

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 MAY 2009 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillors Buckton and Risbridger.

The minutes of the meeting of 20 April 2009 were confirmed and signed.

M1/09 Appointment of Chairman

Councillor Emery was appointed, unopposed, as Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2009/10 and made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in relation to that appointment.

M2/09 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Mrs Palmby was appointed, unopposed, as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2009/10 and made her Declaration of Acceptance of Office in relation to that appointment.

M3/09 Appointment of Parish Council Officers

Members of the Parish Council were appointed, unopposed, to act in the following offices of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2009/10:

- Cemetery Officer: Councillor Cole
- Recycling Officer: Councillor Risbridger
- Allotments Officer: Councillor Barnes
- Footpaths and Trees Officer: Councillor Mrs Desborough.

M4/09 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Open spaces (minute M87/08 (1))

Station Road – the Clerk reported that the Parks and Open Spaces Manager at Fenland District Council has confirmed that he has no objection to adoption of this area of open space by Manea Parish Council, instead of by Fenland District Council (FDC). However, a response is still awaited from that council's Legal Services Manager in relation to how this matter can be progressed.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that a response from the Legal Services Manager at FDC be pursued by the Clerk.

(2) Manea Sewage Treatment Works (minute M87/08 (2))

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter from Anglian Water, in which the company has provided the information requested by the Parish Council.

In the letter, Anglian Water states that the major upgrade to the sewage treatment works, consisting of provision of an additional biological trickling filter (to improve treatment) and the addition of a phosphate removal plant (to improve effluent quality), will commence no later than 31 May 2009.

(3) Locations for additional dog waste bins (minute M96/08 (5))

The Clerk reported receipt of an e-mail from Fenland District Council, stating that the two dog waste bins had been installed by the council during week commencing 4 May 2009 at the locations requested by the Parish Council and that the litter bin requested by members is likely to be installed by contractors working for the County Council within the next six weeks.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M5/09 Manea Village Hall Committee – Annual Report

The Clerk read to members the Annual Report of Manea Village Hall Committee.

The report detailed: the decorating and improvement works that had been undertaken at the Village Hall; some of the activities and events for which the hall had been the venue; the Village Hall's financial position as at 31 December 2008.

Members decided that the contents of the report be noted.

M6/09 Communicating the work of the Parish Council

Further to minute M99/08, members decided, at the request of Councillor Buckton (because of his inability to attend this meeting), that this item of business be deferred until the next meeting.

M7/09 Funding for highway works in Manea

Further to minute M97/08, members considered further the County Council's offer to undertake highway works in the centre of the village.

Members consider that the following highway safety measures are required:

- double yellow lines from School Lane to Jolley Close on one side of the road and along the school frontage on the other side of the road
- a raised highway crossing to the entrance of the school.

Members decided that

- (1) the works outlined above be requested of Cambridgeshire County Council and that Peter Vale of the Northern Highways Division be invited to meet on-site with Councillor Archer or Emery to discuss what the Parish Council is seeking to achieve in terms of pedestrian safety and how this can be best achieved;
- (2) further to minute M88/08, a letter be sent to the Head teacher of Manea Community Primary School reminding her of the commitment given by her and the Chairman of the Governors, at that minute, to encourage the school staff to park their vehicles in the car park of the Village Hall rather than on-street in front of the school.

M8/09 Allotments

Further to minute M89/08, members considered the latest position in relation to the proposal to seek planning permission for three acres of land at The Twenties for new garden allotments. Councillor Archer reported that he and the Clerk had completed the planning application immediately following conclusion of the last meeting and that as soon as he obtains detailed layout plans, he will submit the application to the Local Planning Authority.

The Clerk reported that all agricultural allotment holders and the Manea Allotments Association have paid their rents for the period April to October 2009 and that the Tenancy Agreement between the Parish Council and the Allotments Association had been signed by both parties and subsequently issued.

Members decided that the current progress position be noted.

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

M9/09 Playing Field and play area issues

- (1) Fencing at the playing field – Further to minute M90/08, the Clerk reported that he had, as requested by the Chairman subsequent to the site meeting on 21 April 2009, attempted to seek advice from Bob Ollier, the Parks and Open Spaces Manager at Fenland District Council, on the current regulatory position regarding the need to provide fencing around play areas, to enable the Parish Council to re-locate the fencing from around the play area to the site frontage of the playing field. The Clerk had received an automated e-mail response stating that Mr Ollier would be absent from work until 26 May 2009.

Members noted the current position and anticipate a response from Mr Ollier in time for reporting to their next meeting.

