements 2009/10

Further to minute M21/08, the Clerk reported the response from the County Council in relation to the points raised at that minute.

The response detailed the manner in which the scheme operates and how local councils' bids are considered/evaluated by the County Council. The evaluation process does not allow involvement from members of Town/Parish Councils at site meetings etc. In addition, the County Council confirmed that all funding bids are evaluated using up-to-date traffic data.

Councillor Archer reported on his subsequent discussion with the relevant officer at the County Council. It appears, from that discussion, that there is the option for the Parish Council to make an application to the

County Council for an On-street Parking Places Order in relation to the carriageway in front of the school. It would, however, require the Parish Council to commit a financial sum of the order of £2,000 to meet the County Council's costs whether or not the request were successful. Given this level of cost, members feel that other potential solutions should be considered prior to such a request being made.

Members are aware of the Safer Routes to School scheme, which they feel would, if taken up by the school, improve the on-street parking situation outside the school. It is believed that this initiative had been considered by the School Governors previously but rejected. Members feel that this matter should be re-considered, in the interests of public safety. In addition, members are keen to foster strong working relationships with the School Governors.

Members decided that

- (1) the information within the response from the County Council be noted;
- (2) a letter be sent by the Clerk to the School Governors, requesting that the Governors consider again the school's participation in the Safer Routes to School scheme;
- (3) consideration be given, at a future meeting, if felt necessary, to making a bid to the County Council for an On-street Parking Places Order in relation to a length of carriageway in front of the school.

M27/08 Manea Parish Plan review

Further to minute M20/08, members received a presentation from Philip Eden, Senior Project Officer at Cambridgeshire ACRE, on the importance of reviewing Parish Plans because of their increasing significance in priority setting by other agencies/authorities. He made the point that reviewing a Parish Plan can provide opportunities for the communities to which the plan relates.

Mr Eden explained the national background and context of the production of Parish Plans and the principle that such plans should be a "tool" to empower communities to impact upon what happens within those communities. Plans are a means of providing evidence to bodies and agencies outside of the parish as to the community's needs, such as housing land allocations, public transport facilities, infrastructure improvements and obtaining funding for community projects.

Mr Eden explained that all Parish Plans are considered by the Fenland Strategic Partnership (FSP), which will require the statutory service providers and the third sector to identify the actions required of them to address the community needs articulated within the plan – agencies would be expected to give a valid reason to the FSP for rejecting actions which the plan required of them.

After explaining the benefits of having an up-to-date Parish Plan, Mr Eden detailed the process for producing or reviewing a plan and the importance of involving representatives of the community therein. He informed members that Cambridgeshire ACRE no longer has funding available to assist local councils in meeting the associated costs but suggested that local councils should seek sponsorship and volunteers to facilitate the necessary work.

Mr Eden provided copies of Parish Plans produced by some other Parish Councils within Cambridgeshire, as examples of how plans can differ in terms of detail, design etc. With regard to plan review, Mr Eden suggested that a Parish Council needs to think about likely cost of the project, a realistic time scale and establishing a project group of community representatives; it should examine the current plan, look at any evidence-based studies that have been undertaken since the date of the previous plan and think about each of the themes of the FSP.

The Chairman reminded members of the manner in which the current plan, produced in 2002, had been developed and of the fact that the Parish Council had considered, at an open meeting held on 13 March 2007, progress against

the actions contained within the plan and, as a result, had decided that the plan should be subject to a formal review in 2010.

Members acknowledged the importance of ensuring that the Manea Parish Plan is "fit for purpose" in accordance with recent legislative change, and of involving the community in any review of the plan (particularly those who played a key role in production of the current plan).

Members decided, in the light of the information now presented, that further consideration be given, at a meeting in the early part of 2009, to reviewing the Manea Parish Plan.

M28/08 Speedwatch Initiative

Further to minute M19/08, members considered whether or not to participate in the Speedwatch Initiative.

Manea Parish Council is aware that Wimblington Parish Council is willing to participate in the initiative but that Doddington Parish Council has rejected the proposal.

Members concluded that, given the lack of evidence that there is a problem of vehicular speeding in the village and being mindful of the Parish Council's other funding priorities, participation in the Speedwatch Initiative would not be an effective use of the parish's financial resources.

Members decided not to participate in the Speedwatch Initiative and that Cambridgeshire Constabulary be informed accordingly.

