

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

15 SEPTEMBER 2014 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillors Mrs Berry and Jolley.

The minutes of the meeting of 18 August 2014 were confirmed and signed.

M58/14 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.

M59/14 Open Forum

(1) Manea Action Plan

Further to minute M17/14 (3), Mr P Townrow, a member of the Manea Action Plan Implementation Group, updated the Parish Council on various aspects of the delivery of the action plan, including:

- the Manea rail service had been nominated for two awards
- the production of a planning document, based upon the new Fenland Local Plan, which would be presented to the Parish Council in the near future
- the fact that one of the members of the Manea Action Plan Implementation Group (MAPIG) having removed from the village recently had impacted adversely upon the capacity of MAPIG to progress the actions within the Manea Action Plan
- an application for funding for enhancement works to public footpaths in Manea has been submitted to the Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership scheme grant fund and a decision on that application is awaited.

Members decided that the information reported by Mr Townrow be noted.

(2) Manea Gala Committee

Further to minute M56/14, the Chairman of the Manea Gala Committee, Mr K Keil, explained to the council the financial position of Manea Gala Committee.

Mr Keil stated that the committee currently has approximately £13,000 in its bank account and had made donations, as a result of this year's Manea Gala, in excess of £1,400. He commented that the committee had invited around 20 local groups within Manea to apply to the committee for funding; all applications received would be considered at the next meeting of the committee, which, to achieve the greatest impact, is more likely to support an application from a group for a "larger" facility or piece of equipment rather than award a larger number of small financial sums.

Mr Keil informed members that it is important for Manea Gala Committee to retain a certain level of financial reserves, as it costs between £3,000 and £5,000 each year to deliver a gala; furthermore, the committee is looking to deliver a special event (possibly including a fireworks display) next year to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Manea Gala. He stated that Manea Gala Committee, which is always happy to welcome new committee members, always aims to operate the gala in a way which is in the best interests of the villagers.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman of Manea Gala Committee be noted and that their appreciation of the work of Manea Gala Committee in delivering a successful event each year be recorded.

M60/14 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) New pavilion for Manea (minute M48/14 (2))

The Clerk read to members the letter he had received from Fenland District Council's Senior Community Development Officer, in response to his letter which had informed her of the Parish Council's views (as set out at minute M48/14 (2)) in relation to her previous letter.

The District Council's Senior Community Development Officer states that Fenland District Council (FDC) wishes to assure Manea Parish Council that once the decision is made regarding the Rural Capital Grants scheme and its future, the Parish Council would be informed very promptly. She comments that the previous applications submitted by Manea Parish Council had, for one reason or another, been incomplete and not able to be assessed by FDC. She comments further that Fenland District Council is not able to ear-mark funding for potential schemes without going through the same open and transparent assessment process as has been applied to other applicants; therefore, FDC is not able to confirm a funding allocation for Manea Parish Council's application.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that he would

(1) check the "life" of the planning permission for this proposal;

(2) seek to ascertain from Fenland District Council whether there any Section 106 Planning Obligation monies which Manea Parish Council is able to access to contribute towards this proposal.

(2) Cranmore Lots allotments site (minute M48/14 (4))

The Clerk reported that, due to levels of workload, he was yet to make contact with the firms of estate agents selected by the Parish Council to market the Cranmore Lots allotments site. In addition, he reminded members of concerns that had been expressed at the last meeting of the council as to the use to which the capital receipt from the sale of this land would be applied if it were not possible for the Parish Council to obtain sufficient funding for the proposed new pavilion (minute M60/14 (1) refers) and the view expressed by some members at the last meeting that perhaps the disposal of this land should not take place until/unless it is clear that such funding could be achieved.

Members expressed the opinion that, in order to minimise the level of agent's fees payable, it would be appropriate to engage the services of only company (the one identified at minute M48/14 (4)) to market this site.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that the council should proceed at this time with the disposal of the Cranmore Lots allotments site using the firm of estate agents identified at minute M48/14 (4) to market the land.

(3) Allotments (minute M54/14)

The Clerk read to members a letter from the Secretary of the Manea Allotment Association, expressing the association's thanks to the Parish Council for the decisions it reached at minute M54/14 and that, with regard to the access road, the association would look at ways of maintaining the privacy and security of the allotments site without being unduly restrictive to bona members of the public.

In addition, the Secretary of the Manea Allotment Association comments that the Parish Council's Allotments Officer, Councillor Emery, is welcome to attend the association's monthly committee meetings and would provide him in due course with dates of future meetings.

Members decided that the content of the letter from the Secretary of the Manea Allotment Association be noted.

M61/14 Planning applications

The Clerk reported that he had received no planning applications, for consultation purposes, from the Local Planning Authority since the last meeting of Manea Parish Council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M62/14 Police matters

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

PCSO Dyer reported that the Constabulary had received no reports of incidents of crime and disorder in Manea during the last seven weeks.

