

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 OCTOBER 2010 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Emery, Chairman; Councillors Archer, Buckton, Cole, Mrs Desborough, Jolley, Lockett, Mrs Palmby and Risbridger.

Apologies: None.

In attendance: Mr Alan Pain, Corporate Director at Fenland District Council (FDC), in his capacity as FDC's liaison officer for Manea Parish Council - at the invitation of the Parish Council.

The minutes of the meeting of 20 September 2010 were confirmed and signed.

M67/10 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Open space at Station Road/Jolley Close, Manea (minute M56/10 (1))

The Clerk reported on the latest position in relation to transfer of ownership of this piece of land to Manea Parish Council by way of gift from Fenland District Council.

The Clerk informed members that the solicitors acting on behalf of the Parish Council continue to pursue action from the Legal Section at Fenland District Council (FDC), which is, likewise, pursuing action from the solicitors acting for the land owners.

Members decided that the current situation be noted.

(2) Street Lighting (Minute M56/10 (2))

Councillor Mrs Desborough enquired as to the progress in relation to the outstanding repair and replacement works to the street lighting on East Street, which is in the hands of the Engineering Services Team at Fenland District Council.

Mr A Pain offered to investigate the situation and to inform the Clerk of the outcome of his investigations. Councillor Mrs Desborough provided Mr Pain with the details of the lamp columns which are the subject of repair or replacement; this included the lamp column which had been removed following damage caused by one of the District Council's refuse vehicles.

Members decided that the offer of Mr A Pain, to investigate the situation and to report to the Clerk on the outcome of his investigations, be accepted.

(3) Manea Parish Plan (minute M56/10 (4))

The Clerk reported that both Councillor Lockett and the Secretary/Treasurer to the Village Hall Committee had provided him with the contact details of key stakeholders, to enable the Clerk to send letters of invitation to a public meeting.

The Clerk mentioned the need to enlist appropriate support for this process from the Community Development Team at Fenland District Council and, in particular, for an officer to explain to attendees at the proposed public meeting both the purpose of producing a community-led plan and the process involved and the Clerk asked Mr Pain for such assistance in this matter. Mr Pain stated that Mr R McGivern, Community Development Officer at Fenland District Council, would provide the necessary assistance.

Members decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) the Clerk would arrange, in consultation with McGivern, a date for a public meeting;
- (3) once a date for the public meeting has been fixed, invitations be sent to the key stakeholders identified and general publicity be given within the village.

(4) Planning enforcement issues (minute M56/10 (5))

The Clerk reported that Fenland District Council's Building Control and Planning Compliance Manager will attend the next meeting of the Parish Council to explain what issues the Planning Compliance Team can/cannot deal with and the various powers it has.

The Clerk informed members that Fenland District Council's Building Control and Planning Compliance Manager had confirmed that the possession of a site licence issued by the Camping and Caravanning Club UK does remove the need for planning permission for the stationing of touring caravans. In addition, the Planning and Compliance Team at Fenland District Council is investigating the untidy site at Wisbech Road, Manea.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

(5) Drainage/sewerage problems in East Street, Manea (minute M56/10 (7))

The Clerk reported the response from Anglian Water in relation to this matter, which detailed the results of Anglian Water's investigations into the cause of the flooding and the remedial works that had been undertaken to address the situation.

Members decided that the information provided by Anglian Water be noted and that a copy of the letter from the company be sent, by the Clerk, to the occupiers of each of the eight properties which had been affected by the flooding.

(6) Park Road, Manea (minute M64/10)

The Clerk reported that temporary repair works to the pothole in the carriageway at the entrance to the side of the Londis shop on Park Road had been undertaken by the Local Highway Authority; a permanent repair will follow in due course.

Members mentioned three potholes in the vicinity of the junction of Wimblington Road with Station Road, Manea.

Members decided that

- (1) the information regarding the repair work to the carriageway in Park Road be noted;
- (2) the existence of three potholes in the vicinity of the junction of Wimblington Road with Station Road, Manea

be brought to the attention of the Local Highway Authority.

M68/10 "Building local homes for local people" – Housing Needs Survey

Further to minute M56/10 (6), members received a presentation from Catherine Shilton, a Rural Housing Enabler at Cambridgeshire ACRE, Karen Freya, Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer at Fenland District Council, and Darren Blake, Business Development Manager at Circle Anglia, on the results of the housing needs survey and how this matter could now be progressed. Each officer explained their respective role in this initiative.

Members were reminded that ACRE's Affordable Rural Housing Service aims to increase the provision of affordable housing in rural areas and that this service is supported by a partnership of local authorities and registered social landlords, to help develop affordable rural homes under the Rural Exception Sites Policy of the Local Planning Authorities within the County.

