

Minutes of a Meeting of **Manuden Parish Council** held in the **Community Centre** on **Thursday 1st March 2018** at 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr J Kershaw (Chairman)
Cllr J Archer (Vice Chairman)
Cllr S Hannington
Cllr K Hardy
Cllr E McLean
Cllr F Womack
Cllr R Dale-Cooke

In Attendance: Mr C Bartram(Clerk)

36 Members of the public 32 left after the first point on the agenda.

Apologies D Cllr J Loughlin, C Cllr R Gooding

There were no Disclosures of Interest.

Minutes of
Previous
Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.

Matters
Arising

Following an article published in the Parish News from **Foundations Children & Family Service** and the distribution of an unsigned leaflet (copy attached) throughout the village, there was a great deal of interest from parishioners regarding what is happening with the proposed children's home.

Prior to the meeting the Council had published a letter explaining the role of the Council in the village, some of its activities and the limits of its powers. (Copy attached)

There followed many questions expressing concerns about the quality and reputations of the staff and their motives for setting up the home. Villagers were worried and concerned over the emotional problems the children may have and the problems they may bring, the safety and security of the home and the amount of supervision that the children would need. There were comments on the suitability of the village for such a home, the lack of public transport connections and whether there are enough activities for the children in a tiny village. A large number of the villagers present appeared to suggest that, if possible, a way should be found to prevent the home from opening.

Councillors tried to address these concerns and to allay some of the fears being expressed as they had asked very similar questions when the company presented their plans in September 2017. The Council then spoke of all the investigations they had made and the measures they had taken but, in the end they had to admit that, as the company had received a Certificate of Lawfulness from UDC, there was very little they could do to oppose the home, should they wish to do so, as the company would be operating within their legal rights.

Prior to the meeting, the company had confirmed that they have completed their preparations for Ofsted inspection and that they are now awaiting Ofsted. It is understood that the Ofsted inspection will include a thorough investigation of their financial details, staff qualifications and records and the suitability of the premises.

It was pointed out, several times, to the meeting that the staff are very willing to open their doors to parishioners in order to discuss their plans and they wish to have good relationships with the village; their telephone number was on offer to anyone who wished to contact and to visit them. One member of the public pointed out that, if the home does obtain Ofsted approval it would be in the interests of the village to try to develop a good relationship with them, to which several councillors were in agreement. As some villagers were concerned about contacting the staff directly themselves, the Council offered to compile a list of questions to present to the staff should anyone wish to submit them to the Council (Email :- parishclerk@manuden.org.uk).

The Council were still concerned with the state of **4 Mailers Lane** and the Clerk agreed to call UDC Housing to find the latest situation. Cllr Archer reported that there had been some repairs to the **War memorial lettering** but more needed doing. There was very little to report on the progress of **Gigaclear** although there had been some activity with the application for way leaves. The **Village signage** for MVCC in particular is still a frustrating topic as it is difficult to establish the application process for obtaining a sign. In addition it was noted there had been severe damage to one of the village signs following a recent car accident.

Cllr Hardy was very pleased to say that a new **Village Green Rubbish bin** has been positioned and the old one sent to be re-cycled. The possibility of arranging a **First aid course** was discussed and agreed on. The Council were pleased to hear that a **Chip Shop Van** would be beginning a three month trial starting 6th March and continuing on various Tuesdays at MVCC. All were encouraged to attend the **Village Clean up on the 24th March** starting from Manuden House at 10:00 am

Other issues

The Council agreed to ask groups to limit their **AGM reports** to be read at the AGM and published in the Parish News to 200 words in order to speed up the AGM and to save on printing space ...should organisations also wish to produce a longer version to be published on the village web site that would be fine. The Council also agreed to finance one free copy of the Parish News for all village households which is likely to be the edition following the AGM

The Council agreed to continue with the **UDC Green Waste Collections for 2018** and the Chairman agreed to complete an **Essex Highways User Survey** on behalf of the Council.

The Council agreed to send **Council Meeting agendas** out on Manuden Mail and to include a **link to the Village web site** to see the Council Minutes

Sub Committee Reports

Open Gardens. Singalong to Oliver had been another sell out success with profits being used to make a £ 600 donation to Pancreatic Cancer research, a £200 donation to Grove Cottage as well as purchasing a new park bench for MVCC. The Council thanked everyone involved for their marvellous efforts. The next singalong will be on 13th October with **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang** and future dates are being planned for 2019 and 2020. The Open Gardens committee also reported they were pleased that the event this year will be sponsored by Russell Properties Estate Agency.

