

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

17 NOVEMBER 2014 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillor Cole.

The minutes of the meeting of 20 October 2014 were confirmed and signed.

M85/14 Membership of Manea Parish Council

The Clerk reported that, as a result of his failure to attend meetings of the council throughout a period of six consecutive months, Mr M Archer ceased (by virtue of the provisions of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972) to be a member of Manea Parish Council on 11 November 2014. However, as the vacancy has occurred within six months of the council's next "ordinary" election (which would take place on 7 May 2015), there is no opportunity for electors to request that the vacancy be filled by an election (Section 89 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers); the council may, if it wishes, seek to fill the vacancy by co-option but is under no obligation to do so.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that the Parish Council would not seek to fill the vacancy on the council by way of co-option.

M8614 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.

M87/14 Open Forum

(1) Manea Action Plan

Further to minute M59/14 (1), Mr P Townrow, a member of the Manea Action Plan Implementation Group, updated the Parish Council on certain aspects of the delivery of the action plan, including:

- the application for funding for enhancement works to public footpaths in Manea, under the Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership scheme, has been approved; the money, to come through in three tranches, will enable the production of a Walking Map of Manea (to be delivered, following production, with the first edition of the Manea Matters publication in 2015 and new signage for footpath routes (which would all be in place by August 2015)
- permission had been obtained from Abellio Greater Anglia for the purchase of new seating etc for Manea Station and that the Community Rail Partnership has continued to apply pressure to Network Rail to provide a car park at Manea Station.

In addition, Mr Townrow gave thanks for Manea Parish Council's financial assistance to continuation of the Rural Digital Club at Manea (minute M83/14 (3) refers).

(2) Street Pride

Miss Rebecca Robinett, the Street Pride Co-ordinator at Fenland District Council, informed the Parish Council that the Manea Street Pride Group needs additional volunteers to enable it to continue to operate. She mentioned that an article, with the aim of attracting additional volunteers, would appear in the next edition of the Manea Matters publication and that a litter pick by the existing members of the Street Pride Group is scheduled for 1 December 2014.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that they would help to "spread the word" in terms of the need to recruit additional Street Pride volunteers.

(3) Manea Fire Station

A representative of the local Fire and Rescue Service informed the council that difficulty is being experienced in recruiting sufficient fire fighters for Manea Fire Station and requested that the Fire and Rescue Service be afforded the opportunity to address Manea Parish Council, at its next meeting, on the matter.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Fire and Rescue Service be afforded the opportunity to address Manea Parish Council at its next meeting.

(4) Possible gardens competition

Further to minute M74/14 (1), the resident of Manea who had explained to the council, at minute M74/14 (1), her idea of organising a competition to award prizes to those parishioners who possess the most attractive front gardens in the village, updated the council on the progress that had been achieved during recent weeks. She informed the council that a local business (FJS) had offered to provide a First Prize of £100 and that an article, giving awareness of the initiative, would feature in the January 2015 edition of the Manea matters publication.

Members decided that information presented by the parishioner be noted and that, as it had agreed at minute M74/14 (1), the council would consider the ways in which it could sponsor the competition as the proposal develops.

M88/14 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Charlemont Drive, Manea (minute M74/14 (1))

The Clerk reported to members that he had received from County Councillor Count, following the councillor's discussions with the relevant officers at the County Council, in relation to the possibility of achieving adoption of the highways and street lighting at Charlemont Drive. The Clerk had forwarded to the Charlemont Drive Residents' Association of a copy of the response from County Councillor Count.

In his response to the Clerk, County Councillor Count states that, unfortunately, the situation relating to Charlemont Drive is very different from the one encountered by the County Council at Daglass Way, March. Unlike Daglass Way, Charlemont Drive does not benefit from a Section 38 (of the Highways Act 1980) Agreement being in place, which would have enabled a bond to be called in to complete the works when the developer ceased trading/went into administration. To assist residents, officers of the County Council recently used staffing resources of the Development Management Team to provide the Charlemont Drive Residents' Association with a list of remedial work required to bring the road(s) up to a suitable standard for adoption.