Mrs Shilton informed members that the survey was undertaken in May 2010 and achieved a good level of response from Manea residents; those who responded were generally supportive of the construction of affordable homes as a means of addressing the housing needs within the village. Mrs Shilton provided each member with a copy of the full report on the results of the survey. The conclusion of the survey is that there is a need for 22 new affordable homes to be built in Manea.

In her presentation, Mrs Shilton made the point that, despite the national economic downturn, house prices are still high; the average house price is approximately ten times the average salary.

Mrs Shilton explained the general reasons, both economic and social, why there is a lack of affordable housing in rural areas and the consequences for individuals and communities of this situation. She produced statistics of the levels of household incomes that would be required to be able to purchase different sizes of property in Manea, which demonstrated the need for provision of additional affordable housing in the village.

From the statistics provided by ACRE, 79% of residents in Manea would not be able to afford the purchase of a three-bedroom house, given the estimated price of such a property and the levels of income that would be required to be able to meet mortgage re-payments for such a property price.

Members were informed by Ms Freya of the manner in which affordable rural housing would be provided, i.e. built by a Housing Association on land that the Local Planning Authority would not normally allocate for residential purposes; the houses built could only be occupied by persons with a "local connection". The properties would be available for rent (at approximately 60% of market rent) or shared-ownership. Ms Freya explained the definitions of "exception site" and of "local connection". She explained also the process that would be followed in identifying suitable development sites and the manner in which land purchase and housing construction would be funded.

Mr Blake explained details of the quality of any affordable housing that would be constructed, making the point that the properties would have a very high level of energy efficiency and the build quality generally exceeds that of new properties constructed by private-sector developers. He informed members that, based upon the identified need for 22 new affordable homes, Circle Anglia would look to construct, say, 15 initially; for this number of properties, a site of approximately one acre in size would be required. The properties would be for general needs housing, with a mixture of sizes.

In response to comments made by some members felt that a particular need exists for properties for older people, Mr Blake made the point that all properties built would be capable of easy adaption to meet the needs of specific tenants (for example those who may be elderly or disabled).

Members were informed that the next step in this initiative is to identify a suitable "exception site" for the new properties and that the assistance of the Parish Council in that process would be expected.

Once potential sites had been identified, discussions would be undertaken with the Local Planning Authority as to their suitability in accordance with the Exception Sites Policy.

Mrs Shilton, Ms Freya and Mr Blake responded to members' questions.

Members decided that

- (1) the results of the housing needs survey and the information provided by Mrs Shilton, Ms Freya and Mr Blake be noted;
- (2) members of the Parish Council would seek to identify suitable sites for new affordable homes in Manea.

M69/10 Playing Field and play area issues

- (1) Litter – further to minute M57/10 (2), the Clerk reported an e-mail from a local resident, in which he congratulates the Parish Council for adopting a zero tolerance approach to all aspects of anti-social behaviour in the village and the littering problems at the playing fields. In addition, he suggested that the Parish Council should consider implementing a No Alcohol and No Glass policy in the play areas.

Members decided that

- (1) the comments of the local resident be noted and that the problem of littering and other anti-social behaviour at the playing field be monitored;
 - (2) a further waste bin (additional to the one ordered as a result of minute M57/10 (3)) be purchased for installation at the skateboard park; Mr Pain undertook to discuss the provision of waste bins with the relevant officer at Fenland District Council.
- (2) Skateboard Park – further to minute M57/10 (3), members discussed generally the progress on the skateboard park and its use.

Members were informed that the final stage payment had been made to the contractor and that additional works (drainage etc) had been undertaken by the contractor, at the request of Councillors Archer and Emery.

The Clerk reported receipt of an invoice from the contractor for the additional works undertaken. Councillors Archer and Emery stated their understanding that there would be no charge for these additional works.

With regard to the provision of appropriate advisory signage, Councillor Emery reported that had produced a draft wording for the sign, based upon the sign used at the skateboard park at Christchurch. Councillor Emery read the proposed wording to members.

Councillor Archer informed members that the group of young people who had been involved in the skateboard park project had requested that it be named "Streetz" and he presented a draft design for a sign showing this name.

In addition, Councillor Archer reported that he had now raised with the Leader of Fenland District Council (FDC) the anticipated contribution of £10,000 from FDC towards the cost of this project and is awaiting a formal response.

Members discussed the possibility of providing lighting to the skateboard park, to enable it to be used in the evenings all year round.

Members decided that

- (1) the additional invoice submitted by the contractor be not paid by the Parish Council;
- (2) the suggestions for both the advisory and naming signage be approved and that Councillor Emery would obtain the signs;
- (3) Councillor Emery would discuss with a local electrical contractor the options for providing lighting at the skateboard park;
- (4) Councillor Archer would seek to encourage those young people who had been involved in the project to "police" the facility;
- (5) Councillor Archer would keep members informed of progress in obtaining the anticipated contribution of £10,000 from Fenland District Council towards the cost of this project.