Footpaths It was commented that, in general, the footpaths around the village are in a good state of repair thanks, in many cases, to our local farmers and landowners. It was

noted, however, that there are a couple of footpath signs that need replacing and it was discussed how this may be done.

Scarecrow Trail This will take place on the 1st to 3rd of June. With a **Sports and Hobbies** theme.

Plans

Applications Received:

Conversion of garage loft space and addition of 2 conservation roof windows
Hill House 12 Carters Hill Ref. No: UTT/18/0250/HHF *No comment was made*

Applications determined

UTT/18/0393/NMA Non Material Amendment to UTT/17/0631/HHF - Change plain clay tiles on roof to Redland double roman tiles. 30 Butt Lane Manuden

Fell 1 no. Horse Chestnut.

5 Watts Yard The Street Manuden Ref. No: UTT/18/0017/TCA | *Status: Decided*

Reduce height of run of Elder, Holly and Hawthorn Trees to approximately 6ft.

5 Watts Yard The Street Manuden Ref. No: UTT/18/0019/TCA *Status: Decided*

Non Material Amendment to UTT/15/0498/HHF - Postional change to detached garage with games room 85A Mallows Green Mallows Green Road Manuden
Ref. No: UTT/17/3621/NMA *Status: Approved*

Finance

The Council approved the following cheques

Uttlesford District Council (fo Green Waste Collection Skip)	£1188.00
Katrina Hardy (to pay for the Village Green rubbish bin).....	£450.00
Ace of Spades (Invoices 3663 and 3704 Church grass cutting).....	£540.00
Marmax (for 2 benches) expected to be	£843.60

This will leave us a balance of £9792.11 in our accounts

Items of Interest

The Council were concerned that there had been some **damage to a tombstone** in the Upper Churchyard and were pleased to hear that the PCC had notified the police. The Clerk agreed to write to Essex Highways regarding the **zig zags** outside the Village School and to report the **blocked drains** outside the Alms houses. It was also noted that we will have to appoint a **Data Protection Officer** to meet with new guidelines. The **row of trees** at the top of Stewarts Way has now been trimmed.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 10:14pm

Date of the next meeting **Thursday 19th April**



WHO WE ARE

Foundations Children and Family Services are a private, family run company offering specialist residential care for young people aged 8 to 16 years. We are owned by 2 Directors, Emma Graley (Service Manager/Director) and Stephen Graley (Company Director/Responsible Individual).

Foundations has 3 primary aims;

1. To provide a high level of family-type care to young people, specially designed to build the skills of our young people to provide them with a better start in life.
2. To significantly reduce spending of local authorities.
3. To promote whole-system change within social care.

Foundations will operate a specially designed model of working (The Foundations Programme) with our young people to identify and build upon lagging skills that have developed as a result of their experiences. Our home will operate a tightly run daily structure to ensure that our young people are enabled to develop and stick to routine, this will include strict bed times according to age. Our model is largely based around Social Learning Theory (the idea that we learn the most from those that we spend the most time with) and, as such, our staff will model the correct way to behave and manage situations throughout each shift. All of our staff will be specially trained in the Foundations Programme to offer the most consistent level of parenting possible and, as such, ALL decisions will be made by Paul Tamburro (Clinical Lead), Emma (Service Manager) and Lofton Hull (Registered Manager).

Our young people will be referred by the local authority and will be carefully assessed, both on paper and in person, prior to entry into the home. Foundations will offer placements to disadvantaged young people currently in/en route to residential homes, who strive to do better. Young people will only be accepted in to the home if they are able to demonstrate the capacity and are willing to change. Foundations maintain a stringent assessment process and will not accept any young people that pose a risk to the home or community.

On entry to the home our young people will be subject to a strict routine in order to promote a healthy lifestyle with optimal brain functioning. During the initial stages of the Programme our

young people will be highly supervised at all times during the day. This will give our team the best chance to observe any lagging skills that require development, whilst ensuring minimal room for error for each young person as they become used to our expectations. Through the careful development of a meaningful relationship we aim to gain trust from our young people, as well as an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. It is this understanding that will aid our development of each, carefully constructed Programme of change and development (see example below). As the Programme develops Foundations will help our young people to identify pro-social activities within their local community as well as receiving support to build positive peer relationships.

Example 1.

