

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

10 NOVEMBER 2009 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Barnes, Chairman; Councillors Archer, Buckton, Cole and Emery plus Mr C Carson, Mr I Fost, Mr M Hawes, Mr R Miller and Mr J Short.

Apologies: Mrs P Sones, who had been invited for minute SC22/09.

The minutes of the meeting of 29 September 2009 were confirmed and signed.

SC21/09 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

All matters arising from the last meeting were covered by items on the agenda for this meeting.

SC22/09 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

The Sub-Committee discussed a number of issues in relation to delivery of the management plan, as follows:

- (1) Fishing platforms – there are still a few minor works to be undertaken (including providing steps/ramps) but it is anticipated that all works will be completed by the end of 2009.

Councillor Cole reported that there are still sufficient levels of the necessary construction materials available to enable work parties to make progress, although some additional materials will be needed to achieve completion of all works.

The Chairman reported on the current position in relation to the total income (from the Awards for All grant and the sale fishing tickets and Carp Syndicate memberships) and expenditure to date in respect of Manea Pit.

Mr Carson reported that he had not yet investigated possible surfacing materials/methods for those fishing platforms designed for use by disabled anglers. There was a discussion on the need to meet the requirements of disabled anglers.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) work parties be arranged for 28 November and 12 December 2009;
 - (2) the Chairman would arrange for these work party dates to be publicised within the village, to attract volunteer labour from within the community;
 - (3) Councillors Barnes and Cole plus Mr Miller would meet on-site on 14 November 2009 to produce a schedule of the works required (including achieving effective access for disabled anglers) and the materials needed consequently;
- (2) Weed control – Mr M Hawes explained that, based upon the information he has seen, it is unlikely that Dyofix would cause harm to other plant life or crustaceans in Manea Pit.

Mr Carson made the point that he still has concerns that such a method of weed control could result in the loss of other plant life in the Pit and that it is important to be careful about any means of weed control utilised, particularly given the Pit's status as a County Wildlife Site. He stated that he would like to see evidence that use of this means of weed control causes no harm to plant life.

Mr Miller mentioned a circumstance locally where Dyofix had been used successfully as a means of controlling blanket weed.

Members are aware of the need to undertake weed control measures in the early spring of next year and, consequently, selecting the method to be used ideally requires a decision at the next meeting.

The Sub-Committee decided that the Chairman and Mr Carson would investigate this matter further, i.e. seek to visit sites where this chemical had been used and obtain additional information on the product, so that a decision on whether or not to use this method of weed control at Manea Pit can be made at the next meeting

- (3) Fish stocks – the Chairman reported the decision of Manea Parish Council in relation to the Sub-Committee's recommendation that a sum of £4,000, to be met from the income generated by the sale of fishing tickets and Carp Syndicate membership fees in 2008/09 and 2009/10, be allocated for the purchase of Carp. He informed the Sub-Committee that the Parish Council had decided that, subject to reaching agreement with the preferred supplier, a sum of £6,000 be spent on the purchase of Carp, with the fish being provided in the current financial year but payment being made in three equal instalments over the financial years 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 (so that the payments could be funded from current and future years' income from Carp Syndicate membership fees).

It was reported that the Chairman had approached the potential supplier with regard to the proposal of the Parish Council but that the supplier does not find the proposal to be acceptable because of the suggested length of payment period. The supplier would be prepared to accept payment over two (but not three) financial years.

Some members raised concerns regarding the mix of fish stocks within Manea Pit and questioned whether it is appropriate to purchase only Carp. Assurances were given that there is no need currently to introduce supplies of other types of fish but, obviously, the situation would be kept under review and addressed if/when necessary.

The Chairman reported that Manea Pit had been registered with an organisation known as Cefas, to enable fish to be added to the water.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current situation be noted and to RECOMMEND to Manea Parish Council that a sum of £6,000 be allocated for the purchase of Carp, with payment being made to the supplier in two equal instalments over the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

- (4) Plant life – Mr Carson reported that the Wildlife Trust had not produced a detailed report in respect of the plant life in Manea Pit and that there was nothing that could be added to the summary of findings that he presented at the last meeting.

The Chairman reported, in the absence of Mrs Sones, that the Environment Agency possesses no specific information in relation to the plant life in Manea Pit. He reported also on information obtained, via Mr Hawes, in relation to the quality of the water in the Pit.

The Sub-Committee decided that the information be noted.

(5) Open spaces

- a) Picnic area – the Chairman reported that he had undertaken some ground clearance and seeding works at this area. The two picnic tables/benches, ordered from FACET by the Street Pride service, are currently being stored by the Chairman, for location on-site in the spring of 2010. Councillor Buckton reported that it had been necessary to withdraw the application made to Fenland District Council (FDC), under its Community Grants Scheme, for more benches for the proposed picnic area because the application did not meet FDC's criteria for accessing this funding.

Councillors Archer and Buckton reported that had been unable, to date, to develop, for consideration at this meeting, a plan for the layout/design of this area.

Members of the Sub-Committee consider that the picnic area would be a useful location for the provision of a notice board.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current position be noted and that Councillors Archer and Buckton would develop, for consideration at the next meeting, a plan for the layout/design of this area.

- b) Car park area – the Chairman suggested that, as part of the site meeting arranged for 14 November 2009 (minute SC22/09 (1) (3) above refers), a potential improvement scheme for this area would be produced.

The Sub-Committee decided that the Chairman's suggestion regarding the improvement of this area be supported.

- c) Field adjoining Pit – Councillor Emery expressed his concern regarding the suitability of this site as a possible Community Orchard; he feels that a more suitable use would be as a nature conservation area. Mr Carson informed members of information that had been provided at a recent seminar relating to Community Orchards.