M29/08 Community Access Point (computer) in Church Room

Further to minute M12/08, members considered both how to "spread the word" within the village regarding the availability of this community facility and the practical issues in relation to the provision of keys to the room in which the computer equipment is contained.

Members decided that

- (1) information "flyers" be produced and circulated by Parish Councillors around the village;
- (2) the Chairman would arrange for additional keys (to the church room) to be cut and for the necessary security bolt to be purchased and fitted.

M30/08 Allotments

Further to minute M13/08, members re-considered the proposal to seek planning permission for four acres of land at The Twenties for new garden allotments, in the light of recent measurements that have been undertaken.

Councillor Barnes informed members that the measurements indicate that the area of land concerned is less than four acres and he sought their views on how the Parish Council wished to proceed in this matter, not only in terms of the planning application but also regarding the exact amounts of land which are currently subject to Allotment Tenancies.

Councillor Archer reported that he had informed Fenland District Council, as Local Planning Authority (LPA), that the proposed garden allotments are now in use (in the manner agreed by the LPA).

With regard to the use of the proposed allotments, Councillor Barnes reported that the access roadway to the site has been "destroyed" by the cars of the users. Members are of the view that, given current and anticipated weather

conditions, there would be no point in undertaking remedial works until next Spring. In the meantime, it is considered necessary to erect a notice informing members of the public not to use the road for vehicular access to the allotments.

Members decided that

- (1) digital maps of the Twenties be obtained by Councillor Barnes, for the purpose of validating the measurements obtained recently;
- (2) a draft Tenancy Agreement, between the Allotments Association and the Parish Council, be prepared by the Clerk;
- (3) no planning application be submitted until the measurements of the site area can be clarified;
- (4) a sign bearing the text "No vehicular access to allotments until further notice" be purchased;
- (5) the outstanding issues be considered further at the next meeting.

(Councillor Archer declared his personal interest in this item of business, by virtue of being a member of the Allotments Association)

M31/08 Playing Field

- (1) Car Park sign – Further to minute M15/08 (1), the Clerk reported that the cost of the required sign would be £35.00 plus VAT.

Members decided that the agreed sign be purchased.

- (2) Safety surfacing – Further to minute M6/08, the Chairman reported that Councillor Cole had purchased a supply of the chemical identified at the last meeting for removing algae and moss from the safety surfacing but that the necessary spraying had not been undertaken because of the wet weather; the chemical needs to be applied to the surfacing when it is dry.

The Parish Council takes very seriously its responsibility to maintain this area in a safe condition and, consequently, agreed that the play area should be taken out of use until the surfacing has been made safe. A notice will be placed at the site to inform of the temporary closure of the facility.

Members decided that

- (1) the safety surfacing be treated with the cleaning chemical as soon as suitable weather conditions prevail;
- (2) a sign stating "Play area out of use temporarily" be purchased and erected at the site as a matter of priority.
- (3) Works to trees – Members considered the two quotations received for the works identified at the September 2008 meeting.

Members decided that the quotation, in the sum of £750 plus VAT, submitted by T R Savage, be accepted.

- (4) Lighting – Members discussed the lighting at the playing field.

Members are aware that the first two lights along the footpath across the playing field are not working. It is believed that the lamps have been damaged by local youngsters.

Members decided that Mr R Yardy be requested to undertake the necessary repair works to these two lights and to provide a quotation for the cost of providing and fitting protective grilles over the lamps on all of the columns alongside the playing field footpath.

M32/08 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the Manea Parish Sub-Committee meeting of 4 November 2008.

Minute SC7/08 (3) contains a recommendation that the necessary processes for acquisition of an area of adjoining land (i.e. payment of the land owner's legal costs in the transaction) be undertaken.

Members decided that

- (1) the content of the minutes be noted;
- (2) the offer of an area of adjoining land be formally accepted and that the legal fees of the land owner in relation to the transaction that regard be paid by the Parish Council.

M33/08 Planning application

Members considered the following planning application and decided to submit to Fenland District Council the comments set out (in italics) below:

Erection of 4 x 2-bed detached bungalows on land south-west of 61 Station Road, Manea - F/YR08/0977/F.

Object to the application. The application site lies outside of the Development Area Boundary for the village.

