

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

13 JANUARY 2014 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillors Fielding and Jolley.

The minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2013 were confirmed and signed.

M107/13 Open Forum

(1) Manea Action Plan

Ms D Rowe, a member of the Manea Action Plan Implementation Group (MAPIG), reminded the Parish Council that MAPIG will be holding an open meeting, at the Royal British Legion Club, on 31 March 2014 (commencing at 7.30 pm) and expressed the hope that a number of Parish Council members would attend the meeting.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

(2) Conifers adjacent to Cathedral View, Manea

A resident of Cathedral View informed the Parish Council of his concerns regarding the potential for damage to his property from four large conifers on the Park Road playing field and enquired as to whether the Parish Council would undertake works to these conifers to remove the risk to his property.

Members decided that the comments of the resident be noted and that his request be considered at minute M114/13.

M108/13 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.

M109/13 Community Governance Review

Members received a presentation from Anna Goodall, Head of Governance and Legal Services at Fenland District Council (FDC), on FDC's undertaking of a Community Governance Review.

Mrs Goodall informed members that Fenland District Council has decided to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) with the aim of addressing some boundary anomalies across the district which had resulted from the recent review of District Council electoral wards by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). One of these anomalies is that the co-terminosity which currently exists between the district and parish ward boundaries in Chatteris and Manea would no longer exist from the local elections in May 2015. The District

Council is hopeful that it will be possible to achieve, through the CGR, a situation whereby co-terminosity can be restored.

Mrs Goodall showed members a map which detailed the new district wards for Manea and Chatteris; the new Manea ward is increased in size, taking in part of the existing Birch ward of Chatteris and affects 114 electors – if no changes to parish boundaries were made, these electors would be Manea voters for the purpose of the District Council elections but Chatteris voters for the Town/Parish Council elections. The view of the District Council is that the logical approach would be to align the Manea Parish Council electoral ward boundary with that of the new Manea District ward boundary.

Mrs Goodall explained the purpose of a Community Governance Review (CGR) and the manner in which the process must be operated.

The CGR will consider whether governance arrangements within affected parishes are:

- a) reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area;
- b) effective and convenient to the community in that area.

In doing so, the review is required to take into account:

- a) the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion;
- b) the size, population and boundaries of the local community or parish.

Before making or publishing Final Proposals as a result of the CGR, the District Council will take full account of the views of local people by:

- a) consulting local government electors for areas under review;
- b) consulting any other person or body (including a local authority) which appears to the District Council to have an interest in the review;
- c) consulting the County Council;
- d) taking into account any representations received in connection with the review.

At the conclusion of the CGR process, the District Council will notify each consultee and any other persons or bodies who/which have made written representations of the outcome of the review.

A CGR must be concluded within a twelve months period from the day on which the review commences. A CGR commences when the District Council publishes its Terms of Reference and concludes when that council publishes the recommendations made in the review. Mrs Goodall detailed the review timetable, which begins with publication of the terms of reference on 15 January 2014, followed by adoption of final proposals by the District Council on 24 July 2014 and submission of those proposals to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England by September 2014.

The Boundary Commission has suggested that a relevant consideration for the District Council when undertaking a CGR is that the district wards / county electoral divisions should not split an unwarded parish and that no parish ward should be split by such a boundary. Mrs Goodall made the point that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would soon be embarking upon a review of the Cambridgeshire County Council's electoral divisions; the outcome of that review could have implications for parish boundaries.

Mrs Goodall stated that the District Council wishes to engage with as many community groups and interested parties as possible as part of the CGR.

The electoral arrangements for a new or existing parish council will come into force at the next elections to the parish council which will be on 7 May 2015.

Mrs Goodall responded to members' questions.

Members decided that the information reported by Mrs Goodall be noted and that it would participate fully in this process.

M110/13 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Charlemont Drive, Manea (minute M96/13 (1))

The Clerk reported that he is still awaiting a response from the Charlemont Drive Residents' Association as to whether it would be prepared to meet 50% of the cost of purchasing and installing a waste bin on the estate.

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

(2) Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011-2031 and Manea Station (minute M96/13 (2))

The Chairman reported on the official launch of the Manea two hour rail service held on 10 January 2014, which had been very successful. He anticipates that the event would receive good coverage in the local press.

Various members commented that this new rail service, which commenced on 28 December 2013 is operating well and being used by a wide variety of local people.

Members decided that the current situation be noted.

(3) New pavilion for Manea (minute M96/13 (3))

The Clerk reported that he had no updates to report in relation to this matter.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

(4) Station Road, Manea (minute M96/13 (4))

The Clerk reported that the situation remains the same as reported at minute M96/13 (4).

