

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

20 FEBRUARY 2012 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillors Archer and Cole.

The minutes of the meeting of 16 January 2012 were confirmed and signed.

M131/11 Open Forum

(1) Various community issues

A resident of the village raised the following issues:

- a) An enquiry as to the progress being achieved in securing removal of the TVS sign (minute M89/11 (4) refers)
- b) The apparent temporary nature of the extraction flue at the new Indian restaurant on High Street, Manea
- c) Fallen trees on land behind Manea Community Primary School.

Members decided that the matters at a) and b) above be referred, by the Clerk, to Fenland District Council and that Councillor Mrs Desborough would report c) to the County Farms Section at Cambridgeshire County Council.

(2) Manea Pit

Mrs P Smith referred to minute SC81/11 of 8 February 2012 meeting of the Sub-Committee and informed members of the progress in obtaining an abstraction licence from the Environment Agency. She reported that she had, today, completed a pre-application form for a temporary licence.

Mrs Smith informed members of the abstraction point that she feels would be appropriate and suggested that it may be helpful for a member of the Parish Council to "tip off" the Chairman of the District Drainage Commissioners that the Parish Council would be submitting an application to the Environment Agency for a temporary abstraction licence.

Mrs Smith stated that the application fee would be £135.00 and that there could be an additional cost of £25 for the water. In addition, the Parish Council would need to arrange and meet the cost of hiring a pump and pipeline between the source of the water and the pit. She informed members that the Parish Council would need to obtain the permission of the tenant of the land over which the pipeline would cross.

In addition, Mrs Smith referred to minute M111/11 and suggested that the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee should be reviewed by the Parish Council, to both clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Sub-Committee and to delegate it authority to incur expenditure (against an approved plan of works) without prior reference to the Parish Council.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by Mrs Smith be noted;
- (2) Mrs Smith be authorised to submit to the Environment Agency a formal application for a temporary abstraction licence;
- (3) Councillor Jolley would make contact with the Chairman of the District Drainage Commissioners regarding the Parish Council's application;
- (4) Councillor Emery would discuss with a local contractor the provision of a pump and a pipeline for the water abstraction process;
- (5) the views of Mrs Smith be taken in to account by the Parish Council when considering the future of the Sub-Committee (minute M139/11 refers).

M132/11 Co-option of councillor

Further to minute 119/11 (1), the Clerk reported that there had been no election called to fill the vacancy on Manea Parish Council and, consequently, he had undertaken the process that he had outlined at minute 119/11 (1) in relation to filling the vacancy by co-option.

The Clerk informed members that persons interested in filling the vacancy were invited to make application in writing (setting out why he or she would be suitable for co-option to membership of Manea Parish Council, as well how he or she meets the qualification criteria for membership of a Parish Council); as a result of this process, two applications were submitted to the Clerk.

The Clerk read to members both of the letters of application, from Mrs U Berry and Mrs S Woodard, prior to inviting members to nominate either or both of these candidates as well as any other person that they may wish to propose.

Both of the candidates (but no other persons) were proposed and seconded.

Members decided, by way of a majority vote, through a secret ballot, that Mrs U Berry be co-opted to membership of Manea Parish Council; following her signing of a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Councillor Mrs Berry participated in the meeting.

M133/11 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.

M134/11 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

Joint meeting of local councils (minute M119/11 (2))

The Clerk had circulated, in advance of the Parish Council meeting, a copy of the report produced by the Clerk to Welney Parish Council in relation to the matters discussed at the meeting held on 13 February 2012.

The members of Manea Parish Council who had attended the joint meeting of local councils expressed the view that such attendance had been very worthwhile.

Members decided that the contents of the report of the joint meeting of local councils be noted.

M135/11 Youth issues

Further to minute M117/11, members received a presentation from Debbie Hamilton and Mike Knaggs, Youth Workers from the March and Chatteris Locality Team, on the project plan for Manea Youth Club in 2012/13 in general, including details of a specific project to be delivered using grant aid of £1,000.00 from the Fenland District Youth Council.

The specific project will involve Youth Club members organising and delivering two trips, which are aimed at increasing use of the Youth Bus, improving the communication, team building, organisational and budgeting skills of the young people, as well as improving community cohesion.

