

# MANEA PARISH COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING

11 APRIL 2012 – 7.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Archer, Chairman; Councillor Emery plus Mr C Carson, Mr R K Miller, Mrs P Smith and Mr H Westgate.

**Apologies:** Councillors Cole and Mrs Desborough plus Mrs B Carson and Mr I Fost.

The minutes of the meeting of 12 March 2012 were confirmed and signed.

### SC95/11 Sub-Committee membership

Members of the Sub-Committee welcomed Mr Westgate, the new representative of the Carp Syndicate (because of the resignation of Mr P Catling from that role), to his first meeting.

### SC96/11 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute SC86/11, Mrs Smith informed the Sub-Committee that the planting of additional hedgerow whips is still to be undertaken.

Mrs Smith sought the views of the Sub-Committee regarding the appropriateness, given predictions of another dry summer this year, of proceeding with killing the grass (by spraying) and re-seeding at the meadow area; in such circumstances, the outcome could be areas of dead grass and no new growth.

Further to minute SC86/11, the Sub-Committee was informed that the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contractor had carried out the agreed grass cutting at this site.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the current progress situation be noted;
- (2) small "trial areas" of grass be subject to killing in the near future, with consideration being given in September 2012 as to whether more extensive grass killing should be undertaken;
- (3) because of some concern in the village regarding use of chemicals to kill grass in this area, Mrs Smith would arrange for the "trial areas" to be marked (using hazard tape) following spraying and for notices to be displayed explaining the action that had been taken. Mrs Smith would still proceed with purchasing seed for re-sowing the meadow area when appropriate.

### SC97/11 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

Further to minute SC87/11, Councillors Archer and Emery reported on the activities undertaken during the work parties held on 18 and 31 March and 1 April 2012.

The work parties, which attracted a pleasingly high number of volunteers, were felt to have been very successful. As a result of these work parties, the necessary works to make certain fishing platforms more suitable for use by disabled anglers had been completed.

Councillor Emery informed the Sub-Committee that the delivery of certain materials is awaited and that when these are delivered, it will be possible to undertake the outstanding improvement and maintenance works at Manea Pit. A further work party has been arranged for 15 April 2012 to this end.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current situation regarding maintenance of the pit area be noted.

### **SC98/11 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan**

Further to minute SC88/11, Mrs Smith informed the Sub-Committee that Manea Parish Council had agreed at its last meeting (minute M147/11 (2) refers) to designate her as the single point of contact with the Wildlife Trust in connection with the production of a new management plan for the pit and woodland area; the Clerk stated that he had informed the relevant officer at Wildlife Trust accordingly. Mrs Smith reminded the Sub-Committee that the Wildlife Trust is happy to provide advice to the Parish Council and this Sub-Committee regarding the development of such a plan (minute SC88/11 refers).

Mrs Smith informed the Sub-Committee that she had obtained examples of management plans, which could be utilised as the basis for developing such a plan for Manea Pit and its surroundings. It will be necessary, based upon the advice of the Wildlife Trust, to involve, through consultation, key stakeholders in the plan development process, with the aim of addressing the needs and aspirations of all potential users of the area.

Members of the Sub-Committee felt it could be more beneficial for users of the pit area to be consulted via a conversation while they are “going about their business” around the pit, rather than to try to engage them through formal meetings, questionnaires etc.

The Sub-Committee considers that the new management plan should include a section setting out the strategic direction, set by the Parish Council, for the pit area and be supported by actions necessary for delivery of the plan.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the current position regarding the development of a new management plan be noted;
- (2) Mrs P Smith would produce, for consideration at the next meeting, a structure for progressing this matter.

### **SC99/11 Manea Pit – Health and Safety**

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

Mr Westgate raised concerns regarding the weed killing activities which had been undertaken alongside pathways in the pit area, because of the potential poisoning hazard for dogs and young children, and suggested that this grass growth be controlled in future by cutting.

The Sub-Committee decided that Councillor Emery would discuss with the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contractor the possibility of cutting this grass in conjunction with cutting the grass at the community orchard/woodland area.

### **SC100/11 Fishing and other pit users' issues**

Further to minute SC90/11, Mrs Smith reported to the Sub-Committee that the application for an Abstraction Licence (to enable the temporary abstraction of water from another local source to increase the level of water at Manea Pit) has now been granted by the Environment Agency. The licence expires on 30 April 2012.

Mrs Smith outlined to the Sub-Committee the main conditions of the Abstraction Licence, particularly the requirement to obtain permission daily from the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners to abstract water and also to monitor daily the water level in the drain. The licence allows the abstraction, subject to sufficient water level in the drain, of 1,500 cubic metres of water per day. In the event of there being insufficient water in the drain, pumping would need to be reduced or cease.

Councillor Emery informed the Sub-Committee that Councillor Jolley, in his capacity as a Board member of the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners (MWDC), is happy to both obtain confirmation daily that sufficient water exists in the drain and to take readings from the water meter. In addition, Councillor Emery informed members that the Parish Council would be responsible for both providing diesel for the pump and for meeting the cost of any damage to or theft of that equipment.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Parish Council had agreed at minute SC147/11 (2) to ensure full compliance with the conditions to the Abstraction Licence.

