

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

20 MAY 2013 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillor Archer.

In attendance: County Councillor Connor.

The minutes of the meeting of 15 April 2013 were confirmed and signed.

M1/13 Appointment of Chairman

Councillor Emery was appointed as Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2013/14 and made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in relation to that appointment.

M2/13 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Mrs Desborough was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2013/14 and made her Declaration of Acceptance of Office in relation to that appointment.

M3/12 Appointment of Parish Council Officers

Members of the Parish Council were appointed, unopposed, to act in the following offices of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2013/14:

- Cemetery Officer: Councillor Cole
- Recycling Officer: Councillor Risbridger
- Allotments Officer: Councillor Archer
- Footpaths and Trees Officer: Councillor Mrs Desborough
- Child Protection Officer: Councillor Mrs Berry.

M4/12 Appointment of Parish Council members to the Manea Pit Management Committee

Councillors Archer, Cole, Mrs Desborough, Emery and Fielding were appointed as the Parish Council's representatives on the Manea Pit Management Committee for the municipal year 2013/14. Councillors Mrs Desborough and Emery were appointed as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee respectively for the municipal year 2013/14.

M5/13 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.

M6/13 Manea's Action Plan 2013

Further to minute M89/12, members received a further presentation from Mr P Townrow, a representative of the Manea Action Plan (MAP) group, on the current position regarding the production of the plan; copies of the final draft version of the plan had been circulated to Parish Council members by the MAP group in advance of the meeting.

Mr Townrow stated that all of the work on production of the plan had been completed; the only action to undertake is for the MAP group to agree a cover for the document. He informed members that 1,000 copies of the plan would be produced, which would be sufficient for issuing one copy to each household in Manea plus a quantity of spare copies for future new households and other interested parties etc.

Those villagers who deliver the Manea Matters publication have offered to assist with the delivery of copies of the plan to households in the parish.

Mr Townrow informed members that the Manea Action Plan group would have a stall at this year's Manea Gala, for the purpose of raising awareness of the plan and to answer any questions that parishioners may have regarding the content of the document. He added that the final meeting of the MAP group is scheduled for 16 July 2013; the group would then be disbanded to be replaced by an implementation group.

Mr Townrow expressed thanks, on behalf of the MAP group, to certain people and organisations within the community who/which had assisted in the delivery of this project. He informed members that it is necessary to "wind up" the Awards for All grant aid process; it is anticipated that the total budget for the project may be under spent by around £20 to £30 and the MAP group proposes to donate any under spending to the Manea Royal British Legion club as a token of appreciation for providing free-of-charge accommodation for MAP group meetings.

Members decided that the Manea Action Plan 2013 be endorsed and that the members of the Manea Action Plan group be thanked for the considerable time and effort that they had devoted to this project.

M7/13 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011-2031 and Manea Station (minute M170/12 (1))

The Clerk informed members that he had been unable to obtain, since the last meeting of the Parish Council, an update from the Transport Development Manager at the District Council on the progress of this matter.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that he would continue to seek information relating to the progress in this matter, for reporting to the Parish Council.

(2) Trees in Manea (minute M170/12 (2))

The Chairman reported that the contractor had completed the works to the trees and hedging at the playing field. A number of members made very positive comments about this work.

The Chairman mentioned that one of the trees at the cemetery is in need of urgent works.

Councillor Mrs Desborough reported that she is currently in the process of undertaking inspections of the trees in the village and that she would be inform members of her conclusions following completion of the exercise.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman and Councillor Mrs Desborough be noted and that the contractor which undertook the works to the trees and hedging at the playing field be invited to undertake the works to the particular tree at the cemetery.

(3) Commemorating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee (minute M170/12 (3))

Councillor Jolley informed members that he would be contacting later this week the company which manufactures the proposed replica arch.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Jolley be noted and that he would report further at the next meeting.

(4) Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership (minute M170/12 (4))

The Clerk reported on the current position in this matter; he informed members that he had completed the majority of the application form but had reached the point where input was required from the members of the Manea Pit Management Committee. He had, therefore, sought to achieve the necessary discussion at 15 May 2013 meeting of that committee. Also, he had invited Mark Nokkert, Cambridgeshire ACRE's Programme Manager for this Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership scheme, to the management committee meeting to explain the sections of the application form which required further information.

