

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

15 JUNE 2009 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillor Archer.

The minutes of the meeting of 18 May 2009 were confirmed and signed.

M19/09 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Open spaces (minute M4/09 (1))

Station Road – the Clerk reported that he had still been unable to obtain a response from the Legal Services Manager at Fenland District Council, despite sending a reminder e-mail to that officer.

Members decided that the lack of response from Fenland District Council (FDC) be referred to Mr A Pain, the officer allocated by FDC as its liaison officer for Manea Parish Council, with the request that the matter be addressed.

(2) Funding for highway works in Manea (minute M7/09)

The Clerk reported that he had received no response from Cambridgeshire County Council in this matter

Members decided that a response be pursued by the Clerk.

(3) Highway maintenance works (minute M17/09)

The Clerk reported the response from Rod Marshall of the Northern Area Highways Team of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Mr Marshall states that arrangements have been made for the County Council's contractor to undertake the re-fresh of white lining at various locations within Manea and that, as far as he is aware all of the pot holes identified in the village had been repaired.

Members raised the issue of a speed limit sign on Westfield Road, on the approach to the "S" bend, now facing in the wrong direction and also it being obscured partially by tree growth. In addition, Councillor Mrs Desborough mentioned the continued problems of surface water not draining away at the top of East Street, Manea.

Members decided that these new matters be drawn to the attention of Rod Marshall of the Northern Highways Team at the County Council.

M20/09 The future of health services for South Fenland residents

Further to minute M14/08, members received a presentation from Susan Last (Head of Public Engagement and PALS) and John Leslie (Director of Finance) of NHS Cambridgeshire on the results of the Listening Exercise (which concluded on 14 November 2008) undertaken by NHS Cambridgeshire in respect of its Review of Health Services for South Fenland Residents and to seek members' views, as part of the consequent public consultation exercise (which runs from 27 April to 31 July 2009), on the 3 current options.

Members noted that the Listening Exercise had generated a total of 165 responses and that the most common issue raised by participants was the lack of public transport, as a barrier to accessing health services, within the district. Other issues related to the need to deliver services which meet the health needs for the whole community (not focussing upon the needs of the elderly) and concerns regarding the recruitment and retention of health services staff.

In addition to ascertaining the opinions of the community via the Listening Exercise, NHS Cambridgeshire has obtained the views of the National Clinical Advisory Team in relation to developing the most effective means of delivering health care services to the people of South Fenland.

Members noted also the vision of NHS Cambridgeshire in terms of its delivery of health care services to the local community, including a desire to achieve the best health outcomes based upon clinical research and to offer health care choices to patients.

The perceived benefits and challenges, as well as a financial assessment, of each of the 3 options were explained by the presenters. It was noted that each of the 3 options would require capital spend and that NHS Cambridgeshire can afford an additional £700,000 for direct provision in Fenland to address some of the inequalities that exist within the County.

The representatives of NHS Cambridgeshire explained that there is no intention to close Doddington Hospital and that the existing functions delivered by the hospital would continue during the implementation phase of the new health care arrangements. The point was made that NHS Cambridgeshire intends to retain all of the land at the Doddington Hospital site; there are no proposals to dispose of parts of the site for residential development purposes.

Members asked a number of questions of the presenters, to which they received satisfactory and meaningful responses.

Members noted the ways in which responses to this consultation exercise can be submitted and that the final decision on the proposals will be made by the NHS Cambridgeshire Board during the autumn of 2009.

Members decided to agree a formal response in relation a preferred option at their next meeting.

M21/09 Communicating the work of the Parish Council

Further to minute M6/09, members discussed potential ways of communicating to the community the work that is being undertaken by the Parish Council for their benefit and how the Parish Council could engage and consult more effectively with people that it represents.

Councillor Buckton made the point also that the Parish Council needs mechanisms in place to meet the needs of the community in terms of providing information, in addition to publishing meeting agendas and minutes on its website and displaying copies of those documents at certain locations within the village. It is apparent that the local media is not active in seeking news stories about activities and initiatives within the parish; consequently, members of the Parish Council need to "take the bull by the horns" and implement its own communication channels and be proactive in "publishing" public interest stories.

