

# MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

20 MAY 2015 – 7.10 pm.

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

**Apologies:** Councillor Mrs Berry.

**In attendance:** District Councillor Buckton.

The minutes of the meeting of 20 April 2015 were confirmed and signed.

### M1/15 Open Forum

#### (1) Manea Action Plan

Three members of the Manea Action Plan Implementation Group (MAPIG) informed the Parish Council of progress to date in delivery of the actions within the Manea Action Plan.

One of the representatives informed the council that MAPIG had been working its way through the actions within the plan since its publication in 2013 and made the point that the plan contains a total of 48 actions and the progress on delivery of those actions is monitored using a “traffic lights” (red (meaning little or no progress), amber (work in progress) and green (completed)) system in terms of the level of completeness. Currently, 32 of the actions have achieved green status, one is at red and the others are all at amber status.

Another member of MAPIG referred to Section 3 of the plan (Economy), which is at amber status, and commented that, in terms of “what needs to be done”, the plan states, on page 34, “Parish Council planning recommendations to take account of the local community’s wishes for planning within Manea”. The action for MAPIG in that regard was to produce a checklist document for which the Parish Council would have regard when considering planning applications for development in Manea. Each member of Manea Parish Council was provided with a Development Policy Checklist which had been produced by MAPIG for that purpose.

The MAPIG member referred to Policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan (adopted in May 2014), which indicates that the Local Planning Authority would not expect the number of residential properties in Manea (as a Growth village) to increase by more than 15% between April 2011 and April 2031. He commented that the number of dwellings in Manea at April 2011 was 912 and, on that basis, the village would be expected to accommodate a further 136 dwellings (i.e. 912 x 15%) over the twenty years period to 2031. He circulated a document, which showed, based upon planning permission data, that the actual increase in the number of residential properties in Manea could increase by as much as 28% by April 2031.

The Chairman made the point that the Parish Council is merely a consultee in respect of planning applications submitted to Fenland District Council, as Local Planning Authority (LPA), and that in formulating a consultation response to the LPA, the Parish Council must take into account only material planning considerations; this would not include, for example, the availability (or otherwise) of Broadband provision.

Members decided that the information presented and the comments made by the representatives of MAPIG be noted and that the approach to considering planning applications for development in Manea using the Development Policy Checklist produced by MAPIG be the subject of an item on the agenda for the next meeting of Manea Parish Council

**(2) Vehicles speeding through Manea**

The parishioner who had addressed the Parish Council at minute M159/14 (4) on the possibility of establishing a Community Speed Watch group in Manea informed the council that an initial meeting, with the aim of progressing this idea, would take place on 28 May (to commence at 7.00 pm) and he expressed his hope that at least one member of Manea Parish Council would be able to attend that meeting.

Members decided that the information provided by the parishioner be noted.

**(3) Members of Manea Parish Council**

A parishioner commented that he had become a Manea parishioner as a result of the electoral boundary changes brought about by the recent Community Governance Review (minute M124/14 refers) and he invited members of Manea Parish Council to introduce themselves.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and consequently introduced themselves, individually, to the parishioner.

**M2/15 Election of Chairman**

Councillor Emery was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2015/16 and made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome Councillors Drinkwater and Hookway to their first meeting as members of Manea Parish Council.

**M3/15 Election of Vice-Chairman**

Councillor Mrs Desborough was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2015/16.

**M4/15 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 2014/15:

- Allotments Officer: Councillor Emery
- Cemetery Officer: Councillor Cole
- Child Protection Officer: Councillor Mrs Berry
- Footpaths and Trees Officer: Councillor Mrs Desborough
- Pavements and Street Lighting Officers: Councillors Ms Hookway and Woodard
- Recycling Officer: Councillor Risbridger
- Roads Officers: Councillors Drinkwater and Fielding.

### **M5/15 Appointment of Parish Council members to the Manea Pit Management Committee**

Councillors Cole, Mrs Desborough, Emery, Fielding and Woodard were appointed as the Parish Council's representatives on the Manea Pit Management Committee for the municipal year 2015/16. Councillors Mrs Desborough and Emery were appointed as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee respectively for the municipal year 2015/16.