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

(5) Fodder Fen, Manea (minute M105/13)

The Clerk informed members that he had both requested Fenland District Council to install, just past the railway gates on Station Road, a street name plate bearing the words "Fodder Fen" and had sought to arrange a meeting of relevant persons/agencies with the aim of devising an approach to addressing the issues of mud on the roads at Fodder Fen/Station Road.

The Clerk reported that the relevant team at Fenland District Council is considering the request for installation of a Fodder Fen street name plate.

With regard to arranging a meeting to discuss the issues of mud on the roads at Fodder Fen/Station Road, the Clerk reported that he had been informed by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) that a meeting took place during week commencing 6 January 2014 at Days Lode. Councillor Emery had represented the Parish Council. Although the meeting was organised to discuss Days Lode, attendees also discussed Fodder Fen and Byall Fen

Road. All attendees agreed that the situation needs to be resolved prior to the next Maize harvest and that discussions need to continue with all parties to agree an action plan.

The Chairman informed members of the issues discussed at the meeting and the actions agreed in relation to Days Lode Road, which had been damaged severely in parts by actions to remove mud; to address the situation, two local residents will undertake works to lower the verge, following which the LHA will level the surface of the carriageway using road planings.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk and the Chairman be noted;
- (2) the Clerk would request to Local Highway Authority to arrange a meeting involving all relevant parties to discuss further the issues of mud on the roads at Fodder Fen/Station Road associated with the annual Maize harvest.

(6) Purls Bridge Road, Manea (minute M104/13 (3))

The Clerk reported to members the update that he had received from the Local Highway Authority (LHA) in relation to repair of the carriageway at Purls Bridge Road, Manea.

The LHA has now been allocated funding for maintenance along Purls Bridge Road, Manea and it is proposed that these works, which are anticipated to take around two weeks to complete, would commence on 20 January 2014.

As Purls Bridge Road is a no through road, there is no diversion route available. This, along with the fact that the carriageway is only single track, means that contractors would need to work differently to normal. Usually, a road closure would be booked but, as it will be necessary to maintain access to properties, a road closure would achieve very little. Therefore, temporary traffic signals would be used. Both sets of signals would be set to red and if a vehicle needs to come through it would be escorted through once the road is clear of plant and machinery.

There will be fixed working times – likely to be 9.00 am to 4.00 pm - which will hopefully give the majority of people the opportunity to travel outside of this.

In advance of the works commencing, officers of the LHA will be delivering letters to residents and businesses affected by the works. In addition, advance works boards will be placed at the entrance to the road.

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

M111/13 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 single-storey side and rear extensions and alterations to form first-floor accommodation, involving demolition of garage to existing dwelling and siting of temporary mobile home during alterations, at 3A Westfield Road, Manea - F/YR13/0938/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs Law).

That the application be supported.

(Councillor Cole declared his pecuniary interest in this application, by virtue of his ownership of land adjoining the application site, and retired from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon)

M112/13 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. There had been no crimes reported within Manea since the last meeting of the Parish Council; the only incident reported was of a domestic nature. He added that there had been no further issues relating to mud on roads since December 2013.

The PCSO informed members that he is currently the primary PCSO contact for Manea and that contact can be made with him by telephoning 07738 025149.

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

M113/13 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

Neither Councillor Archer, the District Councillor for Manea, nor Councillor Connor, the County Councillor for the electoral division which includes Manea, was present at the meeting. On this occasion, neither councillor had provided any information for the Clerk to report to the Parish Council on their behalf.

Some members expressed disappointment at the lack of regular attendance at meetings of Manea Parish Council by these councillors.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M114/13 Public open spaces

- (1) Playing field – further to minute M101/13 (1), the Chairman reported that Councillor Cole and he had met with the local person able to provide advice in terms of the improvement works required to the surface of the football pitches and that, as a result, that person had provided a quotation for undertaking the works required, in the total sum of £1,050.00 per occasion (twice a year is being recommended); the works involve aeration, fertilization, overseeding and top dressing of both football pitches.

Further to minute M107/13 (2), members considered the request of the resident of Cathedral View for the Parish Council to undertake works to the four conifers which border his property.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Chairman regarding the improvement works required to the surface of the football pitches be noted and that the quotation in that regard be accepted;
 - (2) the Chairman would obtain from the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contractor a quotation for reducing the height of the four conifers which border the property at Cathedral View, so that they would no longer pose a risk to that property.
- (2) Playing field toilets – further to minute M101/13 (3), members considered the prices obtained by the local resident for the hand basins (china and stainless steel types), taps, waste pipes etc for installation in both of the public toilets at the playing field.

