

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

13 NOVEMBER 2017 – 7.00 pm.

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

Apologies: Councillors and Drinkwater and Risbridger.

In attendance: County Councillor Gowing.

The minutes of the meeting of 16 October 2017 were confirmed and signed.

M84/17 Open Forum

(1) Manea Pit

A parishioner requested an update on the installation of an "otter proof" fence at Manea Pit.

In response, the Chairman commented that an update would be provided as part of the Manea Pit and Community Orchard/Woodland item on the agenda (minute M92/17 refers).

Another parishioner enquired as whether the Parish Council had undertaken any credit checks on the contractor which had been engaged to undertake the installation of an "otter proof" fence at Manea Pit, in advance of paying to the contractor a financial sum for purchase of the necessary materials.

In response, the Chairman stated that no such credit checks had been undertaken by the council.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioners and the responses of the Chairman be noted.

(2) Manea Matters publication

A parishioner mentioned that she had suggested to Councillor Risbridger, who produces the content for the Parish Council's quarterly editorial in the Manea Matters publication, that his most recent content should be amended to include details of the current situation regarding installation of the "otter proof" fence and that his response had been that the content of the council's editorial is a matter solely for the council and not for other groups or individuals. She expressed the opinion that the publication of such information would be in the public interest.

The Chairman commented that Councillor Risbridger had consulted both the Clerk and he regarding the stance to be taken in this matter before responding to the parishioner. The Chairman also made the point that the progress with installation of the "otter proof" fence is documented in the council's minutes and would be discussed further at this meeting.

Another parishioner referred to the Parish Council's editorial for the Manea Matters publication, insofar as it makes mention of cessation of Manea Community Car Scheme. The parishioner stated that he had become aware that the scheme is still operating.

The parishioner mentioned that he had heard a rumour that the contractor which had been engaged to install an "otter proof" fence at Manea Pit had "gone bust" and enquired as to whether the rumour is true. In response, the Chairman commented that there is no truth in the rumour and that he would be updating the council on the situation later in the meeting.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioners and the responses of the Chairman be noted.

(3) New community building for Manea

A parishioner stated that he wished to make comments in relation to this initiative prior to members receiving the presentation from a representative of the group which is working on the possibility/feasibility of providing a new community building for the village. He commented that the public consultation which had been undertaken by the group had resulted in support from only 100 people (around 3% of the population of Manea). He referred to the proposed siting for the new building, which would necessitate re-location of the existing play equipment; an additional cost to that of the possible new building.

The parishioner expressed the opinion that, as the proposed building would be twice the size of the one which had been proposed previously by the Parish Council (which would have cost approximately £400,000 to construct), the cost of the building now being proposed by the community group would cost in excess of £800,000 to construct. In addition, funding would need to be made available to meet the costs of operating and managing such a building. He suggested that if any new community building were to be provided in Manea, the most appropriate course of action would be to "resurrect" the Parish Council's proposal.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted.

M85/17 Members' Code of Conduct

The Clerk reminded members of the need to inform the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council, via the Parish Clerk, 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.

M86/17 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Community resilience (minute M73/17 (1))

Councillor Mrs Eves reminded members that she had volunteered to compile a list of parishioners who possess particular skills and/or equipment which would be useful in the event of small-scale emergencies in Manea and had invited other members to provide her with such information; however, she had received, to date, no such information from members.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that they would each provide Councillor Mrs Eves with names and contact details of parishioners who possess particular skills and/or equipment which would be useful in the event of small-scale emergencies in Manea.

(2) Manea Pavilion (minute M73/17 (2))

Councillor Mrs Desborough reported that the procurement of both a microwave oven for the building and a First Aid kit available for users of the building had been undertaken.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that they consider the scheme of refurbishment of Manea pavilion to be now complete.

(3) Possible Sensory Room (minute M73/17 (4))

Councillor Mrs Desborough reported that she had obtained a brochure, which she would circulate around the members of the council, of the elements that are required to provide an effective Sensory Room. She commented that such provision is a complicated and expensive proposition. There are many types of such facility; in addition, careful thought would need to be given to identifying the level of potential demand/usage for such a facility, planning the proposal, installing the Sensory Room, engaging/training persons to operate the facility.

Councillor Mrs Desborough mentioned that she is awaiting the receipt of a second brochure, which she would also circulate around the members of the council when received.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Mrs Desborough be noted and that they would hold an additional meeting of the Parish Council, possibly in January 2018, with the sole purpose of discussing if/how to proceed in this matter.

