

MANEA PARISH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 APRIL 2017 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: None.

In attendance: Approximately 20 members of the public.

The minutes of the Annual Assembly of 2016 (held on 18 April) were confirmed by attendees and signed by the Chairman of Manea Parish Council.

MA01/16 Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Emery, expressed the opinion that the municipal year 2016/17 had been another busy and a positive year for Manea Parish Council. He commented that the village continues to grow, with a number of proposed developments awaiting the grant of planning permission and others nearing completion; he expressed the opinion that growth of the village needs to be accompanied by supporting community infrastructure, such as school places, sufficient capacity at the doctor's surgery etc.

The Chairman of the Parish Council made the following comments in relation to activities and achievements of the council, during the period since the Annual Assembly of 2016, other matters of relevance to the parish and the council's plans for the future:

- both the cemetery and the playing field are in a very good state of maintenance; the council is fortunate to have a very conscience grounds maintenance contractor.
- the Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) would be refurbished, with new surfacing and fencing, during the next few weeks. Works to the lighting had been completed and the CCTV system would be improved in the near future
- the skateboard park continues to be used heavily by young people; despite requiring regular maintenance works, this had proved to be a good acquisition for the village
- following the decision of the council to not provide a new pavilion in the village, work would commence very soon on refurbishing the existing building
- the two-hourly rail service for Manea had proved very popular, with approximately 13,000 journeys having been recorded during the past year. It is anticipated that an hourly service would be in place by December 2019. New ticket machines and notice boards and the provision of a new shelter (on the "Manea to Ely" platform) are proposed. Network Rail is undertaking feasibility works into the provision of a station car park to the rear of the signal box; all of these issues have the support of Manea Parish Council
- a feasibility study into the delivery of improvements to the railway stations at Manea and Whittlesey is underway. The framework, which has eight stages, is known as GRIP (Governance for Rail Investment Projects); stage one has been completed and stage two is about to commence. The improvements proposed for Manea railway station are the lengthening of both platforms and improved signalling
- Manea Pit had suffered from an outbreak KHV during the last year, which resulted in the death of 30 prized Carp and closure, for fishing purposes, of the pit for a number of weeks (on the orders of Cefas). Cefas provided information and advice on how to respond to the situation, including the introduction of biosecurity measures. The

pit has now re-opened for fishing activities and anglers are required to disinfect their fishing rods, using the tanks of chemicals installed by the Parish Council, prior to use at Manea Pit

- the Parish Council decided, at its last meeting to disband the Manea Pit Management Committee; this decision had not been taken lightly but it had been felt that the pit and community orchard/woodland could be managed more efficiently and effectively by the council itself
- the community orchard/woodland is developing well; this is due in no small way to the work of the group of volunteers which undertakes regular maintenance activities.

The Chairman of the Parish Council concluded that, in general, a very successful year with a bright future and a lot of hard work ahead. He expressed his thanks to every member of the Parish Council for their work in helping to make the village a better place to live; he gave a special mention to Councillor Mrs Desborough for her work as Vice-Chairman of the Council. The Chairman of the Parish Council gave special thanks to the Parish Council Clerk, Terry Jordan, for his hard work, advice and dedication to the role; the Chairman expressing the opinion that Terry Jordan does an amazing job and the advice that he gives is "second to none".

Attendees noted the Chairman's Annual Report and Parish Council members endorsed his comments and sentiments.

MA02/16 Manea Internet Club

Mrs N Scott, Digital Inclusion Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council, and one of her colleagues, Mrs J Johnson, gave an update on the Manea Internet Club.

Mrs Scott reminded attendees that the club began in December 2015 and that the funding for the project had been provided initially by the Learning and Skills Service at Cambridgeshire County Council but more recently by Manea Parish Council.

Mrs Johnson, who supports operation of Manea Internet Club, mentioned some of the positive feedback which she had received from attendees at the club. She made the point that in addition to the learners gaining skills in the use of computers and the internet, the club is assisting in addressing rural isolation. As a result of attendance at the club, some attendees now use webcams to keep in contact with relatives and some are now shopping on-line and accessing information via the internet. Mrs Johnson expressed the opinion that the Manea Internet Club is providing a very valuable facility in the community.

Mrs Scott reminded attendees of the manner in which the sessions operate, assisted by a small number of volunteers (including, currently, a member of staff of Lloyds Bank) and mentioned that one challenge being faced by the club is 13 people all trying to share a 3 megabyte Broadband line. She commented that the Broadband line is managed by the County Council, which does not possess the funding to upgrade the line; it may, however, be possible for the Parish Council to apply for grant funding for that purpose.