Some members mentioned the inconsiderate parking which takes place regularly in the vicinity of the Manea Community Primary School and expressed the opinion that the majority of those responsible are staff of the school; in response, PCSO Dyer undertook to speak with the school's Headteacher about the problems that the parking by school staff is causing; he would also give a reminder that the staff have permission to use the village hall car park.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by PCSO Dyer be noted;
- (2) PCSO Dyer would seek to address with the Headteacher of the Manea Community Primary School the problems that the parking by school staff is causing.

M63/14 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 reporting by the Clerk, on County Council or District Council issues.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M64/14 Public open spaces

- (1) Playing field – further to minute 156/13 (2), at which it was decided that the Chairman and Councillor Cole would remove the swings and chains on the 1955 swings, Councillor Cole informed members that a local contractor had offered to remove, free-of-charge, the whole structure.

Further to minute M156/13 (3), the Chairman updated members on the improvement works undertaken to date to the surface of the football pitches and those scheduled over the next few months.

The need to undertake trimming works to some of the conifers at the playing field was mentioned by one member and Councillor Cole undertook to investigate this work being undertaken via the Chairman of the Manea and Welney IDB.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Chairman and Councillor Cole be noted;
 - (2) the offer from the local contractor remove, free-of-charge, the 1955 swings from the playing field be accepted.
- (2) Cemetery – further to minute M38/14, members are aware that no action appears to have been taken with regard to the provision of watering cans at the cemetery.

Members decided that the offer of Councillor Mrs Desborough to acquire a small number of watering cans be accepted.

- (3) War memorial – further to minute M152/13 (3), the Chairman enquired as to whether the Clerk had received any information from the contractor as to when the works to add the four names to the war memorial would be undertaken. The Clerk responded that he had no such information but would make the enquiry of the contractor

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M65/14 Manea Pit

Members considered whether there are any issues relating to operation and management of Manea Pit which require consideration by the Parish Council at this time.

The Clerk reminded members that the next meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee – at which the only item of business will be the new Manea Pit Management Plan – is scheduled for 9 October 2014.

Further to minute M53/14, Councillor Cole informed members that the surfacing works to the car parking area at Manea Pit are almost complete; the contractor undertaking the works has identified other works which could be undertaken that would improve safety and has offered to undertake these works, as an extension to the current contract, for the sum of £300.00.

Further to minute PMC24/14, Councillor Cole reported that the concrete pads for the pond dipping area had been installed and it is now necessary to proceed with the manufacture and supply of 3 RSJs to continue the installation of this facility; three quotations in this regard had been obtained, with prices ranging from £2,900 to £3,400.

Members decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) the offer from the contractor to undertake additional surfacing works at Manea Pit, at a cost of £300.00, be accepted;
- (3) the lowest quotation (in the sum of £2,900) for the manufacture and supply of 3 RSJs for the pond dipping area scheme, be accepted.

M66/14 Rural Cambs Citizens' Advice Bureau – request for financial assistance

Members considered a request from the Rural Cambs Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) for financial assistance towards the cost of operating its services in the financial year 2015/16.

The CAB states within its letter of request that it dealt with 8,750 different issues, particularly in relation to problems associated with personal debt and queries relating to benefits, in Fenland over the last twelve months; in Manea, the CAB dealt with 63 new clients having 115 problems.

The CAB makes the point that demand for its services is increasing at a time when financial support from some its sources of funding (such as the Royal British Legion) is reducing.

Members decided that financial support in the sum of £35.00 be awarded to the Rural Cambs Citizens' Advice Bureau.

M67/14 The Openness and Accountable Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Clerk reported on the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, which were made under Sections 40 and 43 (2) the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and came into force on 5 August 2014.

The regulations allow reporting at meetings which are open to the public (with the exception of any part of the meeting where the public and press are excluded for the transaction of business which includes confidential information). The regulations do not require a council to permit oral reporting or commentary on a meeting as it takes place, as it is considered that this could cause disruption to proceedings.

It is a requirement of the regulations that any person attending a meeting must, so far as is practicable, be afforded reasonable facilities for reporting and may use any communication method, including the Internet, to publish, post or otherwise share the results of their reporting activities. Publication and dissemination may take place during the meeting or afterwards.

The Clerk informed members of the definition of "reporting" in the context of these regulations.

Much of the regulations merely repeat and reinforce existing arrangements requiring that meetings are held in public and that meeting documents are published. These regulations do not introduce a requirement for councils to broadcast their meetings.

The regulations also make provision for the recording of certain decisions taken by officers acting under powers delegated to them by a town or parish council. The way in which those decisions are recorded and made available to the public is prescribed by the regulations. The Clerk detailed to members the three categories of decision which are affected by these regulations.

Manea Parish Council's Standing Orders do not currently provide the public and the press with the right to film or record its meetings.