M87/17 New community building for Manea

Further to minutes M37/17, M50/17, M60/17 and M75/17, members received a presentation from Mr M Pratt, a member of the group which is working on the possibility/feasibility of providing a new community building for the village.

Mr Pratt informed the council that the group had undertaken a public consultation exercise in relation to the possibility/feasibility of providing a new community building, on land in the ownership of Manea Parish Council (i.e. the recreation ground at Park Road), for the village. He expressed the opinion that the aim of this proposal is to achieve the same goal as the Parish Council's now defunct proposal. Mr Pratt expressed the view that Manea Parish Council's decision not to proceed with its proposal for a new community building, having listened to the views of local people, had been the correct one (minute M32/16 refers). He suggested that the main reason for public objection to the Parish Council's proposal had been the inclusion of a bar, because of the adverse financial implications that such provision could have upon existing licensed premises.

Mr Pratt explained that, following the Parish Council's decision not to proceed with its proposal, some parishioners decided to establish a group, which comprises a cross-section of the local community, to investigate the feasibility of achieving such a new community facility. This group had undertaken consultation with a number of the community groups and organisations which operate in Manea, as well as with members of the public. Mr Pratt showed the council some drawings/artists' impressions of a possible new building and explained that the group had sought to design a building which would be capable of accommodating the needs of a variety of potential users. He expressed the opinion that many of the features of the building are aspirational and that the design would include measures to minimise the costs of heating, lighting and maintenance.

Mr Pratt stated that the group had looked at ways, instead of a bar, of generating income; one of these could be a gym. He made the point that obtaining funding for such a proposal would be a significant issue; grant funding would not be forthcoming in the absence of Parish Council support for the proposal.

Mr Pratt responded to members' questions.

Members expressed the opinion that for the council to consider this proposal properly it would need information relating to: the potential uses of the building; estimated costs of construction and annual operating costs; how the building would be operated and managed (including how the operating costs would be met); how the funding for construction of the building and purchase of associated equipment and furniture would be obtained.

Members decided that the content of the presentation and the responses to their questions be noted and that this matter be discussed in detail at the next meeting of Manea Parish Council; at that meeting the council would decide whether or not to support in principle the proposal of the community group of seeking to achieve the provision of a new community building in Manea.

M88/17 Planning applications

The Clerk informed members that there are no planning applications requiring consideration by Manea parish Council at this time.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M89/17 Police matters

Although no representative of the March and Chatteris Policing Team was present at the meeting, PCSO Carol Holloway 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 Holloway's report mentioned that

- there had been a report of vehicles being driven suspiciously around the village; officers had attended the area and conducted a search but with a negative result
- with regard to the crimes which had been reported to the Constabulary since the last meeting of the council. there had been one report of criminal damage to a lock on a pair of gates at a residential property and a generator and trailer had been stolen from a farm
- she had undertaken foot patrols through the village and outside Manea Community Primary School
- community engagement events continue to be held at the Meat and Eat premises, to enable parishioners to be able to engage regularly on a face-to-face basis with a representative of the Constabulary; the next event is scheduled for 20 November 2017 (to take place between 10.00 am and 11.00 am).

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

M90/17 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

Councillor Buckton, the District Councillor for Manea, was not present at the meeting and he had not provided information to the Clerk, for reporting on his behalf to the Parish Council.

Councillor Gowing, the County Councillor for the electoral division which includes Manea, informed members that one of the seminars which he had attended recently, delivered by officers of the County Council, had related to the authority's Energy Strategy; he expressed the opinion that some of the measures contained within that strategy may be relevant for any new community building in Manea.

County Councillor informed members that he had thought, mistakenly, that cleaning of the gullies in the village had been undertaken but, on becoming aware that the work had not been completed, he would be pursuing with officers at the County Council the completion of that work.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M91/17 Public open spaces

- (1) Bench - further to minute M79/17, Councillor Cole informed members that the Chairman and he are yet to undertake the bench installation works but, hopefully, this would take place within the very near future.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

- (2) Playing field - further to minute M79/17, the Chairman reported that he had arranged for the operation and effectiveness of the showers in the pavilion to be investigated by a local electrical contractor; one of the showers had been found to be not providing hot water and, consequently, it had been replaced.

The Clerk read to members an e-mail, which he had circulated to members in advance of the meeting, from a representative of Manea United Football Club.

In the e-mail it states that the football club had now paid the £120.00 which it had withheld because of the dispute regarding the effectiveness of the showers in the pavilion; the club members are pleased that a new shower had been installed and that the others had been subject to maintenance work.

