

# MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

15 OCTOBER 2012 – 7.00 pm.

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

**Apologies:** Councillor Woodard.

The minutes of the meeting of 17 September 2012 were confirmed and signed.

### M72/12 Open Forum

#### Allotments

A number of members of the Manea Allotment Association attended the meeting to speak in support of the association's request for the Parish Council to renew its tenancy agreement for a period of more than the five years agreed at minute M40/12.

Mrs T Fyson, the Chairman of the Manea Allotment Association, requested that a tenancy period of 25 years be agreed and expressed the opinion that the Parish Council should have given a specific reason for not agreeing to the association's request for a lease period of 25 years, rather than merely saying that a lease period of 25 years "would not be appropriate" (minute M40/12 refers).

Mr C Turner, the Secretary of the Manea Allotment Association, referred to a document that he had produced in support of the association's request for a tenancy period of 25 years, which had been circulated to Parish Council members, by the Clerk, in advance of the meeting.

The document requests the Parish Council to reconsider its decision at minute M40/12, in the light of the following points:

- a short lease does not give any incentive for the association to invest in long-term improvement to the car park, approach road or access roads within the site
- the Manea Allotment Association Committee had decided to buy equipment costing between £400 and £500 to tackle the weed problem posed by vacant and neglected plots. The committee is reluctant to spend this money unless it can be sure that the equipment would be used for many years to come
- many tenants have spent substantial amounts – up to £1,000 – on sheds and do not want to have to abandon them prematurely
- as there is no piped water supply at the site, the majority of tenants have invested in a variety of solutions for collecting and storing rainwater
- the association has some vacant plots. Prospective tenants are less likely to consider taking them on when they realise they have no long-term security of tenure

- the suggestion that the council is legally obliged to provide allotments if there is sufficient demand. If the council decides to terminate the lease, it would be faced with needing to find an alternative site and bear the cost of clearing and reinstating the present site.

In response to the comments of the Manea Allotment Association, the Chairman of the Parish Council stated that the council has no intention of removing the garden allotments provision in Manea at any point in the future; it is the intention of the Parish Council that the provision of these allotments would continue for as long as the demand exists.

Members decided that the views of the Manea Allotment Association - both those in the document and given orally - be noted and that they be taken into account when considering the association's request to renew its tenancy agreement for a period of more than five years (see minute M79/12).

### **M73/12 Members' Code of Conduct**

Further to minute M33/12, the Clerk reminded members of the need to inform the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council of any changes to the content of their Register of Member Interests forms.

Members decided the information reported by the Clerk be noted and acted upon.

### **M74/12 Council appointments**

Members were appointed, consequent to the resignation from the Parish Council of Mr M Buckton (minute M59/12 refers), to act in the following offices of the Parish Council for the remainder of the municipal year 2012/13:

- Vice-Chairman of the Council: Councillor Mrs Desborough
- Allotments Officer: Councillor Archer
- Child Protection Officer: Councillor Mrs Berry.

### **M75/12 Seetec**

Members received a presentation from Steve Toms of Seetec, an organisation which provides Government-funded employment and skills training programmes for the unemployed, on the activities of that organisation and how the community could benefit from engaging with Seetec.

Mr Toms informed members that, as part of its programme to assist people into employment, Seetec provides assistance with CV writing, works with its clients to develop their interview techniques and seeks to create work experience opportunities. He explained that he is currently seeking to identify community projects which could benefit from the free-of-charge labour which Seetec is able to offer. He gave examples of some of the projects in which Seetec's clients are currently participating.

Mr Toms made the point that although Seetec is able to provide the labour for a project, it is not able to provide tools and equipment. Seetec is only able to provide labour for "not for profit" organisations.

Mr Toms stated that he is happy for his contact details to be made available within the community; these are: 07730 141033; [steve.toms@seetec.co.uk](mailto:steve.toms@seetec.co.uk).

Members decided that the information provided by Mr Toms be noted and that they would give thought to identifying community projects which could benefit from involvement by Seetec.

## M76/12 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

### (1) Resignation of membership from the Parish Council (minute M59/12)

The Clerk reported that he had informed Fenland District Council (FDC) of the resignation of Councillor Buckton from membership of the Parish Council and that, as a result, FDC had published formal notice of the vacancy with effect from 19 September 2012.

In accordance with the notice, given under The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 1986, the opportunity existed, until 9 October 2012, for ten local electors for the parish to call for the vacancy to be filled by way of an election. The Clerk reported that there had been no election called to fill the vacancy and, consequently, the Parish Council must fill the vacancy by co-option.