Members were informed that membership of the Youth Club is increasing; these new members are at the younger end of the club's age range. The representatives of the Youth Service informed members that they are looking to achieve outcomes in terms of young people taking "ownership" of Manea Youth Club and establishing a youth panel, which would make applications for funding.

Debbie Hamilton and Mike Knaggs responded to members' questions.

In addition, members considered, in the light of the information presented by these officers, whether the Parish Council should use the services of Community CARTS to provide youth activities in Manea.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by Debbie Hamilton and Mike Knaggs be noted;
- (2) they are committed to the retention and development of a Youth Club in Manea;
- (3) they wish to receive regular updates on the operation, development and achievements of Manea Youth Club (the presentation of information to be delivered by members of the Youth Club if possible);
- (4) a Partnership Agreement between the County Council's Youth Service and Manea Parish Council, detailing what will be delivered by the Youth Service in return for the financial contribution to be made to this service by the Parish Council, be produced by the County Council;
- (5) no action be taken at this time in relation to using Community CARTS to provide youth activities in Manea.

M136/11 Public open spaces

- (1) Playing field – Councillor Emery informed members that he had made arrangements, because of the urgency of the matter, to remedy a situation whereby a tree had fallen against the fence of a neighbouring property.

Members decided that Councillor Emery's action be endorsed.

- (2) Manea Street Pride Group - Councillor Buckton reported briefly on his attendance recently at the Street Pride AGM, at which it was mentioned that Manea Street Pride Group had planted 30,000 bulbs and 200 trees in the village.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Buckton be noted and that the Clerk would seek to ascertain from the Secretary of the Manea Street Pride Group details of the locations where this planting had been undertaken.

M137/11 Planning application

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

Erection of 27 x two-storey dwellings comprising 3 x 4-bed, 21 x 3-bed and 3 x 2-bed with garages, car ports and parking on land south-west of Fire Station, Westfield Road, Manea – F/YR11/0840/F (applicant: F and S Crouch and Maurice Crouch Growers) = revised proposals in respect of amended access layout and revisions to plot layout/design plus one additional unit.

That use of the proposed main access point to the development would, given the level of traffic which uses Westfield Road and the amount of on-street parking in the vicinity of the application site, have a detrimental impact upon highway safety. Consequently, the Local Planning Authority should request the applicants to provide an alternative point of access, either at the further point east or west of the site (rather at the centre of the site); it is acknowledged that this would necessitate a further revision to the proposed layout.

In addition, the Parish Council is disappointed that the revised plans do not appear to show the provision of a school bus shelter and associated waiting area on Westfield Road, which it sought when responding to the consultation on the original version of this application; the Parish Council requests that this be pursued with the applicant.

M138/11 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

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 of:

- the involvement and participation of County Councillors in preparation of the County Council's Budget and Integrated Plan for 2012/13
- the factors that had been taken into account by the County Council in preparing next year's budget, including the need to provide infrastructure to support the continued growth in the county, as well as meeting the needs of an ageing population
- the fact that the County Council will meet on 20 February 2012 to make decisions on its Budget and Integrated Plan 2012/13.

Although Councillor Archer, the District Councillor for the Manea ward, was not present at the meeting, he had informed the Clerk, by-mail in advance, that he had no issues for reporting to Manea Parish Council.

Councillor Jolley, the District Councillor for the Wimblington ward, reported that the Fire Service has announced that it needs to identify a further £2.5 million of savings in the financial year 2012/13 and that this situation could, once again, threaten the future of Manea Fire Station. He informed members that he had written, in his capacity as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel at Fenland District Council, to the Chief Fire Officer expressing concern regarding the impact of budget reductions upon the delivery of Fire Services in Fenland.

Members decided that information reported be noted.

M139/11 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting of 8 February 2012.

With reference to minute SC78/11, Councillor Emery reported that procurement of the materials to undertake the necessary maintenance works at the pit has been arranged.

In connection with minute SC80/11, Councillor Buckton reported that the visit to Manea Pit by the Health and Safety Manager at the Wildlife Trust had been arranged for 9 March 2012 (at 9.45 am).