M34/08 Finance

The Clerk reported on the Parish Council's income and expenditure since the last meeting, as follows:

Income

Landin & Son	Burial fee (Mrs Taylor)	£125.00
J Lawrence	Allotment rent	£180.00
B Fletcher	Allotment rent	£180.00
Various	Fishing tickets	£48.00
C Howell and A Howell	Allotment rent	£360.00
P Clarke	Allotment rent	£225.00
Total Income		£1,118.00

Expenditure

R Yardy	Service of CCTV equipment	£95.00
A Ryman	Wages plus refund of expenses	£163.16
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £71.92), Broadband/telephone and other expenses	£338.36
T Jordan	Reimbursement of cost of purchase of computer etc for Parish Council	£838.94

M Oliver	Metalwork repairs etc	£907.10
Manea Village Hall Committee	Hire of meeting room on 27/10	£7.50
E Mason and Son	Grass cutting etc – Aug and Sep	£1,049.83
Mrs L Kennedy	Wreath for Remembrance Day	£19.00
Total Expenditure		£3,418.89

Members decided that the income of £1,118.00 be noted and that, following the necessary proposal and seconding, the payments totalling £3,418.89 be authorised.

M35/08 Parish Precept and General Expenses 2009/10

Further to minute M19/08 (4), members considered the level of Parish Precept and the General Expenses for the financial year 2009/10.

Members decided that the level of Parish Precept be £19,000 and that the General Expenses submission to Fenland District Council (FDC) should generally replicate the one for 2008/09 but be increased by 2.5% (as suggested by FDC as the inflationary allowance for 2009/10).

M36/08 Correspondence

- (1) Communities in control: Real people, real power: Codes of conduct for local authority members and officers.

Members decided that the consultation document be circulated among Parish Councillors (commencing with Councillor Archer) in advance of the next meeting, to enable them to reach conclusions at the next meeting as to the collective response from the Parish Council to the consultation exercise.

- (2) Awash with Wildlife Project.

The Clerk circulated an invitation for members of the Parish Council to attend this event on 15 December 2008.

- (3) Christmas tree for village.

The Clerk reported receipt of a letter, informing the Parish Council that Hazelmere Homes would be unable to provide a new Christmas tree for the village due to the fact that the company had been placed into Administration on 24 October 2008 and had, consequently, ceased trading.

Members are aware of the availability of such a tree from a resident of the village and it was agreed that Councillors Archer and Emery would inspect the tree to assess its suitability.

- (4) Skateboard Park proposals.

The Clerk reported receipt of an e-mail from the Clerk to Christchurch Parish Council, suggesting a joint approach and information sharing regarding the provision of a skate board park in each village.

Whereas this is a new proposal for Christchurch, the Manea project (including the funding bid) is well advanced.

Members decided that the Clerk to Christchurch Parish Council be informed of the current situation and be offered the opportunity to discuss the Manea project with Councillor Archer, to enable that council to learn from the experience of Manea Parish Council in this regard.

(5) Memorial bench.

Further to minute M23/08, the Clerk reported the receipt of a letter of thanks from the requesters. Councillor Emery informed members of his dealings with the requesters in terms of agreeing the exact location for the bench within the cemetery.

(6) Fenland Landscape Against Turbines (FLAT) campaign.

Members considered a request from the FLAT group to support its objection to the planning application submitted to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for a the development of a wind farm at Marshland St James.

Members decided that, as this proposed development would have no impact upon the parish of Manea, it would not be appropriate to raise objection to this planning application.

(7) RDP workshops.

The Clerk circulated details of workshops being run by the RDP in December 2008.

M37/08 Highways and access issues – 32 High Street, Manea

Councillor Archer raised two highways and access issues in relation to 32 High Street, Manea.

Firstly, that the hedge at this property currently overhangs the public highway and, secondly, that an access from the rear of this property has been created.

Members decided that a letter be sent to the occupier of this property

- asking him to arrange, in the interest of public safety, for the hedge at the property, which currently overhangs the public footpath, to be cut back;
- informing him that the access arrangements that have been created are likely to require consent from both Fenland District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, and Cambridgeshire County Council, as the Local Highway Authority and that, unless the necessary consents have already obtained, it would be advisable to have early discussions with these authorities.

(The Chairman agreed to this item being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable the issues to be addressed as a matter of priority)

M38/08 Next meeting

Members decided that the next meeting of the Parish Council be held on 15 December 2008, commencing at 7.00 pm, in the Village Hall;

Meeting finished at 10.05 pm

Signature:.....(Council Chairman).

Date:.....