

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

23 MARCH 2009 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Emery, Chairman; Councillors Archer, Barnes, Buckton, Cole, Mrs Desborough (from 7.30 pm), Jolley, Mrs Palmby and Risbridger.

Apologies: None.

The minutes of the meeting of 16 February 2009 were confirmed and signed.

M73/08 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Open spaces (minute M63/08 (1))

Station Road – the Clerk reported that, despite sending a reminder last week, he has still not received a response from the company which is dealing with the administrative affairs of Hazelmere Homes, i.e. BDO Stoy Hayward LLP (Chartered Accountants).

Members decided that a further letter be sent to BDO Stoy Hayward LLP.

(2) Castle Care, Acorn Lane, Manea (minute M63/08 (4))

The Clerk reported that, although he had received no update from Fenland District Council on the planning situation at this site, he had ascertained that the Planning Committee, at its meeting on 11 March 2009, had decided to authorise: (1) enforcement notice proceedings to secure cessation of the unauthorised use of 4 Acorn Lane, Manea as a children's home; (2) prosecution proceedings against Castle Care in the event that there is non-compliance by the company with any notice served.

Members decided that the current position be noted.

(Councillor Emery declared his personal interest in this item of business, by virtue of his wife being an employee of Castle Care)

(3) Manea Sewage Treatment Works (minute M63/08 (7))

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter from Anglian Water, stating that the company hoped to be able to respond in time for this meeting of the Parish Council. However, no such response had been received by the date of the meeting

Members decided that a further letter be sent to Anglian Water, seeking a response for reporting to the next meeting.

M74/08 Manea Community Primary School Travel Plan

Further to minute M63/08 (5), the Chairman reported that, due to a family bereavement on the part of the Head teacher of the school and her consequent inability to attend the meeting, the presentation by the Chairman of the Governors and the Head teacher would now be made to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

M75/08 Allotments

Further to minute M65/08, members considered the latest position in relation to the proposal to seek planning permission for three acres of land at The Twenties for new garden allotments.

Councillor Archer reported that he had obtained the necessary plans/maps and the other supporting information to accompany the planning application and suggested that he and the Clerk should complete the necessary paperwork immediately after the meeting to enable the planning application to be submitted to Fenland District Council, as Local Planning Authority, the following day.

As a result of views expressed by members of the Allotment Association at the Open Forum, the Parish Council considered the undertaking of works to improve the access road to the site. The Parish Council acknowledges that it has a responsibility to provide a suitable means of vehicular access to the allotments site and is prepared to allocate a financial sum for the purchase of construction materials, on the basis of the Allotment Association arranging and meeting the costs of the associated construction works.

Members gave consideration also as to what would be an appropriate length of the Tenancy Agreement for the Allotment Association, bearing in mind the fact that the Agreement includes a notice period of twelve months (by either party to the Agreement) and that many of the allotment holders would be making capital expenditure on sheds etc.

Members decided that

- (1) at the conclusion of the meeting, the Clerk and Councillor Archer would complete the planning application for change of use of the three acres of land at The Twenties for new garden allotments and that Councillor Archer would submit the application to the Local Planning Authority the following day;
- (2) the term of the Tenancy Agreement be for a period of three years (with an automatic option for the Allotment Association to renew the Agreement at the end of each term of three years) and that the draft version of the document be updated to reflect this decision;
- (3) a sum of £1,000 be allocated for the provision of construction materials to achieve a suitable means of vehicular access to the allotments site, on the basis that the Allotment Association arranges and meets the costs of the associated construction works;
- (4) the Tenancy Agreement produced and updated by the Clerk be issued to the Manea Allotment Association by Councillor Archer at the meeting of the Allotment Association on 24 March 2009.

(Councillor Archer declared his personal interest in this item of business, by virtue of being a member of the Allotments Association)

M76/08 Playing Field

- (1) Safety surfacing – Further to minute M66/08, the Clerk reported that he had received a quotation from Wicksteed Leisure, in a total sum exceeding £25,000 plus VAT, for replacement of the safety surfacing at the play area.

The Chairman reported that he had undertaken further cleaning of the safety surfacing and it is now in a safe condition. Other members made the point that, given the works carried out to trees in the vicinity of the play area, it is likely that, with regular cleaning, the surfacing will remain in a safe condition for the foreseeable future.

Members decided that replacement of the safety surfacing be not undertaken at this time and that the quotation from Wicksteed Leisure for such works be not accepted.

- (2) Fencing – Further to minute M68/08, the Clerk presented a draft specification for the provision and installation of metal fencing along the playing field frontage, following a members' site visit on 11 March 2009.

Members decided that the specification be approved and that invitation to submit a quotation for the works be sent to four local companies which are known to undertake such works.