At the last meeting of the Parish Council, members had decided that the future of the Sub-Committee be considered at this meeting (minute M125/11 refers). However, members considered that it would be inappropriate to have such a debate in the absence of the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, Councillor Archer.

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from Councillor Archer concerning the future of the Sub-Committee. In summary, Councillor Archer feels that the Sub-Committee should remain and that efforts should be made to increase the level of community participation in its work.

Councillor Buckton stated that he is not seeking to threaten the future of the Sub-Committee, a concern which is recorded by Sub-Committee members at minute SC84/11 and mentioned in the e-mail from Councillor Archer, but to ensure that the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee (T o R) are fit for purpose. With regard to future operation of the Sub-Committee, members are mindful of the comments made by Mrs P Smith at minute M131/11 (2) and will take them into account in reviewing the Sub-Committee's T o R.

Members consider that, under the strategic direction of the Parish Council, the Sub-Committee needs to work to an annual plan (including the resources, both human and financial, required) for operation and management of Manea Pit. It is also considered to be important to make efforts to increase the level of community participation in the operation of Manea Pit.

The Clerk reported that comments had been made by a local resident in relation to the content of the draft Manea Pit Management Plan which was considered by the Parish Council at minute M125/11; these would be taken into account in producing a final version of the plan.

Members decided that

- (1) the contents of the Sub-Committee minutes be noted and that the recommendation at minute SC77/11 (relating to the sending of a letter to the Headteacher at Manea Community Primary School, formally inviting the school to use the pit for educational purposes) be approved;
- (2) the future of the Sub-Committee, particularly the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders under which it operates, be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

M140/11 Finance

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

Income

J H Landin and Son	Interment fee – W Short	£140.00
Kent Memorials	Memorials – 3 for Risely family	£420.00
Kent Memorials	Memorials – Williamson and Rolfe	£420.00

Total Income		£980.00
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Expenditure

Shrievalty Trust	Donation to the Bobby Scheme	£30.00
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£72.10
Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 19/12/11	£7.50
Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 16/01/12	£7.50
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Membership renewal 2012	£40.00
Morgan Lakey	Tree works at Manea Pit	£2,200.00
Morgan Lakey	Chipping of tree waste	£250.00
Ridgeons	Materials for pit works	£5.51
Fenland CAB	Outreach sessions (Sep. to Dec. 2011) – financial support	£120.00
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £87.20), Broadband and other expenses	£453.27
Total Expenditure		£3,185.88

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 January 2012 (in the total sum of £47,651.99), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Desborough, seconded by Councillor Risbridger, that the income of £980.00 be noted and that the payments totalling £3,185.88 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 January 2012, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months, be noted.

M141/11 Annual Risk Assessments

Members considered, in accordance with the advice of the Council's Auditors that local councils should assess and take mitigating actions, the risks to the Parish Council.

Members are of the view that all of the risks faced by the Council are covered by the necessary measures, including:

- insurance policies in respect all assets and public liability
- an annual inspection by the Parish Council of all assets

- the Parish Sub-Committee considering, at each meeting, any health and safety issues relating to Manea Pit and its surroundings
- an annual ROSPA inspection of all play equipment
- monthly reporting by the Clerk of all items of income and expenditure and monies held in bank accounts
- all expenditure is approved at Parish Council meetings and cheques require three signatures
- the Clerk reports to members twice annually on the Parish Council's overall financial position
- Annual Accounts are approved by the Parish Council
- all activities are governed by Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- the Parish Council possesses a prudent level of financial reserves to be able to fund any unforeseen eventualities.

Arising from the discussion of this item, it was suggested that fire extinguishers should be installed at the pavilion.

In addition, members felt it appropriate discuss, at the next meeting, how the Parish Council should ensure the effective use and maintenance of the assets that it operates and manages on behalf of the community.

Members decided that

- (1) appropriate risk management measures are in place currently but the situation be kept under constant review and considered formally by the Parish Council at the February meeting each year;
- (2) Councillor Emery would pursue, with a local contractor, the installation of fire extinguishers at the pavilion;
- (3) an item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting in relation to management of the Parish Council's community assets.