Prior to the management committee meeting, the Clerk had sent its members a copy of the partly completed application form, asking them to think about the following issues:

- The risks associated with the project and any mitigating actions in that regard
- How the pond dipping area will be promoted/publicised to achieve usage by children other than those attending the Primary School
- How the Manea project links to others in the Ouse Washes scheme
- How volunteer labour/input will feature within the project – what tasks, how many volunteers etc.

Councillor Emery had attended a presentation event on 9 May 2013, at which representatives of all the bodies applying for funding under this scheme had outlined their respective projects.

The Clerk would be meeting with Mr Nokkert, at the offices of Cambridgeshire ACRE, on 23 May 2013 with the aim of finalising the application form.

Mr Nokkert had explained to the management committee that the application would need to explain:

- the justification, in terms of community need/benefit, for the Manea project
- how the facilities delivered by the project would be promoted/publicised
- the tasks which would be undertaken by volunteers, detailing the number of persons needed and the length of time they would be needed
- the linkages between the Manea project and the others within the Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership scheme.

At its 15 May 2013 meeting, the Manea Pit Management Committee had decided (minute PMC61/12 refers) that, having listened to the comments of both the Clerk and Mr Nokkert, members would forward their comments, as a matter of priority, to the Clerk, to enable him to produce a final draft of the application form in time for his meeting with Mr Nokkert on 23 May 2013. However, with the exception of information provided by the representative of Manea Community Primary School, no member of the committee had so far forwarded comments to the Clerk.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that he would send electronically a copy of the partly completed application form to each Parish Councillor.

(5) Dog waste bin (minute M177/12)

The Clerk reported that Fenland District Council is seeking to identify a suitable location along Westfield Road for the installation of a dog waste bin. He added that the cost of the bin would be £153.80.

The most suitable location on Westfield Road is found to have power cables running below the surface and, consequently, is not able to be used for the installation of a waste bin. The relevant officer at the District Council is seeking to identify a suitable alternative location.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that he would keep the Parish Council informed of the progress in this matter.

(6) Vehicle parking on East Street, Manea (minute M178/12)

The Chairman informed members that he had raised this issue at 17 April 2013 meeting of the Chatteris and Manea Neighbourhood Forum and the Constabulary had undertaken to address members' concerns.

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

(7) Use of Parish Council land and buildings (minute M179/12)

The Clerk reported that he is now in possession of a copy of the insurance cover held by the Manea United Football Club.

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

(8) Cranmore Lots – drainage (minute M181/12 (1))

Councillor Cole reported that the Chairman and he and the Chairman had inspected the site and concluded that drainage works would be beneficial.

Arising from discussion of this matter, members identified the fact that the sale of the agricultural allotments at Cranmore (with a total area of 13 acres and currently producing an annual income of £1,300) could be one means of generating a capital receipt for the Parish Council which could be used to contribute towards the construction costs of the proposed new pavilion (minute M16/13 (2) refers).

The Clerk reminded members that any proposal to sell this agricultural allotment land would require the tenants to be given twelve months notice of termination of their tenancies with effect from October in any year; consequently, the earliest date that the Parish Council could dispose of this land would be October 2014.

Members decided that

- (1) the offer of Councillor Cole to obtain a quotation for appropriate drainage works at this site be accepted;
- (2) they would consider, at the next meeting, the possibility of selling the Cranmore Lots agricultural allotments as a means of generating a capital receipt for the Parish Council which could be used to contribute towards the construction costs of the proposed new pavilion.

M8/13 Planning applications

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had received no planning applications, for consultation purposes, from the District Council since the last meeting.

Members decided that the situation regarding the absence of planning applications requiring consideration by the Parish Council at this time be noted.

M9/13 Proposed residential development (of 13 affordable one-bedroom bungalows) at Valentine Close, Manea

Mr K Elener, the architect for a local developer, informed members of a scheme for the erection of thirteen, one-bed bungalows at Valentine Close, Manea. He circulated plans showing the design of the properties and the proposed layout of the scheme. He informed members that these plans had been forwarded to Fenland District Council as part of the pre-application process.