The Clerk outlined the recommended process to be used in filling a Parish Council vacancy by co-option, which had been used by the Parish Council previously when filling a vacancy by co-option (minute M119/11 (1) refers).

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that co-option to membership of Manea Parish Council be undertaken, using the process utilised by the Parish Council previously, at the next meeting;
- (2) copies of letters received from persons applying for co-option to membership of the Parish Council be forwarded by the Clerk to Parish Council members in advance of the next meeting.

### (2) Golden Age emergency planning (minute M61/12)

Members considered the appointment of a local emergency co-ordinator for the parish.

Members decided that the local emergency co-ordinator for the parish of Manea be Councillor Risbridger.

### (3) Manea Youth Club (minute M62/12 (1))

The Chairman reported that no progress had been made to date in seeking to engage further with village youngsters; Councillor Archer and he would discuss options in this regard prior to the next meeting of the Parish Council, at which they would report back to members.

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

### (4) Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011-2031 and Manea Station (minute M62/12 (2))

Members felt it appropriate to defer consideration of the issues arising from 4 September 2012 meeting between members of the Parish Council and the Transport Development Manager at Fenland District Council; these being: (1) appointing one representative of Manea to serve upon the Steering Group and three representatives to serve upon the Community Rail Partnership; (2) the manner in which the Parish Council would respond to consultation exercises (e.g. as a single body or as individual members); (3) the establishment of a constituted action group in relation to station adoption.

Councillor Archer commented that the launch of the Community Rail Partnership (CRP), held at March Station on 12 October 2012, had been well attended.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that the issues listed at (1), (2) and (3) above be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

**(5) Trees in Manea Cemetery (minute M62/12 (4))**

The survey document is still being circulated amongst members of the Parish Council.

Members decided that, following conclusion of the document's circulation amongst members, the Parish Council would consider the recommendations within the survey document.

**(6) Manea Gala Committee – provision of additional Christmas lights (minute M70/12 (2))**

The Chairman informed members that consultation letters had been sent by Manea Gala Committee to the residents of all of the properties which share a border with the open space area at Jolley Close/Station Road, Manea.

Members decided that the current situation be noted.

**(7) Local Minor Highways Improvement Scheme for Manea (minute M70/12 (4))**

The Clerk reported on revisions made by the County Council, in response to the comments made by the Parish Council at minute M70/12 (4), to the design of the proposed highway safety scheme for Station Road, Manea. The Clerk showed members by a plan of the revised design.

The revised design plan shows build-outs into the carriageway on both sides of Station Road, instead of a single, larger one opposite the school only.

Members commented that the revision to the scheme has overcome their concern. They did make the point that, occasionally, large agricultural vehicles, such as combine harvesters, use this road and have presumed that such use has been taken into account by the Local Highway Authority in this the design of this scheme.

Members decided that the revised design of this highway safety scheme be supported.

**M77/12 Planning application**

The Clerk reported that planning application F/YR12/0650/F (for the erection of a detached double garage with 2-bed annexe over for key worker accommodation, involving demolition of existing garage to existing care home at Cathryn Wheel House, 43 High Street, Manea), which was considered by the Parish Council at minute M63/12, had been withdrawn by the applicant.

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

**M78/12 Police matters**

PCSO Martin Bogunovic, of the March and Chatteris Policing Team, reported to members on incidents of crime and disorder which had been reported to the Constabulary since the last meeting of the Parish Council; the only incident has been the theft of an engine battery from an agricultural premises in Manea.

The PCSO made the point that the recent incidents of crime in the parish have taken place in rural areas and that he would ask people living in those areas to be vigilant and to report to the Constabulary, via the 101 telephone number, any incidents of suspicious activity or behaviour. In addition, he informed members that the anti-social use of motorcycles in Manea had been agreed as a policing priority at the meeting of the Chatteris and Manea Neighbourhood Forum held on 10 October 2012.

PCSO Bogunovic responded to members' questions.

Members decided that the information reported by PCSO Bogunovic be noted.

### **M79/12 Allotments**

Further to minute M40/12, members considered the request of the Manea Allotment Association to renew its tenancy agreement for a period of more than the five years agreed by the Parish Council at that minute.

Members endorsed the comments made by the Chairman at minute M72/12 (that the council has no intention of removing the garden allotments provision in Manea at any point in the future; it is the intention of the Parish Council that the provision of these allotments would continue for as long as the demand exists).

Members are of the opinion that the wording of the tenancy agreement between Manea Parish Council and the Manea Allotment Association makes it clear that there is an automatic right for renewal of the lease at the end of each period of five years; this, in effect, provides an open-ended arrangement but enables a period for re-negotiation by either party each five years. This has the effect of the "rolling" lease that the Manea Allotment Association says it is seeking.