M142/11 Neighbourhood Forums in Fenland

The Clerk reported to members on the latest position regarding Neighbourhood Forums in Fenland.

The Clerk reminded members that after two rounds of multi-agency Neighbourhood Forums, Fenland District Council had decided, in light of reduced resources, to "step back" from being the lead agency in terms of administering, organising and publicising forum meetings. Consequently, the other key agencies involved in the Neighbourhood Forum meetings have been considering how this decision of the District Council will impact upon their engagement with communities within Fenland. As an interim measure, the Constabulary organised a series of forum meetings in Fenland in October 2011 and a further round in January/February 2012.

After those two rounds of Police-led meetings (at which there was participation by officers of the District Council and the County Council as well as members of the three tiers of local government), Police Inspector Sissons felt it appropriate to seek to agree arrangements for the future. To discuss a way forward, relevant officers of the Constabulary, Fenland District Council and the County Council met on 6 February 2012.

Those officers concluded that

- Neighbourhood Forums should be operated on a multi-agency, and not Police only, basis.
- efforts should be made to ensure maximum councillor participation – given that they are the people's representatives and should have their ears to the ground. They should be bringing local issues to the table if members of the public are not able or do not wish to attend a public meeting.
- there should be an opportunity for the community to be able to have a direct influence on the setting of local priorities. However, it is acknowledged that some members of the community do not like public speaking and they will only attend when something really affects them.

- partner agencies should develop a link between the Shape Your place website and Neighbourhood Forums, to provide a means by those not attending to feed their concerns into the meeting.
- meeting dates should be set 12 months in advance to allow planning and advertising.
- Partners should identify and use venues that are free-of-cost to the Police – possibly those owned by local councils where appropriate.

On the basis of the officers' conclusions, the following way forward is proposed:

- Multi-agency approach to Neighbourhood Forums in Fenland.
- Although to be led administratively by the Constabulary, the District Council and the County Council would support (providing agenda items, assisting with publicity, encouraging councillor participation, responding to issues raised etc).
- There would be no formal panel of decision-makers but all councillors from each of the three tiers of local government would be invited to attend their relevant forum.
- Ideally, chairmanship would be undertaken by a representative of the community (local councillor or otherwise); in the absence of such, chairmanship would default to the Constabulary.
- There would be consultation on meeting dates and agenda items with key partners.
- Changes to forum areas, to link Chatteris and March areas and split Wisbech and District in to Wisbech and a Rural North villages forum; Whittlesey and District and Waterlees and Clarkson would not change
- Consultation on the proposals by the Constabulary with Fenland District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and the local councils in Fenland.
- Implementation of the new arrangements from June/July 2012.

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

M143/11 Trees in Manea

Further to minute M127/11, the majority of members stated that they had not had the opportunity, since the last meeting, to view the trees identified by Councillor Mrs Desborough.

Members decided that discussion of this matter be deferred to the next meeting.

M144/11 Parish Council and community projects and initiatives

(1) Quality Parish Councils scheme

Further to minute M128/11 (1), Councillor Buckton circulated a document setting out information as the basis of an article for the next edition of the Manea Matters publication; the information related to the Parish Council's Precept for 2012/13, the activities and services upon which the Parish Council spends money and the fact that the Parish Council will be producing, later this year, its first Annual Report.

In addition, the Clerk reported a suggestion from a local resident that, as a means of improving the communications between Manea Parish Council and the community, a search facility should be added to the Parish Council's website. This could be achieved at a one-off cost of £50.00.

Members decided that

- (1) the information produced by Councillor Buckton, to feature as an article in the next edition of the Manea Matters publication, be approved;
- (2) a search facility be added to the Parish Council's website.

(2) Community-led plan for Manea

Further to minute M128/11 (2), the Chairman informed members the Manea Action Plan Group spent its last meeting re-designing the questionnaire.

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

(3) Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012

Further to minute M128/11 (3), Councillor Buckton reported that he had spoken with Mr Lockett and Mrs Carson to ascertain the latest position regarding proposed activities for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. He informed members of the information that he had obtained

Members considered the formulation of an application to access the grant of £1,000 being made available by Fenland District Council to contribute towards the cost of Diamond Jubilee celebrations within the parish.

