

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

16 SEPTEMBER 2013 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: County Councillor Connor.

The minutes of the meeting of 19 August 2013 were confirmed and signed.

M59/13 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.

M60/13 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Charlemont Drive, Manea (minute M47/13 (1))

The Clerk informed members that the Parish Council is still awaiting the provision, by a resident of Charlemont Drive, of quotations for the manufacture and installation of a notice board at this estate.

Members decided that the information reported be noted.

(2) Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011-2031 and Manea Station (minute M47/13 (2))

The Clerk reported to members on the meeting which had taken place on 11 September 2013, which comprised of a visit to Manea Station and a subsequent discussion at the village hall of measures necessary to enhance the facilities at the station. The Parish Council was represented at the meeting (which included officer representatives from Greater Anglia, Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council) by Councillors Archer, Mrs Desborough, Jolley and Woodard and the Clerk.

Following the meeting on 11 September, the Clerk had circulated electronically to all Parish Council members the documentation which had been provided to meeting attendees.

The Clerk summarised, for the benefit of those who had been unable to attend, the matters discussed at the meeting, namely:

- attendees agreed a list of items (including: waiting shelters, a car park, facilities for bicycles and motorcycles, a bus drop-off/pick-up point, lengthening the platforms to be able to accommodate trains of 3 carriages in length) to be included in an improvement plan.
- the improvement plan would be the subject of a public consultation exercise, which would operate along the lines of the one operated by Fenland District Council in June of this year in relation to proposed improvements to Whittlesey Station.

- The Partnerships Manager of Greater Anglia had explained to meeting attendees the manner in which the company's Station Adopters scheme operates (all volunteers are required to undergo training provided by Greater Anglia; the Station Adopters Group for a particular station must agree an annual action plan of works/activities with the manager of that station; the usual size of a Station Adopters group is three or four people); the key role of Station Adopters is to act as "ears and eyes" of the community and to inform Greater Anglia of any maintenance works needed.
- Greater Anglia announced an improved rail service for Manea, with effect from January 2014.

The Clerk informed members of the need to consider (and to suggest revisions if necessary) a draft Communications Plan for the improved rail service and to agree a quote, on behalf of Manea Parish Council, for the associated press release.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk be noted;
- (2) the Clerk would inform Fenland District Council of the Parish Council's suggested revisions to the communications plan for the improved rail service;
- (3) the Clerk would formulate, from the various comments made by members, a Parish Council quote for the press release in relation to the improved rail service, which he would, following consultation with (and agreement by) members, forward to Greater Anglia.

(3) Cranmore Lots (minute M47/13 (5))

The Clerk informed members that the period during which the current tenants of the Cranmore Lots agricultural allotments could serve a counter notice in relation to the notice given by the council that their tenancies would terminate on 11 October 2014 had now expired and that he had received no communications from these tenants.

Councillor Archer expressed his disappointment that notice had been given to the tenants of these allotments, despite his opinion - which had been sent to members by e-mail prior to notices being served - that the Parish Council should not dispose of a community asset (which provides an annual income for the Parish Council) without first undertaking a consultation exercise within the village. He suggested that the Parish Council should withdraw the notices served upon the tenants of these allotments and engage with the local community before making any decision to sell this allotment land.

Councillor Archer alleged that this course of action had only become necessary because of delays on the part of Councillor Jolley in submitting the planning application for the new pavilion (minute M60/13 (4) refers).

Councillor Jolley responded to Councillor Archer's allegation; he stated that he had taken no action which resulted in a delay in obtaining planning permission for the new pavilion and explained the process he had followed and the time which is needed to undertake the necessary processes, which included consideration by the Parish Council as to its exact requirements for the new building.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk be noted;
- (2) no action be taken to withdraw the notices served upon the tenants of the Cranmore Lots agricultural allotments or to consult with the community on the Parish Council's decision to sell this land.

(4) New pavilion for Manea (minute M47/13 (6))

Members discussed the need for the Parish Council to agree a business plan for the proposed new pavilion, acknowledging that it is necessary to demonstrate within the plan that such a facility would be sustainable financially. Without being able to demonstrate such sustainability, the Parish Council would be unable to secure grant funding towards the cost of constructing and equipping a new pavilion.

One key element of the income to be generated by use of the new building would be from bar sales. The Parish Council, therefore, needs to make a decision as to the extent of the bar facilities that would be provided – what days and times would such a facility operate?

The Clerk reminded members that when Councillor Jolley had sought members' views, from the perspective of producing a business plan, previously, the Parish Council had concluded (at minute M128/11 (4)) that "Members are conscious of the potential impact that operating a bar facility etc at the new pavilion could have upon existing businesses within the village but consider that, in the interests of the local community, it is essential to ensure the viability and sustainability of the new pavilion". On that basis, it was decided that "the business plan for the new pavilion be based upon the one for the similar facility in Wimblington".

