

MANEA PIT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

25 NOVEMBER 2014 – 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Desborough, Chairman; Councillors Emery, Fielding and Woodard plus Mr P Catling, Mr I Fost, Mr J Short, Mrs P Smith and Miss M Williams.

Apologies: Councillor Cole plus Mr R K Miller and Mrs L Stevens.

The minutes of the meeting of 7 August 2014 were confirmed and signed.

PMC26/14 Decisions made by Manea Parish Council

The Clerk reported briefly on the decisions made at meetings of Manea Parish Council, since 7 August 2014 meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee, in relation to matters affecting the operation and management of Manea Pit; those being the acceptance of quotations for

- undertaking surfacing works to the car parking area at Manea Pit
- the manufacture and supply of 3 RSJs for the pond dipping area scheme
- the supply of 1,000 Bream (of 6 - 8 inches in length) – together with 2,000 mixed fish (of 3 - 5 inches in length) on a free-of-charge basis.

The committee decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

PMC27/14 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute PMC19/14, Mrs Smith and Miss Williams gave an update on this project.

Mrs Smith informed the committee that there is a need to replace three pear trees which had died. In addition, she reported that, as a consequence her ceasing to be a resident of Manea, Miss Williams would be taking on the role of managing this project

Miss Williams informed the committee that she is currently obtaining three quotations for pruning works to the trees.

Some members of the committee had noticed that cars had accessed the area and expressed the view that measures should be taken to ensure that the gate which was installed to prevent such unauthorised access is locked.

The committee decided that the information reported by Mrs Smith and Miss Williams be noted and to place on record its appreciation of the work that had been undertaken by Mrs Smith in the delivery of this project.

PMC28/14 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

Further to minute PMC20/14, the committee considered the current situation regarding the maintenance of Manea Pit and its surroundings.

The surfacing works to the car parking area at Manea Pit (minute PMC26/14 refers) have been completed. Some maintenance works are, however, required to the main car park.

The works to cut steps into the earth in a couple of locations, to provide easier access to adjacent fishing platforms (minute M39/14 refers), have not, so far, been undertaken.

The view of committee members is that the maintenance works are generally up-to-date; the situation would continue to be monitored, with work parties being arranged as and when necessary to keep "on top" of the situation.

The committee is of the opinion that much has been achieved in the development and maintenance of the pit area during the period of its ownership by Manea Parish Council and that the work of volunteers has been key in that achievement.

The committee decided that the current situation be noted and that the need for further maintenance works be assessed in greater detail early in 2015.

PMC29/14 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan

Further to minute PMC21/14, Mrs P Smith had arranged the circulation of the latest version of the draft management plan, in advance of the meeting, to the members of the committee. She commented that she had taken into account the results of the recent botanical survey of Manea Pit in the latest version of the draft plan.

Mrs Smith informed the committee that she had incorporated, as far as was possible, all of the comments which had been made by those members of the committee who had responded to the consultation exercise. She expressed the view that the plan document should be the subject of a "wide" consultation exercise and that all of the comments made to date should remain in the consultation version of the plan document.

The Clerk reported comments that he had been sent by Mrs L Stevens; she states that Manea Primary School is currently developing its outdoor learning, which is a major focus of the school's development plan. In addition to developing the outdoor learning, the school has included within its policy its ambitions for working within the community in the local woods, the railway station and Manea Pit.

The committee decided that, to enable it to devote a sufficient amount of time to discussion of the draft management plan, an additional meeting of the committee, at which the only business would be consideration of the latest version of the draft management plan, be arranged.

PMC30/14 Manea Pit – Health and Safety

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

Councillor Woodard mentioned that, as a result of the car park surfacing works, there is a need for works to be undertaken to one of the fishing platforms designed for use by disabled anglers to make it safe for use.

The Committee decided that the works required to make safe one of the fishing platforms designed for use by disabled anglers be undertaken by a work party early in 2015.

PMC31/14 Fishing and other pit users' issues

Mr Fost informed the committee that he had spoken with a representative of the company with which Manea parish Council had placed an order for Bream (minute PMC24/14 refers), who has stated that he anticipates being able to deliver the fish before the end of the calendar year.

Further to minute PMC10/14, Mr P Catling reported that he had contacted VS Fisheries with regard to the purchase of Carp (to replace those which had died over recent years); the company informed him that it would be necessary to

place an order several months in advance of delivery; the company recommends the purchase of Carp which are five years of age, each with an average weight of 14 lb; the cost would be £17.75 per lb; resulting a price exceeding £200 per fish.

The information reported by Mr Fost and Mr Catling generated a general, brief discussion regarding fish stocking of Manea Pit; various views were expressed but no specific conclusions were reached.

Councillor Emery reported that he had met recently with James Hooker, the officer at the Environment Agency who has responsibilities for issues related to the movement of fish, to discuss concerns of the Wildlife Trust regarding the introduction of Silver Bream fish to Manea Pit. Councillor Emery informed members that Mr Hooker is impressed with the manner in which Manea Parish Council is maintaining and developing Manea Pit and has, as a result of his inspection of the pit, concluded that the introduction of additional fish to Manea Pit would cause no harm to its status as a County Wildlife Site. Mr Hooker had offered to provide (and install), free-of-charge to Manea Parish Council, a number of "hedgehog" devices, which act as a deterrent to cormorants. The Chairman and Councillor Emery had also met on-site subsequently with Mr Hooker and two officers of the Wildlife Trust; all are happy with the manner in which the pit is being managed; the officers of the Wildlife Trust did, however, suggest the netting-off one area within the pit.

The committee decided that

- (1) the information reported be noted;
- (2) Mr Catling would provide to the Clerk a proposal, for reference to Manea Parish Council, in relation to the purchase of "replacement" Carp;
- (3) it is supportive of the installation of "hedgehogs" in Manea Pit.

PMC32/14 Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership

Further to minute PMC24/14, the Clerk reminded the committee of the need to: submit quarterly returns to ACRE on progress on projects; record time spent by volunteers on delivering the project; collect data to demonstrate achievement of the project's planned outcomes. He commented that, in the absence of any data being provided to him in relation to time spent by volunteers on delivering the project, he had not been able, to date, to submit any quarterly returns to Cambridgeshire ACRE.

In addition, the Clerk mentioned that, as soon as all of the materials needed for construction of the pond sipping area had been purchased by the Parish Council, he would be able to re-claim, via Cambridgeshire ACRE, the monies expended by the council.

The committee decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that they would seek to ensure the Clerk's receipt of records of time spent by volunteers on delivering the project.

PMC33/14 Next meeting

The committee decided that the next meeting – at which the only of business would be consideration of the latest version of the draft management plan (minute PMC29/14 refers) - be held on 9 December 2014, to commence at 7.00 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea; the next "full" meeting of the committee would take place on 13 January 2015, to commence at 7.30 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

POST-MEETING NOTE: Because of the unavailability of meetings accommodation on 9 December 2014 and 13 January 2015, the dates of the respective meetings were changed to 8 December 2014 and 6 January 2015.

Meeting finished at 9.10 pm.

Signature:.....(Committee Chairman)

Date.....