- (3) Grass cutting – Further to minute M70/08 (1), the Chairman reported that he had spoken with the contractor who undertakes the grass cutting on behalf of the County Council. The contractor has spiked the field and has agreed to cut the grass each week as close to the weekend as possible, in accordance with the wish of the Parish Council.

(Councillor Jolley declared his personal interest in this item of business in so far as it related to obtaining quotations for the provision and installation of new fencing at the playing field, by virtue of his involvement with one of the companies selected to submit a quotation for the works)

M77/08 Planning applications

Members considered the following planning applications and decided to submit to Fenland District Council the comments set out (in italics) below:

- (1) Erection of a single-storey extension to dog grooming building to form domestic garage/store at 35C Westfield Road, Manea - F/YR09/0131/F

That the application be supported.

- (2) Erection of 5 x 3-bed self-catering holiday lets at Colony Lake, Bedford Bank, Welney – F/YR09/0172/F

That the application be supported, subject to the imposition of a condition upon any planning permission granted to restrict the occupancy of the units (e.g.no occupancy during certain months of the year), to prevent them being occupied permanently as residential accommodation.

M78/08 Land currently forming a car park in Park Road, Manea

The Clerk reported a letter from Graham Dack and Company, Solicitors, on the latest position regarding the registration of this land as being in the ownership of the Parish Council, together with an invoice for the legal work undertaken.

Members are pleased to note that this matter is reaching its conclusion and that this piece of land is likely to soon be registered as being in the ownership of the Parish Council.

Members expressed concern regarding the extent to which the cost of the legal work undertaken by the company to date exceeds the estimate provided before the legal process began. Consequently, members would like the legal advisers to provide details to support the basis of the original estimate and to substantiate why the company's invoice now differs so greatly from that estimate. Some members are of the opinion that some of the additional costs could have been avoided.

Members decided that

- (1) the progress in terms of the land registration be noted;
- (2) the invoice from the legal advisers be challenged by the Clerk and that the response be reported to the next meeting for further consideration of the matter.

M79/08 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting of 11 March 2009.

Councillor Barnes reported that some minor improvement/maintenance works had been undertaken at the Pit over the previous weekend and that a work party is being organised for week commencing 13 April 2009, following an inspection by the Sub-Committee on the evening of 14 April.

Councillor Buckton reported on the current position regarding the grant application.

Members decided to note the information reported.

M80/08 Finance

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

Income

Various (via P Bridgement)	Sale of fishing tickets	£30.00
Fenland District Council	Third quarter 2008/09 recycling credits	£73.88
Various (via P Catling)	2 x part year memberships of Carp Syndicate	£100.00
Total Income		£203.88

Expenditure

E-on	Electricity for playing field	£35.54
E-on	Electricity for pavilion	£271.19
Ridgeons	Cleaning fluid, tap connector and hose connector	£18.21
Manea Village Hall Committee	Hire of meeting room on 16/02	£7.50
Richard Yardy	Repairs to alarm system	£40.00
Londis	Cleaning materials	£24.80
Mason and Son	Maintenance of cemetery and playing field (Oct. – Dec., 2008)	£546.25
Suffolk ACRE	Pavilion insurance 2009/10	£211.90

UK Signs	2 signs for pit footpath	£40.00
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£97.59
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £74.05), Broadband and other expenses	£341.29
Revenue and Customs	Clerk's Income Tax (Dec. 2008 and Jan. and Feb., 2009).	£211.88
Fenland District Council	Business rates – Burial ground	£164.90
Total Expenditure		£2,011.05

Members decided, upon a proposal from Councillor Mrs Palmby, seconded by Councillor Mrs Desborough, that the income of £203.88 be noted and that the payments totalling £2,011.05 be authorised.

M81/08 Correspondence

(1) CPALC membership renewal 2009/10.

The Clerk reported the invitation from CPALC to renew membership of the organisation for 2009/10.

Members are not convinced that the Parish Council has derived the benefits that it anticipated from membership and, given the annual cost of membership and other uses to which that financial resource could be put, they wish to give further thought to the matter before making a decision on whether membership should be renewed for 2009/10.

Members decided to defer a decision on this matter until the next meeting of the Parish Council.

(2) District and Parish Council Liaison.

Further to minute M49/08 (1), the Clerk reported receipt of a letter from the Chief Executive of Fenland District Council, informing the Parish Council that Mr A Pain, Director of Economic and Community Development, has been allocated as the District Council's Corporate Management Team's liaison officer for Manea Parish Council.

Members noted that, under the liaison arrangement, Mr Pain will be Manea Parish Council's "first port of call" for District Council enquiries and will attend meetings of the Parish Council when invited for specific issues.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that Mr Pain be invited to a future meeting when relevant.

(3) Cambridgeshire ACRE and Playing Fields Association.