Members decided that council:

- (1) notes the requirements of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 and the implications for Manea Parish Council;
- (2) adds to its Standing Orders the following wording, to ensure the council's compliance with the requirements of these regulations:

"Members of the public, representatives of the press and councillors may film, audio-record, take photographs and use social media to report on meetings as they are taking place and the council shall make reasonable provision for this to happen. Members of the public and representatives of the press who wish to report on meetings in this way are advised to contact the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting so that any arrangements, if necessary, can be made. Any person whose recording activities are disruptive to the meeting may be required by the Chairman to cease recording and may be removed from the meeting";
- (3) requires the Clerk to the Council to put in place arrangements to ensure the council's compliance with the requirements of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 in terms of the recording of decisions taken by officers.

M68/14 Financial matters

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

Income

Manea Gala Committee	Donation from proceeds of gala	£150.00
H J M Memorials	Memorial tablet	£100.00
Total Income		£250.00

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 18 August 2014	£10.00
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£50.80
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £115.50), Broadband and other expenses	£533.37
HM Revenue and Customs	Clerk's Income Tax (June, July and August 2014).	£362.57
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.39)	£8.14
E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.08)	£1.74
Came and Company	Insurance 2014/15	£1,518.61
PKF Littlejohn LLP	External Audit of 2013/14 accounts (includes VAT of £40.00)	£240.00
Total Expenditure		£2,689.23

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 August 2014 (in the total sum of £57,885.67), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 August 2013.

Further to minute M12/14, the Clerk reported that the Parish Council's accounts for 2013/14 had been "signed off" by the External Auditors.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Jolley, seconded by Councillor Risbridger, that the income of £250.00 be noted and that the payments totalling £2,689.23 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 August 2014, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 August 2013, be noted;
- (3) to note the situation regarding the Parish Council's accounts for 2013/14.

M69/14 North East Cambridgeshire: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

The Clerk reported on the consultation exercise currently being undertaken by Fenland District Council (FDC), between 1 September and 24 October 2014, in relation to a review, in accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, of where FDC locates its polling districts and polling places in North East Cambridgeshire for the purpose of Parliamentary and local government elections.

The District Council must complete the review by 31 January 2015. Any changes to the polling districts and polling places resulting from this review would be in place for the Parliamentary and local government elections scheduled currently for 7 May 2015.

The consultation letter from Fenland District Council (FDC), which was read to members by the Clerk, gave a definition of the terms of polling district, polling place and polling station; the letter was accompanied by a consultation feedback form.

Details of the current and proposed arrangements are available on the District Council's website:
<http://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/3434/Polling-District-Review>.

Members decided that any responses they wish to make to the consultation questions asked by Fenland District Council be sent to the Clerk in time for him to forward such comments FDC by the deadline of 24 October 2014

M70/14 Correspondence

(1) Funfair

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from the operator of a travelling funfair, which is based locally, enquiring as to whether the Parish Council would be interested in a funfair being held in Manea for one week in 2015.

The operator of the funfair states within the e-mail that all of the equipment used complies with all of the necessary safety regulations and is fully insured; the funfair would be operated in such a way as to not inconvenience village residents in terms of noise, disturbance and litter.

Members decided that the operator of a travelling funfair be invited to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council to provide greater detail of the nature of the request and the manner in which the funfair would be operated.

(2) Rural Digital Clubs

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from the County Council's Project Manager for Digital Inclusion, in which this officer states that the Rural Digital Club (the purpose of which is to help people to learn how to use the internet) is proving very successful and that this success is generating the need for additional volunteers to assist in operation of the sessions (which take place each Wednesday). The officer has asked whether members of the Parish Council are able to identify members of the community who would be willing and able to volunteer (ideally, with effect from 17 September 2014).

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and they would seek to identify volunteers to assist in operation of the Rural Digital Club sessions at Manea.

(3) Manea Youth Club

The Clerk read to members a letter which had been sent to the Chairman by Miss N Read, the Lead Youth Worker for the Manea Youth Club, informing the council of the youth club's experience of participation in this year's Manea Gala.

Miss Read states that the members of the youth club enjoyed preparing and running its stall at the gala, from which the young people ran activities and selling items which had been made during youth club sessions. Through the sale of items, the youth club achieved the sum of £52.30 and its members were extremely pleased with that result and acted as encouragement for their efforts.

Members decided that the content of the letter from the Lead Youth Worker for the Manea Youth Club be noted.

M71/14 Commemorating the centenary of the outbreak of World War One

Further to minute M143/13, the Chairman commented upon the success of the World War One commemorative event held on 1 August 2014, which had resulted in more than £400 being donated to this year's Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Members decided that the comments of the Chairman be noted and that the Parish Council would place on record its appreciation of the time and effort devoted by those members of the community who had delivered such a successful event.

M72/14 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 20 October 2014, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.35 pm

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

Date:.....