

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 JUNE 2012 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillors Mrs Berry and Cole.

The minutes of the meeting of 21 May 2012 were confirmed and signed.

M19/12 The Standards Board for England – Members’ Code of Conduct

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

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

M20/12 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Manea Ancestry Group (minute M1/12 (4))

The Clerk reported receipt of an application for a financial donation of £200 to meet the annual cost of operating this facility (made up of £155 to cover the cost of one year’s membership and use of Ancestry.com and £45 to purchase paper and printing ink).

Members indicated that they are happy to meet the cost of one year’s membership and use of Ancestry.com (£155.00) but feel that the beneficiaries of this activity should be required to meet the costs of paper and printing.

As a condition of the grant aid, members would like to receive information on a quarterly basis in relation to the level of usage of this service (i.e. number of users and the number of hours that it is used). The council also expects this facility to be publicised by the group around the village and that any publicity mentions the financial support provided by Manea Parish Council.

Members decided that a financial donation in the sum of £155.00 be made to the Manea Ancestry Group and that the group be informed by the Clerk of the Parish Council’s wishes in terms of “performance” information and publicity.

(2) Neighbourhood Forums in Fenland (minute M7/12 (1))

The Clerk informed members that Chatteris Town Council had considered, at its meeting on 12 June 2012, the suggestion (at minute M156/11) that Manea Parish Council and Chatteris Town Council host jointly a quarterly community-led forum (to which the Constabulary and other key bodies would be invited).

Chatteris Town Council has agreed to participate in such an arrangement; that council suggests operating the arrangement initially for a trial period of 12 months, possibly beginning in September at a mutually agreed time and place.

The Clerk to Chatteris Town Council makes the point the Constabulary has made it known that it is making arrangements for a forum meeting in August, which members of Chatteris Town Council consider to be the wrong time of year; this is why Chatteris Town Council has suggested holding a meeting in September.

Members were very pleased to hear that Chatteris Town Council is supportive of their suggestion.

Members decided that the response from Chatteris Town Council be noted and that the Clerks of the two councils would liaise in terms of the arrangements (date, time, venue, invitees etc).

(3) Recycling banks in Manea (minute M7/12 (2))

The Chairman reported that he had raised with the Royal British Legion Club the possibility of the Firefighters' Benefit bank being re-located to the club's car park; the club is not supportive of such an arrangement.

Members were unable to identify any other suitable location within the village for re-location of this charity bank.

In addition, members are aware that, despite its previous assurance (minute 163/11 (4) refers), Fenland District Council (FDC) had not secured removal of the textile bank.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that the Local Highway Authority (LHA) be requested to both arrange removal of the Firefighters' Benefit bank from its current location (on the highway verge at the junction of Wisbech Road and Station Road, Manea) and to pursue action from Fenland District Council in relation to removal of the textile bank from the same site.

(4) Trees in Manea Cemetery (minute M7/12 (3))

Councillor Mrs Desborough reported that the survey document is still being circulated amongst members of the Parish Council.

From the annual village inspection (which took place immediately prior to this meeting), it is evident that some minor works to trees would be beneficial.

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

(5) Footpaths and street lighting in Manea (minute M13/12)

The Clerk reported on the latest position regarding the works required to street lamps in the village.

Fenland District Council has now stated that the cost of replacing street lamp number FPC9 would be £500 (for the cost of a new lantern and bracket) (instead of £682.17 for a galvanised column).

With regard to the Clerk's attempts to obtain a comparison quotation from a contractor which had undertaken street lighting works for the Parish Council previously, he reported that the contractor's business had gone into liquidation. Furthermore, Fenland District Council (FDC) has subsequently stated that it requires all works to street lighting assets to be undertaken by its contractor, Balfour Beatty. FDC makes the point that it is unable to accept any liability for works arranged outside of its arrangement with Balfour Beatty, as this would raise issues over the council's ability to provide future provision of energy and general maintenance.

The Clerk informed members that, since the last meeting, Fenland District Council had identified a further street lamp - FPC14 on Westfield Road – which requires attention; it has been deemed by Fenland District Council as structurally unsafe. Although this lamp is currently provided by means of a bracket attached to a telegraph pole,

the replacement needs to be provided via a galvanised column (because UK Power Networks current regulations do not allow replacement lamps to be attached to telegraph poles). The cost of a new lamp column will be £1,039.65.

In responses to members' concerns regarding the availability of Parish Council funding to meet the cost of these street lighting works, the Clerk reminded members that provision of £1,000 (for purchase of an additional street lamp, not purchased in 2011/12) had been made in the Parish Council's accounts and that the receipt of a similar sum is anticipated as part of the Concurrent Functions Grant 2012/13. On the basis of the estimated funding available, it would be possible to meet the costs of the street lighting works required currently and leave an element of funding for any other works needed during 2012/13.