County Councillor Count makes the point that if the owner of the land over which the road(s) pass can be established and is willing to dedicate the same as public highway and the residents bring the road(s) up to an acceptable standard, the County Council would be prepared to adopt them under Section 37 of the Highways Act. However, if the residents are intending to take this route, they need to undertake the remedial work sooner rather than later, as the longer it is left the more deterioration is likely to occur. In addition, the Development Management Team at the County Council does not possess the staffing resources to keep undertaking inspections and providing remedial lists without there being a strong likelihood of the works being undertaken.

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

(2) New pavilion for Manea (minute M75/14 (1))

The Clerk reported that he had engaged the firm of architects which had submitted the original application for planning permission to make application for renewal of planning permission reference F/YR11/0075/F and to submit an application for Building Regulations approval.

The Clerk informed members that the view of the architect is that he sees no reason why there should be a problem with obtaining a new planning permission for the proposed building or in achieving building regulations approval.

The total cost of obtaining planning permission and building regulations approval is estimated at £3,437.50, made up of the following costs:

- architects updating the planning application submission details and making the new planning application (£250.00)
- architects producing the submission details and making the application for building regulations approval (£1,250.00)
- undertaking an energy assessment – to be carried out an independent assessor - as part of the application for building regulations approval (estimated at £500.00)
- planning application fee payable to Fenland District Council (£962.50 (including parish council 50% reduction))
- building regulations plans submission fee payable to Fenland District Council (estimated at £475.00).

With regard to the Parish Council's application for funding under Fenland District Council's Rural Capital Grants scheme, the Clerk read to members a letter received from the Senior Community Support Officer at Fenland District Council in which she confirms that the relevant officers at Fenland District Council (FDC) had considered Manea Parish Council's application and, as a result, had identified matters which FDC has asked for clarification/explanation by the Parish Council; these are:

- (1) information to show the basis used for the figures contained within the business plan, such as comparable evidence of similar sites and usage figures
- (2) evidence of Manea Parish Council's decision to sell the Cranmore Lots allotments site
- (3) up-to-date plans for the development showing the community space.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that he would respond to the issues raised by Fenland District Council as follows:

- (1) informing Fenland District Council that the figures in the business plan were produced by comparing the activities, charges and usage of what the council considers to be two very similar operations; those being the Parkfield building at Wimblington and the Village Hall at Manea.

- (2) sending to Fenland District Council copies of the latest minutes relating to the land sale and the exchange of correspondence between the Parish Council and the estate agents in relation to the matter
- (3) reminding Fenland District Council (FDC) that it possesses plans of the proposed building (planning application reference F/YR11/0075/F) and informing FDC that no changes have been made to the plans since that time.

(3) Cranmore Lots allotments site (minute M75/14 (2))

The Clerk reported that, at the deadline for the submission of tenders (13 November 2014) the estate agents had received two tenders, in the sums reported to members by the Clerk.

In addition, the Clerk informed members of the level of fee which would be due to the estate agent and the fact that the council would need to incur legal costs in relation to the sale process.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and the highest tender received for the purchase of the Cranmore Lots allotments site, in the sum of £151,000, be accepted.

(Members resolved to exclude the public for the part of this item of business which involved disclosure by the Clerk of the identities of the tenderers, on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended))

(4) Funfair (minute M75/14 (3))

Members considered further the provision of a funfair in Manea for one week in 2015.

The Chairman informed members that this matter had been discussed by the Manea Gala Committee, which shares the view of the Parish Council that the week following the Manea Gala (which would take place on 11 July) would be an appropriate time for holding a funfair in Manea; the Gala Committee comments that the playing field would be ready for use by the funfair operator from the afternoon of 12 July 2015.

Members decided that the operator be permitted to provide a funfair in Manea during the week following the Manea Gala 2015.

M89/14 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) Erection of 32 dwellings (max) on land north of 28 – 30 High Street, Manea – F/YR14/0838/O (applicant: Primetower Properties Ltd).

That the application be supported. However, although the application is Outline in nature (with no details committed at this stage), the Parish Council would like to see included within a development of this scale a significant number of the properties being smaller, affordable, family homes (possibly including a number of properties available on a shared-ownership basis).

