

# **MANEA PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**15 MAY 2017 – 7.00 pm.**

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

**Apologies:** County Councillor Gowing.

The minutes of the meeting of 18 April 2017 were confirmed and signed.

### **M1/17 Open Forum**

#### **War memorial**

A parishioner expressed the opinion that repair works are required to the kerbing of the village war memorial.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and that the Parish Council would assess the situation as part of its annual village inspection, which would take place immediately prior to the next meeting of the council (on 19 June 2017).

### **M2/17 Election of Chairman**

Councillor Emery was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2017/18 and made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **M3/17 Election of Vice-Chairman**

Councillor Mrs Desborough was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2017/18.

### **M4/17 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 2017/18:

- Allotments Officer: Councillor Emery
- Cemetery Officer: Councillor Cole
- Child Protection Officer: Councillor Mrs Berry
- Footpaths and Trees Officer: Councillor Mrs Desborough
- Manea Pit and Community Orchard/Woodland: Councillor Fielding
- Pavements and Street Lighting Officers: Councillor Ms Hookway (plus one vacancy)
- Recycling Officer: Councillor Risbridger
- Roads Officers: Councillors Drinkwater and Fielding.

## M5/17 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.

## M6/17 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

### (1) Vacancy in the membership of Manea Parish Council (minute M152/16)

The Clerk read to members an e-mail from the Returning Officer at Fenland District Council (FDC), enquiring as to whether Manea Parish Council wishes FDC to issue poll cards for the by-election (caused by the resignation of Mr R Hirson from membership of Manea Parish Council) scheduled for 29 June 2017.

Members are of the opinion that parishioners are already aware that this by-election is scheduled for 29 June 2017 and, therefore, poll cards in that regard would be unnecessary and, consequently, the cost of printing and posting poll cards would not be an efficient use of the Parish Council's financial resources.

Members decided that the Clerk would inform the Returning Officer at Fenland District Council that Manea Parish Council does not require the issue of poll cards for this by-election.

### (2) Community resilience (minute M154/16 (1))

Members considered further how the council should proceed in terms of developing a plan or community support in the event of small-scale emergency situations in Manea.

Councillor Risbridger informed members that he had sought to obtain, via Fenland District Council's website, a template for a Parish Emergency Plan; so far, to no avail. He mentioned that it would be useful to produce a "contacts pyramid" for use in a small-scale emergency situation and expressed the opinion that the key to protecting the community in such situations is to "know your neighbour".

Councillor Risbridger suggested that it may be useful to convene a public meeting to discuss how an emergency plan could be developed and proposed that he would include in the editorial that he produces quarterly, on behalf of the Parish Council, for the Manea Matters publication.

Councillor Ms Hookway informed members of action that she had taken to assist the doctor's surgery in dealing with operational difficulties caused by the recent cyber attack on NHS' IT systems.

Members decided that Councillor Risbridger would produce editorial for the next edition of the Manea Matters publication with regard the production of an emergency plan for the village, with a request that villagers provide their views on the matter to either Councillors Mrs Desborough, Emery or Risbridger; once equipped with comments from parishioners, the matter would be considered further by the council.

### (3) Manea Pavilion (minute M154/16 (2))

The Chairman informed members that the two new external doors to the pavilion had been fitted and it is anticipated that the new windows would be installed on 23 May 2017. He mentioned that he had procured paint for internal decoration of the building and is of the belief that there may be a sufficient stock of paint to undertake painting of the exterior of the building.

Councillor Fielding reported that he had made arrangements for the manufacture of an additional 15 bollards and that, once manufactured, he would liaise with Mr S Payne with regard to their installation.

Members decided that the current situation be noted.

#### **(4) Application for financial assistance - East Anglia Children's Hospices (minute M161/16 (1))**

The Clerk reported that he had obtained from East Anglia Children's Hospices (EACH) the details of the benefit which had been derived by families in Manea as a result of the services provided by the organisation, to enable the application for financial assistance from EACH to be considered further by the council.

In response to the Clerk's request for further information, the Fundraising Manager for EACH states that the organisation is currently supporting 5 children and young people and 11 family members in the parish.

