

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

14 SEPTEMBER 2015 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Emery, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Berry, Cole, Mrs Desborough, Drinkwater, Fielding, Ms Hookway and Risbridger.

Apologies: Councillor Woodard.

In attendance: District Councillor Buckton.

The minutes of the meeting of 17 August 2015 were confirmed and signed.

M66/15 Open Forum

(1) Planning application F/YR15/0723/0 (Erection of 4 dwellings at 48 Station Road, Manea)

A parishioner informed the council of the concerns of a number of residents in relation to this planning application. They have concerns regarding the flooding of gardens of the properties which share a boundary with the application site; they are concerned that the residential development of this site would worsen the current situation. The parishioner expressed the view that if the proposed new dwellings were to be chalet bungalows, there would be overlooking of some existing properties. He commented also that the proposed new properties would be behind the building line and that approval of this application would set a precedent for further similar development elsewhere along this road.

The parishioner claimed that there are a number of inaccuracies within the documentation submitted with the application, including the existence of trees on the site and the reason given by the applicant for demolition of the property which had occupied this site; he mentioned that asbestos had been evident in the property which had occupied the site previously and he expressed the hope that this has been removed and disposed of in a proper manner.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and taken into account when considering this planning application (minute M69/15 refers).

(2) Planning application F/YR15/0723/0 (Erection of 4 dwellings at 48 Station Road, Manea)

The applicant for this proposal spoke in support of the application and sought to address the concerns and comments articulated at part (1) of this minute.

The applicant gave an assurance that all of the information contained within the application documentation is accurate; she stated that there were no buildings or trees remaining on the application site at the time of the application being submitted to the Local Planning Authority. She explained the drainage arrangements for this site and that a flood risk assessment of the site had been undertaken. Every property would have a garage and two parking spaces, a situation with which the Local Planning Authority is happy.

Members decided that the comments of the planning applicant be noted and taken into account when considering this planning application (minute M69/15 refers).

M67/15 Members' Code of Conduct

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.

M68/15 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) New pavilion for Manea (minute M53/15 (1))

The Clerk reported that he had informed the planning agent which had been engaged by the council to deal with all of the issues relating to seeking Building Regulations approval for this new building that the council is happy to accept the quotations obtained by the agent for the SBEM works as part of the approval process and for the foundation design/structural aspects of the scheme.

Further to minute M39/15 (2), the Chairman and Councillor Cole undertook to obtain, for the purpose of providing cost estimates for submission with further applications for funding, quotations from three local building contractors for construction of a new pavilion.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

(2) Cranmore Lots allotments site (minute M53/15 (2))

The Clerk informed members that he had provided to the council's solicitors the information requested of him, for submission with an application to HM Land Registry for registration of this land as being in the ownership of Manea Parish Council.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that he would contact the council's solicitors to impress upon them the need for this matter to be progressed as a matter of priority.

M69/15 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 a single-storey 2-bed dwelling on land south of 37 School Lane, Manea - F/YR15/0670/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs R Lepla).

Object, on the basis that the application site provides insufficient facilities for the turning and manoeuvring of vehicles to be used by occupiers of or visitors to the proposed dwelling.

- (2) Erection of 3 x two-storey 4-bed dwellings with garages, involving demolition of existing dwelling, at 26 Park Road, Manea - F/YR15/0689/O (applicants: Mr and Mrs D Haylock).

That the application be supported.

- (3) Erection of 4 dwellings, involving demolition of existing dwelling (Outline application with matters committed in respect of access, layout and scale) at 48 Station Road, Manea - F/YR15/0723/O (applicant: Miss E Dent).

That the application be supported.

M70/15 Police matters

No representative of the March and Chatteris Policing Team was present at the meeting and on this occasion no report had been received from the Constabulary on recent incidents of crime and disorder which had been reported to the Constabulary since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

Members had no issues to raise, for reference by the Clerk to the local policing team.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M71/15 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.

District Councillor Buckton informed the Parish Council that, further to minute M57/15, he had discussed with the Head of Planning Services at Fenland District Council (FDC) the need for the proposed guidance in relation to the use of Policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan to be produced as a matter of priority. Councillor Buckton expressed the opinion that FDC currently appears to be operating Policy LP12 in an arbitrary manner. He had enquired of the Head of Planning Services as to whether, in the view of the Local Planning Authority, appropriate (i.e. pre-application) community consultation, as required by Policy LP12, had been undertaken in respect of two of the applications being considered by Manea Parish Council at this meeting (F/YR15/0689/O and F/YR15/0723/O); the response from the Head of Planning Services is that application F/YR15/0689/O had, because of the presentation to the meeting of Manea parish Council on 20 July 2015 (minute M38/15 refers) complied with the community consultation requirement of Policy LP12; Councillor Buckton expressed the opinion that a post-application presentation to the Parish Council does not constitute pre-application community consultation

Councillor Buckton suggested that Manea Parish Council should ask to see a draft version of any guidance produced by FDC in relation to Policy LP12.