- (2) Erection of 2 x two-storey 3-bed dwellings with detached hovel on land east of 37 School Lane, Manea – F/YR14/0874/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs Lepla).

Object to the application, on the basis that the access to the site is inadequate to accommodate the traffic that would be generated by the development.

- (3) Works to one Horse Chestnut tree covered by TPO 04/2004 at 15 High Street, Manea – F/YR14/0879/TRTPO (applicant: Mr R Fowler),

That the application be supported.

Further to minute M138/13, the Clerk reported the submission of an appeal against Fenland District Council's refusal to grant planning permission for the erection of 3 dwellings, comprising 1 x two-storey 4-bed with detached double garage/workshop/store, 1 x two-storey 4-bed with attached garage with store above and 1 x 4-bed with attached double garage on land south of Bungalow, Station Farm, Fodder Fen Road, Manea (application reference F/YR14/0113/F) and to consider the opportunity to submit a representation to the Planning Inspectorate in relation to this matter and informed members of the process for the Parish Council's submission to the Planning Inspectorate, if it wished to do so, of comments additional to those made previously to the Local Planning Authority.

The Clerk reminded members of the comments made by the Parish Council to the District Council in relation to this application, as set out at minute M138/13.

Members decided that no representation be made to the Planning Inspectorate.

M90/14 Police matters

Although no representative of the March and Chatteris Policing Team was present at the meeting, PCSO Sam Dyer had provided a report detailing recent incidents of crime and disorder which had been reported to the Constabulary since the last meeting of the Parish Council. PCSO Dyer's report mentioned

- one incident of theft of an outboard motor and dingy from a boat moored along the Old Bedford River between 10 and 12 November
- that the level of crime in the parish had reduced considerably when compared to the same period last year, at which time there had been six reported crimes.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk, on behalf of PCSO Dyer, be noted.

M91/14 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.

Although there is currently no District Councillor for Manea (minute M85/14 refers), Councillor Jolley, the District Councillor for Wimblington, informed members that he would keep Manea Parish Council up-to-date on District Council issues which affect that parish. In that regard, Councillor Jolley informed members that Fenland District Council is currently proposing that the level of Concurrent Functions Grants awarded to Parish Councils for 2015/16 and beyond would not be reduced below the 2014/15 level.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M92/14 Public open spaces

- (1) Playing field – the Chairman informed members that he had received a complaint from a member of the public regarding the slippery condition of the safety surfacing at the play area at the playing field and, because of the associated health and safety risk, he had arranged for the council's grounds maintenance contractor to power wash the surfacing; the contractor would also try to remove, by power washing, the graffiti from the skateboard park.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted and that his actions in relation to the power washing works to the safety surfacing be endorsed.

- (2) Area around St Nicholas' Church, Manea - Councillor Fielding informed members of complaints that he had received from a number of villagers regarding the noise and fouling of birds in the vicinity of the church and enquired as to whether it would be permissible for the Parish Council to arrange a cull of the birds.

The Chairman responded that it would not be permissible for the Parish Council to arrange culling of the birds.

Members decided that the comments of Councillor Fielding and the Chairman be noted and that the issue be drawn to the attention to the Diocese of Ely.

M93/14 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 informed members that the next meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee is scheduled for 25 November 2014.

The Chairman reported that he had met recently with James Hooker, the officer at the Environment Agency who has responsibilities for issues related to the movement of fish, to discuss concerns of the Wildlife Trust regarding the introduction of Silver Bream fish to Manea Pit. The Chairman informed members that Mr Hooker is impressed with the manner in which Manea Parish Council is maintaining and developing Manea Pit and has, as a result of his inspection of the pit, concluded that the introduction of additional fish to Manea Pit would cause no harm to its status as a County Wildlife Site. Mr Hooker had offered to provide (and install), free-of-charge to Manea Parish Council, a number of "hedgehog" devices, which act as a deterrent to cormorants.

The Chairman had undertaken to ensure Mr Hooker's receipt of a copy of the recent botanical survey of Manea Pit.