Mr Elener made the point that his client recognises the need for affordable homes in the village, particularly for the elderly, and feels that this scheme would help address that need. He commented that the recent planning permission for the development off Williams Way does provide four two-bed bungalows but any unoccupied bed spaces in properties would attract a reduction in benefits for those in receipt of Housing Benefit payments (often referred to as the “bedroom tax”); this could not be the case with one-bed properties.

The developer’s agent also informed members that his client has decided not to implement a planning permission for the erection of five executive dwellings at High Street Farm but, instead, proposes to submit a planning application at some future date for the erection of a scheme for two-bedroom bungalows on that site.

Mr Elener added that his client intends that all of the proposed bungalows would be available at affordable rents (that being 80% of market rents in perpetuity) and that the properties would be managed by the developer, as opposed to a Housing Authority or Registered Social Landlord; this would be assured through a legal agreement linked to the planning permission.

Mr Elener responded to members’ questions.

Members share the view of Mr Elener and his client that there is a demand in Manea for single-storey properties for elderly residents in the village and feel that these proposals, particularly the one for one-bed units (as they would not subject those occupiers in receipt of benefits to the “bedroom tax”), would be a major benefit to the local community.

Members are also of the opinion that the scheme for thirteen one-bed bungalows is well designed and would meet a specific housing need in Manea; this need is demonstrated through the data obtained to inform the new Manea Action Plan (minute M6/13 refers).

Members decided that the proposals outlined by Mr Elener – both the current scheme for the erection of one-bed bungalows at Valentine Close and the future proposal for the erection of two-bed bungalows (instead of five executive houses) at High Street Farm, together with the management arrangements indicated – be supported by the Parish Council in principle.

(Councillor Cole declared his pecuniary interest in this item of business, by virtue of his ownership of the land subject to this development proposal, and retired from the meeting for the discussion of the discussion and voting thereon)

M10/13 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 currently has the lowest rate of recorded crime in Fenland; no crimes had been reported within Manea since the beginning of April 2013.

The PCSO added that Speed Watch initiative is active within Manea and that the Constabulary is keen to establish Neighbourhood Watch schemes within the village; he and PCSO Martin Bogunovic would soon be undertaking leaflet drops in the village, with the aim of recruiting Neighbourhood Watch volunteers.

PCSO Dyer responded to members' questions.

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

M11/13 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

Councillor Archer, the District Councillor for Manea, was not present at the meeting and, on this occasion, he had not produced information, for reporting by the Clerk, on District Council-related issues.

Councillor Connor, the recently-elected County Councillor for the electoral division which includes Manea reported that the County Council elections on 2 May 2013 had resulted in no political group having overall control of the council; a meeting of the Conservative Group members of the County Council would take place at Shire Hall tomorrow, at which the Conservative Group's approach to the situation should become clearer. Councillor Connor gave a commitment to the Parish Council that he would be an active councillor for Manea, providing his support to the community in any way needed.

Councillor Jolley, the District Councillor for the Wimblington ward on the District Council, informed members that

- Fenland District Council's Cabinet is examining the feasibility of replacing all of the street lamps owned by the District Council and the Parish Councils within the district, in association with the County Council's current street lighting replacement programme.
- a campaign to promote and develop the towns' markets is underway; this includes exploring the possibility of holding a March Christmas Market (similar to the one which has operated in Wisbech for a number of years).

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M12/13 Public open spaces

- (1) Annual RoSPA inspection report – the Clerk reported the receipt of this report, which suggests that certain minor works are required to equipment etc at the playing field. A separate report has been produced in relation to the skateboard park; the report has identified defects which require addressing.

Members decided that the RoSPA reports 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) Playing field – the Chairman expressed the opinion that the public toilets at the playing field would benefit from being re-painted and he offered, subject to other members' agreement, to undertake this work for the Parish Council.

Members decided that the Chairman's offer to undertake re-painting of the public toilets at the playing field be accepted

M13/13 Manea Pit

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee held on 15 May 2013.

