

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 APRIL 2011 – 8.05 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillor Lockett.

The minutes of the meeting of 21 March 2011 were confirmed and signed.

M147/10 The Standards Board for England – Members' Code of Conduct

Members were reminded of the need to ensure that their register of Declarable of Interests is kept up-to-date.

No members had any amendments to make to their register entries.

M148/10 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Open space at Station Road/Jolley Close, Manea (minute M132/10 (1))

The Clerk read to members a briefing paper received from Mr A Pain, Corporate Director at Fenland District Council (FDC), setting out FDC's current position in this matter. From the information provided by Mr Pain, it is clear, despite the information provided by the Legal Services Team at FDC (reported to the last meeting), that Fenland District Council remains committed to achieving, if possible, a satisfactory resolution to this matter.

The briefing paper details the current position in this matter and highlights the difficulties being experienced by Fenland District Council in this matter because of the administrators' solicitors engaging three fee-earners on this case. This action has applied a wholly disproportionate burden of cost to Fenland taxpayers for what was hoped to be a relatively straightforward matter.

The briefing paper suggests four possible options for progressing this matter, as follows:

- (1) Sending a pragmatic letter to a senior Director at the administrators, under the joint signatures of a Corporate Director of Fenland District Council and the Chairman of Manea Parish Council, seeking a reasonable and cost-effective resolution. (Mr Pain provided a draft letter for members' consideration).
- (2) Manea Parish Council approaching the administrators directly.
- (3) Await the land to be potentially transferred to the Crown and then the Parish Council to consider approaching the Crown to take possession of the land.
- (4) The Parish Council to seek advice from its solicitors as to implications of using the land despite ownership potentially resting with Crown.

Members decided that the information provided by Mr Pain be noted and that option (1) be pursued as the means of seeking to achieve a satisfactory resolution to this matter.

(2) County Council's Village Maintenance Budget (minute M132/10 (2))

The Clerk reported that the company which currently undertakes this grass cutting is happy to both continue to undertake this work and to not increase the cost for 2011.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and the contractor be informed of their appreciation of his positive approach to assisting the Parish Council in continuing to maintain the appearance of the village in the face of reduced funding available to the Parish Council to undertake this work.

(3) Winter Service and the Localism Agenda – Opportunities for Third Party Working (minute M132/10 (3))

The Clerk reported that the Local Highway Authority is able to provide an additional salt bin and that arrangements are in hand for the bin to be delivered to Councillor Cole.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

(4) Highway issues (minute M132/10 (4))

The Clerk reported that the Local Highway Authority has received no response to the two letters sent to the owner/occupier of 74b Station Road (requiring the cutting back of the trees/hedges at this property) and, consequently, the matter has been referred to the relevant officer to pursue enforcement action.

In addition, the Clerk informed members that notification had been received from the Local Highway Authority that it currently proposes to undertake, as part of its county-wide programme, surface dressing on Westfield Road, Park Road and School Lane; the extent of the programme will be determined by the level of funding available.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

(5) "Save Your Village Fire Station" campaign (minute M143/10)

The Clerk read to members the response to his letter to the Member of Parliament.

The Member of Parliament, Stephen Barclay, states that he shares the Parish Council's concerns regarding cuts to front-line services and that he has recently discussed this issue with the Chief Fire Officer and certain members of the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority.

In his letter, Mr Barclay makes the point that the savings required for the first two years of the four-year cost saving process have already been achieved through back-office efficiency savings and that, consequently, no cuts are required at Manea to achieve savings during the first two years. He adds that no decisions have yet been made regarding the future of Manea Fire Station; Mr Barclay believes that it should be possible for the Fire Authority to find the savings from further, but as yet unplanned, back-office savings.

Mr Barclay has written an open letter, a copy of which he enclosed with his letter of response to the Parish Council, which he has sent to the Chairman of Cambridgeshire Fire Authority suggesting proposals for making savings through reductions in back-office and management costs instead of front-line services.

Members decided that

(1) the content of the letter from the Member of Parliament be noted;

- (2) the Parish Council would continue to support, as necessary, the campaign for retention of Manea Fire Station.

M149/10 Playing Field and play area issues

- (1) Future development of facilities – Further to minute M134/10 (2), the Clerk reported that he had submitted to Cambridgeshire ACRE an Expression of Interest (IoE) form in relation to funding available under the Fens Adventurers Rural Development Programme. An initial assessment of the form has been undertaken by a representative of Cambridgeshire ACRE and, as a result, additional information has been requested.