Members decided - taking into account both the written and oral submissions from the Manea Allotment Association, together with the fact that the wording of the agreement makes it clear that there is an automatic right for renewal at the end of each period of five years – that the current tenancy agreement (approved at minute M40/12) should stand.

### **M80/12 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish**

Councillor Harper, the County Councillor for the electoral division which includes Manea, was not present at the meeting. Although County Councillor Harper was not present at the meeting, he had produced a report on County Council-related issues, which the Clerk read to members. This report informed Manea Parish Council that:

- Town and Parish Councils would soon receive information from the County Council in respect of its Local Minor Highways Improvements Schemes process for 2013/14; under the scheme, the County Council has allocated a sum of £50,000 for Fenland district
- work on the winter gritting schedules is nearing completion and gritting/salt stocks are at a healthy level
- the County Council is currently considering the Government's "School Funding Reform: Next Steps Towards a Fairer System" consultation paper
- the Care Quality Commission has recently published a consultation exercise on its proposed strategy for 2013-2016: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)
- the Connecting Cambridgeshire superfast Broadband campaign is the fastest growing in the country; much of the support has been generated with the help of more than 70 Broadband Champions.

Councillor Archer, the District Councillor for the Manea ward, informed members that he had nothing specific to report on this occasion.

Members decided that the information reported be noted.

### **M81/12 Public open spaces**

- (1) The annual RoSPA inspection report – this is still being circulated among Parish Councillors.

Members decided that the RoSPA report continues to 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.

- (2) Skateboard Park – further to minute M66/12 (2), the Clerk reported that the Chairman and he had met on site with an appropriate officer of Fenland District Council (FDC) to agree the exact location for the new bin, which had subsequently been installed by FDC.

The Chairman presented a quotation from the local electrical contractor for works which would restrict operation of the flood lighting at the multi-sports area to 9.00 pm, in the sum of £226.00 (plus VAT)

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Chairman and the Clerk be noted;
- (2) the quotation from the local electrical contractor for works which would enable control of times of operation of the flood lighting at the multi-sports area be accepted.
- (3) Playing field – further to minute M52/12, the Chairman reported that the field had now been spraying, to remove the weed growth, and that the cost would be £200.00.

The Chairman commented that the conifers around the playing field would benefit from being trimmed and suggested that he makes enquiries regarding this work being undertaken via the Manea and Welney Internal Drainage Board.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted and that he would undertake the enquiries that he had suggested with regard to trimming of the conifers.

- (4) Car park – further to minute M38/12, Councillor Jolley reported that the cost of providing and installing a height barrier would be £400.

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

### **M82/12 Manea Pit**

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee held on 11 October 2012.

Councillor Archer, the Chairman of the Manea Pit Management Committee, circulated an updated version of the schedule of actions document (minute PMC29/12 refers).

Further to minute PMC27/12, Councillor Emery informed members that officers of the Environment Agency would undertake removal of the “alien” fish from the ponds during November or December 2012.

Members decided that the contents of the minutes of the Manea Pit Management Committee and the additional information reported by Councillors Archer and Emery be noted.

### **M83/12 Financial matters**

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

## Income

Richard King Memorials	Memorial inscription - Ward	£80.00
Fenland District Council	Parish Precept – second half	£9,500.00
Kent Memorials	Memorial inscription - Rolfe	£80.00
Mr E Miller	Purchase of burial plot	£550.00
Kent Memorials	Memorial inscription - Waters	£80.00
P Lawrence	Allotment rent	£200.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£10,490.00</b>

## Expenditure

Jaks Graphics	2 x CCTV signs for skateboard park	£16.50
D Cole	Cost of petrol for grass cutting at cemetery and playing field	£12.00
Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 17 September 2012	£7.50
D Newman	Repair of cemetery fencing	£65.00
SLCC	Annual membership subscription (cost shared with Elm PC)	£70.00
Rural Cambs CAB	Outreach service (July to September 2012)	£100.00
E.on	Electricity for village green	£6.72
E.on	Electricity for sports area	£15.02
E.on	Electricity for pavilion	£34.79
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£50.32
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £92.79), Broadband and other expenses	£434.83
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£812.68</b>

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 September 2012 (in the total sum of £48,364.63), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 September 2011.