M70/10 Planning application

Members considered the following planning application and decided to submit to the Local Planning Authority the comments set out (in italics) below:

Siting of a mobile home and change of use of existing mobile home to staff mess room at 76 Station Road, Manea – F/YR10/0734/F (applicant: Mr Risely).

That the application be supported.

M71/10 Manea Pit

Members received the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting of 12 October 2010.

In connection with minute SC30/10, Councillor Archer mentioned an offer from the Woodland Trust of trees for the community orchard/woodland project. In addition, members considered action to keep the potential community orchard/woodland site tidy until the project could be undertaken; they felt that it would be appropriate to have the land ploughed, at a cost of £50.

Members decided that

- (1) the contents of the Sub-Committee minutes be noted;
- (2) Councillor Archer would contact the Woodland Trust to discuss its offer of trees for the community orchard/woodland project;
- (3) arrangements be made for ploughing the field adjoining Manea Pit, for the sum of £50.00.

M72/10 Finance

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

Income

Fenland District Council	Parish Precept – second payment	£9,500.00
P Lawrence	Allotment rent	£180.00
Carp Syndicate	Additional membership	£76.50

HM Revenue and Customs	VAT re-payment: April to September 2010	£15,083.91
Total Income		£24,840.41

Expenditure

Clever Curves Ltd	Final stage payment for skateboard park	£20,885.63
Shrievalty Trust	Donation to the Bobby Scheme	£25.00
Manea Village Hall	Room hire on 20/09/10	£7.50
R.P.M Design and Print	Keep Out sign for Bedlam Pit	£23.50
SLCC	Clerk's membership renewal (50% of cost)	£59.00
Ridgeons	Materials for village notice board	£25.31
Steve Emery	Repair and painting of notice board	£75.24
Kent Memorials	Re-painting names on war memorial	£117.50
Frontier Agriculture	Grass seed	£18.00
T R Savage	Repairs at playing field	£998.75
Mrs A Ryman	Wages and expenses	£94.35
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £86.72), Broadband and other expenses	£394.64
Total Expenditure		£22,724.42

The Clerk reported also on the Parish Council's half-yearly financial position, which showed income of £35,672.66 and expenditure of £112,140.22 to 31 September 2010.

Members decided

- (1) upon a proposal from Councillor Emery, seconded by Councillor Mrs Desborough, that the income of £24,840.41 be noted and that the payments totalling £22,724.42 be authorised;
- (2) that the Parish Council's financial position as at 31 September 2010 be noted.

M73/10 Correspondence

- (1) CWU Eastern Branch – opposition to privatisation of Royal Mail.

The Clerk reported receipt of a letter from the CWU Eastern Branch, requesting Parish Councils to support its campaign of opposition to the Government's proposals to privatise Royal Mail and, accordingly, to write to the local MP asking him to support Early Day Motion 738.

Members decided that it would not be appropriate to participate in this political process.

- (2) Cambridgeshire Older People's Newsletter.

The Clerk reported receipt of the latest edition of this newsletter.

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

- (3) Anglia in Bloom.

The Clerk reported an e-mail from a local resident.

The e-mail expressed the resident's congratulations to the Parish Council, the Street Pride group and of the members of the community who had contributed to Manea's success this year. He gave particular mention to the success in Manea Pit being designated as the Best Ecological Project in the recent Anglia in Bloom awards.

Members decided that the content of the e-mail be noted and welcomed.

M74/10 Items for Press Release or news stories

Members decided that no matters have arisen since the last Parish Council meeting that would benefit from being the subject of Press Release or news story for public attention. Members did, however, agree that, if proposals emerged from Fenland District Council to introduce car parking charges in the district, the Parish Council would use the local media to express its opposition to the introduction of pay parking in Fenland.

M75/10 High speed Broadband project

Councillor Archer reported briefly on the current high speed Broadband project and informed members that, because one of the eligibility criteria is for a village to have at least 1,000 properties, Manea does not qualify for this project.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Archer be noted.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable members to apprised of the situation at the earliest opportunity)

M76/10 Remembrance Sunday

Members discussed arrangements for wreath laying at the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

Members decided, in the knowledge that both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman would be unavailable to do so, that Councillor Archer would lay the wreath on behalf of Manea Parish Council.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency because of the date of Remembrance Sunday)

M77/10 Fenland District Council officers' liaison/communication with Manea Parish Council

Mr Pain sought members' views on the frequency of his attendance at future Manea Parish Council meetings, acknowledging the fact that his previous attendance at a Manea Parish Council meeting had been in January 2010.

Mr Pain acknowledged that the Clerk had sent him agendas for all of the Parish Council meetings since Mr Pain had been appointed by the District Council as its officer for Manea Parish Council.

Members decided that Mr Pain would attend meetings of Manea Parish Council on a quarterly basis, plus on additional occasions where there was a specific need.

M78/10 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 22 November 2010, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Village Hall, School Lane, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.50 pm

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

Date:.....