Members decided that

- (1) Fenland District Council be authorised to arrange the required works to street lamps FPC9 (Station Road) and FPC 14 (Westfield Road);
- (2) they would consider, at a future meeting, when the availability of funding for street lighting should be clearer, the provision of an additional street lamp at Wisbech Road.

M21/12 Planning applications

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

- (1) Erection of a 2-bed single-storey dwelling on land north of 55 School Lane, Manea – F/YR12/0412/RM (applicant: Mr E Payne).

That the application be supported.

- (2) Erection of 3 x 15.545 metre high Hub height) wind turbines at Bottom Farm, Day's Lode Road, Fodder Fen, Manea – F/YR12/0435/F (applicant: Mr R Fowler).

That the application be supported. In addition, members would like to see a Section 106 Planning Obligation, providing some form of community benefit, attached to any consent granted.

- (3) Erection of 3 x 15.545 metre high Hub height) wind turbines at Bottom Farm, Day's Lode Road, Fodder Fen, Manea – F/YR12/0436/F (applicant: Mr M Fowler).

That the application be supported. In addition, members would like to see a Section 106 Planning Obligation, providing some form of community benefit, attached to any consent granted.

In addition, members noted that the following planning applications, which were considered by the Parish Council at the last meeting, have been withdrawn by the applicant:

- (1) Erection of 3 x 15.545 metre high (hub height) wind turbines at Bottom Farm, Days Lode Road, Manea - F/YR12/0260/F
- (2) Erection of 3 x 15.545 metre high (hub height) wind turbines at Bottom Farm, Days Lode Road, Manea - F/YR12/0261/F.

M22/12 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. On this occasion, he had not produced a report, for reporting by the Clerk, on County Council-related issues.

Councillor Archer, the District Councillor for the Manea ward, reported that

- the outcome of the Boundary Commission review could result in an increase in the number of electors in the Manea ward of Fenland District Council (by including some electors who are currently within one of the Chatteris wards). This could, subject to a Community Governance Review being undertaken by Fenland District Council, have implications for the Manea parish boundary;
- the District Council is about to embark upon a consultation exercise in relation to the new Local Development Framework.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M23/12 Public open spaces

Further to minute M11/12 (1), the annual RoSPA inspection report is still being circulated among Parish Councillors. The Chairman mentioned some of the minor works recommended to equipment etc at the playing field.

The Chairman reported that he and Councillor Mrs Desborough had met, on site, with a representative of the company which installed the skateboard park regarding the repair works identified in the separate RoSPA report produced in relation to that structure. As a consequence of the site meeting, the Clerk had forwarded a copy of the report to the company's representative.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Chairman regarding the skateboard park repairs be noted:
- (2) the RoSPA report continue 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.

M24/12 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee of 14 June 2012.

The Chairman reported that he had, in accordance with minute PMC2/11, made contact with the Headteacher at Manea Community Primary School to both invite the school to be represented on the Management Committee and to ascertain the school's needs in using the pit area for educational purposes.

With regard to minute PMC5/11, members considered whether the Parish Council should purchase an inflatable dinghy (for the purpose of enabling the removal of debris from the pit to be carried out etc). In this regard, the Clerk reported the prices obtained by Mr Westgate for the purchase of a suitable inflatable dinghy; these ranged from around £300 to £500.

Members considered, in accordance with minute PMC5/12, the arrangements for the emptying of bins and clearance of litter around the pit area; they do support the recommendation of the Carp Syndicate members in this regard.

Members decided that

- (1) the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee and the post-meeting developments be noted;
- (2) with regard to the acquisition of an inflatable dinghy, there should be no purchase of any equipment at this time; such consideration should take place once an action plan for works etc is in place and where those works demonstrate the need for equipment purchase;
- (3) the Chairman of the Management Committee would arrange for the Parish Council representatives on the committee to meet prior to the date of the next meeting of the Management Committee to begin work on the production of a draft action plan;
- (4) Mr R K Miler be "re-employed" to empty the litter bins and undertake litter picking at Manea Pit.