The football club is requesting, now that its debt has been paid, a set of keys for the pavilion.

The e-mail states that between the football clubs a defibrillator had been purchased, with the intention of it being available for home matches. The members of Manea United Football Club are of the opinion that this could be available more widely for the users of the pavilion and recreation ground if the Parish Council were to purchase a secure heated cabinet in which to house the defibrillator, rather than it being brought to the pavilion on match days only. The football club comments that, if a cabinet for the defibrillator cannot be purchased by the council, Manea United Football Club would welcome a financial contribution from the council towards the cost of the defibrillator; the clubs' managed to purchase this at a greatly reduced price; a contribution from the Parish Council of one-third of the cost would only be £127.20.

Further to minute M154/16 (2), Councillor Fielding reported that the additional 15 bollards required for installation in front of the recreation ground had been manufactured and are ready for installation.

Members decided that all of the information be noted and that

- in accordance with minute 64/17, the practice introduced in relation to key holders for the pavilion be reviewed at the next meeting of the council;
 - Manea United Football Club be requested to obtain, and provide to the Parish Council, a cost for the purchase of an appropriate cabinet in which to house the defibrillator at the pavilion.
- (3) Street lighting - further to minute M79/17, members considered again the possibility of arranging re-location of the street lighting between Manea railway station and the Station Road/Wimblington Road junction to the same side of the road as the footpath, instead of their current locations which are on the opposite side of the road to the footpath.

Members decided that the Clerk would request Fenland District Council to obtain an updated quotation for the cost of this work.

- (4) Multi-use Games Area - further to minutes M37/17 and M79/17, members reviewed the charging structure agreed by the council at minute M23/17.

Members decided that no changes are required to the charging structure agreed at minute M23/17.

- (5) Caretaking of the council's community assets - further to minute M46/17 (3), members reviewed, following three months of operation, the new arrangements for caretaking of the council's community assets.

Councillor Mrs Eves expressed the opinion that the new contractor is providing an excellent service but stated her awareness that the new arrangement is considerably more expensive than the previous one; she asked the question as to whether the council is happy paying the cost of the new arrangement.

In addition, Councillor Mrs Eves suggested that, in an attempt to reduce the amount of litter that blows around the recreation ground, lids be added to the existing bins located at the Multi-use Games Area and the skateboard park.

Members decided that

- they are happy with the new contractual arrangements in respect of the caretaking of the council's community assets and would ensure that the council's budget for the financial year 2018/19 includes sufficient financial resources to meet the cost of that service;
 - the Chairman would investigate the possibility/feasibility of affixing lids to the waste bins located at the Multi-use Games Area and the skateboard park.
- (6) Manea Cemetery - further to minute M50/17, the Councillor Cole informed members that work to lay gravel around the memorial tablets within the cremated remains section of the cemetery had now been undertaken.
- (7) Village sign - the Chairman informed members that a parishioner, Mrs Haldane, had re-painted the village sign and that, as a mark of appreciation, he had purchased, on behalf of the Parish Council, a small gift for her

Members decided that the situation be noted, to express their gratitude to this parishioner and that the cost of the gift to her be met by the council.

M92/17 Manea Pit and Community Orchard/Woodland

The Chairman informed members that some maintenance works are still required at Manea Pit, including making "non-slip" (by affixing wire mesh to the structure) and adding a handrail to one of the crossing points at Manea Pit.

The Chairman updated members on the situation with regard to installation of the "otter proof" fence. He mentioned that the contractor had fallen behind on the company's work schedule and that, consequently, its sub-contractors would not now be able to undertake the works at Manea Pit until after Christmas. The contractor had offered to re-pay to the council, if it so wishes, the money which had been paid to the contractor for the purchase of materials.

The Clerk read to members an update report provided by the Manea Community Orchard/Woodland Group, a copy of which he had circulated to members in advance of the meeting. The report informed the council that

- work is continuing on clearing the cut grass. Once this has been completed, the group would move on to clearing under the hedgerow and in, and around, the various trees and bushes on site
- the group has been discussing the way forward for the next growing season but needs to see what impact the "otter proof" fence will have and, realistically, what the remaining volunteers are likely to be able to achieve now that their number has reduced to four
- planting of the daffodil bulbs took place on 5 November
- the plants from the Woodland Trust had been received last week and around half of those have been planted

- the current leader of the group of volunteers has decided to stand down from that position at the end of the year but would continue to participate in activities where possible. At the current time there is no-one who is able to take-on this task.