The Clerk reported also on the Parish Council's half-yearly financial position, which showed income of £23,741.38 and expenditure of £21,176.02 to 30 September 2012; he gave explanations as to variances between the estimated income and expenditure for the year and the actual levels of income and expenditure in the financial year to date.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Jolley, seconded by Councillor Archer, that the income of £10,490.00 be noted and that the payments totalling £812.68 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 September 2012, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 September 2011, be noted;
- (3) the Parish Council's half-yearly financial position be noted.

## M84/12 Parish Council and community projects and initiatives

### **(1) Quality Parish Councils scheme (minute M69/12 (1))**

Members considered whether, in the light of the resignation of Councillor Buckton, who was leading on this initiative, to continue with the process of seeking to achieve Quality Status for Manea Parish Council.

Members decided that

(1) because of the lack of capacity to devote to this initiative, the Parish Council would no longer pursue Quality Parish Council status for Manea Parish Council;

(2) this matter would not feature on future agendas as a community initiative.

### **(2) Community-led plan for Manea (minute M69/12 (2))**

The Chairman reported that the cost of the community-led plan process is predicted by the Manea Action Plan Group to exceed the funding available to the group and, consequently, sought members' views on making a financial donation towards the shortfall in funding.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted and that he would invite the Manea Action Plan Group to submit to the Parish Council a written application for financial support.

### **(3) New pavilion for Manea (minute M69/12 (3))**

Councillor Jolley reported that all the information required by Fenland District Council (FDC), in relation to the Parish Council's application for a grant under the District Council's Rural Capital Grants scheme (minute M42/12 (4) refers) would be provided to FDC within the next month. He informed members that he is still awaiting receipt of information regarding the funding that Sport England is making funding available for sporting activities and facilities.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Jolley be noted and that he would provide a further update on the situation at the next meeting.

### **(4) Manea Youth Bus (minute M69/12 (4))**

The Chairman informed members that the current situation regarding the Youth Bus is no different to that reported at minute M69/12 (4).

Members decided that

(1) the information reported by the Chairman be noted;

(2) this matter would not feature on future agendas as a community initiative.

## M85/12 Correspondence

### **(1) Cambridgeshire Playing Fields Association Newsletter: Autumn 2012.**

The Clerk reported receipt of the latest edition of this newsletter.

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

(2) Cambridgeshire ACRE's Community Action magazine: Autumn 2012.

The Clerk reported receipt of the latest edition of this magazine.

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

(3) Victim Support - request for a financial donation.

The Clerk reported a request from Victim Support for a financial donation towards the cost of providing support to people whose lives have been affected by crime.

Members decided that a donation of £30.00 be made to Victim Support.

(4) Manea Cemetery – maintenance.

The Clerk read to members a letter from a local resident regarding work that he had undertaken around his daughter's grave and in which he requested that the Parish Council does not carry out any tree lopping works to an adjacent Walnut tree or cut the grass beneath that tree (on the basis that this would be undertaken by the resident). In addition, the resident congratulated the council on the neat and tidy condition of Manea Cemetery.

Members decided that the content of the letter be noted and that the resident's request that he be allowed to maintain the area around his daughter's grave be approved.

(5) Williams Way, Manea – proposed residential development.

The Clerk reported a letter from an architectural company, informing the Parish Council of a consultation event that it had arranged (for 25 October 2012, between 4.00 pm and 7.00 pm, at the village hall) in relation to a proposal to develop residentially, on behalf of Roddons Housing Association, on land off Williams Way, Manea.

The proposed development, which is not yet the subject of a planning application, consists of 38 dwellings (with a mixture of two, three and four bedroom properties).

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

(6) Winter gritting volunteers 2012/13.

The Clerk reported a letter from Cambridgeshire County Council, informing the Parish Council that, as a result of the success of last year's winter gritting volunteer pilot, it proposes to run this initiative again for winter 2012/13.

The County Council is offering a number of training sessions for new volunteers this year and to provide the opportunity for refresher training to existing volunteers who would find it of benefit. The training sessions for new volunteers are compulsory, as these ensure that the volunteers are trained to use and maintain the equipment effectively and safely, so that the County Council is able to cover their activities with its insurance.

The training sessions offered are scheduled for four dates in late October and early November 2012 at various County Council Highways Depots, either at 12 noon or 1.00 pm.

Councillor Archer indicated that he may be interested in becoming a volunteer this year and would, if deciding to become a volunteer, contact the County Council direct to book a training place.

The Chairman offered to contact former Councillors Buckton and Lockett, who received the training last year, to see if they are prepared to act as winter gritting volunteers again this year.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that the Chairman and Councillor Archer would undertake the actions set out above.

**M86/12 Next meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 19 November 2012, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Church Room, Park Road, Manea.

**Meeting finished at 9.00 pm**

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

Date:.....