Councillor Buckton informed the council that, as part of the District Council's Comprehensive Spending Review, a questionnaire would be sent, towards the end of this month, to all households within Fenland; the aim of the exercise is to enable the public to make suggestions as to how Fenland District Council could make budget reductions of at least £1.8 million over the next three financial years.

Councillor Buckton reported that he had made enquiries of the County Council as to whether the Local Highway Improvements scheme could be used as a means of obtaining funding towards the cost of installing cycle routes; in response to his enquiry, The County Council had commented that it possesses no funding to provide cycle routes in Fenland; the primary means of achieving the provision of cycle routes is via Section 106 Planning Obligation monies where appropriate.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Head of Planning Services at Fenland District Council be requested to consult Manea Parish Council upon the guidance that it would be producing in relation to the interpretation and application of policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan.

M72/15 Public open spaces

- (1) Skateboard park – further to minute M43/15, Councillor Drinkwater informed members that the repair and maintenance works to the skateboard park have been programmed by the contractor.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

- (2) Drainage - further to minute M58/15, the Chairman enquired of Councillor Cole as to the current situation regarding the undertaking of these works. Councillor Cole stated that the contractor had been given the "go ahead" but work had not yet commenced. He undertook to pursue the matter with the contractor.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

- (3) Open space area at Scholars Close, Manea - members discussed issues relating to littering and dog fouling on the open space area at Scholars Close, Manea.

Members decided that the Clerk would enquire of Fenland District Council as to the about the possibility of that council installing a litter bin and a dog waste bin on the open space area at Scholars Close, Manea.

- (4) Wimblington Road, Manea : speeding of vehicles - members discussed the speeding of vehicles along Wimblington Road, Manea and concluded that the imposition by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) of an advisory speed limit of, say, 35 mph - as had been seen in other locations within the area - in the vicinity of Plantation Farm would be beneficial.

Members decided that the Clerk would enquire of the LHA as to the possibility of installing an advisory speed limit sign (possibly 35 mph) at the sharp bend near Plantation Farm on Wimblington Road, Manea.

- (5) Notice board - further to minute M43/15, the Chairman enquired of Councillor Cole as to the current situation regarding the installation of the new notice board. Councillor Cole undertook to pursue the matter with the contractor.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M73/15 Manea Pit

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee held on 9 September 2015, which was deemed as being an informal meeting, with no powers to make decisions because of being inquorate (because the attendance of an insufficient number of members of the parish Council's representatives of the committee).

One recommendation had been made at the informal meeting of the committee (minute IMC2/15 refers); that being that the Parish Council approves the purchase and installation, at appropriate locations within the community orchard/woodland area, of "Please clear up after your dog" signs.

To avoid future meetings of the Manea Pit Management Committee being inquorate, the Chairman encouraged the Parish Council members of the committee to make every effort to attend these meetings and that they are unable to attend, they should inform the Clerk at the earliest opportunity; he would then be able to cancel a meeting which he knew would be inquorate if it were to take place.

Members decided that

- (1) the contents of minutes of the informal meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee be noted and that the recommendation in relation to the purchase of "Please clear up after your dog" signs be approved;
- (2) the Clerk would report to the next meeting of the Parish Council on the position relating to the income and expenditure attributable to Manea Pit during the current financial year.

M74/15 Parish street lighting

Further to minute M126/14, members considered the latest proposal from Fenland District Council (FDC) - as set out in a letter (with attachments) from District Councillor King, the Cabinet member for Rural Affairs - in relation to replacement of Parish Council-owned street lighting across Fenland. The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, a copy of the letter (and attachments) from FDC.

The letter states that Fenland District Council had allocated £250,000 to replace the Category 1 street lights (i.e. those requiring immediate replacement) and that the Parish Councils would be responsible for replacement of the Category 2 street lights (i.e. those requiring replacement within three years). The letter goes on to say that FDC had decided that any under-spending of the £250,000 allocation for Category 1 street lights would be allocated proportionately by FDC to Parish Councils to assist them in meeting the costs of replacing the Category 2 street lamps. Also, since the time of the time that the survey of the street lights had been undertaken, a number of Category 2 street lights had been re-classified as being in category 1 and, consequently, the costs of replacing those lights had been met by Fenland District Council.