Members decided that

- (1) a presentation on the work and achievements of the Parish Council, which could be delivered to various community groups etc., be developed;
- (2) one member of the Parish Council should act as Press Officer; the member appointed to that role being Councillor Buckton;
- (3) Councillor Buckton will produce an article, for submission to the local newspapers in relation to the development works (including the successful grant aid bid) at Manea Pit;
- (4) information in relation to the work and achievements of the Parish Council be made available to the Manea Matters newsletter;
- (5) future Parish Council agendas will include an item in relation to identifying matters which could be the subject of a Press Release;
- (6) the principle of the Parish Council holding, say, two community engagement meetings each year be approved.

M22/09 Allotments

Further to minute M8/09, the Clerk reported that he had been informed by Councillor Archer that the planning application for the change of use of this land had still not been submitted. Members expressed their disappointment at this situation and requested the Clerk to make their feelings known to Councillor Archer.

The Clerk reported a letter from Mr R Angood of Chatteris, in which he makes a number of points regarding the access road to the allotments site; the issues raised by Mr Angood included the private ownership of the road and the improvement works that the Parish Council had funded. He suggested that the Parish Council should have consulted the owners of the land over which the access road runs in advance of undertaking works.

Members took on board all of the comments made by Mr Angood and agree totally with the comment made regarding the prior discussion and consultation that should have taken place prior to works being proposed and undertaken. At the time of arranging and undertaking the works, the Parish Council was not aware of the ownership situation, which is now clear.

Members of the Parish Council acknowledge that the land owners are under no obligation to make a financial contribution towards the costs of these works but are grateful for the donations that have been received.

Some members reported concerns of villagers regarding the speed at which vehicles are being driven along the access road by some members of the Allotment Association and, consequently, asked me to report this concern to you, so that it could be drawn to the attention of the members of the Association.

Members decided that the current progress position be noted and that

- (1) a response to Mr Angood's letter be sent, giving the Parish Council's apologies for the fact that works to the access road were undertaken without prior discussion or consultation and making the point that had the Parish Council been aware of the ownership situation, it would not have acted in the way that it did; it certainly will not propose or undertake further such works without prior consultation/dialogue;
- (2) a copy of the letter from Mr Angood's letter and the Clerk's response thereto be sent, for information, to the Secretary of the Manea Allotment Association;

- (3) the concerns of villagers regarding the speed at which vehicles are being driven along the access road by some members of the Allotment Association be drawn to the attention of the Secretary of the Allotment Association.

M23/09 Playing Field and play area issues

- (1) Fencing at the playing field – Further to minute M9/09, the Clerk reported that he had still been unable to obtain a response from the Parks and Open Spaces Manager at Fenland District Council, despite sending a reminder e-mail to that officer.

Members are very disappointed about the number of occasions on which officers of Fenland District Council fail to respond in an effective or timely manner to issues raised by the Parish Council.

Members decided that

- the lack of response from Fenland District Council (FDC) be referred to Mr A Pain, the officer allocated by FDC as its liaison officer for Manea Parish Council, with the request that the matter be addressed;
 - a letter be sent to the three contractors which submitted quotations for the provision and installation of new fencing at the playing field, informing them that the Parish Council will not be making any decisions in this matter until it has received and evaluated the information awaited from Fenland District Council.
- (2) Play area at Williams Way – further to minute M9/09, the Clerk reported that he had received no response from Fenland District Council (FDC) regarding an official opening of this play area but had been informed by Councillor Archer that he is pursuing with FDC the provision of waste bins and cutting of the grass at this site.

Members are very disappointed about the number of occasions on which officers of Fenland District Council fail to respond in an effective or timely manner to issues raised by the Parish Council.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that the lack of response from Fenland District Council (FDC) be referred to Mr A Pain, the officer allocated by FDC as its liaison officer for Manea Parish Council, with the request that the matter be addressed.

- (3) Annual ROSPA inspection report – the Clerk reported on the recommendations within this report, which suggest that certain works are required to equipment etc at the playing field.