M25/12 Financial matters

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

Income

Carp Syndicate	Membership fees	£220.00
Cambridgeshire County Council	Verge cutting 2012	£593.73
J H Landin and Son	Plot purchase and interment fee	£220.00
J Lawrence	Allotment rent	£200.00
Various (via I Fost)	Fishing fees	£90.00
Total Income		£1,323.73

Expenditure

Richard Yardy	Electrical works at village green and to CCTV system in pavilion	£257.76
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£62.90
Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 21/05/12	£7.50
Perce Baxter and Son Ltd	Gravel for pit works	£132.00
E.on	Electricity for sports area	£13.29
E.on	Electricity for pavilion	£23.43
Manea Community Primary School	Cost of 150 Jubilee coins (and delivery)	£458.75
E.on	Electricity for village green	£3.09
Sears Bros. Ltd	Verge cutting 2011	£989.10
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £112.92), Broadband and other expenses	£549.94
H M Revenue and Customs	Clerk's Income Tax (March, April and May 2012).	£343.23
Total Expenditure		£2,840.99

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 May 2012 (in the total sum of £57,550.97), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Archer, seconded by Councillor Woodard, that the income of £1,323.73 be noted and that the payments totalling £2,840.99 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 May 2012, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months, be noted.

M26/12 Highways matters

(1) Local Minor Highway Improvements

Further to minute M123/11, the Clerk reported on the outcome of the Parish Council's applications for highway works under the Local Minor Highway Improvements scheme; these applications being for

- a) the provision of a crossing point across Station Road, in the immediate vicinity of the Community Primary School;
- b) speed reduction measures along Park Road.

The Parish Council's application for the scheme at a) above was successful. The estimated cost of the approved scheme is estimated at £10,000, to which the Parish Council will be required to make a contribution of 10% towards the cost.

Now that the process of considering the applications has been concluded, the Local Highway Authority (LHA) will be undertaking more detailed work to establish firm costs and a timetable for each scheme; the LHA will then formally agree each council's financial contribution to allow the scheme to be implemented.

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

(2) Maintenance issues

Members raised the following highways maintenance issues:

- hedge needs cutting back - Station Road; on the right-hand side of the road (when heading towards the station from the village) beyond the council houses
- hedge needs cutting back - Station Road; at the entrance of Wisbech Road (site is a building plot)
- road "drops away" on Wimblington Road; opposite "Poppyfields".

Members decided that these matters be drawn to the attention of the Local Highway Authority, with the request that the necessary action to address the issues be undertaken.

M27/12 Parish Council and community projects and initiatives

(1) Quality Parish Councils scheme

Further to minute M15/12 (1), Councillor Buckton reported that he had been unable to devote time since the last meeting to conclude the draft version of the Parish Council's first Annual Report, which he will present to the next meeting.

The Clerk informed members that he had attended, on 22 May 2012, a training event relating to the General Power of Competence, so that he could undertake this additional module of the Certificate in Local Council Administration qualification process.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Buckton and the Clerk be noted.

(2) Community-led plan for Manea

Further to minute M15/12 (2), the Chairman reported that the questionnaire is almost ready for circulation and that the Manea Action Plan group is currently in the process of “recruiting” additional volunteers to deliver the questionnaires throughout the village.

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

(3) Queen’s Diamond Jubilee 2012

Further to minute M15/12 (3), Councillor Buckton informed members that, despite him sending a “progress chasing” e-mail on 8 June, the Fields in Trust organisation is yet to confirm whether or not the playing field will be granted formal designation under the Queen Elizabeth Fields Challenge 2012.

Councillor Buckton stated that, because of the adverse weather conditions on Sunday 3 June, the proposed picnic in the park did not take place; it is planned that this event be re-arranged and the likely new date is 9 September 2012.

Members expressed their appreciation of the significant contribution made by Mrs B Carson to the success of the Jubilee celebrations in the village; it is known, from comments made by members of the public that this appreciation extends beyond the membership of the Parish Council. Members supported the suggestion of Councillor Buckton that the Parish Council should offer to reimburse Mrs Carson for the costs that she incurred in arranging activities.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by Councillor Buckton be noted;
- (2) Councillor Buckton would ascertain from Mrs Carson details of the costs that she had incurred in arranging Jubilee events;
- (3) a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs Carson for the significant contribution that she made to the success of the Jubilee celebrations in the village.

(4) New pavilion for Manea

Further to minute M15/12 (4), the Clerk reported that a business plan for the new pavilion had been submitted to Fenland District Council (FDC) on 11 June 2012 and that FDC had, in response (on 12 June), stated that the information submitted by the Parish Council would be considered by council officers at an assessment pre-meeting on 15 June and that FDC would inform the Parish Council thereafter of any additional information that may be required to make an informed decision on the Parish Council’s application for funding.

The Clerk reported that he sought from Fenland District Council (FDC) an indication of what type of additional information might be needed from the Parish Council. FDC has responded that it is likely to need up-to-date community consultation (as the previous one was in March 2010) and details of the community spaces within the facility in addition to sports use.