Further to minute M51/08, the Clerk provided copies of magazines produced for members of these bodies.

Members decided that the magazines be circulated amongst the members of the Parish Council.

(4) ROSPA inspection.

The Clerk reported notification that the annual inspection on behalf of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents of the equipment at the playing field would take place during the month of April 2009.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

(5) Manea Pavilion – insurance for 2009/10.

The Clerk reported the invitation, from the Council's existing insurer (Suffolk ACRE), for renewal of its policy of insurance for the pavilion. It was noted that the cost of the policy has increased marginally over last year's premium.

Members decided the policy of insurance for the pavilion be renewed with the existing insurer.

(6) Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations 2008/09.

The Clerk reported a request from Fenland District Council (FDC) for a report on the manner in which the grant of £1,000 awarded to Manea Parish Council in 2008/09, towards the cost of maintenance works at the playing field, had been spent by the Parish Council.

The Chairman reminded members that subsequent to the grant being awarded, FDC had agreed to a request from the Parish Council that the grant money be not spent on maintenance works to the playing field but be utilised as a contribution towards the cost of the proposed skateboard park.

Members requested the Clerk to respond to FDC's request for a report by providing a reminder of the subsequent decision by FDC regarding the use of the grant.

(7) CPALC Annual Assembly.

The Clerk reported on CPALC's Annual Assembly, scheduled for 16 May 2009 and its invitation for CPALC members to submit items for the agenda for that meeting.

Members noted the details of the AGM and decided to request CPALC to include an item on the agenda for the AGM enquiring as to how, given that it claims to act as the collective representative voice for the local councils within the geographical area of Cambridgeshire, CPALC obtains the views of local councils before acting as their representative. The reason for this enquiry is that Manea Parish Council has not been consulted by CPALC upon any issue during its current period of membership.

(8) Village Grass Cutting 2009/10.

The Clerk reported a letter from Cambridgeshire County Council, offering the Parish Council a specified financial sum in relation to the village grass cutting for 2009/10, at a rate 5% higher than in 2008/09.

Members decided that the sum offered by the County Council be accepted and that the Parish Council's current contractor be invited by the Clerk to undertake the cutting of the grass verges within the parish in 2009/10 (subject to the contractor's costs not increasing significantly).

(9) Crime BUStEr.

The Clerk informed members of a visit to Manea by the Crime BUStEr on 24 March 2009.

The Clerk explained that the Crime BUStEr is a specially-equipped single-decker bus utilised by the Safer Fenland Partnership to deliver a programme of community safety events, including raising the awareness of crime prevention and helping to reduce people's fear of crime.

Members decided that the information be noted.

M82/08 Community Access Point

Further to minute M39/08 (4), Councillor Mrs Palmby mentioned operational difficulties in relation to use of the Community Action Point (i.e. computer) in the Church Room, as a result of no record being kept of those who are using the computer equipment and the fact that the security bolt on the door between the room containing that equipment and the main Church Room needing replacement due to damage.

Members decided that a log of users needs to be operated by each of the key holders and that Councillor Emery will arrange to replace the door bolt and Councillor Mrs Desborough will obtain, from the key holders, details of those people who have been using this facility.

M83/08 Unauthorised stationing of caravans

The Chairman referred to the unauthorised stationing of caravans, which are being occupied residentially, at Toll Corner.

Members decided that the matter be brought to the attention of the Developments Service at Fenland District Council, for investigation (and remedial/enforcement action).

M84/08 Effective Three Tier Working in Cambridgeshire: A proposal for enhanced neighbourhood engagement and management in Fenland

Councillor Mrs Desborough reported briefly on her attendance, on behalf of the Chairman, at a consultation event held earlier that evening by Fenland District Council in respect of its proposals for neighbourhood management and neighbourhood engagement across the district. The proposals include the creation of a number of Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Management Boards as a means of obtaining and addressing issues and priorities within the Fenland communities.

Members noted the information reported and agreed to study individually the proposals document which was provided to Mrs Desborough at the consultation event.

M85/08 Street Cleansing

Members discussed street cleansing and weed control on pavements, following mention made by Councillor Archer in respect of very recent cleansing works undertaken by Fenland District Council.

Members are pleased with the works when undertaken but feel that the District Council should have in place for the necessary works to be scheduled on a regular basis and not only upon request from the Parish Council.

Members decided that the Clerk should inform Fenland District Council of the Parish Council's feelings on this matter.

M86/08 Next meeting and Annual Assembly

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for 20 April 2009, following the Annual Assembly which will commence at 7.00 pm, in the Village Hall.

Members determined the agenda for the Annual Assembly and requested the Clerk to identify suitable dates for the May and June 2009 meetings of the Parish Council (to be held at the Village Hall and the Pavilion respectively).

Meeting finished at 8.55 pm

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

Date:.....