Peter has been at the home for 3 weeks and our team have come to know him well during his time with us. Peter is interested in attending the gym, although staff are uncertain of his ability to manage this at such an early stage. As such, staff plan to take Peter to the gym and train with him until they are sure of his ability to manage himself whilst there and ask gym staff politely should he need assistance. Gym staff would then be informed of our work at Foundations and given our contact details, should the need arise. The next step of the Programme would see our team drop Peter at the gym and collect him after his routine, checking with gym staff on his progress or any area for future improvement. Once the team are confident that Peter is ready, he will be allowed to make his own way to the gym, with enough time to travel, complete his workout and return home. As a consequence of returning on time, Peter will eventually be awarded more trust, though lateness will ensure that privileges are lost for the following day.

At Foundations we feel that everyone should be entitled to the opportunity to live within a supportive family, though our young people will not always possess the necessary skills to succeed within this environment. During the Programme Foundations will seek to build these necessary skills in each young person, whilst working alongside Social Care teams to assist them in identifying a suitable follow on placement within a Foster family. Once identified Foundations will offer training and support to a chosen family, in order to prepare them for their new placement, enabling a greater chance of success. Foundations will then provide our young people with a gradual transition to their new placement, along with follow on support to ensure that we continue to build necessary skills of young people and their carers as they settle down together. Once a placement is stable (minimum of 3 months) Foundations will taper off their work, leaving our young people and their Foster families enabled to succeed and significantly reducing cost to local authorities.

Stephen's experience:

Stephen is 62 years of age and with a business partner has successfully run his own company in which he employs up to 15 people as both direct and indirect employees. The focus of his business is to raise funds for a variety of charities.

The majority of Stephen's adult life has been spent as a member of Her Majesty's Armed Forces, where he served in the Intelligence Corps, retiring after 28 years as a Major.

During all of his service he has held, and continues to hold, Government Level Security Clearance.

Stephen has for the last 2 years and continues to be the Chairman of his local YMCA which has over 250 junior members.

Emma's experience:

Emma has worked in the care industry for the past 18 years.

After moving out to Portugal Emma worked as a counsellor/mentor with children in a residential setting. The Programme was aimed at adolescents aged between 12 and 18, in particular those who: had problems with behaviour, social, emotional and mental health difficulties, difficulties forming relationships or attachments, suffered from personality development disorders, came from abusive or violent backgrounds, showed signs of neglect and displayed a disregard for rules, came from multi-problem families, came from dangerous or dysfunctional social environments, voice right-wing extremist views and displayed the respective behaviour, failed to attend school or where required to participate in such a Programme as a condition for the suspension of a juvenile criminal sentence.

Whilst working on the project Emma became a foster parent for a 14-year-old girl from Germany who went back to Germany at the age of 18 to finish her education but still has regular contact with Emma.

Emma moved back to the UK in 2014 where she worked in a 16+ unit providing support to young people moving towards independence.

More recently Emma worked within a private residential home, partnered with 2 local authorities, Department for Education and Birmingham University Social Care Faculty to provide a specialist Programme of residential care, aimed to work with young people that had experienced significant childhood trauma, in order to build upon their skills. The Programme aimed to take young people with a long history of residential care and, through building meaningful relationships, carry out enough work to enable them to manage living within a family-based, specially trained, foster placement.

Emma holds a Diploma in Child Psychology and Diploma in Counselling, as well as all of the necessary care qualifications. Emma has also received training in a specialist model of residential care and behaviour management.

Paul's experience:

Paul has worked within specialist behavioural Programme's for the past 13 years within both local authority and private sector. Since its inception within UK Paul worked within a pilot Programme for Intensive Fostering. This was based on a widely researched, international model called Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) developed at Oregon Social Learning Centre. During his time with the Programme Paul worked extensively alongside local Fostering, Social Care and Youth Offending Teams, as well as working with local Courts, Magistrates and Judges to inform hearings. Given that the pilot Programme was operated by Youth Justice Board (and later Ministry of Justice) Paul has also had significant experience within both fields. During his last 3 years with the Programme, Paul became Programme Supervisor, leading the team to improve its positive outcomes from the national average of 67% completion rate to 86%.

Paul's extensive knowledge of adolescent behavioural Programmes led him to work as Clinical Lead for a specialist Programme in London. The Programme was developed alongside two local authorities, the Department for Education and Birmingham University Social Care Faculty in the development of a unique specialist fostering Programme. This Programme was aimed at young people in high-cost residential placements, often miles from home, in order to carry out significant behavioural work with them in a residential setting. This work was aimed at providing young people

a greater chance of success within a family-based care setting with specially trained and supported foster carers.