In terms of celebrations, members are aware of a number of possible activities proposed by the community for the period 2 to 5 June 2012, including:

- Village parade
- Street party
- Barbeque/picnic and concert at the village playing field
- Open gardens
- Animal show
- Art exhibition
- Village treasure hunt
- Tea dance at the British Legion Club
- A disco for under 11's
- A disco for adults.

Members also sought to identify other potential projects for utilisation of the grant funding and, consequently, suggested:

- replacement of a decorative arch, which "disappeared" many years ago, at Pump Corner
- allocating one of the Parish Council's garden allotments for general community use for fruit growing (leading to free fruit for villagers)
- contributing towards the cost of the new village "gateway" signs, which are scheduled for replacement by the County Council (as Local Highway Authority) to include "Jubilee" wording.

The Clerk reported an invitation from Fields in Trust for membership of the organisation, at an annual cost of £35.00; such membership would provide the Parish Council, as the owner of a field designated under the Queen Elizabeth Fields Challenge 2012, with access to expertise in outdoor sport and play provision.

Members decided that

(1) the information reported by Councillor Buckton be noted;

(2) the Parish Council would not become a member of Fields in Trust at this time;

(3) the Clerk would make application to Fenland District Council for the £1,000 grant on the basis of the celebratory events and the potential Jubilee projects set out above;

(4) the Clerk would ascertain from the Local Highway Authority the feasibility of the new village "gateway" signs including "Jubilee" wording.

(4) New pavilion for Manea

Further to minute M128/11 (4), Councillor Jolley informed members that work to develop a business plan for the new pavilion is underway and that he would report further at the next meeting.

Members decided that the current position be noted.

(5) Manea Youth Bus

Further to minute M128/11 (5), Councillor Buckton informed members that the promotional activities that he reported at that minute are underway.

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

(6) Extending the Winter Maintenance Service 2011/12

Further to minute M128/11 (6), Councillors Buckton and Emery reported that volunteers had undertaken gritting activities on a number of occasions recently. The County Council has responded positively to requests for re-filling grit bins. Given the improving weather, it is anticipated that very few additional gritting activities would be necessary

Members decided that the information provided by Councillors Buckton and Emery be noted.

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

Further to minute M128/11 (7), the Clerk reported on the current situation regarding the transfer of this area of open space to Manea Parish Council.

The Clerk informed members that Fenland District Council (FDC) has recently provided satisfactory information to the solicitors acting on behalf of the Administrators in relation to discharging the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement applying to this land; on that basis, all necessary documentation can be finalised by the Parish Council's solicitors. He reported that he had sent an invoice to FDC in relation to the financial contribution that it had agreed to make (of £400.00) towards the Parish Council's legal costs in this matter; the District Council has confirmed that payment of the invoice will be made as soon as ownership of the land transfers to Manea Parish Council.

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

M145/11 Correspondence

(1) Cambridgeshire Playing Fields Association Newsletter: Winter 2011/12.

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) Fenland District Council's Community Grants Scheme 2012/13.

The Clerk reported a letter from Fenland District Council (FDC), providing details of this scheme, which enables community and voluntary groups in the district to apply for funding of up to £5,000.00 per project.

To be successful, the applications must show how the projects (which would need to be delivered by 1 April 2013) would help improve the lives of local residents. The deadline for the submission of applications is 27 April and funding will be allocated in August 2012.

Members decided that the information provided by FDC be noted and that they would bring this information to the attention to relevant groups within the community.

(3) Cambridgeshire County Council's HCV Strategy.

Further to minute M55/11, the Clerk reported a letter from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) informing Parish Councils that, following the consultation exercise, the HCV Strategy was approved by the Cabinet at the County Council in January 2012.

The letter states that the strategy, which recognises the economic importance of road haulage and the need to balance this with the environmental impact of lorries upon local communities, will be used by CCC to facilitate joint working with local communities to determine how best to manage their HCV issues.

Members decided that information provided by the County Council be noted.

M146/11 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 19 March 2012, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.25 pm

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

Date:.....