- (2) Manea Village Show – members decided that, because of the community benefit of this event, the playing field could be used on a free-of-charge basis for the Manea Village Show and that, in addition, they would consider, at the next meeting, making a financial donation for the purchase of prizes.
- (3) Play area at Williams Way – members discussed the current situation regarding the availability and opening of this new facility.

Members decided that an enquiry be made of the Parks and Open Spaces Manager at Fenland District Council as to when and how the official opening of this play area could be effected.

- (4) Weed growth at the playing field – the Chairman reported the need to undertake weed control measures at the playing field.

Members decided to support the Chairman's suggestion that he asks Mr P Lawrence to undertake the necessary spraying works.

- (5) Grant funding – the Chairman reported that, further to minute M90/08, Councillor Buckton had attended a meeting last week in relation to funding now available for new play areas and that he would be attending a further meeting next week.

Members noted the current situation and hope that Councillor Buckton will be in a position to provide more detail at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

- (6) Village sporting activities – members decided to invite Mr P Sprye, who has been appointed recently by Fenland District Council as a Sport Co-ordinator for Manea, to attend the July 2009 meeting of the Parish Council so that members can be informed of his ideas for developing sporting activities in the village and to ascertain how the Parish Council could provide support to him in that regard.

M10/09 Planning applications/appeal

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

- (1) Change of use from steel fabrications to shop (A1) and cafe (A3) at 16A High Street, Manea – F/YR09/0266/F

Object to the application, for the following reason:

- *there is considered to be inadequate provision for the on-site parking of vehicles. This is likely to result in an increase in the level of on-street parking in the High Street and, consequently, both traffic congestion and highway safety issues.*

Although they are aware that business competition and alcohol licensing are not material planning considerations, members share the concerns of the public that the provision of an additional retail facility in the village could have an adverse impact upon the viability of other similar businesses – a particular concern is the need to retain Post Office services in Manea – and that an additional outlet for alcohol sales would not be desirable. The Parish Council would seek to resist the retail sale of alcohol from these premises under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003.

In reaching a view on this application, members had regard for the contents of letters of objection that local residents had sent to the Local Planning Authority (and copied to the Parish Council Clerk) in relation to this application; the points made in those letters were re-iterated by attendees at the Open Forum held before commencement of the meeting.

(Councillors Cole, Emery and Jolley declared their respective personal and prejudicial interest in this planning application, by virtue of business connections with the applicant's immediate family, and retired from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon. Councillor Mrs Palmby took the Chair)

- (2) Erection of 4 x 2-bed detached chalet bungalows with associated parking and erection of 2.1 metre high acoustic fencing on land south-west of 61 Station Road, Manea – F/YR09/0286/F

Object to the application, on the basis that the site lies outside of the Development Area Boundary for Manea.

In addition, members noted that a planning application (reference F/02010/08/CC) in relation to extension and improvement works at Manea Community Primary School had been approved (subject to suitable planning conditions) by the County Council, as the relevant Local Planning Authority, on 12 May 2009.

Further to minute M55/08, the Clerk reported the submission of an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against Fenland District Council's refusal of planning permission for change of use of dwelling (C3) to Independent School (D1) at 6 Acorn Lane, Manea and informed members of the process for the Parish Council's submission to the Planning Inspectorate, if it wished to do so, of comments additional to those made previously to the Local Planning Authority.

Members decided that a representation should be made to the Planning Inspectorate stating that the Parish Council wishes to reiterate the content of the representation that it made to Fenland District Council in opposition to this proposal. The representation should also make the points that

- the Parish Council supports strongly the decision reached by Fenland District Council, i.e. to refuse planning permission for this proposal, on the basis that the Parish Council considers that this application proposes a totally unsuitable use for a residential property in a rural village
- members share fully the concerns of local residents regarding the adverse impact that approval of this application would have upon their quality of life
- in the opinion of the Parish Council, there are obvious operational linkages between the activities at numbers 4 and 6 Acorn Lane but no planning permission exists for the use of number 4 as a children's home; however, according to the observations of local residents, this use has been operated by the applicant company for many months; this unauthorised use is generating a considerable number of vehicle movements to and from the property and is causing parking difficulties and highway obstruction
- Manea Parish Council would ask that the Planning Inspectorate dismisses this appeal.

(Councillor Emery declared his personal interest in this item of business, by virtue of his wife being an employee of Castle Care)

M11/09 Manea Pit

Further to minute M93/08, the Chairman read to members a letter from Councillor Risbridger regarding his continued concern in relation to the works being undertaken at Manea Pit.

In the letter, Councillor Risbridger detailed his strength of feeling about the works undertaken at the pit and his concerns regarding the impact they are having and will have upon the status of that area as a wildlife site – he expressed the view that the site is one designated as having Special Scientific Interest.