Councillor Mrs Eves informed members that the next edition of the Manea Matters publication would include a plea for additional volunteers to join the group, as well as someone (ideally possessing horticultural experience) to lead the group.

Further to minute M80/17, Councillor Fielding informed members that he had collected from London the ride-on lawn mower which had been donated to the group by a parishioner and the Chairman commented that the storage container which is located at the cemetery is now ready to accommodate the mower.

Further to minute M65/17, the Chairman reported that he had arranged the manufacture of three signs bearing the wording "Manea Pit and Orchard" and had, subsequently, installed two of those signs at appropriate locations; the remaining sign would be installed in the very near future.

Members decided that

- (1) the information reported by certain members be noted;
- (2) the content of the report of the Community Orchard/Woodland Group be noted;
- (3) the work to install the "otter proof" fence be undertaken after Christmas by the contractor appointed previously by the council but the offer of the contractor to re-pay the money which had been paid for the purchase of materials be accepted; the Chairman would liaise with the contractor in that regard;
- (4) further to minute M80/17, the new Manea Pit Management Plan, which had been circulated by the Clerk to all members in advance of the meeting, be adopted by Manea Parish Council

M93/17 Parish councillors' training

Members considered a request from Councillor Mrs Eves to undergo Councillor Development training, which is being arranged by Doddington Parish Council.

This training, which would be delivered by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC), is spread over 3 sessions (on different dates; each session having a duration of approximately two hours; the sessions are as follows:

- (1) Meetings, Meeting Procedures and Code of Conduct (on 18 January 2018)
- (2) Budgets, Precepts, Statutory Powers and Standing Orders (on 25 January 2018)
- (3) Planning, Section 106 Planning Obligations and Risk Management (on 1 February 2018).

The total amount that would be charged by CAPALC for the three sessions would be £1,050 (£350 per session); the greater the number of attendees, the lower the cost per attendee. Doddington Parish Council is, consequently, seeking to attract as many attendees as possible.

A number of members indicated that they would be interested in attending at least one of these training sessions

Members decided that the Clerk would book with Doddington Parish Council places for members of Manea Parish Council on the Councillor Development training, as follows:

- Session 1: Councillors Mrs Eves and Ms Hookway
- Session 2: Councillors Mrs Berry, Mrs Desborough, Emery, Mrs Eves, Fielding, Ms Hookway
- Session 3: Councillors Mrs Eves and Ms Hookway.

M94/17 Manea Community Car Scheme

Further to minute M82/17, Councillor Mrs Eves reported on the current position in relation to Manea Community Car Scheme. She commented that she had been surprised to hear at minute M82/17 that the scheme had closed, as she had been vetted very recently and approved as a driver for the scheme.

Councillor Mrs Eves commented that it would appear that there has been an internal misunderstanding by those involved in operating the Manea Community Car Scheme, which had resulted in a scheme member informing people and the Parish Council that the scheme had closed. She stated that it had been confirmed to her that the scheme, although very short of volunteers, is still active and the co-ordinator had gone to a lot of effort to ensure that this scheme is still able to offer a service by being supported by drivers from neighbouring schemes. Consequently, Councillor Mrs Eves enquired as to whether it would be possible to re-pay the financial sum which had been paid accidentally to the Parish Council. She commented that this money is needed to subsidise the costs incurred by the voluntary drivers, thus ensuring that passengers are not overburdened with cost.

In response to the comments of Councillor Mrs Eves, the Chairman reminded members that they had decided at minute M82/17 that the £160.00 paid to the council by the Treasurer of the Manea Community Car Scheme be held in the Parish Council's accounts, to be made available to any new car scheme that may be set-up in the village in future.

Members decided that the comments of Councillor Mrs Eves and the Chairman be noted and that the funding currently being held by the Parish Council be released as soon as the council receives a formal request from a new Manea Community Car Scheme which has a bank account.

M95/17 Local Highway Improvements 2018/19

Further to minute M71/17 (3), members considered the request from the Manea Speed Watch group for the Parish Council to provide 10% of the cost of the group's Local Highway Improvements (LHI) scheme in the event that the bid is successful.

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from the Manea Speed Watch group, in which it states that a bid for a Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) had been submitted to the County Council under the Local Highway Improvements scheme for 2018/19. The group understands that these devices are similar to the Speed Watch camera/display but are intended to be positioned semi-permanently, unmanned, and are able to be moved to different locations.