With regard to potential sources of funding towards the cost of the proposed new building, Councillor Jolley informed members that WREN may be able to provide some funding towards the community aspects of the building but not towards the sporting element. He added that the Cambridgeshire Football Association had stated that it would be unable to provide financial support to the costs associated with this building.

Members decided that

(1) the current situation be noted;

(2) the Parish Council would consider, at the next meeting, the production of a business plan for the proposed new pavilion; in terms of the projected income, members would need to make a decision on the extent to which bar services would be operated at the new pavilion.

(5) Station Road, Manea (minute M47/13 (7))

The Clerk reported that he had received, via e-mail, an update on this matter from Fenland District Council's Head of Assets and Projects. The update states that an officer of Fenland District Council's Building Control Service had visited 48 Station Road and concluded, from his inspection, that the structure is not in a dangerous condition. Now that the structural status of the property has been established, officers at the District Council are evaluating possible options to address the issue and will continue to update Manea Parish Council.

Fenland District Council's Head of Assets and Projects makes the point that derelict and unsightly buildings are an issue across the district; this situation has been recognised by the District Council and, consequently, a Streets Ahead Enforcement Group, which would examine how the council could respond better to such concerns, has been established.

The Clerk reported that, since receipt of the e-mail from Fenland District Council's Head of Assets and Projects, he had received a letter from Fenland District Council's Planning Compliance Team (PCT), informing the Parish Council that the PCT is investigating the situation regarding 48 Station Road, with the aim of identifying a course of action available to the District Council.

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

(6) Traffic calming measure on Station Road, Manea (minute M54/13)

The Clerk reported that the Local Highway Authority had undertaken to examine the situation and to inform the Parish Council of the result of those investigations.

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

(7) Street lighting on Station Road, Manea (minute M55/13)

Councillor Mrs Berry reported that she had examined the post to which the "missing" street lamp had been affixed, with the aim of identifying the likely responsible authority for replacement of the street lamp, but had been unable to find any relevant information.

Councillor Woodard offered to investigate this matter further and to forward to the Clerk any information that he is able to obtain.

The Chairman commented that the concerns which had been raised by a local resident (minute M173/12 refers) regarding the reduction in the level of illumination that would occur in Orchard Way through the removal of street lamps in (as part of the County Council's street lighting programme) appear to have been justified; the Chairman suggested that if residents raise this as an issue with the Parish Council, it should consider making a representation to the County Council in that regard.

Members decided that the offer of Councillor Woodard, to investigate this matter further and to forward to the Clerk any information that he is able to obtain be accepted.

M61/13 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) Formation of a vehicular access to existing dwelling at 90 Westfield Road, Manea – F/YR13/0624/F (applicant: Mr D Drinkwater).

Object, on the basis that the proposed access roadway provides no facilities for the turning of vehicles; consequently, vehicles would not be able to both enter and exit the site in forward gear, detrimental to highway safety.

- (2) Erection of 4 dwellings on land south and west of Keswick, Station Road, Manea – F/YR13/0667/O (applicant: Mrs V Fox).

That the application be supported.

- (3) Erection of a 3-bed two-storey dwelling, involving demolition of existing dwelling, at Bottom Farm, Days Lode Road, Fodder Fen, Manea – F/YR13/0676/F (applicant: Mr and Mrs M Fowler).

That the application be supported, subject to the imposition on any permission granted of a condition requiring demolition of the existing dwelling upon completion of the replacement dwelling.

In addition, members noted that planning application F/YR13/0498/F (which proposed the erection of 2 x 3-bed log cabins for use as holiday accommodation and erection of 1.2 m high post and rail fencing on land north-east of The Woodlands days Lode Road, Fodder Fen, Manea), which was considered by the Parish Council at minute M48/13, had been withdrawn by the applicant.

M62/13 Police matters

PCSO Sam Dyer, of the March and Chatteris Policing Team, informed members of incidents of crime and disorder which had been reported to the Constabulary since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

PCSO Dyer commented that Manea continues to have the lowest rate of recorded crime in Fenland. Only three crimes had been reported within Manea since the last meeting of the Parish Council; these related to one theft of diesel from an item of farm machinery, one theft of diesel from the allotments and the theft of a set of alloy wheels from the garden of a residential property in the village.

The PCSO commented that the Constabulary would be devoting time over the next month to progress the development of Neighbourhood Watch schemes in Manea.

PCSO Dyer responded to members' questions.

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

M63/13 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

Councillor Connor, the County Councillor for the electoral division which includes Manea, was not present at the meeting. On this occasion, he had not provided any information, for reporting by the Clerk, on County Council-related issues.