### **M6/15 Members' Code of Conduct**

The Clerk informed members of the need to complete a Register of Member Interests form, consequent to their election to membership of Manea Parish Council, and then for them to submit to the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council of any subsequent changes, as they arise, to the content of that form.

Members decided the information from the Clerk be noted and acted upon.

### **M7/15 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting**

#### **(1) Defibrillators in Manea (minute M159/14 (3))**

Members considered the purchase (at an estimated cost of £500.00) of a cabinet for storage of a defibrillator on an outside wall of the Rose and Crown public house.

Members decided that the Parish Council would meet the cost of purchasing a cabinet for storage of a defibrillator and that the Councillor Drinkwater would request the landlord of the Rose and Crown public house to make the necessary arrangements with the company which supplies these cabinets.

#### **(2) New pavilion for Manea (minute M161/14 (1))**

The Clerk informed members that the situation is unchanged from that reported at minute M161/14 (1).

Members commented that, now that planning permission has been granted and a significant amount of the necessary funding had been secured, the council needs to put its efforts into identifying sources of grant funding and then submitting applications to acquire the balance of funding needed to be able to deliver this project.

Members decided that the position be noted.

#### **(3) Cranmore Lots allotments site (minute M161/14 (2))**

The Clerk informed members that the situation in terms of the legal process relating to the sale of the Cranmore Lots allotments site is unchanged from that reported at minute M161/14 (2); the legal issue in relation to the deeds to the council's land assets is still to be resolved.

The Clerk informed members of the details of his latest exchange of correspondence with the council's legal advisers and that he would keep members advised on any developments in that regard. In addition, the estate agents acting for the council in the sale of this land have produced a tenancy agreement (for the period of one year (365 days)) between the purchaser of this site and Manea Parish Council, which would enable to the purchaser to crop the land in advance of the land sale proceeding to conclusion; the money to be paid to Manea Parish Council in respect of the tenancy agreement would be deducted from the purchase price of the land. The Clerk outlined briefly the terms of the tenancy agreement; one member of the council recommended that the agreement should not cover a period of more than 364 days.

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

- (1) seek to arrange a meeting between the Chairman of the Council, he an appropriate representative of the council's solicitors to discuss the situation relating to the deeds to the council's land assets;
- (2) liaise with the estate agent regarding the term of the tenancy agreement between the purchaser of this site and Manea Parish Council.

**(4) Manea Youth Club (minute M168/14)**

The Clerk read to members a letter from the County Council's Youth Development Co-ordinator (YDC), in which she provided an update on the future of the Manea Youth Club.

The YDC explains in her letter that Young People March (YPM) - a charity youth-work organisation based at March - would take over the running of the Manea Youth Club with effect from 1 June 2015. Officers of the County Council's Youth Service would be working closely with the staff of YPM for a few weeks leading up to that date to ensure a seamless transfer. This arrangement would be at no additional cost to the Parish Council and the County Council's Youth Development Co-ordinator would remain as the council's point of contact for issues relating to Manea Youth Club.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

**M8/15 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 detached garage to existing dwelling at Eastend, Purls Bridge Drove, Manea – F/YR15/0294/F (applicant: Mr and Mrs Evans).

*That the application be supported.*

- (2) Erection of single-storey extension to front of existing building at The Surgery, Cathedral View, Manea – F/YR15/0326/F (applicant: Dr R Hirson).