As a result of discussion, it was felt that no possible scheme should be ruled-out at this stage.

The Sub-Committee decided that Mr Carson would produce, for consideration at the next meeting, a layout plan for a potential Community Orchard on this land.

- (6) Health and Safety – the Chairman reported on the issues raised through the Health and Safety Report produced in 2007 and informed the Sub-Committee of the progress achieved to date. In this regard, the Sub-Committee gave consideration to whether or not it would be appropriate to provide life aids at the Pit. Members consider that the manner in which the development works have been undertaken at the Pit have mitigated the risk which gave rise to the recommendation that life aids should be provided.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current progress situation be noted and that, having assessed the level of potential risk and the level of mitigation provided, life aids be not provided.

SC23/09 Carp Syndicate – membership and fees income

Further to minute SC19/09, members were informed of the number of current members of the Carp Syndicate and the total level of income to date from membership fees.

It was made known by certain Sub-Committee members that there is interest in Carp Syndicate membership from up to nine other persons.

In the absence now of a Secretary/Treasurer of the Carp Syndicate, the Sub-Committee Chairman is currently covering that vacancy. All members of the Sub-Committee agreed that continuation of this arrangement is not appropriate and that the Carp Syndicate members must identify one its members to assume that role.

The Sub-Committee decided

- (1) to note that the membership of the Carp Syndicate has increased, since the last meeting, from 16 17 members and that the total income from Carp Syndicate has, consequently, increased by £80.00;
- (2) that, in the absence now of a Secretary/Treasurer of the Carp Syndicate, the Sub-Committee Chairman would make contact with those persons who have expressed an interest in becoming members of the Carp Syndicate;
- (3) that those members of the Sub-Committee who are members of the Carp Syndicate would arrange for syndicate members to identify one of their members to assume the role of Secretary/Treasurer.

SC24/09 Rules for fishing at Manea Pit

Further to minute SC19/09, the Chairman read out to members the draft rules that he had produced in relation to all users of the fishing facilities at Manea Pit.

Each of the rules was discussed, as a result of which a small number of revisions were agreed by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee decided that the draft rules be amended by the Chairman, in accordance with the revisions agreed by members. The final version of the rules is set out in the appendix to these minutes.

SC25/09 Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of Sub-Committee

The Chairman reported on discussion by Manea Parish Council regarding the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee. He explained that it was deemed necessary by the Parish Council to review the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee, following one year's operation of the Sub-Committee, to reflect the current situation in relation to the development of Manea Pit, i.e. that, given the significant improvements achieved in respect of the fishing facilities, the focus now needs to move to developing other aspects.

Consequently, the Parish Council considers that membership of the Sub-Committee requires revision to ensure that it includes fewer members representing the fishing fraternity and includes people representing other community interests. The revised Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee state that membership should now be "5 members of the Parish Council plus a minimum of 5 members of the local community, subject to each interest group being permitted no more than 2 members".

Various views were expressed by Sub-Committee members regarding the future level of fishing interest and the potential difficulty in attracting wider community participation. In addition, Councillor Archer suggested further revisions to the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee, in relation to members' conduct, a maximum period of office for Chairman etc. The Clerk advised that the matters raised by Councillor Archer should be referred to the Parish Council, not the Sub-Committee, for consideration.

The Sub-Committee noted the revised Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Sub-Committee, as reported by the Chairman, and decided that certain members would seek to attract interest and participation from a wider element of the local community.

SC26/09 Manea Pit – Strategic Plan 2008/11

The Chairman reported on the progress in delivery of the Strategic Plan 2008/11 for Manea Pit, adopted by the Parish Council last year. He reminded the Sub-Committee of the Parish Council's vision for the pit, as set out within the plan, ie that "Manea Pit will be a safe open green space that is enjoyed by the whole community, where a wealth of wildlife and habitat will thrive", and explained the ways in which this is being achieved through community consultation and engagement, partnership working, securing funding and management of the pit's development.

The Sub-Committee decided to note the information reported by the Chairman and to discuss the Strategic Plan in more detail at the next meeting.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to avoid undue delay to consideration of this matter)

SC27/09 Next meeting

Members decided that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee be held on 15 December 2009, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the British Legion Club.

Meeting finished at 9.30 pm.

Signature:.....(Sub-Committee Chairman).

Date:.....

RULES for Fishing at Manea Pit

1. Membership of the Carp Club will entitle the member to: Day fishing and exclusive night fishing for 365 days per annum starting on the 16 June to the June inclusive.
2. A season ticket will entitle the ticket holder to Day fishing only for 365 days per annum starting on the 16 June to the 15 of June inclusive.
3. A day ticket will entitle the ticket holder to Day fishing for one day only.
4. Those fishing more than 2 rods must be in possession of 2 rod licences.
5. Those fishing with more than two rods must be sensitive to other fishermen wanting to fish, and be courteous as to not 'line trespass' over other swims.
6. Fishermen must have their Membership Cards or Day tickets with them at all times when fishing, and show on demand to the Bailiffs.
7. Bait boats may be used, if used responsibly.
8. Dinghies may only be used to retrieve tethered fish.
9. Fishermen must only use safe rigs. Fixed or tether rigs are banned. (Rigs will be inspected!)
10. Unhooking mats must be used for Carp at all times and all fish must be handled with care at all times.
11. Fish are not to be sacked for unnecessary long spells especially in hot weather, and are to be sacked in as deep water as possible. Do not sack carp in, or close to, weed as this is very dangerous!
12. All nets and Mats should be clean and dry before use.
13. No fish are to be put in, or taken out of the pit.
14. You must take your litter home with you or the Parish Council reserve the right to withdraw fishing rights. Please leave your swim as you would wish to find it.
15. Fishermen must be courteous to other fishermen and members of the general public at all times.