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

- the District Council had played a part in assisting the creation of the Delamore Fenland Horticultural Academy - a new horticultural training centre, based at Delamore's premises in Wisbech St Mary, aimed at boosting skills levels and attracting new businesses into Fenland - which was opened officially on 30 August 2013. Delamore is currently working with the College of West Anglia and the Thomas Clarkson Academy to devise various courses and programmes.
- Fenland District Council and the National Landlords Association would be hosting jointly an event on 2 October 2013, to provide advice (on issues such as insurance and legal obligations) to anyone who is currently a landlord or thinking of becoming one.
- the latest programme for the roll-out of Superfast Broadband under the Connecting Cambridgeshire Project shows that works to deliver the provision of this enhanced service in Manea would be undertaken during the period April to July 2015.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M64/13 Public open spaces

- (1) The annual RoSPA inspection reports – the Chairman informed members that he had so far been unable, due to recent work commitments, to arrange the necessary actions to address the recommendations contained within the RoSPA reports but that he would take action between this meeting of the Parish Council and the next one.

The Chairman added that he had received no contact from the supplier/installer of the skateboard park (to discuss the repair works required to that equipment).

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted and that the Clerk would repeat his request to the supplier/installer of the skateboard park to make contact with the Chairman.

- (2) Allotments – a number of members commented upon the high quality of the work undertaken to repair the access roadway to the allotments site.

The Clerk reported that, in response to his letter to all of those who the council believes would derive benefit from these repair works (inviting them to make a financial contribution towards the repair costs), he had received one further response; the response was from the Fenland District Lodge of the Oddfellows, which had provided a contribution of £50.00 towards the cost of the repair works to the access roadway.

Further to minute M52/13, the Clerk informed members that the Manea Allotment Association would be happy to plant hedging along three sites of the allotments site but it is not sure exactly where the planting could be sited without encroaching on farmland or obstructing farm vehicles. The association has asked whether a member of the Parish Council would be able to indicate where such planting could be undertaken.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that the Chairman would meet with the Chairman of the Manea Allotment Association to discuss the planting of hedging at the allotments site.

- (3) Playing field – the Clerk read to members a letter from the Manea Gala Committee, in which the committee expressed its pleasure with the success of this year's gala and thanked the Parish Council for its support; enclosed with the letter was a donation to the Parish Council of £150.00.

Members decided that

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

(2) the review of the annual payment made to the playing field caretaker (minute M52/13 refers) be undertaken at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

M65/13 Manea Pit

Further to minutes PMC15/13 and M53/13, the Chairman reported that he had contacted the Environment Agency (EA), to enquire as to whether it would be able to provide some fish on a free-of-charge basis (as it had done previously); the response from the EA is that it would be unable to supply any fish currently but would note the Parish Council's interest for any fish that it may be able to provide in the future.

The Clerk informed members that the next meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee is scheduled for 26 September 2013.

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

M66/13 Financial matters

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

Income

Various (via I Fost)	Sale of fishing tickets	£148.50
Manea Gala Committee	Donation	£150.00
Oddfellows, Fenland District Lodge	Contribution towards cost of repair works to access road to allotments site	£50.00
Total Income		£348.50

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 12 August (£40) and 19 August 2013 (£10)	£50.00
P J Thory Ltd	Materials for works to allotment roadway (includes VAT of £203.59)	£1,221.53
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£52.34
D Cole	Cost of diesel and hardcore for works to allotment roadway	£142.00
Fenland Fisheries	Spraying reeds etc at Manea Pit (includes VAT of £33.50)	£201.00
E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.18)	£3.84
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.36)	£7.51
PKF Littlejohn LLP	External Audit of Annual Return 2012/13 (includes VAT of £40.00)	£240.00
HM Revenue and Customs	Clerk's Income Tax (June, July and August 2013).	£368.95
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £122.12), Broadband and other expenses	£630.98
Came and Company	Insurance for 2013/14	£1,339.01
R Harrison	Works to allotments roadway (includes VAT of £65.00)	£390.00
Total Expenditure		£4,647.16

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 August 2013 (in the total sum of £51,206.14), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 August 2012.

Further to minute M15/13, the Clerk reported that the Parish Council's accounts for 2012/13 had been "signed off" by the External Auditors.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Desborough, seconded by Councillor Emery, that the income of £348.50 be noted and that the payments totalling £4,647.16 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 August 2013, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 August 2012, be noted;
- (3) to note the situation regarding the Parish Council's accounts for 2012/13.

M67/13 Correspondence

Manea Matters.

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from the Treasurer of the Manea Matters publication, thanking the Parish Council for its support (through the purchase of editorial space in each edition) in 2013 and inviting it to continue with that support in 2014.

The Clerk informed members of the annual costs for 2014 of purchasing a full page, a half page or a quarter page in each edition of Manea Matters.

Members decided to continue to purchase a full page in each quarterly edition of the Manea Matters publication in 2014, at an annual cost of £80.00.

M68/13 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 21 October 2013, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.50 pm

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

Date:.....