Councillor Buckton expressed the view that the current pavilion should be retained following erection of the new one, to be converted into an "outdoor classroom"; he informed members that the opportunity exists to apply for funding (between £10,000 and £50,000) for such a project.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk be noted;
- (2) retaining the current pavilion for use as an outdoor classroom, subject to a successful application for the necessary funding, be agreed; Councillor Buckton would proceed with developing a funding bid;
- (3) community consultation regarding the proposal for a new pavilion be undertaken during Manea Gala.

(5) Manea Youth Bus

Further to minute M15/12 (5), Councillor Buckton informed members that the current situation is no different to that reported at minute M15/12 (5).

Members are aware that one of the projects of the Manea Youth Club is promotion of the Manea Youth Bus (minute M135/11 refers). With regard to the Manea Youth Club, the Chairman referred to recent staff changes within the Youth Service, which raised questions in members' minds as to whether Manea Youth Club is being provided with the Youth Worker support for which the Parish Council is providing funding.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by Councillor Buckton be noted;
- (2) the Clerk would seek confirmation from the Youth Service that the funding from the Parish Council is being put to its intended use and also arrange for the Parish Council to receive from the Youth Service a brief update on how the Youth Club is benefiting from the financial support provided by the Parish Council.

(6) Open space at Station Road/Jolley Close, Manea

Further to minute M15/12 (6), Councillor Buckton reported that the ceremony to mark the acquisition of this land for the village would take place at 11.45 am on the day of Manea Gala 2012 (i.e. 14 July).

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Buckton be noted and that this matter should not feature on future agendas as a community initiative.

M28/12 Station Road, Manea

Further to minute M1/12 (1), Police Sergeant Monger reported on the progress in dealing with the issues in this case.

Sergeant Monger informed members that the Constabulary had interviewed a number of local residents, which has resulted in twelve significant statements. In addition, he had met with the relevant Inspector and Chief Inspector at the RSPCA, to discuss the animal welfare issues.

Sergeant Monger stated that the Constabulary now possesses sufficient information to at least visit the property and to interview the householders. He added that arrangements are being made for a joint visit to the property by officers of the Constabulary, Fenland District Council and the RSPCA.

Members decided that the information reported by Police Sergeant Monger be noted.

M29/12 Annual village inspection

Following their annual village inspection, which took place immediately prior to this meeting - and included visits to the allotments, playing field and cemetery - members considered whether there is a need to arrange any repair, replacement or improvement works to these community assets.

Members decided that

- (1) the level of occupancy at the garden allotments and the fact that the Manea Allotment Association is looking to find a tenant for the vacant plot;
- (2) the Chairman would liaise with the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contractor to prevent future graves being dug out of line;
- (3) the Parish Council should consider, prior to setting its Precept for 2013/14, the possibility of re-surfacing and widening the road/pathway within the cemetery.

M30/12 Correspondence

- (1) Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT).

Further to minute M177/11, the Clerk read to members a letter from FACT, expressing thanks for the financial support provided by the Parish Council.

Members decided that the contents of the letter be noted.

- (2) County Farms Estate: Bearts Farm Wood, Manea.

The Clerk reported an e-mail from the Strategy and Estates Team at Cambridgeshire County Council, seeking the Parish Council's support for its bid to the Forestry Commission for funding to carry out woodland improvement works at Bearts Farm Woods in Manea.

The County Council makes the point that the woods have now become tall and quite dense, as little management has been carried out over the years, which is why an application for a Forestry Commission Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) has been submitted. If the application is successful, the funding would enable the County Council to carry out works to benefit the public and wildlife; these works include:

- thinning of the woodland (this involves removing trees to favour the best species)
- coppicing of multi-stemmed trees (this helps create a diverse structure)
- improving public access - coppicing along paths and widening them
- way markers and interpretation board – to inform visitors of where they can go, and providing information on what can be seen in the woodland.

In considering the funding application, the Forestry Commission has asked for evidence that the proposal is supported by the Parish Council.

Members indicated that they are fully supportive of this funding application. They expressed the view that Bearts Farm Wood is a valuable community facility that would certainly benefit from the works proposed by the County Council (subject to a successful bid for grant aid), to enable public access and enjoyment to be maximised; this is not possible in the wood's current condition.

Members decided that the Parish Council would support Cambridgeshire County Council's bid to the Forestry Commission for funding to carry out woodland improvement works at Bearts Farm Woods in Manea.

M31/12 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 16 July 2012, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.25 pm

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

Date:.....