The response goes on to say that EACH supports families and cares for children and young people from birth until the age of 19 yrs who have been diagnosed with life-threatening conditions. EACH offers families flexibility and control over where they receive their care and support, including where their child dies; at home, in hospital or at one of the three hospices operated by EACH (at Milton, Quidenham (Norfolk) and The Treehouse (Ipswich)). The hospices are a place where families feel safe, at home and where they can spend quality time together; enabling parents to be parents and not caregivers.

EACH states that it relies upon voluntary donations for the majority of its income and each year needs to raise more than £5 million from fundraising and £2.5 million from its shops. In addition, the organisation needs to raise £10 million to develop its hospice services in Norfolk, including a new hospice. Therefore, any donation that Manea Parish Council is able to make would be put to good use.

Members decided that that financial support in the sum of £500.00 be provided to East Anglia Children's Hospices (EACH).

#### **M7/17 Planning applications**

The Clerk informed members that no planning applications had been received by the Parish Council, as consultee of the Local Planning Authority, since its last meeting.

In addition, the Clerk reported the withdrawal by the respective applicants of the following planning applications:

- (1) F/YR16/1080/F (for the erection of a single-storey 2-bed dwelling on land east of 2 Holly Close, Manea); the Parish Council had raised objection to this application (at minute M141/16), on the basis that no pre-application consultation (as required by Policy LP12 of the Fenland local Plan) had been undertaken by the applicant
- (2) F/YR17/0202/F (for the erection of 2 x two-storey 4-bed and 2 x two-storey 3-bed with garages on land south-east of Williams Way, Manea); the Parish Council had supported (at minute M103/16) this proposal.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

In addition, members considered a pre-application consultation in respect of a proposal to erect one dwelling at East Street, Manea.

Members decided that they do not support the erection of a dwelling on the area of land shown on the plan submitted by the land owner's planning agent, on the basis that: the proposal would constitute overdevelopment of the site; the existing highway infrastructure and access arrangements are inadequate to serve further residential development in this part of the village.

### **M8/17 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

- there had been three incidents of theft of agricultural machinery from sheds on farms; such thefts are taking place across the county and CID is investigating the matter
- one incident of anti-social behaviour had been reported; this involved litter being thrown from a vehicle. The young persons responsible for the incident had been traced and they had apologised for their actions
- 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
- evening patrols around the car parks at Manea Pit and Park Road continue to take place; no issues requiring action by the Constabulary had been identified during the last month
- the Constabulary had received complaints from members of the public regarding staff of Manea Community Primary School parking their vehicles in front of the school all day, causing a "bottle neck" on the highway. PCSO Carol Holloway would be making contact with the Headteacher, to ask that staff be encouraged to park elsewhere in the village; however, as the inconsiderate parking is not taking place on double yellow lines, the Constabulary is unable to take any formal enforcement action against the "offenders".

Some members expressed surprise that PCSOs had not witnessed, during their patrols, drug-taking (the smoking of cannabis etc) activities at the Manea Pit car park; this tends to take place at around 7.00 pm on most days of the week.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk, on behalf of PCSO Rae, be noted and that he would inform the local PCSO of the drug-related incidents which take place at the Manea Pit car park, with a request that the situation be investigated.

### **M9/17 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish**

Neither Councillor Gowing, the new County Councillor (elected on 4 May 2017) for the electoral division which includes Manea, nor Councillor Buckton, the District Councillor for Manea, were present at the meeting.

Neither of these councillors had provided any information to the Clerk for reporting to the council. County Councillor Gowing had, however, requested the Clerk to arrange publication of his contact e-mail address on the Manea Parish Council website. The Clerk informed members that County Councillor Gowing's request had been actioned.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

### **M10/17 Public open spaces**

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

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

The Chairman offered to examine the documents in detail and produce a schedule of remedial works required to address the recommendations of the RoSPA reports.

Members decided that they would accept the offer of the Chairman with regard to producing a schedule of remedial works to address the recommendations of the RoSPA reports and that they would assess the situation generally, as part of the annual village inspection, scheduled for 19 June 2016 (immediately prior to the meeting of the Parish Council).

- (2) Community building - the Chairman informed members that a group of parishioners is planning to seek the views of Manea residents as to their wishes for a new community building in the village (in the light of the council's decision (at minute M32/16) not to proceed, in response to comments of the public, with the project to provide a new pavilion/community building for the village); the group proposes to use the Manea Matters publication as a means of consulting the community. He mentioned that the group is aiming to consult parishioners on three possible schemes and is enquiring as to whether Manea Parish Council would be prepared to provide financial assistance to meet the costs of architects producing some draft plans.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted and that Manea Parish Council would not provide financial assistance to meet the cost of architects producing, for the "community building group", some draft plans of a possible new community building in Manea.

