

MANEA PARISH COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 MARCH 2010 – 7.00 pm.

Present: (1) Councillor Buckton, Chairman; Councillors Archer, Buckton, Cole and Emery plus Mr I Fost, Mr R Miller, Mrs P Smith and Mr D Stevens (in place of Mr P Catling) (Sub-Committee members);
(2) Mrs B Carson, Mrs M Larham and Mr Larham (Orchard Group members).

In attendance: Fabiloa Blum, of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Diversity Partnership, and Mr Keith Norman, a representative of the Little Downham Parish Community Orchard Group.

Apologies: Councillor Mrs Desborough and Mr P Catling.

The minutes of the meeting of 9 February 2010 were confirmed and signed.

SC47/09 Sub-Committee membership issues

The Clerk to Manea Parish Council reported both the appointment of Councillor Mrs Desborough to membership of the Sub-Committee and of Councillor Buckton as Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year, as a consequence of the resignation of Chris Barnes from membership of Manea Parish Council (minute M120/09 refers).

The Sub-Committee decided that the information be noted.

SC48/09 Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting

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

SC49/09 Field adjoining Manea Pit – possible use as Community Orchard

Further to minute SC41/09 (5) (c), Councillor Buckton welcomed the members of the Orchard Group to the meeting of the Sub-Committee and introduced this item by explaining the implementation and development of Manea Pit to date and making the point that, now that the works to enhance the fishing facilities are almost complete, the next element of the project is to develop the environmental aspects of the site.

Mr Keith Norton, a representative of the Little Downham Parish Community Orchard Group, gave a presentation on the development and implementation of a community orchard on an area of land of approximately one acre in size in Little Downham. Mr Norton explained that the group had acquired the use of this land by way of a sixty years lease from Cambridgeshire County Council (at cost of £12,000).

Mr Norton informed attendees that the cost of the lease had been met through grant aid; 80% being awarded by DEFRA and the remainder via various local charities. He stated that local families had been invited to plant trees at the orchard site and that the ongoing maintenance of the orchard is undertaken by volunteers.

The presentation included a slide show of photographs of the project at various stages of development. Mr Norton explained the design concept for the orchard and the types of trees (primarily apple trees of "old" Cambridgeshire varieties) that have been planted. He explained also the manner in which the Management Group, comprising four adults and four children) operates.

Mr Norton responded to attendees' questions.

The Sub-Committee noted that Mrs Smith had produced an article for the next edition of the Manea Matters magazine, with the purposes of: seeking design ideas; obtaining community views on the proposal generally; offering the opportunity for local people to sponsor a tree. Mrs Smith reminded attendees of the planting proposals that she had reported at the 12 January 2010 meeting of the Sub-Committee; in summary, the necessity for a budget of around £5,000 to provide a hedgerow (to be planted in the autumn of 2010) and trees (to be planted in the spring of 2011).

Fabiola Blum, of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Diversity Partnership, gave information on the possible sources of grant aid for the development and implementation of a community orchard in Manea.

The Sub-Committee acknowledges the necessity to have regard for the views of the community on this initiative and is particularly keen to engage children in the project.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the information provided by Mr Norton and Ms Blum be noted;
- (2) this initiative be progressed on the basis of seeking to plant hedgerows in the autumn of 2010 and trees in the spring of 2011;
- (3) Councillor Buckton and Mrs Smith would work jointly on the submission of applications for grant aid;
- (4) Councillor Buckton and Mrs Carson would arrange to discuss this initiative with the Headteacher at Manea Community Primary School, with the aim of engaging children in the project;
- (5) Mr C Carson would report to the next meeting on any regulations regarding restrictions on planting in close proximity to dykes.

SC50/09 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 etc – Councillor Cole reported that the works are almost complete; some minor surfacing works are still to be undertaken, which will require the purchase of a number of scaffold poles, sleepers and gravel.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the current progress situation be noted;
 - (2) the additional materials required be purchased;
 - (3) a further work party be arranged for 27 March 2010, to enable all outstanding works to be completed;
 - (4) its appreciation of the work undertaken by Mr C Barnes, Councillor Cole and Mr R K Miller in connection with the improvement/development of Manea Pit be placed on record.
- (2) Weed control – Mr C Carson circulated a copy of a document produced by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, which sets out guidance in relation to the use of barley straw to control algae. He read to the Sub-Committee some of the key points of the guidance, from which members concluded that such use should be the subject of

further consideration. The members discussed the practical issues in relation to this matter, including the time of year which would be most appropriate to undertake such works and the likely availability of barley straw locally.

Mrs Smith reported that The Wildlife Trust has stated that it would not recommend the use of Dyofix as a means of weed control at Manea Pit and that an experimental use of Dyofix is being undertaken by the Environment Agency at another pit within Cambridgeshire.

The Sub-Committee decided that the information reported by Mr Carson and Mrs Smith be noted and that the possible use of barley straw as the means of weed control at Manea Pit to be considered again at the June 2010 meeting of the Sub-Committee;

(3) Fish stocks – Councillor Emery reported that the remaining Carp are now in Manea Pit.

Mrs Smith and Councillor Archer mentioned the debate at the last meeting of Manea Parish Council regarding the possibility of not adding the additional fish, in the light of comments made in correspondence by the Wildlife Trust that the use of this pit as a Carp fishery could threaten the status of the pit as a County Wildlife Site (minute M123/09 refers). Councillor Emery explained the operational reasons behind the decision to allow the fish to be added to the pit.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current situation be noted.

(4) Water quality – Mrs P Smith reported that the water sampling has now been undertaken and the results of the analysis are likely to be available by the end of March 2010.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current situation be noted.

(5) Car park area - the Sub-Committee noted that the agreed surfacing works have been undertaken.

SC51/09 Manea Pit – Health and Safety

The Sub-Committee considered whether there are currently any health and safety issues relating to Manea Pit.

The Sub-committee identified no new health and safety issues since the last meeting but noted that the necessary works required to the tree with a dead branch were still to be undertaken and that A “Deep Water” warning sign had not yet been placed on the notice board.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the outstanding works to the tree be undertaken as part of the activities of the work party arranged for 27 March 2010 (minute SC50/09 (1) above refers);
- (2) a “Deep Water” warning sign be placed in the notice board as a matter of priority;
- (3) there be a general review of the contents of the notice board to ensure that the information displayed is up-to-date, relevant and informative.

SC52/09 Carp Syndicate – membership and fees income

Further to minute SC43/09, members were informed of the number of current members of the Carp Syndicate.

The Sub-Committee decided to note that the membership of the Carp Syndicate has increased, since minute SC43/09; from 27 to 28 members and that the income from this additional member will be presented by Mr Catling to the next meeting.

SC53/09 Next meeting

Members decided that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee be held on 5 May 2010, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.20 pm.

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

Date:.....