Councillor Risbridger detailed also, through the letter, the types of action that he is prepared to take, with the support of other agency intervention if necessary, to preserve the wildlife status of the pit area. Such is the councillor's strength of opinion on the matter that he offered his resignation from the Parish Council in the event that his concerns could not be addressed.

Members decided that the Chairman and Councillor Barnes (as Chairman of the Sub-Committee) would arrange to meet with Councillor Risbridger to explain the wildlife status of the pit and the development proposals for that area and to give an assurance that regard will be had for the councillor's concerns when agreeing future development works.

M12/09 Finance

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

Income

Manea Allotment Association	Allotment rent for 2009/10	£540.00
P Clarke	Allotment rent	£225.00
C Howell	Allotment rent	£180.00
A Howell	Allotment rent	£180.00
R Fletcher	Allotment rent	£180.00
J Lawrence	Allotment rent	£180.00
C Barnes	Allotment rent	£22.50

HM Revenue and Customs	VAT reimbursement	£2,199.20
Fenland District Council	First half of annual Precept	£9,500.00
Fenland District Council	Refund of planning application fee	£335.00
Turner and Son	Burial fee - Mellers	£700.00
Landin and Son	Burial fee - Hawkins	£125.00
Cambs County Council	Grass cutting payment	£791.65
Total Income		£15,158.35

Expenditure

Public Works Loans Board	Loan re-payment	£95.39
Manea Village Hall Committee	Hire of meeting room on 20/04	£7.50
Norfolk Copiers Limited	Toner for photocopier	£70.48
P J Thory Ltd	Gravel for Pit works	£376.44
D and J Transport Ltd	Crushed hardcore for allotments access road	£576.44
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£60.00
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £74.63), Broadband, telephone and other expenses	£392.49
Total Expenditure		£1,578.74

In addition, the Clerk reported on the Annual Audit of Accounts return, informing members that the document had been examined and approved by the Council's Internal Auditor. The Auditor had, however, made two governance recommendations, as detailed to members, in relation to the undertaking of risk assessments and accounting for income from the sale of fishing tickets.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Desborough , seconded by Councillor Mrs Palmby, that the income of £15,158.35 be noted and that the payments totalling £1,578.74 be authorised;
- (2) that the Audited Accounts for 2008/09 be approved and submitted to the External Auditors;
- (3) a payment in the sum of £225.00 be made to the Internal Auditor for the work undertaken;
- (4) to record their thanks to the Clerk for his work in relation to the financial affairs of the Council and the information that he provides to members in that regard.

M13/09 Financial donations to local charitable organisations

Members considered applications for a financial donation from the following four charitable organisations which provide support services that benefit the community within Fenland:

- East Anglia Children's Hospices
- Cambridgeshire Shrievally Trust (i.e. the Cambridgeshire Bobby Scheme)
- Volunteer Centre Fenland
- WRVS Emergency Services.

The Clerk read to members each of the request letters.

Members decided that a donation of £25.00 be made to each of the four organisations; cheques to be signed at the next meeting.

M14/09 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.

(2) Cambridgeshire Playing Fields Association newsletter.

The Clerk reported receipt of the latest newsletter.

Members decided that the document be circulated amongst members of the Parish Council.

(3) Water Cycle Study and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment event.

The Clerk reported details of an event scheduled for 10 June 2009 in Ely, to which the Parish Council had been invited to send a representative.

Members decided that the documentation be provided to Councillor Archer, who agreed to represent the Parish Council at the event.

M15/09 Manea Footpath No. 6

Members decided, in response to consultation from the Rights of Way Officer at the County Council, to raise no objection to the landowner's request to install a new kissing gate on this footpath.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to avoid undue delay to determination of this matter)

M16/09 Environmental improvements in the village

The Clerk reported a concern from a resident of Manea regarding the appearance of the plinth of the village War Memorial. The Chairman agreed to undertake the necessary re-painting works.

Members noted that Councillor Archer had made arrangements for the Street Pride group to undertake repair and improvement works at Pump Corner on 18 June 2009.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to avoid undue delay to determination of this matter)

M17/09 Highway maintenance works

Councillor Mrs Desborough enquired as to the current position regarding the highway repair and remedial works that the County Council had promised to undertake as soon as 2009/10 funding became available.

Members decided that the matter be raised, by the Clerk, with Rod Marshall of the Northern Area Highways Team.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to avoid undue delay to determination of this matter)

M18/09 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 15 June 2009, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Pavilion, and decided that it would be preceded at 6.30 pm by the annual village inspection.

Meeting finished at 9.10 pm

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

Date:.....