- (3) Playing field - the Chairman informed members of a request from Chatteris Youth Services to use the playing field and the pavilion for activities (between 9.30 am and 12 noon) on 9 August 2017.

Further to minute M144/16, Cole reported that he was yet to obtain an additional quotation for works to reduce to 8 feet the height of the conifers along the boundary of the playing field but would undertake such action in advance of the next meeting of the council.

Members decided that

- (1) the request from Chatteris Youth Services for use of the playing field and the pavilion be approved and that such use be on a free-of-charge basis;
- (2) the update from Councillor Cole with regard to obtaining a quotation for reducing the height of the conifers along the boundary of the playing field be noted.

### **M11/17 Manea Pit and Community Orchard/Woodland**

The Chairman informed members that work parties, to undertake routine maintenance at Manea Pit, had taken place on Thursday evenings over recent weeks.

Further to minute M159/16, the Clerk read to members an e-mail from an officer of the Environment Agency (EA) regarding the council's application to the EA for permission to install "otter proof" fencing around Manea Pit. The letter states "Provided that the Parish Council continues to use and manage the site in accordance with the terms of the lease, I do not feel that we need to become involved in what is a local parish issue regarding the use of the leased property. Therefore, I am now writing to give consent (as landlord) to the otter fencing".

In the light of the grant of consent by the EA for installation of "otter proof" fencing around Manea Pit, members considered progressing that project. The Chairman reminded members that quotations had been obtained more than a year ago for the purpose of estimating the cost of such works and, at that time, the quotation submitted by Otter Stop Limited had been the lowest of those obtained by the council. He mentioned that Mr C Carson, a member of the former Manea Pit Management Committee (and who had advised the committee on environmental and conservation issues) had suggested that the height of the proposed fencing would need to be no higher than four feet (as opposed to the five feet included within the lowest quotation). Members supported the draft specification suggested by the Chairman; that being:

- fencing of four feet in (vertical) height, with ground cover of two feet and a top angle of one foot

- five hand gates and a gate at the main car park
- the line of the fencing to be two metres in from the boundary hedge
- metal or wooden fence posts (contractors to quote for both options).

Further to minute M159/16, the Clerk read to members the response that he had received to his enquiries of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) with regard to the possibility of the provision of both directional and tourism (brown) signage to Manea Pit. The LHA has stated that it would have no objection to the provision of directional "highway" signage to Manea Pit, the cost of manufacture and installation of such signage at each agreed location would be approximately £750 (plus VAT); the Clerk is still awaiting a response in relation to the enquiry regarding the possible provision of tourism (brown signs).

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

- the group is seeking the council's permission for the planting of daffodils along the bank fronting Manea Pit; 500 native bulbs could be purchased for £90 and the group is considering organising a Manea Pit Daffodil Fund and seeking donations at the Manea Gala and then involve the community, especially children, in their planting in the autumn
- further to last month's request (minute M159/16 refers), the group would like to suggest that it would be able to make a directional sign for Manea Pit, for placement at the junction of Park Road and Straight Road, to match the one being made by the group for the Community Woodland/Orchard.
- there would be further planting, by volunteers, of hedge plants, to be provided by free-of-charge by the Woodland Trust, in the autumn of this year.
- although there had been some negative comments made by villagers regarding the fact that the group is letting the grass grow in the Community Orchard, there had also been a number of positive comments from other sections of the community. The group states its acknowledgement that it is not possible to please everyone; however, it would like to remind everyone that the grass would be cut short at the end of the season (late August/early September) and would remain so until the start of the new growing season in 2018.