Lofton's Experience:

Lofton was born 1959 in Windsor and grew up in Berkshire. He is of Caribbean parents from St Kitts & Nevis. He has a wealth of experience in Children's Social Services since 1978 working in a range of statutory and private settings. He worked extensively in residential children's homes for the first 10 years and then qualified as a social worker in 1985.

Since that time, he has worked as a child protection social worker mainly in London Boroughs but including Harlow. He has managed a range of social work teams as well as a Local Authority care home for children with complex health care needs with limited life expectations. In 2013 Lofton relocated to Barnstable North Devon as a senior practitioner and his most recent position as a social worker in Somerset.

Lofton's role will be the registered manager of the children's home and his experience in this role is welcomed.

Should anyone wish to talk to us or gain some more understanding of the home please visit with us anytime. Just knock. Our door is always open.

Proposal for Boys' Residential Home at [REDACTED]

(opposite the old Village Hall)

You may have seen the article in the March edition of the Parish Magazine about this proposal. The plan is to open a residential home for up to five traumatised boys/youths between the ages of 8-18 for whom fostering has proven unsuccessful. It has been under discussion since last September, since when there has been no publicity about it up until now. There has now been a Manuden Mail with this as the first item on the agenda at the Parish Council meeting, to be held this Thursday, 1st March, at 7.30pm in the Manuden Village Community Centre. The purpose of this note is to raise people's awareness and to encourage them to attend Thursday's meeting to seek further information.

At a Parish Council meeting way back in September 2017 plans were put forward by the company named Foundations Children & Family Service, which is based in Huddersfield. The Company have obtained a Certificate of Lawfulness from Uttlesford District Council, and are awaiting OFSTED registration. The proposal was discussed in PC meetings again in October, December and January but because there had been no notice at the time about it in the Parish Magazine, Manuden Mail or other publicity no one in the village knew about it officially. We became aware of this only in January, through rumours circulating in the village which we have followed up with some research and questions to the Parish Council; we have also met and discussed with the carers now living at [REDACTED]

We are sure that everyone would agree that to try to help very troubled boys back to more structured lives is a laudable objective. However a proposal like this obviously raises a number of questions of legitimate concern to Manuden residents, on which they may reasonably expect to have information and reassurance before it proceeds any further. For example:

- What are we to understand about these five traumatised boys/youths? Is there a history of violence or drugs? What supervision will they have?
- The cost is said to be some £2500 per boy per week, a level of input implying that they have very severe problems;
- Will they be allowed out into the village unsupervised? What consideration has been given to the safety of other residents, especially the children's play area into which Villagers have put so much work and commitment?
- Foundations Children & Family Service have only recently been formed and this is their first project; so they do not yet know how their plans will work out; but hopefully they will be able to offer reassurance and further information on the points raised above.

It is a pity that there has been no previous public information about this scheme and that no prior notice of it was given out in advance of the PC meeting in September 2017 when it was first discussed. That meeting was attended by the Company making the proposal, as well as by District and County Councillors. That would have been the ideal opportunity for the public to have obtained proper information from people able to give authoritative answers. We do not know whether any risk assessment has been made of the possible impact on the neighbouring residents or the village as a whole. Village residents are entitled to full information about the plans so that they can make a well informed judgement as to the possible risks involved.

As mentioned above, the purpose of this note is to raise people's awareness of the proposal, and to notify that the Parish Council is meeting on Thursday 1st March at 7.30pm in the Manuden Village Community Centre and this proposal is to be first on the agenda. We would urge you to attend this meeting so that if the project is to proceed it does so with the full support and understanding of our community.



Many of you will have received an unsigned letter regarding the 'Proposals for Boys' Residential Home in the village, encouraging you to attend the Parish Council Meeting this evening when it will be discussed.

The Parish Council actively encourages all villagers to attend our meetings and we hope to see you there.