Mrs Scott mentioned that the Manea Internet Club had been nominated for a Community Impact Award, as part of an awards scheme being operated by the County Council.

Attendees noted the situation.

MA03/16 Annual Report from Manea Village Hall Committee

The Clerk read to attendees the minutes of the 2016 AGM of Manea Village Hall Committee, which took place on 6 April 2016 (and had been agreed as a correct record at the 2017 AGM held on 12 April 2017).

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. In addition, the Clerk summarised the Village Hall Committee's Financial Statement for the period 1 January to 31 December 2016, which had been presented to the Village Hall Committee's 2017 AGM; it shows that the committee held at 31 December 2016 financial balances of £25,229.36 (an increase of £1,950.99 over the position as at 31 December 2015).

Attendees noted the situation.

MA04/16 Annual Report from Manea Educational Foundation Trust

The Clerk read to attendees the Annual Report from Manea Educational Foundation Trust, which detailed the manner in which the Trust operates – i.e. awarding grants once annually (in June) to students (aged between 16 and 25 years) in Further and Higher Education – and the number of individual grants that had been awarded since the last Annual Parish Assembly.

The report mentions how the grants scheme is publicised; this includes a regular advertisement in the Manea Matters publication.

Attendees noted the situation.

MA05/16 Report of the Manea Allotment Association

Mr R Watts, the Chairman of Manea Allotment Association, read to attendees the Annual Report of the Manea Allotment Association, which detailed a number of operational factors in relation to the allotments site which it rents from the Parish Council, including:

- the association has a committee, of 10 members, which meets at two monthly intervals; the officers of the committee were elected at the recent AGM
- that, as a result of a proactive approach to attracting tenants, only 2 of the 42 plots are currently vacant; there is a very broad spectrum of tenants and the association hopes to achieve full occupancy during 2017/18
- that the association held a further very successful BBQ last summer to help develop the community spirit amongst tenants
- that gates have been installed at the end of the car park, this has been achieved through an effective dialogue with local farmers
- that the association is appreciative of Manea Parish Council supplying hardcore for maintenance of the access road to the allotments site; the maintenance work is undertaken by working parties comprising members of the association
- the committee had been investigating the possibility of obtaining Lottery funding for the provision of a chemical toilet and a water supply at the site
- details of maintenance and enhancement works which had been undertaken by the allotment association
- there is a significant community spirit among the members of the Manea Allotment Association, with members working to help each other
- some anti-social behaviour and criminal damage had been experienced at the site in recent days.

Attendees noted the Report of the Manea Allotment Association.

MA06/16 Manea Station Adopters

The Clerk read to attendees a report from the Manea Station Adopters.

The report states that Manea station continues to be increasingly well used, both during the working week and on Saturdays. The work on the list of planned improvements had started, with 117 metres of palisade fencing being replaced, 120m of pipe work fencing re-painted and a waiting shelter completely re-painted. The ticket machine and "totem pole" information centre is now scheduled for installation.

The report mentions that the new advanced bi-mode trains are currently being built and the group had received an invitation to visit Switzerland to see completed units at first-hand. The new units would all be 3 or 4 coaches long and able to move seamlessly between electricity and diesel supplies.

Members of the Manea Station Adopters group had attended a meeting in Ipswich on 7 April 2017 and they asked the Managing Director of Greater Anglia (GA) why the hourly service could not start immediately. He admitted that he was "under enormous pressure from his "mothership", NS in the Netherlands, to get the service started using spare train capacity elsewhere within GA". He went on to say "the real issue remains all of the extra crossing closures at Ely which would result in the level crossing spending much longer closed to road traffic, potentially causing chaos in the surrounding roads".

The report from the Manea Station Adopters group goes on to say that, meanwhile, the group continues to sweep platforms, empty bins, water plants, update notice boards, clean waiting areas, grit platforms and, of course, undertake the required health and safety checks each week.

Attendees noted the situation.

MA07/16 Issues raised by parishioners

(1) Manea Fire Station

Mr M Milner, Watch Commander at Manea Fire Station, mentioned structural damage which had been suffered recently to the building in which the fire engine is stored (which had attracted interest by the community and the local newspapers) and informed attendees that emergency work had been undertaken to make the building both safe and vandal-proof; a contractor had been appointed to undertake the permanent repair works.

In addition, Mr Milner mentioned that the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has no plans currently to close Manea Fire Station.

Attendees noted the situation.

(2) Community Speed Watch

The Co-ordinator of the Manea Speed Watch Group informed attendees that the group's application to the County Council, under its Local Highway Improvements scheme for 2017/18, for the purchase of a Speed Indicator Device, had been successful.

Attendees noted the situation.

Meeting finished at 7.25 pm

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

Date:.....