Members decided that

- (1) the information from the Environment Agency and the Local Highway Authority (LHA), as reported by the Clerk, be noted;
- (2) given the Environment Agency's consent to the installation of "otter proof" fencing around Manea Pit, the Parish Council would now progress that project by the invitation of formal quotations for the works (quotations to be invited from the contractor which submitted which submitted the lowest quotation previously plus two others);
- (3) no action be taken regarding directional and tourism (brown) signage to Manea Pit until the council receives a response from the LHA regarding tourism signs;
- (4) the content of the report of the community orchard/woodland group be noted and that it be informed that
  - the Parish Council is happy with proposal to plant daffodils but would like to see a mixture of flowers (not daffodils only) - perhaps bluebells, snowdrops and crocuses also. The council is also happy with the fundraising idea
  - with regard to directional signs, only "proper" highways directional signs can be used on the highway; any "informal" signs would need to be on private property/land. A quotation has been received from the Local Highway Authority (LHA) for "proper" signs; these would cost £750 each (including installation). The Parish Council has also requested permission from the LHA for brown Tourism signs and is awaiting a response. The council has decided to take no action regarding signage until it receives a response from the LHA regarding brown signs.

### M12/17 Williams Way, Manea

Councillor Drinkwater expressed that opinion that the fencing at this estate is a disgrace, an eyesore in the village, and that action should be taken to remedy the situation.

The Chairman informed members that he had undertaken investigations to seek to ascertain the ownership, and, consequently, responsibility for repair/replacement, of this fence. To that end, he had spoken with District Councillor Sutton, who undertook to discuss the matter with the relevant officer of the District Council. The general view is that the owner of the fence is either Fenland District Council or Circle Roddons Housing Association; it is not situated on land owned by Manea Parish Council.

The Clerk reminded members that District Councillor Buckton had investigated this matter previously (minute M78/16 refers); at that time both Fenland District Council and Circle Roddons had claimed that the fence is in the ownership of the other party and, consequently, no action was being taken to address the situation.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Chairman would inform the council of the response that he receives from District Councillor Sutton.

### M13/17 East Street, Manea

Councillor Mrs Desborough mentioned that a number of people travel by car along East Street to take their dogs, for walking, to County Farms land. She expressed the opinion that these motorists tend to drive inconsiderately and are a danger to pedestrians.

The Chairman informed members that he had spoken with one of the tenants of the County Farms land who had arranged to meet with an officer of the County Farms service; the tenant farmer would be asking the County Council officer for permission to install a gate to the land that he rents from the County Council and also whether the County Council would provide "no unauthorised access" signs at certain point on East Street. The tenant farmer had undertaken to inform the Chairman of the outcome of his discussion with the officer of the County Council. The Chairman expressed the opinion that a successful outcome to these discussions could provide a solution to the difficulties explained by Councillor Mrs Desborough.

Members decided that the comments made by the Councillor Mrs Desborough and the Chairman be noted and that he would report to the council on the outcome of his the tenant farmer's discussion with the officer of the County Council.

### M14/17 Financial matters

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

#### Income

Fenland District Council	Precept: first 50%	£33,005.00
Fenland District Council	Council Tax Support Grant: first 50%	£452.00
Tony Clingo	Plot purchase and interment fee	£266.00
Richard King Memorials Ltd	2 cremated remains tablets	£220.00
Richard King Memorials Limited	Cemetery memorial	£170.00
P Lawrence	Allotment rent	£425.00
B Fletcher	Allotment rent	£200.00
Carp Syndicate	21 membership fees 2017/18	£2,520.00
H M Revenue and Customs	VAT refund 2016/17	£4,833.77

<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£42,091.77</b>
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**Expenditure**

Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 18 April 2017	£10.00
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £153.23 and NI of £11.30), other expenses and allowances	£708.48
Anglian Water	Water for pavilion	£50.15
Anglian Water	Water for cemetery	£20.64
E.on	Electricity for village green (includes VAT of £0.78)	£16.46
E.on	Electricity for sports area (includes VAT of £0.78)	£16.46
E.on	Electricity for pavilion (includes VAT of £2.91)	£61.20
Mrs A Ryman	Pavilion cleaning	£57.60
B Short	Repairs to playing field toilet	£15.00
S Emery	Repairs to fencing at village green	£45.12
Public Works Loans Board	Loan re-payment	£95.39
Manea Street Pride Volunteer Group	Contribution towards cost of plants	£100.00
Ridgeons	Maintenance materials for Multi-use Games Area (includes VAT of £10.32)	£61.94
Ridgeons	Wood etc for replacement doors at pavilion (includes VAT of £19.32)	£115.95
Playsafety Limited	Annual RoSPA inspection of play area and skateboard park (includes VAT of £30.80)	£184.80
I Cooper	Internal Audit 2016/17	£225.00
Haine Tree Services Ltd	Prune trees around Multi-Use Games Area (includes VAT of £65.00)	£390.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£2,174.19</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 2017 (in the total sum of £281,625.54) together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 April 2016.