At minute 15 May 2013 meeting (minute PMC66/12 refers) the management committee decided to

- (1) recommend to the Parish Council that, in an attempt to address the problems associated with the litter bins around the pit – i.e. persons unknown filling the bins with domestic household rubbish and waste sacks being cut and then put back into the bins – the litter bins currently sited around the pit be re-located to the car park;
- (2) request the Parish Council to consider the purchase of an inflatable dinghy for use at Manea Pit (for the purpose of enabling members of the Carp Syndicate to clear broken fishing lines and other debris from the pit, freeing tethered fish and wildlife etc);
- (3) recommend to the Parish Council that a £30.00 joining fee be introduced for new members of the Carp Syndicate, to provide an incentive for members to renew their membership annually.

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that it had considered previously (at minute M24/12) a request from the Carp Syndicate to purchase an inflatable dinghy and that the Parish Council had decided that there would be no purchase of any equipment at that 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.

The Chairman reported the prices obtained by Mr Westgate, the Secretary of the Carp Syndicate, for the purchase of a suitable inflatable dinghy; these ranged from around £300 to £500.

Councillor Jolley reported that, further to minute PMC53/12, two metal bollards (to prevent unauthorised parking around the pit area) had been manufactured and installed. In addition, he informed members, further to minute M160/12, that the cost of providing a gate and fence to prevent unauthorised vehicular access to the woodland area would be £800.00; In response to Councillor Jolley's comments, Councillor Fielding mentioned that he would be attending an auction in the very near future, at which it may be possible to acquire a suitable gate at a lower cost.

Members decided that

- (1) the contents of the Manea Pit Management Committee minutes and the associated updates be noted;
- (2) it would not be appropriate to remove the litter bins currently sited around the pit and re-locate them to the car park;
- (3) the decision made at minute M24/12 in relation to the request for purchase of an inflatable dinghy at that time remains valid and, consequently, the Parish Council would not be purchasing a dinghy for use at Manea Pit;
- (4) it is not appropriate to consider, at this time, the introduction of joining fee for new members of the Carp Syndicate, as the Parish Council proposes to consider, in advance of the 2014/15 membership period, whether a Carp Syndicate should continue to operate; the Parish Council feels that there could be merit in Carp fishing tickets being issued directly by the Parish Council;
- (5) in the event that Councillor Fielding is unable to source a suitable gate (for installation at the woodland area), Councillor Jolley would proceed with the purchase and installation of a new gate and fencing (at a cost of £800.00).

M14/13 Parish Council and community projects and initiatives

(1) Community-led plan for Manea (minute M164/12 (1))

The Chairman reported that he had nothing to add to the content of the presentation made by a representative of the Manea Action Plan (MAP) group at minute M7/13.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that this matter would no longer feature as a regular item on Parish Council agendas.

(2) New pavilion for Manea (minute M164/12 (2))

Councillor Jolley informed members that the Clerk is now in possession of the application form for a grant under the District Council's Rural Capital Grants scheme and that he would be providing the Clerk with the supporting information which needs to accompany the application (which includes a business plan) in the near future.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that Councillor Jolley and the Clerk would provide a further update at the next meeting.

M15/13 Financial matters

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

Income

A Howell	Allotment rent	£200.00
C Howell	Allotment rent	£200.00
P Lawrence	Allotment rent	£200.00
C Barnes	Allotment rent	£25.00
E Barnes	Allotment rent	£200.00
B Fletcher	Allotment rent	£200.00
J Lawrence	Allotment rent	£200.00
Various (via I Fost)	Fishing fees	£125.00
Carp Syndicate	Membership fees for 2013/14	£720.00
Richard King Memorials Ltd	2 x memorial tablets	£200.00
Fenland District Council	Parish Precept – first 50% (including £939.50 Council Tax Support)	12,500.00
Fenland District Council	Recycling credits	£5.86
Total Income		£14,775.86

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 15 April 2013	£7.50
Public Works Loans Board	Loan re-payment	£95.39
Shaw and Sons	Receipts and Payments ledger	£70.80
E Mason and Son	Grounds maintenance: March 2013	£643.20
E Mason and Son	Grounds maintenance: April 2013	£1,041.91
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£66.04
Sears Bros. Ltd	Verge cutting 2012	£989.10
Haine Tree Services Ltd	Tree works	£6,010.00

T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £126.18), Broadband and other expenses	£622.74
Playsafety Limited	Annual RoSPA inspections	£177.60
E.on	Electricity for sports area	£11.51
E.on	Electricity for village green	£7.51
E.on	Electricity for pavilion	£48.20
I Cooper	Fee for internal audit 2012/13	£200.00
Ridgeons	Two combination locks	£30.84
R Jolley	Steel doors for toilet block and 2 removable bollards for pit area	£480.00
H Westgate	Cost of stamps – Carp Syndicate	£36.00
Total Expenditure		£10,538.34

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 April 2013 (in the total sum of £63,284.06), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 April 2012.