Members decided that the report be circulated among Parish Councillors, for their consideration, between this meeting and the next, to enable a schedule of agreed works to be produced at the next meeting

M24/09 Planning applications

Members considered the following planning application and decided to submit to the Local Planning Authority the comments set out (in italics) below:

Erection of a 3-bed detached house with integral double garage on land north of East View, School Lane, Manea – F/YR09/0360/F (applicant: P Jolley)

That the application be supported.

In addition, members noted that the planning application (reference F/02004/09CW) in relation to the erection of a glass reinforced plastic kiosk to house the chemical dosing system at Manea Sewage Treatment Works, considered by the Parish Council at minute M91/08, had been approved (subject to suitable planning conditions) by the County Council, as the relevant Local Planning Authority, on 21 May 2009.

(Councillor Jolley declared his personal and prejudicial interest in planning application F/YR09/0360/F, by virtue of being the applicant for the proposal, and retired from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon)

M25/09 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting of 19 May 2009.

In relation to minute SC2/09 (1), Councillor Barnes, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee reported on negative comments that had been made by local people, which were echoed during the Open Forum element of this Parish Council meeting, in relation to the decision made by the Sub-Committee in respect of the cost of fishing season tickets for 2009/10.

Councillor Barnes stated that, having reflected upon the situation and taken into account the comments made by local people in this matter, he had decided not to take any action in relation to the decision at minute SC2/09 (1) and to refer the matter to the Parish Council for consideration.

Most members made the point that they too had received and heard similar comments to those described by Councillor Barnes and supported his stance in the matter. The Clerk reported the view of Councillor Archer that, in the light of this matter, he has concerns about continuation of the Sub-Committee. The Clerk added that, in his opinion, it would be desirable to review, on the basis of one year's operation, the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

Councillor Barnes mentioned also his concerns regarding the effectiveness of the current Bailiff arrangements in relation to the collection of fees for day fishing tickets – a view shared by the Clerk from the perspective of proper auditing functions – and suggested that consideration should be given by the Parish Council to the creation of a part-time post to be responsible for this activity and other “estates” (such as the allotments, cemetery and playing field) issues.

The Clerk reported a request from the Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust to undertake a habitat and vegetation survey, to be funded by the Environment Agency, at Manea Pit.

Members decided that

- (1) the cost of an annual season ticket for an adult be £25 for the period June 2009 to June 2010;
- (2) the new cost of an annual season ticket for a senior citizen or a child of 12 years of age or older be £15 for the period June 2009 to June 2010;
- (3) an annual season tickets for a child under 12 years of age be free-of-charge;
- (4) following some initial discussions by Parish Council members on the evening of 17 June 2009, a decision on the possible creation of a post of Estates Officer/Bailiff be taken at the next formal meeting of the Parish Council;
- (5) the request of the Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust, in relation to undertaking a habitat and vegetation survey at the pit be approved.

M26/09 Community Access Point

Further to minute M82/08, Councillor Mrs Desborough reported that she is currently pursuing the possibility of re-locating to the Post Office (within the Londis shop) the IT equipment currently in the Church Room.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that Councillor Mrs Desborough's efforts to retain the Community Access Point facility within the village be supported.

M27/09 Finance

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

Income

R Angood	Contribution towards cost of improvements to allotments access road	£50.00
Weyman's Funeral Services	Burial - Rolfe	£500.00
Kent Memorials	Burial Memorial – S Goude	£125.00
Bartletts (Charity match)	Hire of pitch on 30/05/09	£40.00
Turner and son	Purchase of burial plot for non-Manea resident (Mellers)	£700.00
Total Income		£1,415.00