We are aware that many people may not know too much about the Parish Council so we have put together a few bullet points

About the Parish Council

- The Parish Council is an elected body, consisting of 7 unpaid councillors and a clerk. Its role is to represent the interests of the village, but its power and influence is extremely limited. The meetings are public; anyone can come along.
- We are the lowest tier of **local government** and we are totally separate from the PCC – the Parochial Church Council which is run by the **Church** of England.
- We have the ability to raise funds through council tax (Precept). Historically we have aimed to keep this as low as possible, often having the lowest Precept in Essex.
- Instead, members of the Parish Council have been able to fund projects by joining with other villagers willing to give up their time to raise funds and apply for grants. The Manuden Village Community Centre and the Play Park are recent examples of this.
- Events such as Manuden Open Gardens, The Scarecrow Trail, Manuden Musical Mayhem and Manuden Fun Run are all organised in order to raise money for village organisations and charities and that enables us to benefit our thriving community without using tax payers' money.
- The money we do get from the precept is spent on maintaining and cutting grass in the village and churchyard, paying for the fortnightly garden refuse skip and projects such as renovating the war memorial. The Parish Council communicates its activities through its agendas and minutes which are published on the website (www.manuden.org.uk) and placed on noticeboards around the village. We also convey information via the Parish Magazine and via email messages from ManudenMail, but these methods aren't suitable for important Parish Council matters since they only reach those signed up to receive them.
- To send a letter to each household by post would cost hundreds of pounds. Given the number and spread of the remote houses, hand delivering a letter to each household is extremely time-consuming.
- Occasionally we consider that there are significant benefits to this; some years ago, we wrote and delivered a leaflet encouraging the completion of a survey about the demand for broadband. The survey's results enabled us to successfully lobby for Manuden to get Superfast broadband 3 years earlier than originally planned.
- Sometimes situations occur which could be problematic to the village. We always publish our discussions in our minutes, but we don't send out additional information unless we feel it is beneficial at that time. In 2010, there were plans to redirect Stansted Airport's

flight path, so we paid for the advice of an Air Traffic Expert. Ultimately villagers were then invited to write to object to the proposals using the coherent and relevant points made by the consultant. Fortunately, after all the letters and the lobbying from other Parish Councils, the plans were withdrawn.

- We don't have the authority to approve or reject planning applications; our opinion is no more valid than that of any individual writing in. If we object to a planning application, it has to be a valid objection in planning law, if it is going to influence the decision. Our role with regards to planning is simply to look at each application and assess the effect on the village or the near neighbours in order that plans are not passed without someone from the village considering the proposals.

In case you are unable to attend the meeting, we would like to briefly respond to the unsigned letter which contains mis-information, such as the impression that the home is for boys only, which is not the case.

The establishment of such a home is an issue over which the Parish Council has **no** jurisdiction.

Individuals and businesses are free to rent or buy properties in the village and the only influence the Parish Council may have is if planning permission is needed. If a family with a history of serious antisocial behaviour were planning to rent the same property, we would not be able to stop them.

Since it wasn't a planning matter, the only way it might be prevented is if Ofsted ultimately decide to refuse its registration. We were advised (and agreed) that Ofsted were much more likely to be influenced by the considered opinion of representatives from the District and County Council on the suitability of the location and the quality of the proposals than by the opinions of residents who will always be worried if a residential home was proposed nearby.

We have concerns about the proposal which we have raised and discussed with our District Councillor, our County Councillor (who is also the Cabinet Minister for Education) and with the Antisocial Behaviour Co-ordinator from Uttlesford, all of whom are lobbying and acting on our behalf to check the credentials and proposals of the company involved and try to influence the home being sited in a more suitable location.

If the plans proceed we will continue to work with them and other organisations to reduce - and hopefully eliminate - any real or potential issues.

We were told in September by Foundations Children and Family Services that they were going to communicate their plans to the village. They have now done this in the latest Parish News.

We have found no evidence that Ofsted will take into account the opinions of Parish Councils and near neighbours when deciding whether to allow the registration of a children's home. Their remit is to determine the suitability of the provision for the children.

We therefore decided against sending a notification to all residents about a proposal which may not happen; that may not be problematic, over which the Parish Council and residents have no real influence. We also considered that the company would be communicating their plans with the village directly.

Many of the questions asked in the unsigned letter have already been asked of 'Foundations' when they initially told us of their plans in September at which time we raised all of the issues that have

since been communicated to us as concerns. All of these points were discussed by the representatives of Essex and Uttlesford Councils who were at the meeting.

Foundations are keen to address the concerns of residents and have stated:

“Should anyone wish to talk to us or gain some more understanding of the home please visit us anytime. Just knock. Our door is always open” The home manager has also provided a mobile number in order that appointments can be made. We will share this at the PC meeting.

In addition to this we propose to gather the concerns that have been expressed to us and encourage ‘Foundations’ to publish answers to the ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ to help allay any fears people may have if the residential home goes ahead.

If the residential home is approved we hope that individuals will help it to become an organisation that has a positive impact on village life and on the lives of the children it supports.

In case you have not seen the letter from Foundations Children and Family Services, it is attached.