Members decided that the local resident be authorised to proceed with the works to install hand basins in the public toilets at the playing field, on the basis of using 35 cm white china corner sinks (at a cost of £82.69 each); in addition, members noted the cost of the pipe work and associated fixings etc (estimated at less than £150.00).

- (3) The annual RoSPA inspection reports – further to minute M101/13 (4), the Clerk reported that the contractor had undertaken the repair works to one of the pieces of play equipment but because of the overall condition of the roundabout and the difficulties that had been experienced by the company in trying to remove the structure (to be able to fit new bearings) without causing damage to either the roundabout or the surfacing, the contractor had not undertaken any works to that piece of equipment.

The contractor is, therefore, seeking the council's instructions as to how it wishes to proceed in this matter – request the contractor to attempt removal of the roundabout (to facilitate replacement of the bearings) and possibly cause damage to both the structure and the surfacing?; take no further action to address the recommendations of the RoSPA report with regard to the roundabout?; accept one of the quotations provided by the contractor for the supply and installation of a new roundabout (minimum cost of £4,000.00) and associated safety surfacing (costing approximately £2,800.00).

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk be noted;
- (2) the Chairman and Councillor Cole would inspect the condition of the roundabout and report to the next meeting of the Parish Council on their findings.

M115/13 Financial matters

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

Income

P Clarke	Allotment rent	£250.00
Fenland District Council	Recycling Credits	£12.17
A R Clingo	Interment fee	£154.00
Fenland District Council	Concurrent Functions grant – second instalment	£1,955.00
Turner and Son	Burial plot purchase and interment fee	£578.00
Total Income		£2,949.17

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 16 December 2013	£10.00
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£79.38
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £124.27), Broadband and other expenses	£573.57
E Mason and Son (Farmers) Ltd	Grounds maintenance: November and December 2013 (includes VAT of £232.90)	£1,397.40
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.70)	£14.64

E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.94)	£19.66
E.on	Electricity for pavilion (includes VAT of £7.49)	£157.21
Anglian Water	Water for playing field	£5.20
Anglian Water	Water for cemetery	£4.73
M Short	Second half-year Caretaking wages	£425.00
Richard Yardy 2002 Ltd	Electrical works at pavilion (includes VAT of £10.44)	£62.64
Fenland Leisure Products Ltd	Repairs to play equipment (includes VAT of £63.20)	£379.20
Total Expenditure		£3,128.63

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 December 2013 (in the total sum of £50,617.47), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 December 2012.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Desborough, seconded by Councillor Woodard, that the income of £2,949.17 be noted and that the payments totalling £3,128.63 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 December 2013, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 December 2012, be noted.

M116/13 Parish Precept 2014/15

Members considered the level of Parish Precept for the financial year 2014/15.

The Clerk presented a detailed report on the Parish Council's income and expenditure for 2012/13 and as at 31 December 2013, the financial position as at that date, estimates of income and expenditure for 2014/15 and various notes to aid members' deliberations regarding the level of Parish Precept to be set, including the facts that

- the difference between the estimated expenditure and estimated income for 2014/15 (without the inclusion of any new projects/schemes) is £23,170.00.
- the Manea Parish Council Precept for 2013/14 was £23,127.00 (to which was added £1,879.00 by the District Council in Council Tax Support Grant, giving a total Precept income of £25,000.00).
- the level of Council Tax Support Grant which had been allocated by Fenland District Council to Manea Parish Council for 2014/15 is £1,451.00 (as opposed to £1,879.00 in 2013/14).
- the Parish Council was awarded a Concurrent Functions Grant by Fenland District Council of £3,910 in 2013/14. The estimated receipts figures for 2014/15 show Concurrent Functions Grant income from Fenland District Council at 2/3 of the level paid in the current financial year. This grant will reduce by a further 1/3 in 2015/16 and will cease being paid in 2016/17.
- the income from allotments rents has been reduced by £650.00 for 2014/15, as no rent will be due from the Cranmore Lots after the April 2013 payment (there will be no October 2013 payment because of the council's decision at minute M33/13 (6) to sell these allotments to generate a capital receipt).
- the estimates of expenditure include continued funding for operation of the Manea Youth Club.
- the Parish Council decided at minute M76/13 that it would consider, as part of the budget-setting process for 2014/15, undertaking improvement works to the surface of the football pitch (at Park Road playing field).