*That the application be supported.*

*(Councillor Drinkwater declared his non-pecuniary interest in this planning application by virtue of his wife's employment by the applicant)*

In addition, the Clerk reported that planning application F/YR15/0178F (which proposed the erection of 5 x two-storey dwellings, comprising 2 x 3-bed and 3 x 4-bed with detached garages, involving demolition of existing dwelling, at 26 Park Road, Manea), which had been considered by the Parish Council at minute M150/14, had been withdrawn by the applicant.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

**M9/15 Police matters**

Although no representative of the March and Chatteris Policing Team was present at the meeting, PCSO Dawn Rae had provided a report detailing recent incidents of crime and disorder which had been reported to the Constabulary,

as well as updating the Parish Council on other relevant matters, since the last meeting of the Parish Council. PCSO Rae's report mentioned that

- with effect from 18 May 2015 Sergeant Alan Boughen, who had been undertaking the role of Acting Sector Inspector for Fenland, is now the Sergeant for the March and Chatteris Policing Team and that Inspector Will Davis had been appointed to the role of Sector inspector for Fenland
- there had been no crimes reported in Manea since the last meeting of the Parish Council
- there had been two reported incidents of anti-social behaviour in the village; both of these related to youths using vehicles in an anti-social manner on Park Road
- the Constabulary had been doing a lot of work regarding the behaviour of local drivers in Manea and Chatteris, resulting in three vehicles being seized, five Section 59 warnings being given and eleven letters sent to registered owners
- three speeding tickets had been issued to motorists caught speeding along Station Road and there had been five occasions where words of advice had been given to motorists on High Street and Station Road; also one ticket had been issued for inconsiderate parking
- the Constabulary held a "have a cuppa with a copper" event last week; seven members of the public took advantage of this opportunity to engage with the Constabulary and raised issues relating to dog fouling in the village, parking outside the school and speeding early mornings.

As a result of hearing the information provided by the local PCSO, members discussed briefly the ongoing problem of speeding in the village and a number of possible measures which might help to address the situation were mentioned.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by the Clerk, on behalf of PCSO Rae, be noted;
- (2) they would discuss, at the next meeting of Manea Parish Council, possible measures to achieve a reduction in the speed of vehicles travelling through the village.

### **M10/15 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, who had been elected to membership of Fenland District Council on 7 May 2015, informed members that it is his intention to attend the meetings of Manea Parish Council. He asked the Parish Council to use him as a resource to help address issues within the parish; he stated his keenness to be tasked with matters over which the Parish Council has concerns; he would report back to the council on matters which he had investigated/pursued; he expects to be held to account for his actions as the District Councillor for Manea.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

### **M11/15 Public open spaces**

- (1) RoSPA inspection – members considered the undertaking of works to address the issues raised by the RoSPA reports in respect of the playing field and the skateboard park.

A copy of the RoSPA reports had been provided to members, by the Clerk, in advance of the meeting.

The Chairman informed members that, having scrutinised both reports he had produced a list of works required to both the play (and associated) equipment and the skateboard park. He outlined to members his assessment of the works required and a suggested approach for undertaking those works.

Members decided that

- (1) a copy of the RoSPA report relating to the skateboard park be forwarded to the supplier of that equipment, with the request that a representative of the company meets on-site with the Chairman of the Council to discuss the remedial works required to the skateboard park;
  - (2) a copy of the RoSPA report relating to the play equipment be forwarded to a local play equipment manufacturer/supplier with the request that a representative of the company meets on-site with the Chairman of the Council to discuss the remedial works required to certain items of play equipment;
  - (3) the Chairman would make arrangements, with appropriate local contractors, for undertaking of those works which would not need to be carried out by specialist contractors.
- (2) Playing field - the Clerk reported to members on an allegation made (on 30 April 2015) by a resident of the village that his young child had suffered a cut to his head as a result of coming into contact with the self-closing gate to the toddler play area at the Park Road playing field; the resident expresses the opinion that the injury was sustained by his son was because the tension of the spring which effects closure of the gate is too strong.

The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, copies of the e-mail between the parent and he, in which the Clerk had made the point to the child's parent that the matter would be discussed at this meeting of Manea Parish Council.

The Clerk informed members that he had received, on 14 May 2015, a letter (accompanied by a claim notification form) from a firm of solicitors, acting on behalf of the child's parent, informing the council that the firm's client would be making a claim against the council for compensation in relation to "personal injury and consequential loss". In accordance with the request contained within the solicitors' letter, the Clerk had forwarded the solicitors' claim notification form to the council's insurance company.

