

MANEA PIT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

30 JANUARY 2013 – 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Archer, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Desborough, Emery, Fielding plus Mr C Carson, Mr I Fost, Mrs L Stevens and Mr H Westgate.

Apologies: Councillor Cole, Mr R K Miller and Mrs P Smith.

The minutes of the meeting of 11 October 2012 were confirmed and signed.

PMC31/12 Management Committee membership

The management committee welcomed Mrs L Stevens, in her capacity as the representative of Manea Community Primary School, to her first meeting of the committee.

PMC32/12 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute PMC23/12, the Clerk reported an update provided by Mrs P Smith, via e-mail, in relation to this project.

Mrs Smith has contacted the Heritage Lottery Fund and would be applying to extend the grant period for an additional eighteen months, as agreed at minute PMC14/12.

To undertake the necessary works to the trees and hedge around the orchard, Mrs Smith had arranged three work party dates (13 January, 10 February and 10 March 2013), which were advertised via the Manea Matters publication. However, because of the poor weather conditions, the work party arranged for 13 January was subsequently cancelled.

The work parties would be carrying out pruning the fruit trees and reducing the height of the hedge to promote the development of a thick hedge. The grass in the re-seeded area is still alive and when it grows it would smother the weed seedlings.

The committee decided that the current situation be noted.

PMC33/12 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

Further to minute PMC24/12, Councillor Emery reported that he and two other members of the committee had installed two wooden bollards, to prevent the unauthorised parking of vehicles around the pit area but these had been removed subsequently by persons unknown. Consequently, he invited the committee to consider a more permanent solution.

Councillor Fielding suggested the installation of two metal bollards, which he indicated the estimated cost to be £45 to £50 each.

At Councillor Emery's instigation, the committee sought to identify a means of preventing access to the pit area by motorcycles and quad bikes; committee members were mindful of the need to retain access for the users of motorised wheelchairs and invalidity scooters etc and to be able to allow access for machinery and plant used in

connection with maintenance works around the pit area. The committee concluded that a “light touch” approach – through the use of signage – should be taken initially; if that fails to achieve the desired outcome, the implementation of a physical means of access prevention may need to be considered.

The committee is aware that some repair works to the access road are required, which could be undertaken as part of a future work party.

The committee decided that

- (1) the information reported be noted;
- (2) Councillor Fielding would arrange for the installation of two metal bollards (to prevent unauthorised parking around the pit area);
- (3) Councillor Emery would arrange for the purchase of six “No motorcycles or quad bikes beyond this point” signs and their subsequent installation at all access points to the pit area.

PMC34/12 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan

Further to minute PMC25/12, in the absence from the meeting of Mrs Smith, the committee received no update in relation to development of the new management plan.

Mrs Stevens commented that any proposals for developing the Manea Primary School’s use of the pit area as an “outdoor classroom” would be very welcome; she added that the school is proposing to use the pit area for educational purposes again this year (not just in the summer, as was the case last year).

The Chairman commented that Fenland District Council had launched recently a new tourism section of its website and suggested that this provides an additional means by which the facilities offered by the pit and its surroundings could be promoted/publicised.

The committee decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) the management committee and the Parish Council should continue to give consideration to ways in which the pit area and its surroundings could be developed as a community facility and that any resultant proposals be included within the new management plan.

PMC35/12 Manea Pit – Health and Safety

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

As a consequence of Councillor Emery reporting that works to extend the notice board at Manea Pit (minute PMC6/12 refers) had been completed, the committee discussed the information which it considers should be included on the notice board; this included the Carp Syndicate rules, Conservation Award certificate etc.

The committee decided that

- (1) there are no new health and safety issues at this time;
- (2) the Chairman would place the information deemed appropriate in the notice board at Manea Pit.

PMC36/12 Fishing and other pit users' issues

Further to minute PMC27/12, the committee gave further consideration to the proposal for a pond dipping area at Manea Pit, following its approval, at minute PMC27/12, of a design.

Although the committee acknowledges that the initial cost of constructing the pond dipping structure from recycled plastic is likely to be more expensive than using traditional materials, it is of the opinion that, because of the longevity of the recycled material, there would be longer-term savings in not needing to maintain or replace more traditional materials due to wear and tear. Therefore, costings for construction in both recycled materials and traditional materials should be obtained, following which a conclusion could be reached as to the best value approach to delivering this initiative.

Following the agreement to a costing for the construction of a pond dipping structure, options for obtaining grant aid towards that cost would be explored.

The committee noted that a harmonious situation between the anglers and dog walkers exists currently.

The committee considered the setting of fees for Carp Syndicate membership and fishing tickets for 2013/14. The committee took into account the following factors:

- the current economic circumstances
- current level of membership of the Carp Syndicate
- the level of income that is generated currently
- the need to be able to continue to fund maintenance of the area
- the level of fish stocks.

Mr Fost commented that, because of the poor fishing conditions and consequent reduction in the number of ticket sales in 2012, he could not support an increase in the cost of fishing tickets.

The committee decided that

- (1) Mr Fost would produce estimated costings for the proposed pond dipping area, both on the basis of constructing the structure from either recycled plastic or traditional materials and report thereon to the next meeting;
- (2) it would RECOMMEND to Manea Parish Council that fees for Carp Syndicate membership and fishing tickets for the 2013/14 fishing season be increased (by approximately 10%) to:
 - £120.00 (from £110.00) for annual membership of the Carp Syndicate
 - £27.50 (from £25.00) for an annual fishing season ticket
 - £16.50 (from £15.00) for a concessionary rate annual season ticket
 - £5.50 (from £5.00) for a day fishing ticket.

PMC37/12 Review of the Standing Orders of the Manea Pit Management Committee

In accordance with the request of Manea Parish Council (minute M113/12 refers), the management committee reviewed, in the light of experience of operation over recent months, its Standing Orders and Terms of Reference; the Parish Council had asked the committee to make recommendations as to any revisions it considers necessary to enable the committee to operate as effectively as possible.

The management committee decided to RECOMMEND to the Parish Council that the Standing Orders and Terms Reference of the Manea Pit Management Committee be revised to

- increase the number of Parish Council representatives on the management committee from four to five members
- enable the appointment of a Vice-Chairman of the committee.

PMC38/12 Wildlife Trust's survey of Manea Pit

Further to minute M12/12, the Clerk reported details of the Wildlife Trust's survey of Manea Pit, which it undertook on 15 August 2012. The survey results document provides: details of the qualification of the pit as a County Wildlife Site; a description of the site; a map of the area; a species list.

The management committee decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that a copy of the document be circulated electronically to all members of the committee.

PMC39/12 Monitoring of actions

The Chairman circulated an updated schedule of actions document.

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

The committee decided that the Chairman would present an up-to-date version (i.e. with completed actions deleted and new actions added) to each meeting of the management committee.

PMC40/12 Next meeting

The committee decided that the next meeting be held on 7 March 2013, commencing at 7.30 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.15 pm.

Signature:.....(Committee Chairman).

Date.....