The Clerk informed members that he will endeavour, when time allows, providing the additional information sought and then re-submit the IoE form.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

- (2) Skateboard Park – Further to minute M134/10 (3), the Chairman commented that the waste bin provided at the skateboard park is not being used; youngsters are choosing to deposit their rubbish on the ground instead.

In addition, members mentioned that the skateboard park now appears to be suffering some “wear and tear”, such as some edging screws now being missing etc.

Members decided that

- (1) the situation regarding the littering at the skateboard park be noted and that members would, when witnessing such action, seek to address the issue with the culprits;

- (2) the Clerk would request the company which installed the skateboard park to visit the site to inspect the equipment and to make good any matters that would be covered under the facility’s warranty.

M150/10 Planning applications

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

- (1) Erection of single-storey side extension to existing dwelling, involving demolition of existing garage and conservatory, at 48C Station Road, Manea – F/YR11/0230/F (applicant: Mr M Tuck).

That the application be supported.

- (2) Fell one walnut tree covered by TPO 09/1992 at A2 Williams Way, Manea – F/YR11/0262/TRTPO (applicant: Mr S Winter).

Support, provided that the Local Planning Authority’s Arboricultural Officer confirms that the tree is dead or dying.

- (3) Use of land as a temporary construction compound and storage area for 12 months at Bearts Farm, East Street, Manea – F/YR11/0263/F (applicant: Mr D Burbeary).

That the application be supported.

M151/10 Finance

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

Income

Various (via I Fost)	Fishing fees (less expenses for fish food and grass seed)	£23.00
P Lawrence	Allotment rent	£180.00
C Barnes	Allotment rent	£22.50
E Barnes	Allotment rent	£180.00
P Clarke	Allotment rent	£225.00
Total Income		£630.50

Expenditure

M Short	Purchase of petrol for playing field maintenance	£7.00
R R Angood	Plough land adjoining Manea Pit	£48.00
Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 21 March 2011	£7.50
Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	£19.00
Peterborough Tree Services Ltd	Works to conifer hedge at playing field	£3,267.68
Fenland District Council	Non-domestic rates 2011/12 - Cemetery	£177.53
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£88.06
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £96.01), Broadband and other expenses	£481.07
Total Expenditure		£4,095.84

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 March 2011 (in the total sum of £44,967.30).

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Archer, seconded by Councillor Risbridger, that the income of £630.50 be noted and that the payments totalling £4,095.84 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 March 2011 be noted;

M152/10 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting of 4 April 2011.

The Clerk drew members' attention to the Sub-Committee's request for the provision of an additional page, in respect of the pit and orchard/woodland, on the Manea Parish Council website (minute SC60/10 refers). Members are happy that such action be taken and that the £60 per annum cost of this additional page be met by the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported a request, from a local resident, for use of the pit area as the venue for a first aid course, in late April or early May 2011, for Duke of Edinburgh leaders.

Members decided that

- (1) the contents of the Sub-Committee minutes be noted;
- (2) an additional page be provided on the Manea Parish Council website, the annual cost being met by the Parish Council;
- (3) the request for use of the pit area as the venue for a first aid course be approved and that the final details of the event be agreed between the requester and Councillor Archer (as the Chairman of the Manea Pit Sub-Committee).

M153/10 Correspondence

- (1) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC) – invitation for membership 2011/12.

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation for CPALC for membership of the organisation for 2011/12.

The Clerk informed members of the cost of membership of CPALC for 2011/12 and reminded them of their rationale in not renewing the Parish Council's membership for 2009/10 and taking out membership for 2010/11. He also informed members of the benefit derived by the Parish Council through his membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks, which provides a high quality support to local councils in terms of information, advice and training.

Councillor Archer commented that CPALC is considered by a number of organisations as the "voice" of all local councils and that without such membership the views of the Parish Council would not be represented in "wider" decision-making that could impact upon residents of the parish.

Members are, however, still not convinced, based upon previous experience of CPALC membership, that the Parish Council would derive sufficient benefits from membership to justify the annual cost and, given the current economic climate and the other uses to which that financial resource could be put, they do not consider it to be in the best interest of the community currently to utilise financial resources in this way.

Members decided that the Parish Council would not become a member of CPALC for 2011/12.

- (2) Water main renewal – Station Road, Manea.

Further to minute M116/10 (4), the Clerk reported an e-mail from Anglian Water, informing the Parish Council that the commencement date of the water main renewal scheme for Station Road, Manea has been delayed further; works are now scheduled to take place during the summer school holidays. Part of the reason for the delay was the need to seek planning permission for use of a nearby site as a storage/operating area (minute M150/10 refers).