Members commented that the gate to the toddler play area had been in place for many years and there had been no previous reports of injury to a child and that the strength of the spring fitted to the self-closing gate had never been deemed by the annual RoSPA inspection to pose a risk to users of the gate.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that, as they are of the opinion, which appears to be supported by the results of the very recent annual RoSPA inspection report, that the self-closing gate to the toddler play area is not defective, no action is required by the Parish Council in this matter (except to await the outcome of the resident's claim for compensation).

- (3) Amenity area in front of the playing field – Councillor Cole mentioned that some of the timber posts which had been installed as a means of preventing the parking of vehicles on the amenity area in front of the playing field are now suffering damage and he suggested that they be replaced with posts manufactured from metal.

Members decided that the comments and suggestion of Councillor Cole be noted and that the offer of Councillor Emery to obtain quotations for the manufacture and installation of metal posts be accepted.

## M12/15 Manea Pit

Members considered whether there are currently any issues relation to the operation and management of Manea Pit.

Councillor Cole commented that significant progress had been made since the last meeting of the Parish Council in constructing the pond dipping area and informed members that an assessment had been made as to whether, in the interests of health and safety, it would be appropriate to fit handrails to the platforms. On the basis of the assessment concluding that it would be appropriate to fit handrails to the platforms, Councillor Cole had obtained a quotation from a local contractor for the manufacture of such handrails; the cost being £700.00 plus VAT.

Councillor Cole mentioned minor maintenance works required around Manea Pit and proposed that 20 tons of hardcore be purchased for use in undertaking certain repairs works.

The Clerk reminded members that the next meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee is scheduled for 27 May 2015.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that

- (1) the quotation from the local contractor for the manufacture of handrails for affixing to the pond dipping platforms, in the sum of £700.00 plus VAT, be accepted;
- (2) 20 tons of hardcore be purchased for use in undertaking certain maintenance works at Manea Pit.

## M13/15 Financial matters

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

### Income

|                                    |  |            |
|------------------------------------|--|------------|
| Kent Memorials                     | Cremated remains tablet  | £100.00    |
| Manea Allotment Association        | Allotment rent   | £250.00    |
| Turner and Son                     | Plot purchase and interment fee  | £578.00    |
| H M Revenue and Customs            | VAT refund 2014/15   | £4,898.82  |
| J H Landin                         | Interment of ashes   | £154.00    |
| J Lawrence                         | Allotment rent   | £200.00    |
| C Howell                           | Allotment rent   | £200.00    |
| Turner and Son                     | Interment of ashes   | £154.00    |
| Ouse Washers Landscape Partnership | Reimbursement of expenditure incurred on materials for pond dipping area | £6,102.14  |
| Fenland District Council           | Precept and Council Tax Support Grant – first half 2015/16               | £19,010.00 |

|                     |  |                   |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>Total Income</b> |  | <b>£31,646.96</b> |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|

**Expenditure**

|                                 |  |                  |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Manea Village Hall              | Room hire on 20 April 2015   | £10.00           |
| Mrs A Ryman                     | Wages and expenses   | £62.29           |
| T Jordan                        | Salary (less income tax of £128.49),<br>Broadband and other expenses                               | £600.25          |
| E.on                            | Electricity for pavilion (includes VAT of<br>£5.00)  | £105.17          |
| E.on                            | Electricity for village green (includes<br>VAT of £0.37)   | £7.78            |
| E.on                            | Electricity for sports area (includes VAT<br>of £0.36)   | £7.63            |
| Public Works Loans Board        | Loan re-payment  | £95.39           |
| Cole Properties                 | Reimbursement of the cost of hardcore<br>for works at Manea Pit (includes VAT of<br>£76.88)        | £461.26          |
| Playsafety Ltd                  | Annual RoSPA inspections (includes<br>VAT of £29.60)   | £177.60          |
| E Mason and Son                 | Grounds maintenance works for<br>October 2014 to March 2015 inclusive<br>(includes VAT of £696.80) | £4,180.80        |
| I Cooper                        | Internal Audit of 2014/15 accounts   | £200.00          |
| Society of Local Council Clerks | Membership 2015/16   | £83.50           |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>        |  | <b>£5,991.67</b> |

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 April 2015 (in the total sum of £65,976.95), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 April 2014.

