

# MANEA PARISH COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING

4 JANUARY 2012 – 7.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Archer, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Desborough and Emery plus Mr I Fost, Mr R K Miller and Mrs P Smith.

**Apologies:** Councillor Cole plus Mrs B Carson and Mr C Carson.

**In attendance:** Councillors Buckton (until 7.40 pm) and Woodard plus Mrs Woodard.

The minutes of the meeting of 24 November 2011 were confirmed and signed.

### SC66/11 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute SC57/11, Mrs Smith informed the Sub-Committee that the community volunteers had planted around 900 hedge and shrub bushes during the recent work parties. It will be necessary to arrange a further work party to carry out planting of the remaining stock.

Mrs Smith added that, subject to appropriate weather conditions, the first planting of fruit trees would be undertaken towards the end of this month. She is seeking to achieve the involvement of Manea Community Primary School pupils in this planting work. It is anticipated that the Guides will participate in planting of the wild flowers.

Mrs Smith reminded the Sub-Committee that the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund included an Apple Day and informed the Sub-Committee of Mrs B Carson's ideas as to how such an event could be operated.

The Sub-Committee decided

- (1) that the current progress situation be noted;
- (2) that it is happy to support proposals from Mrs Carson in relation to an Apple Day;
- (3) to support the suggestion of Councillor Emery that the naming of the community orchard/woodland should reflect the name of the former owner of the land;
- (4) to express its appreciation of the work undertaken by Mrs Smith in organising the various planting activities.

### SC67/11 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

The Sub-Committee discussed briefly the works still necessary to deliver the current management plan.

Councillor Buckton made the plea that when future work parties are organised, public notice is given; this had happened in the past but not on recent occasions; he expressed the view that it is important to give the whole community the opportunity to participate in this work. Councillor Buckton suggested that in addition to the more traditional methods of providing information to the public, it might be beneficial to establish an e-mail contact list of interested persons.

Councillor Woodard expressed the view to the Sub-Committee that the fishing platforms at Manea Pit are still not suitable for use for disabled anglers; they need certain works to make them safe by anyone who uses a wheelchair.

The Sub-Committee acknowledged that there are works still required in this regard but they had not, to date, been given priority within the development programme.

Mrs Smith expressed her concerns regarding vegetation clearance works which had been undertaken to the third pond at the pit. She expressed the view that the area which had been cleared should be "left to nature" and certainly should not have been carried out in the absence of agreement by the Wildlife Trust. She enquired as to why the work had been undertaken and why the matter had not been referred to the Sub-Committee for a decision.

Mr Fost explained why and how this work had been undertaken.

Councillor Archer endorsed the concerns and comments expressed by Mrs Smith and made the point that this action is a further example of decisions being made outside of Sub-Committee meetings, contrary to a previous decision of the Sub-Committee that this would not happen.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the current situation regarding maintenance of the pit area be noted;
- (2) a list of all outstanding development and maintenance works be compiled, following which the necessary materials would be procured and work parties organised; a priority issue within the list would be works to certain fishing platforms to make them more suitable for use by disabled anglers;
- (3) Councillor Archer would ensure that, in future, details of work parties would be publicised to the community;
- (4) in future, no development or maintenance works would be undertaken at the pit area unless they had been agreed at a meeting of the Sub-Committee.

#### **SC68/11 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan**

Further to minute SC59/11, Mrs Smith reported on comments that she had received, as a result of consultation with members of the Sub-Committee, in relation to the document that she had produced.

She informed the Sub-Committee of the amendments that Mr Carson, who was absent from the meeting, had suggested, which related, in the main, to the wildlife and environmental aspects of the pit area.

In addition to suggesting amendments to the document, Mr Carson felt that the Parish Council should consider implementing a policy for stocking levels of fish, based upon Environment Agency and Wildlife Trust guidance; such a policy would provide for good management of the fishing interest whilst restoring the aquatic vegetation diversity for which the pit area was designated as a County Wildlife Site. The Sub-Committee supported Mr Carson's suggestion.