Members decided that

- (1) the information provided by Anglian Water be noted;
- (2) Anglian Water be requested to extend, to cover the whole length, the 10 mph speed limit which currently covers part of the access road (off East Street) to the sewage treatment works.

(3) Tenders for contracted bus services – consultation.

Further to minute M87/10 (10), the Clerk reported a letter from Cambridgeshire County Council detailing the results of this consultation exercise, which closed on 11 March 2011.

The letter explains the reason for the consultation exercise, i.e. the need to make financial savings in this service, and the manner in which the consultation was conducted across Cambridgeshire. The exercise generated 97 responses, of which 19 were received from Parish Councils.

Although the exercise has resulted in some bus companies deciding to cease operating certain routes, because of the withdrawal of financial subsidy by the County Council, none of the service cancellations affect the residents of Manea.

Members decided that the results of this consultation exercise be noted.

(4) Sewerage system in Manea.

Further to minute M129/10, the Clerk reported receipt of an e-mail from Anglian Water.

In the e-mail, Anglian Water confirms that the drainage/sewerage system in Manea is adequate for the village and is not a barrier to future development. In addition, it states that the company will send a representative to a future meeting of the Parish Council; the company had hoped to arrange this for 18 April 2011 meeting but this had not subsequently proved possible.

Members decided that the content of the e-mail be noted.

M154/10 Items for Press Release or news stories

Members considered whether there are currently any matters affecting the parish which would benefit from the issue of a Press Release or the production of a news story.

Members decided that

- (1) no matters have arisen since the last Parish Council meeting that would benefit from being the subject of Press Release or news story for public attention;
- (2) given the Parish Council's publicity arrangements involving Manea Matters, there is no longer a need for this item to appear on Parish Council agendas.

M155/10 Maintenance issues – Pump Corner and Manea Cemetery

The Chairman reported on works to replace the chain at Pump Corner. He informed members that a suitable replacement chain had been obtained and that arrangements are in hand for its installation to take place; the cost of works will be met by the Street Pride group.

The Chairman informed members of works that had been undertaken, at no cost to the Parish Council, to repair a water leak at Manea Cemetery.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable members to informed of the situation at the earliest opportunity)

M156/10 Neighbourhood policing issues

The Clerk reported that PCSO Marie Bailey, of the Chatteris and District Neighbourhood Policing Team, was unable to attend the meeting but that she had provided, by e-mail, information on crime and disorder issues in Manea.

The Clerk reported, on behalf of PCSO Marie Bailey, that

- there have been break-ins to a number of sheds at the allotments and items have been stolen
- one property on High Street has been the subject of a burglary, during which jewellery was stolen
- the Constabulary have received reports of people consuming alcohol at the skateboard park; none of those witnessed by the Police were, however, underage and, consequently, no offence was being committed.

Members decided that

- (1) the information from PCSO Marie Bailey be noted;
- (2) they have no particular issues at this time to be referred to the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable members to be kept up-to-date on crime and disorder issues within the village)

M157/10 Joint meeting of local councils

Further to minute M116/10 (2), the Clerk reported on the latest position regarding the arrangements for the next joint meeting of local councils.

The Clerk informed members that, after receiving notification on 25 March 2011 that Christchurch Parish Council proposed to host the next meeting on 18 April 2011, he had informed the Clerk to Christchurch Parish Council that the date would clash with that of the Annual Assembly and Parish Council meeting at Manea. Consequently, the Clerk to Christchurch Parish Council undertook to refrain from finalising the date until he had received responses from the clerks to the other parish councils. On 11 April 2011, the Clerk received electronically the agenda for meeting, which was still scheduled for 18 April 2011.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable members to be kept up-to-date on this matter)

M158/10 Land at Orchard Way, Manea

The Clerk reported an enquiry from a resident of Tucks Yard as to whether the Parish Council is the owner of an area of land at Orchard Way, because the fence at the site is considered to be in need of repair.

The Chairman informed members that the area of land in question is not owned by the Parish Council but by a local developer.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable the matter to be considered at the earliest opportunity)

M159/10 Entrances to the village

Councillor Archer reported briefly to members on work planned in relation to updating the highway signage and the provision of planting at the entrances to Manea.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Archer be noted.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable members to informed of the situation at the earliest opportunity)

M160/10 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 16 May 2011, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.20 pm

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

Date:.....