The Clerk reported also on the Annual Audit of Accounts return for 2014/15, 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.



The Clerk explained to members the unreliability problems that he is now experiencing with the laptop provided to him for use on Manea Parish Council business and the need, in his opinion, to replace this piece of IT equipment (which is almost 8 years of age) as a matter of priority, in the interests of both business continuity and safeguarding the council's data. The Clerk estimated that the cost of purchasing a replacement laptop would be no more than £400.00.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Fielding, seconded by Councillor Woodard, that the income of £31,646.96 be noted and that the payments totalling £5,991.67 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 April 2015, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 April 2014, be noted;
- (3) that the Audited Accounts for 2014/15 be approved and submitted to the External Auditors;
- (4) the Clerk be authorised to purchase a new laptop for use on Manea Parish Council business.

#### **M14/15 Annual Report of the Manea Village Hall Committee**

The Clerk read to members the minutes of the AGM of Manea Village Hall Committee, which took place on 2 April 2014.

The minutes included the Annual Reports of both the Chairman and the Secretary/Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee. These reports contained details of some of the activities and events which had taken place at Manea Village Hall during the preceding twelve months, as well as income received during the year and the hall's overall financial position at the year end.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk, on behalf of the Manea Village hall Committee, be noted.

#### **M15/15 General Power of Competence**

Further to minute M118/13, members considered adoption once again, following the formation of the new Manea Parish Council, as a consequence of 7 May 2015 local elections, 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). 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 all of its nine members had been elected to the council on 7 May 2015 and that its Clerk possesses the Certificate in Local Council Administration, Manea Parish Council continues to meet the eligibility criteria for adoption of the General Power of Competence.

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

### **M16/15 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils**

Further to minute M157/14 (3), members considered the invitation from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) for Manea Parish Council to become a member of the association, at a cost of £430.26 for the municipal year 2015/16.

The Clerk outlined briefly the information provided by CAPALC as to the benefits of a local council being a member of the association and reminded members that Manea Parish Council had not been a member of CAPALC for a number of years, on the basis that members had not been convinced that such membership provided good value for money.

Members decided, on the basis that they are still not convinced that such membership provides good value for money, that Manea Parish Council would not become a member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils for the municipal year 2015/16.

### **M17/15 Correspondence**

#### **(1) Magpas – financial assistance**

Further to minute M157/14, the Clerk read to members a letter of thanks from Magpas in relation to the financial assistance provided by the Parish Council towards the cost of providing emergency medical care at the scenes of accidents within Cambridgeshire.

Members decided that the content of the letter be noted.

#### **(2) Manea Gala Committee**

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from the Secretary of the Manea Gala Committee, asking whether, in relation to this year's gala, the Parish Council:

- would allow the committee to install temporarily a ramp at the side of the pavilion to provide access to the disabled toilet
- would be prepared to have all the lights checked along the footpath to the pavilion and outside the pavilion ready for the gala
- wishes to include any information in this year's Manea Gala programme, which would be sent for printing before the end of May 2015.

Members decided that

- (1) the request to install temporarily a ramp at the side of the pavilion, to provide access to the disabled toilet, be approved but with the proviso that the works be undertaken in liaison with Parish Councillor Woodard (because of his knowledge of disability issues);
- (2) arrangements be made, by the Chairman of the Council, for the electrical contractor used by the Parish Council to check (and repair if/where necessary) the lighting to the footpath at the playing field;
- (3) there is nothing specific which the council wishes to include in the programme for the Manea Gala 2015 but it would book a stall at the event.

**M18/15 Next meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 15 June 2015, 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 9.30 pm**

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

Date:.....