Members decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) the Clerk would forward to Mr Hooker a copy of the recent botanical survey of Manea Pit;
- (3) the offer of Mr Hooker, to provide (and install), free-of-charge to Manea Parish Council, a number of "hedgehog" devices, be accepted.

M94/14 Lorry parking on Park Road, Manea

Councillor Mrs Desborough informed members of the difficulties that had been experienced by a resident of Park Road as a consequence of lorries being parked (as early as 6.00 am, with engines left running) whilst making deliveries to the neighbouring shop. However, as a result of a conversation with the owner of the shop, the matter has been resolved for the time being.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Mrs Desborough be noted.

M95/14 Financial matters

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

Income

Manea Allotment Association	Allotment rent	£250.00
J Lawrence	Allotment rent	£200.00
B Bridgement	Purchase of two cremated remains plots	£484.00
Kent Memorials	Cemetery memorial	£154.00
Total Income		£1,088.00

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 16 and 20 October 2014	£20.00
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£52.44
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £122.81), Broadband and other expenses	£543.94
Kent Memorials	Addition of names to war memorial (includes VAT of £53.00)	£318.00
Cambridgeshire County Council	Funding for Manea Youth Club – second quarter	£1,110.93
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.37)	£7.78
E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.63)	£13.20
E.on	Electricity for pavilion (includes VAT of £0.77)	£16.09
Mainstream Fisheries Ltd	1,000 fish (Bream) (includes VAT of £331.25)	£1,987.49
Public Works Loans Board	Loan re-payment	£95.39
Jonathan Graham	Botanical survey of Manea Pit	£395.00
B Short	Repair leaking stop cock at pavilion	£20.00
W T Savage	Extend roadway and provide parking area at Manea Pit (includes VAT of £460.00)	£2,760.00
Richard Yardy 2002 Ltd	Replace shower at pavilion (includes VAT of £26.00)	£156.00
Richard Yardy 2002 Ltd	Replace damaged socket at village green (includes VAT of £13.20)	£79.20
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Wreath	20.00
Total Expenditure		£7,595.46

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 October 2014 (in the total sum of £55,055.18), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 October 2013.

The Clerk reported also on the Parish Council's half-yearly financial position, which showed income of £24,250.30 and expenditure of £16,923.08 to 30 September 2014; he gave explanations as to variances between the estimated income and expenditure for the year and the actual levels of income and expenditure in the financial year to date.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Risbridger, seconded by Councillor Woodard, that the income of £1,088.00 be noted and that the payments totalling £7,595.46 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 October 2014, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 October 2013, be noted;
- (3) that the Parish Council's half-yearly financial position be noted.

M96/14 Application for financial assistance: Volunteer Centre Fenland

Members considered an application from the Volunteer Centre Fenland (VCF) for financial assistance towards the cost of operating its services in the financial year 2015/16.

The VCF states within its e-mail of request its hope that each Parish Council would set-aside £500 to contribute to the operating costs of the VCF and that each Town Council would set-aside the sum of £1,000. The e-mail, a copy of which had been forwarded by the Clerk to members in advance of the meeting, lists the core functions of the Volunteer Centre Fenland and expresses VCF's opinion in terms of the increasing importance of supporting volunteering within communities.

The Clerk informed members that, upon receipt of the request, he had invited the VCF to provide information as to the benefit that had been derived by Manea parishioners from the work of the VCF; the Manager of the VCF responded by stating that no such data is available.

The Clerk reminded members that Manea Parish Council had provided financial support to the VCF previously; this was £25.00 in 2009/10 and £30.00 in 2012/13.

Members decided, in the absence of evidence that Manea residents do or would benefit from the services provided by this organisation, that it could not justify awarding financial support to the Volunteer Centre Fenland.

M97/14 Correspondence

Financial assistance to the Rural Cambs Citizens' Advice Bureau

Further to minute M66/14, the Clerk read to members a letter of thanks from the Rural Cambs Citizens' Bureau in relation to the financial assistance provided by the Parish Council towards the cost of operating the bureau's services in the financial year 2015/16.

Members decided that the content of the letter be noted.

M98/14 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 15 December 2014, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.40 pm

Signature:.....(Council Chairman)

Date.....