Members of the Sub-Committee generally supported the amendments suggested by Mr Carson and agreed a small number of other changes to the document.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the current position regarding the development of a new management plan be noted;
- (2) the document be updated by Mrs Smith, to reflect the changes agreed, and then referred to the next meeting of Manea Parish Council for consideration;

- (3) Mrs Smith would make contact with the Environment Agency to ascertain whether it is able to provide guidance in relation to managing levels of fish stock etc.

### **SC69/11 Manea Pit – Health and Safety**

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

Further to minute SC60/11, Councillor Buckton informed the Sub-Committee that, because of the recent Christmas and New Year holidays, it had not been possible to make contact with the Health and Safety Manager at the Wildlife Trust. He undertook to pursue this matter.

The Sub-Committee decided that

- (1) the information reported by Councillor Buckton be noted;
- (2) there are no new health and safety issues at this time.

### **SC70/11 Fishing and other pit users' issues**

Further to minute SC61/11, Mr Fost reported that the level of dog fouling around the pit has, over recent weeks, reduced considerably and that there have been no recent incidents of conflict between dog walkers and anglers at Manea Pit.

Mr Fost expressed concerns regarding the low water level in the pit, caused by the sustained period of dry weather over a number of months, and the detrimental impact that could have upon the fish. He suggested that if the dry weather situation continues, the Parish Council may need to consider taking action to protect the fish; such action could be pumping water into the pit from another source and cutting channels in the bank to increase fish becoming stuck in certain areas of the pit.

Mrs Smith informed the Sub-Committee of the regulations and licensing requirements relating to the abstraction of water and of the necessity, if such an initiative were to be pursued, of making the necessary applications as a matter of some urgency.

Members decided that the information reported be noted and that Councillor Archer and Mrs Smith would obtain advice regarding the abstraction of water from the Manea and Welney Internal Drainage Board and the Environment Agency respectively.

### **SC71/11 Management of trees at Manea Pit**

Further to minute SC62/11, the Clerk reported that Manea Parish Council had accepted, at its last meeting (minute M111/11 refers) a quotation, in the sum of £2,200 for all of the tree works required. This quotation had been obtained, since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee, by Mr Fost from a company recommended by Mr Catling.

Mr Fost mentioned that this contractor possesses a wood chipping machine, which it would be possible for the Parish Council to hire; this would be a means of producing wood chippings from the pollarded trees, for use in maintaining the footpaths around the pit area.

The Sub-Committee decided that the information provided by the Clerk be noted and that he would obtain a quotation from the contractor for one day's hire of the wood chipping machine.

### **SC72/11 Monitoring of actions**

Further to minute SC63/11, 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.

The Sub-Committee decided that 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.

### **SC73/11 Website information**

Further to minute SC64/11, Councillor Archer reported that there had been no progress in relation to this matter.

The Sub-Committee decided that the current situation be noted and that Councillor Archer would provide an update at the next meeting.

### **SC74/11 Ouse Washes Landscape Project**

Councillor Emery reported briefly on the Ouse Washes Landscape Project, which is being developed by Cambridgeshire ACRE as a potential scheme for Heritage Lottery funding. Manea Parish Council has been invited to suggest a project idea, possibly linked to the pit area.

The Sub-Committee decided that the information reported by Councillor Emery be noted.

### **SC75/11 Congratulations**

Councillor Buckton thanked the Sub-Committee for the work that it has undertaken at the pit area and congratulated it on the benefits that it had delivered to the community as a result of its work and commitment.

The Sub-Committee decided that Councillor Buckton's comments be noted.

### **SC76/11 Next meeting**

The Sub-Committee decided that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee be held on 8 February 2012, commencing at 7.30 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

**Meeting finished at 8.50 pm.**

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

Date.....