According to the information provided by Fenland District Council, there are 51 Category 2 street lamps in Manea and the estimated cost of their replacement is £61,200; the District Council would be making a contribution, from under-spending on its £250,000 budget allocation, of £7,707 towards the costs faced by Manea Parish Council. This means that that Manea Parish Council would need to provide funding of £53,493 over a period of three years to meet the costs involved. The Clerk reminded members that the estimated cost provided to this council by Fenland District Council in December 2014 (minute M111/14 refers) was £31,163.

District Councillor King has invited Parish Councils in Fenland to inform him of their comments in relation to this matter, which he would draw to the attention of the District Council's Cabinet (which would consider this matter as part of its meeting scheduled for 17 September 2015).

The Clerk reported on a meeting, convened by the Chairman of Doddington Parish Council, held on 4 September 2015, at which both the Chairman of Manea Parish Council and he had been in attendance, to discuss the implications for Parish Councils of the need to replace street lighting.

The actions agreed at the joint meeting of Parish Councils were that each Parish Council in Fenland be asked to consider:

- requesting Fenland District Council to consider providing interest-free loans, over extended periods, to Parish Councils to cover the cost of replacing Category 2 street lights
- requesting Fenland District Council to consider withdrawing the Concurrent Functions Grants payments to Parish Councils and using that funding instead to meet the cost of replacing the Category 2 street lights
- making a contribution to the cost of a sample survey of street lamps being undertaken by an independent contractor to test the validity of Balfour Beatty's survey results findings. It was suggested that each Parish Council would choose up to 10% of its Category 2 lights for inspection
- express to Fenland District Council concerns regarding the ethics of using the same contractor to both undertake the condition survey of the parish street lights and the consequent replacement works.

Members decided that the Clerk would inform

- (1) District Councillor King that Manea Parish Council is aware that a number of the Parish Councils within Fenland have agreed to ask Fenland District Council (FDC) to meet the cost of replacing the Category 2 street lights through ceasing, with effect from 1 April 2016, the payment to Parish Councils of Concurrent Functions Grants and using that money to fund street lights replacement; those councils estimate that the money which would be

paid to Parish Councils in Concurrent Functions Grants over the next 10 years would be sufficient to meet the cost of replacing all of the category 2 lights across all 12 parishes. Manea Parish Council asks the Cabinet at Fenland District Council to give serious consideration to such an approach. There is also concern across the Parish Councils within Fenland regarding the ethics of a single contractor – Balfour Beatty – undertaking both the condition survey of the lighting stock and the consequent replacement works; does this not constitute a conflict of interest?

- (2) the Chairman of Doddington Parish Council that Manea Parish Council wishes to be part of the proposed independent survey of 10% its Category 2 lights; that is 5 lights.

M75/15 Manea Matters publication

Members considered the invitation from the Manea Connect Committee for the Parish Council to continue to advertise in the Manea Matters publication for a further twelve months period, at a cost of £90.00.

Members are of the opinion that the Manea Matters publication is a very effective way of being able to communicate with the local community in relation to the council's activities, plans and ambitions.

Members decided that Manea Parish Council would continue to advertise in the Manea Matters publication for a further twelve months period.

M76/15 Financial matters

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

Income

Turner and Son	Plot purchase and interment fee	£578.00
Kent Memorials	Memorial inscription	£88.00
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Ouse Washes project	£2,397.48
Heritage Lottery Fund	Community woodland/orchard grant	£3,150.00
Various (via I Fost)	Sale of fishing tickets	£413.50
Total Income		£6,626.98

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 5 and 17 August 2015	£50.00
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£52.00
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £132.97), Broadband and other expenses	£613.54
E.on	Electricity for pavilion (includes VAT of £1.53)	£32.13
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.61)	£12.78
E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.58)	£12.08
E Mason and Son	Grounds maintenance works for July 2015 inclusive (includes VAT of £212.10)	£1,272.60
Came and Company	Insurance 2015/16	£1,564.17

S J B Grounds Care	Service and repair of lawn mower (includes VAT of £13.00)	£78.00
Manea PCC	Hire of room for Internet Club	£90.00
Total Expenditure		£3,777.30

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 August 2015 (in the total sum of £ 59,306.27), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 August 2014.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Desborough, seconded by Councillor Mrs Berry, that the income of £6,626.98 be noted and that the payments totalling £3,777.30 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 August 2015, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 August 2014, be noted;

M77/15 Correspondence

The Clerk informed members that there are currently no items of correspondence for reporting to the council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M78/15 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 19 October 2015, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.00 pm

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

Date:.....