- the Parish Council decided at minute M53/13 that it would consider, when setting the Parish Council's Precept for 2013/14, the provision of a proper surface to the car parking area at Manea Pit (based upon estimates when the matter was considered previously, the works are likely to cost around £3,000).
- Fenland District Council has recently informed all of the Town and Parish Councils within Fenland that a review of the street lighting stock in the district, a proportion of which is owned by those local councils, is to be carried out. Once the review has been concluded, each local council will be informed of the street lighting which requires repair or replacement. On that basis, a sum of £2,500 has been included in the 2014/15 estimates to fund such works.

Members decided, unanimously, that

- (1) the Parish Council's income and expenditure for 2012/13 and as at 31 December 2013 and the financial position as at that date be noted;
- (2) the estimates of income and expenditure for 2014/15 be noted and, subject to increases in the estimated expenditure figures to make financial provision for undertaking surfacing works to the car parking area at Manea Pit (minute M53/13 refers) and carrying out improvement works to the surface of the football pitch (minute M76/13 refers), be approved as the basis of the Parish Council's budget for 2014/15;
- (3) being mindful of the current economic circumstances, the Parish Council's financial position and its desire to be able to continue to meet the needs of the community, the level of Parish Precept for 2014/15 be set at £27,549 (on the basis of a financial requirement of £29,000 less the Council Tax Support Grant from Fenland District Council of £1,451.00).

(Councillors Mrs Berry, Cole, Mrs Desborough, Emery, Risbridger and Woodard declared their respective pecuniary interest in the setting of the Parish Council Precept, by virtue of having a beneficial interest in a domestic dwelling within the parish, but had been granted a dispensation to speak and vote in this matter)

M117/13 Manea Pit

The Clerk informed members that no meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee had taken place since the last meeting of the Parish Council and that the next one had been arranged for 27 January 2014.

Further to minute M102/13, the Chairman reported that he had been unable, to date, to obtain from the Secretary of the Carp Syndicate a list of syndicate members. In addition, the Clerk reported that, in accordance with minute IMPC1/13, he had sent an e-mail to Mr H Westgate asking if he would be happy for one of the other members of the Syndicate to attend meetings of the Manea Pit management Committee in his stead but he had received no response to his e-mail.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk and the Chairman be noted and that the Clerk would inform another member of the Carp Syndicate who attends the meetings of the Manea Pit Management Committee in an unofficial capacity of the concerns of the Parish Council regarding the relationship between the Carp Syndicate and the Parish Council (via the Manea Pit Management Committee) and the implications that this could have for the future of the syndicate beyond 2014/15 unless that relationship improves.

M118/13 The General Power of Competence

Further to minute M104/13 (2), members considered adoption of the General Power of Competence.

The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, a briefing paper on the General Power of Competence; this included details of:

- a) the legislative background to the power - Sections 1 to 8 of the Localism Act 2011
- b) what the power allows councils to do - "anything that individuals generally may do"
- c) the risks and restrictions limiting use of the General Power of Competence – restrictions would include the duty to:
 - act with regard to crime and disorder
 - consider conserving biodiversity
 - provide allotments if there is a demand for such
 - act within relevant law and regulations, relating to issues such as: Health and Safety, company law (if it wishes to trade), employment legislation, the law relating to local council governance.
- d) how the General Power of Competence (GPC) relates to Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 – a council which adopts the GPC no longer needs to use Section 137 as a power for taking action for the benefit of its community
- e) the eligibility criteria for a council to adopt the General Power of Competence.

With regard to e) above, a council must resolve to use the power, record the decision in its minutes, and renew that resolution at the annual meeting following each ordinary election (every four years; the next one taking place in May 2015). At the time of the resolution, the council must have both a qualified clerk (possessing, for example, the Certificate in Local Council Administration) and at least two-thirds of the members of the council must have been elected (and not co-opted) to the council.

Given that seven of its nine members had been elected to the council and that its Clerk now possesses the Certificate in Local Council Administration, Manea Parish Council meets the eligibility criteria for adoption of the General Power of Competence.

Members decided, unanimously, that the General Power of Competence be adopted by Manea Parish Council

M119/13 Correspondence

- (1) Manea Gala Christmas Fair 2013.

Further to minutes M79/13 (3) and M101/13 (2), the Clerk read to members a letter from the Chairman of the Manea Gala Committee, expressing thanks to the Parish Council for its contribution towards the cost of the Christmas lights and the fair held on 8 December 2013

Members decided that the contents of the letter be noted.

- (2) Norfolk Green bus company.

The Chairman reported a letter from the Norfolk Green bus company, informing the Parish Council that Stagecoach became the owner of the Norfolk Green bus company on 18 December 2013; the letter makes the point that there is likely to be little change to the network of services which were operated by Norfolk Green.

Members decided that the contents of the letter be noted.

M120/13 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 17 February 2014, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.45 pm

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

Date:.....