The Clerk reported that the recommendations of the Sub-Committee in respect of the fees for Carp Syndicate membership and fishing tickets for the 2012/13, as well as the proposed change to the fishing year, were approved by Manea Parish Council; in addition, the Parish Council had endorsed the banning of bait boats (minute M154/11 refers).

Mr Westgate informed the Sub-Committee that a harmonious situation currently exists between the anglers and the dog walkers.

Mr Westgate and Mr Miller presented the Clerk with Carp Syndicate membership fees of £220.00 and income from the sale of fishing tickets totalling £140.00 respectively.

Mr Westgate circulated copies of the minutes of the AGM of the Carp Syndicate (held on 28 March 2012). He drew to the attention of the Sub-Committee the following issues discussed at the meeting, which he had been requested to refer to the Sub-Committee:

- a) a query as to whether the decision to prohibit the use of bait boats is final
- b) the possibility of giving at least one month's notice to Carp Syndicate members of future work parties
- c) a request that a small budget be provided annually for the purchase of a small number of Carp, to maintain stock at a constant level.

With regard to a) above, the Chairman made the point that Manea Parish Council had endorsed the proposal to ban the use of bait boats. It was accepted that, with regard to b), it would be unusual for a work party to be arranged a month in advance of it taking place (often, it is less than two weeks) but that syndicate members would be given as much notice as possible. In relation to c), the Sub-Committee considered that the issue should be addressed as part of the new management plan (minute SC98/11 refers).

Mr Westgate stated that he would, in accordance with minute SC90/1, produce an update of the Carp Syndicate rules, for consideration at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee. He undertook to include within the rules the ability for the Secretary to withdraw membership from anyone whose actions at Manea Pit could be considered as bringing the syndicate into disrepute (such actions that would result in withdrawal of membership would be shooting of birds around the pit area).

Mr Fost had produced an updated version of the general fishing rules but it was not possible, given his absence from the meeting, to clarify how the revised rules differed from the current ones.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the information reported be noted;
- (2) the Carp Syndicate rules be reviewed at the next meeting;
- (3) Councillor Archer would seek clarification from Mr Fost regarding the changes he had made to the fishing rules; it was agreed that if the changes related solely to the ban on the use of bait boats, Councillor Archer would be authorised to approve the rules; if other changes had been made, the rules be referred to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration;
- (4) Councillor Emery would make the necessary arrangements with the local contractor who would be providing the pump and pipeline and with Mr P Jolley for the water abstraction process to commence as soon as possible.

### **SC101/11 Monitoring of actions**

Further to minute SC92/11, Councillor Archer circulated an updated schedule of actions.

The Sub-Committee considered the actions listed in the document and agreed which ones had been completed and which ones needed to remain as outstanding.

Further to minute SC78/11, The Clerk reported that he had referred to the County Farms Department at the County Council the concerns relating to the poor condition of the road adjacent to Manea Pit. It has transpired that the road is in fact not owned by the County Farms Department but is public highway. The Local Highway Authority has undertaken to inspect the road and to assess its condition.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) Councillor Archer would present an up-to-date version (i.e. with completed actions deleted and new actions added) to each meeting of the Sub-Committee;
- (2) all of the actions currently listed separately which relate to revision of the management plan and had each been allocated to Mrs Smith be combined into one comprehensive list to be taken into account in the production of the new plan (minute SC98/11 refers);
- (3) the action regarding the arrangement of a "try fishing day" (agreed at minute SC8/11) be re-allocated from Mr I Fost to Mrs P Smith, who would seek to progress the initiative by seeking donations from villagers of any surplus fishing tackle; one means of raising the matter with the community would be through an article (to be written by Mrs Smith) in the next edition of the Manea Matters publication.

### **SC102/11 Website information**

Further to minute SC93/11, Councillor Archer reported that there has still been no progress in relation to this matter.

With regard to the future of the Sub-Committee, Councillor Archer reported that Manea Parish Council had agreed, at its last meeting (minute M154/11 refers), that it would meet informally during week commencing 2 April 2012 to discuss both the production of new Standing Orders and Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee and any necessary revisions to the Manea Pit Strategic Management Plan, to enable formal consideration and approval at the next meeting of the Parish Council. He outlined to Sub-Committee members the content of a draft Standing Orders and Terms of Reference document which had been discussed by members of the Parish Council informally last week.

Members of the Sub-Committee expressed concern regarding the suggestions that future meetings of the Management Committee (which would replace the current Sub-Committee) would take place on that a less frequent basis and that there would no longer be a Vice-Chairman of the committee.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) the views of the Sub-Committee regarding the content of the draft revised Standing Orders and Terms of Reference document be reported to the next meeting of Manea Parish Council;
- (3) Councillor Archer would provide a further update at the next meeting.

**SC103/11 Next meeting**

The Sub-Committee decided that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee be held on 16 May 2012, commencing at 7.30 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

**Meeting finished at 9.40 pm.**

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

Date.....