The Clerk reported also on the Annual Audit of Accounts return for 2012/13, informing members that the document had been examined and approved by the council's Internal Auditor. The Internal Auditor is very satisfied with the Parish Council's compliance with relevant procedures and controls and the quality of the record keeping undertaken by the Clerk.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Emery, seconded by Councillor Fielding, that the income of £14,775.86 be noted and that the payments totalling £10,538.34 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 April 2013, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 April 2012, be noted;
- (3) that the Audited Accounts for 2012/13 be approved and submitted to the External Auditors.

M16/13 Correspondence

- (1) Cambridgeshire Shrievally Trust - request for financial assistance.

Members considered an application for a financial donation from the Cambridgeshire Shrievally Trust (i.e. the Cambridgeshire Bobby Scheme) towards the cost of the works that it undertakes to improve the security of the homes of elderly and vulnerable people across the County.

Members decided that a financial donation of £50.00 be made to the Cambridgeshire Shrievally Trust.

- (2) Road Victims Trust – request for financial assistance.

The Clerk reported a letter from the Road Victims Trust, the purpose of which is to both introduce the body to the Parish Council as it expands its services (operated currently in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) into Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (effective from April 2013) and to request financial assistance towards its operational costs.

The letter states that the Road Victims Trust, which is a registered charity, was established to support those affected by fatal road collisions either as family, friends or witnesses. The services provide comprehensive support to meet the specific practical and emotional needs of those affected by the impact of the sudden and violent circumstance of a road death and the ensuing legal and coronial procedures.

As a non-profit-making organisation which offers its services free-of-charge and receives no statutory funding, the Road Victims Trust needs to raise all its funding by way of grants, donations and fundraising events.

Members decided that

- (1) as this venture is new to Cambridgeshire and, consequently, the level of benefit which would be derived by residents of not only the County generally but the parish of Manea specifically is currently unknown, no financial assistance be provided to the Road Victims Trust (RVT) at this time;
- (2) it would be appropriate to consider a funding request following one year's operation of the service within Cambridgeshire and on the basis of statistical information that the RVT could provide, to demonstrate the benefits derived by local people, at that time.
- (3) Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT) – financial assistance.

Further to minute M155/12 (2), the Clerk read to members a letter of thanks from FACT in relation to the financial assistance provided by the Parish Council to support the Manea Dial-A-Ride service.

Members decided that the content of the letter be noted.

- (4) Manea Gala – storage facilities.

The Clerk reported a letter from the Chairman of the Manea Gala Committee, informing the Parish Council that the committee is in the process of purchasing two containers for storage of the items associated with the annual village gala; these containers would replace the two lorry bodies, located at the playing field, used currently for that purpose.

In addition, Manea Gala Committee asks whether the Parish Council would consider insuring these containers and their contents in exchange for the committee donating the containers to the Parish Council and then paying it an annual rental of £200 for the use of the containers.

The Clerk gave members advice in relation to the requirements for insurance of its assets (and the level of excess applying to its current policy of insurance) and its liabilities in respect of public safety, together with the importance of evaluating such issues on the basis of an appropriate risk assessment.

Members decided that Manea Gala Committee be granted permission to situate two storage containers at the playing field, for the purpose of storing items associated with the annual Manea Gala – members feel that the containers would be preferable to the lorry bodies used currently for this purpose – but can see no need for either Manea Gala Committee or Manea Parish Council to provide insurance cover for the containers. Under this arrangement, the containers would not be “donated” to the Parish Council but remain in the ownership, together with their contents (which the gala committee could decide to insure), of Manea Gala Committee.

M17/13 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 17 June 2013, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea; this meeting will be preceded by the annual village inspection, commencing at 6.00 pm at the pavilion.

Meeting finished at 8.40 pm

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

Date:.....