**MANEA PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING 25th March 2024**

**Present: Councillors,** Ben Bonos (Chairman), Jan Coupland (Vice Chairman), Caroline Barnes, Charlie Marks, Chris Bartram, Janet O’Keefe, David Payne, Nick Usher and Doggett.

Alan Melton Clerk/RFO.

**M148/23: Public Forum.** Brenda Mead-Blandford advised the council that the FACT vehicle was now making regular visits to the village, the Rose and Crown had kindly allowed the vehicle to park in their car park. Food was being distributed from the “Stop the Landfill”, food was being collected from major stores in the area, currently 184 households are using the service, including pensioners and young families. To date 620 kilograms had been saved from landfill. FACT supply the vehicle and the driver. The Chairman on behalf of the community thanked Barbara Mead-Blandford for all her hard work, the Council expressed gratitude.

Martin Hindry wished to raise the issue of the Manea Community Warm Hub; the Chairman pointed out that the issue was to be debated as a confidential item.

Steve Emery advised the Council that he would be relinquishing his position of MUGA officer after 10 years, The Chairman expressed his thanks. The Clerk would explore options for a replacement method of letting.

**M149/23: Apologies**. Councillor John Gowing (CCC), Councillor Alan Gowler (FDC)

**M150/23: Code of Conduct**, Members were reminded of the Code of Conduct.

**M151/23: Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests**. Councillor Marks, item 6 as a member of FDC Planning Committee. Councillors Barnes and Usher declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10, as spouse of a School Governor. Councillor Payne declared a pecuniary interest in item 13 and left the room. Councillor Bartram declared a pecuniary interest in item 16 and left the room.

**M152/23: Minutes,** the minutes of the meeting 29th January 2024 were received and accepted, the Chairman signed the minutes.

Actions and progress from previous minutes.

* Fire Station, The Chairman reported that the open meeting at the Fire Station was very successful, and thatb3npossible recruits had been identified.
* Boots Bridge, Councillor Marks reported that the 50mph speed limit sign was to be moved from the bridge by 300 metres.
* Parking and Speed Restrictions: The Clerk reported that he had applied for at 20mph speed limit in Station Road.
* Drainage, Councillor Marks reported that a householder has cleared drains and ditches in School Lane and Wisbech Road.
* Extraction Licence, The Clerk reported that the Environment Agency had granted a license to extract water from the water courses to replenish the pit.
* Neighbourhood Plan, The Clerk reported that Cambridgeshire Acre had advised that funding would be available from July 2024.
* Environmental Improvement Grant, The Clerk/RFO reported that the application for a £5,000 grant for Environmental Improvements had been granted.

**153/23: Polce report,** the Chairman gave an update on Police Matters.

**M154/23: Planning applications:**

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| **F/YR24/0190/F** | Single storey annex, 88A Station Road, Manea |  | No Objection |
| **F/YR24/0194/0** | Erect one dwelling at 22c School Lane, Manea |  | No Objection |
| **F/YR24/0197/F** | 2 Storey extension at 26, Station Road, Manea |  | No Objection |
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**M155/23: Financial matters**, The RFO presented the monthly income and expenditure report, also presented were the accounts for payment. Members gave the RFO authority to pay all outstanding accounts. The RFO reported that at the end of the financial year, the council had traded within budget limits and the accounts for 2023/2024 would be closed and audited.

**M156/23: Maurice Short Community Pavilion,** The Clerk reported that planning and fundraising was continuing, the Clerk and the Chairman had a meeting with the local representative of the National Lottery, she gave advice of how to strengthen our bid.

**M157/23: Application for a Grant,** the Council received a grant application form the Manea Primary School for a grant of £1000, for a storage shed. The RFO reported that the s137 budget was underspent. Members unanimously agreed to grant the school £1000 from the s137 fund.

**M158/23: Illegal Development** at Horseway, New Road, Chatteris, (Manea Parish). Councillor Marks gave an update of the enforcement action being taken by Fenland District Council to remove the current buildings and to stop further development it was reported that the occupiers had divided the site into individual plots, enforcement notices would have to be served upon all occupiers.

**M159/23: Street Pride**. Councillor O’Keefe reported that a person had come forward offering to give 39 hours per year to co-ordinate Street Pride. Members welcomed the offer and asked Councillor O’Keefe to accept the offer.

**M160/23: Westfield Road**, Street Lights. The Clerk reported that the developer at the end of Westfield Road had offered to pay for four new streetlights. Members were pleased to accept the offer and resolved to adopt the streetlights once the relevant certificates are in place.

(*Councillor Payne left the room)*

**M163/23: ROSPA**, members were advised that the next ROSPA inspection of the play equipment will take place in April 2024.

**M164/23: Grounds Maintenance Contract:** The RFO presented a report to members regarding the tender process for the appointment of a new contractor to carry out the ground’s maintenance of the public open spaces, S. M. Guy Playing Field and the Cemetery.

The RFO reported that he had received 3 tenders for the work, all of which were evaluated in accordance with the 1972 Local Government Act (Finance and Procurement).

Following the meeting held on the 18th March 2024, members agreed to award the contract to Mr Chris Bartram, subject to the provision of all insurances a DBS Certificate and confirmation of Health and Safety rules. At the meeting held on 26th March 2024 the RFO reported that he was satisfied that all the criteria had been met and that he was in possession of the necessary documentation.

Members unanimously authorised the Clerk/RFO and the Chairman to enter a contract with Mr Bartram. *(Councillor Bartram left the room)*

**163/23. Manea Community Warm Hub.** Members received a report from the Clerk/RFO regarding the Manea Community Hub which was being held on Wednesday mornings. Members were reminded that the that the Council had granted £450 as starter finance and the Fenland District Council had granted £980.00. Cambridgeshire Acre had made a grant of £2500.00.

Following an email trail (seen by all members), it was reported that a third party had informed Cambridgeshire Acre that the grant of £2500.00 was no longer needed, (as it did not meet the criteria of the Manea Hub) The Third Party had stated that £2100.00 would be returned as £400.00 had already been spent.

Members were reminded that the grant of £2500.00 had been made to the Parish Council and was therefore for the Council to allocate the funds in accordance with Cambridgeshire Acre criteria.

The third party therefore had no authority to offer all or part of the £2500.00 back to Cambridgeshire Acre. This was a clear breach of Council Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Local Government Finance Act.

Members unanimously agreed that the rules had clearly been broken and that action needed to be taken.

* The Clerk/RFO was asked to write to Cambridgeshire Acre and apologise as the third party had no authority to act on behalf of the council.
* The Clerk/RFO was asked to inform the third party that the sum of £2500.00 would be withdrawn from the hub accounts.
* The Clerk/RFO was asked to inform Cambridgeshire Acre of this decision and request that the council be allowed to ring fence the £2500.00 for a suitable alternative use.
* The third party to be reminded to use the FDC grant of £980.00 in accordance with the grant obligations.
* Members also resolved to review the Parish Council Grant at the start of the new financial year.

**M164/23: Meeting date: The next meeting would be held on Monday 15th April at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.**

**M165/23: The meeting closed at 9.30pm.**

**Signed…………………………………………………………………………………………………….Chairman**

**Date……………………………………………………………………**

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