The County Council estimates the cost of equipment and installation works to range between £4,000 and £7,000. The Speed Watch group is of the opinion that the County Council would need to erect poles to which to attach the MVAS and, consequently, the cost would more likely to be closer to £7,000 than £4,000.

Members decided that the Parish Council would provide 10% of the cost of this Local Highway Improvements (LHI) scheme (i.e. up to £700) in the event that the bid from the Manea Speed Watch group is approved by the County Council.

M96/17 Financial matters

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

Income

Chatteris Funerals	Interment fee	£170.00
Carp Syndicate	Membership fee 2017/18	£120.00
P Lawrence	Allotment rent	£531.25
C Howell	Allotment rent	£250.00
Manea Allotment Association	Allotment rent	£250.00
B Fletcher	Allotment rent	£250.00
Manea UFC	Hire of football pitch (3 matches)	£120.00
Total Income		£1,691.25

Expenditure

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 16 October 2017	£10.00
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £152.40 and NI of £10.80), other expenses and allowances	£789.45
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.81)	£17.07
E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.98)	£20.51
E.on	Electricity for pavilion (includes VAT of £2.83)	£59.39
Anglian Water	Water for cemetery	£49.67
Anglian Water	Water for playing field	£43.09
A Ryman	Pavilion cleaning	£75.15
E Mason and Son	Grounds maintenance: September 2017 (includes VAT of £240.00)	£1,440.00
M Willmottt	Caretaking duties and expenses (includes VAT of £31.11)	£446.65
Public Works Loans Board	Loan re-payment	£95.39
Manea Community Primary School	Donation towards the cost of digitising school log books	£600.00
Jaks Graphics	3 x "Manea Pit and Woodland" directional signs	£55.50
Ridgeons	Toilet seat (includes VAT of £2.31)	£13.84
Ridgeons	Wood filler and wet rod hardener (includes VAT of £3.40)	£20.42
Ridgeons	Padlock (includes VAT £2.78)	£16.70
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Poppy wreath	£20.00
B Short	Fitting new toilet seat	£10.00
Richard Yardy (2002) Ltd	Supply and fit new shower in pavilion (includes VAT of £31.23)	£187.37
Manea Connect Committee	Manea Matters editorials 2017/18	£120.00
Manea School of Gardening	Daffodil bulbs for community	£220.00

	orchard/woodland (includes VAT of £36.67)	
Mrs A Desborough	Reimbursement of the cost of purchasing microwave oven and First Aid Kit for Manea Pavilion	£74.98
D Newman	Preparing area and laying granite chippings at Manea Cemetery	£300.00
FJS Services Ltd	Welding works to white line roller	£19.75
Total Expenditure		£4,704.93

In addition, the Clerk reported to members on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 October 2017 (in the total sum of £249,948.11), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 October 2016.

Further to minute M81/17, members considered the Chairman's suggestion that the council ear-marks a sum of £100,000, from the capital receipt generated by the sale of the Cranmore Lots allotments site (minute M75/16 (3) refers), for the purchase of new play equipment for the recreation ground.

The Clerk reminded members that the council would need to set its budget and precept for the financial year 2018/19 at its January 2018 meeting and suggested that they may wish to give thought prior to that meeting as to any issues which may generate a need for additional financial resources.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Berry, seconded by Councillor Cole, that the income of £1,691.25 be noted and that the payments totalling £4,704.93 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 31 October 2017, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 October 2016, be noted;
- (3) that the council would not ear-mark, at this time, specific funding for the purchase of new play equipment for the recreation ground but it would consider, possibly at an additional meeting in the New Year, the development of a long-term plan for improvement of the facilities provided at the recreation ground.

M97/17 Correspondence

Honey Farm, Byall Fen Drove, Manea

The Clerk read to members a letter from a parishioner regarding the destruction of wildlife habitat which had occurred recently at Honey Farm, Manea, since the new tenants had taken possession on 1 October 2017. He asks that the Parish Council investigates what had been going, on the basis that, under the Hedgerows Regulations of 1997, it is unlawful to remove and destroy more than 20 metres of hedgerow without the prior consent of the Local Authority. The parishioner states that he cannot believe that a local authority would allow such destruction without a re-planting scheme being put in place.

The Chairman informed members the parishioner had already raised this matter with him and he had informed the parishioner that there is no action which could be taken by the Parish Council in this matter; it is not the relevant local authority.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and that he be informed that this situation is not one in relation to which the Parish Council has any duties, powers of influence.

M98/17 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 11 December 2017, to commence at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.55 pm

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

Date:.....