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall Committee	Hire of meeting room on 18/05	£7.50
Fenland Fisheries Ltd	Scaffold poles for Manea Pit	£648.00
Playsafety Ltd	Annual ROSPA inspection	£93.15
East Anglia Children's Hospices	Donation to funding	£25.00
Cambridgeshire Police Shrievally Trust	Donation to funding for Bobby Scheme	£25.00
Volunteer Centre Fenland	Donation to funding	£25.00
WRVS	Donation to funding	£25.00
B Cundell	Internal Audit of annual accounts	£225.00
E.on	Pavilion electricity	£208.51
R Angood	Weed control chemicals	£57.50
E-on	Playing field electricity	£38.46
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£49.89
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £75.61), Broadband and other expenses	£341.28
Revenue and Customs	Clerk's Income Tax (March, April and May 2009).	£241.22
SLCC	Membership 2009 and joining fee	£102.00
Total Expenditure		£2,112.51

Members decided, upon a proposal from Councillor Emery, seconded by Councillor Mrs Palmby, that the income of £1,415.00 be noted and that the payments totalling £2,112.50 be authorised;

M28/09 Correspondence

(1) COPE newsletter

The Clerk reported receipt of the latest COPE newsletter.

Members decided that the document be circulated amongst members of the Parish Council who do not receive a copy direct from the organisation.

(2) Jointly Funded Minor Highway Improvements 2010/11.

The Clerk reported receipt of an invitation from the County Council to bid for schemes under this initiative, i.e. for a maximum of two bids per parish with neither of those bids exceeding £35,000. The deadline for bids submission is the end of July 2009.

Members decided that they would each give thought to this matter between this meeting and the next and present their ideas for possible schemes to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

(3) Manea's Walk for Charity – 7 June 2009.

The Clerk reported a letter from Mrs B Lovegrove, in which she detailed the success of the charity walk undertaken at the playing field on 7 June 2009 and expressed her thanks for the decision of the Parish Council (at minute M7/08) to enable the field to be used free-of-charge for that event.

The event enabled in excess of £1,400 for MacMillan Cancer Support.

Members were pleased to note the success of the event.

(4) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – invitation for membership.

The Clerk reported receipt of an invitation from the SLCC for him to become a member of that society. He reported the cost and benefits to the Parish Council of such membership.

Members decided that the Clerk should become a member of the SLCC, at the total cost for 2009 of £102.00.

(5) Cemetery Memorial.

The Clerk reported a request from Kent Memorials for consent for a memorial stone on the grave of Mr S Goode in Manea Cemetery.

Members were informed of the size, design and material of the proposed memorial and the wording of the inscription.

Members decided that the request be approved.

(6) Fenland District Council's arrangements for Neighbourhood Management and Engagement.

The Clerk reported a request from Fenland District Council for Manea Parish Council to appoint a representative (the Chairman or another member if the Council prefers) to serve upon the Rural Neighbourhood Management Board. The first meeting of this board, which is one of five boards created via the District Council's proposals, is scheduled for week commencing 13 July 2009.

The Chairman stated that he would be happy to undertake this role, provided that meetings of the Rural Board are held at times which would enable his attendance.

Members decided that the Chairman should be the Parish Council's representative on the Rural Management Board, the appointment being reviewed in the event that attendance at such meetings proves to be difficult for him.

(7) Chatteris and Manea Neighbourhood Panel.

The Clerk reported a letter from Police Sector Inspector Andy Sullivan, seeking the views of the Parish Council as to why the meeting, held in Manea on 14 May 2009 attracted no local residents or members of the Parish Council.

Members are of the view that the absence of Parish Councillors and of members of the local community was due to the lack of awareness within the village of the meeting; they stated that they had not seen any posters or other publicity material. A number of members indicated that they would have been present if they had been aware of the meeting.

Members decided that their view be sent to Cambridgeshire Constabulary, in response to the letter from the Sector Inspector.

M29/09 Site for dog agility classes

The Clerk reported, on behalf of Councillor Archer, a request for the Parish Council's assistance in identifying an alternative location within the village for the dog Agility classes, due to difficulties that are being experienced by the operators of the classes at the current location.

Members were unable to identify an alternative site other than the village playing field, which had been used on previous occasions for this purpose.

Members decided that the requesters be informed by Councillor Archer of the conclusion of the Parish Council.

M30/09 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 20 July 2009, commencing at 7.00 pm. In addition, members decided that the venue for future meetings should be the Village Hall wherever possible.

Meeting finished at 9.25 pm

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

Date:.....