The Clerk reported also on the Annual Audit of Accounts return for 2016/17 (which includes the Governance Statement and Accounting Statement), 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.

Further to minute M160/16, the Clerk reported that he had contacted District Councillor Sutton with regard to the possibility of Manea Parish Council accessing the Section 106 Planning Obligation monies, currently being held by Fenland District Council, which are allocated for leisure and recreation provision in Manea. District Councillor Sutton responded, stating that if the Clerk were to forward copies of quotations for the Parish Council's agreed works to the Multi-use Games Area and the pavilion, the Head of Planning Services at Fenland District Council would arrange for Section 106 Planning Obligation monies to be paid to Manea Parish Council. The Clerk informed members that he

had sent the necessary information to the Head of Planning Services at Fenland District Council and is awaiting a response.

Councillor Ms Hookway expressed the opinion that Manea Internet Club would benefit from the provision of additional financial support, in connection with its use of the Church Rooms for its weekly sessions, from Manea Parish Council.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Drinkwater, seconded by Councillor Fielding, that the income of £42,091.77 be noted and that the payments totalling £2,174.19 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank accounts as at 30 April 2017, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 30 April 2016, be noted;
- (3) that the Audited Accounts Annual Return for 2016/17 be approved and submitted to the External Auditor;
- (4) that the information reported by the Clerk with regard to accessing Section 106 Planning Obligation monies from Fenland District Council be noted;
- (5) in the event that it proves possible to fund the Parish Council's agreed works to the Multi-use Games Area and the pavilion (currently being met from the capital receipt from the sale of allotments land (minute M97/16 refers)) from Section 106 Planning Obligation monies, the council would seek the views of parishioners as to additional play equipment provision (to be funded from the capital receipt) in the village;
- (6) that the agenda for the next meeting of Manea Parish Council would include an item for Councillor Ms Hookway to invite a discussion by members with regard to the provision of additional financial support to Manea Internet Club.

### M15/17 Correspondence

#### **(1) Parish street lighting**

The Clerk read to members a letter from District Councillor King, Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, regarding arrangements which have been put in place by Fenland District Council (FDC) because of difficulties which have been faced by members of the public and Parish Councils regarding Balfour Beatty's response to service requests for street lighting maintenance; the company stating in response to such requests that "we no longer maintain these light".

The letter from District Councillor King stated that the reason for this situation is that Balfour Beatty presented FDC recently with a renewed contract offer with a two weeks deadline. Because of operational difficulties with Balfour Beatty, FDC was not prepared to enter into a new contractual arrangement at such short notice. FDC anticipates completing its evaluation of all the alternatives by the end of May 2017, at which time District Councillor King would contact Parish Councils again.

In the meantime, e-mail all non-Cambridgeshire County Council street lighting (i.e. columns numbered FDC, FPC or RHA) service requests or enquiries should be sent to the Assets and Projects Team at Fenland District Council at: [assets&projects@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:assets&projects@fenland.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01354 654321. FDC will assess the matter reported and action as appropriate by using the range of contractors at its disposal.

Members decided that the content of the letter from District Councillor King be noted and that they would "spread the word" regarding this situation.

**(2) Tree on the village green**

The Clerk read to members e-mails from two residents of Jolley Close, Manea regarding the large tree located on the village green (at the junction of Station Road with School Lane), requesting, at least, further cutting back (work had been undertaken in 2016 (minute M138/15 refers)) of the branches which overhang the gardens of some of the properties on Jolley Close; the authors of the e-mails would prefer complete removal of the tree.

In summary, the issues raised by the residents, for which they suggest works to the tree are required, are:

- mess caused to clothes, cars, paths at the properties by birds which perch on the branches of the tree
- noise caused by birds which perch on the branches of the tree
- seeds and branches falling from the tree into gardens, causing damage to lawns and posing a health risk to domestic pets.

Members decided, given that they consider it to be an attractive feature in the centre of the village, that this tree should not be removed but the council would consider, following inspection, undertaking further trimming works following conclusion of this year's bird nesting season.

**M16/17 Next meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 19 June 2017, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea; this meeting would be preceded by the annual village inspection, commencing at 6.00 pm at the pavilion.

**Meeting finished at 8.45 pm**

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

Date:.....