

MANEA PIT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

23 JUNE 2015 – 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Emery, Vice-Chairman in the Chair; Councillors Cole and Woodard plus, Mr C Carson. Mr I Fost, Mr J Short, Mrs P Smith and Miss M Williams.

Apologies: Councillors Mrs Desborough and Fielding plus Mr P Catling and Mrs L Stevens.

The minutes of the meeting of 27 May 2015 were confirmed and signed.

PMC10/15 Decisions made by Manea Parish Council

The Clerk reported that Manea Parish Council had received, at its 15 June 2015 meeting (minute M19/15 (1) refers), a representation from a parishioner regarding concerns from some members of the local community in relation to what they see as unnecessary controls and a lack of clarity over permitted use of the pit area. The resident had expressed the opinion that Manea Parish Council had not conveyed clear and reasoned messages to the public with regard to the community's permitted use of the pit area.

The parishioner had mentioned to the Parish Council that he had submitted a petition to the council, seeking to address this situation but had been informed by the Clerk that the documentation submitted does not constitute, for various reasons, a valid petition.

In response to the representation, the Chairman of the Parish Council had drawn to the parishioner's attention the discussion and decision of the Manea Pit Management Committee regarding persons not keeping their dogs under control within the pit area (minute PMC7/15 refers). At the meeting of the Parish Council, the Chairman had referred to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which requires all birds to be protected; this is another reason why dogs need to be kept under control within the pit area. In addition, the Chairman of the Parish Council had made the point that any resident who wishes to raise issues in relation to the operation, management and development of the pit area is able to address the Manea Pit Management Committee by utilising the Open Forum element at the beginning of each of its meetings.

At its meeting on 15 June 2015, Manea Parish Council had decided that it would undertake its annual inspection of Manea Pit and the surrounding area immediately prior to its next meeting (on 20 July).

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

PMC11/15 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute PMC3/15, Mrs Smith reported that she had "chased" delivery of the "lectern" design interpretation boards (a total of seven had been ordered; four for the community orchard/woodland project and three for the Ouse Washes project), the delivery of which may not now take place in time for their installation in advance of the OuseFest event on 25 July 2015.

Mrs Smith reminded the committee that certain members of the committee had agreed to take on the task, using their respective areas of expertise, to produce information (such as species of birds, types of fish, varieties of trees etc.) as content for the interpretation boards. She mentioned that she had produced interpretation board content in relation

to the community orchard and on the history of Manea Pit and showed to the committee the pond dipping information which had been produced by Mrs L Stevens.

Mrs Smith also reminded the committee that the deadline for spending the grant monies from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is the end of June 2015; in this regard, Mrs Smith is in the process (almost completed) of producing a "close down" report for submission to the HLF. It is looking as though the total funding claim to the HLF would be approximately £7,300 (the provisional award to this project by the HLF had been on the basis of an estimated project cost of £7,100 plus a 10% contingency sum; she reminded the committee that around 50% of the grant funding had already been received by Manea Parish Council.

Mrs Smith informed the committee that a condition of the grant funding is that recipients are required to erect signs at the site to inform the public of the HLF's contribution towards the cost of the project. She showed the committee two signs that she had obtained in that regard; the committee agreed suitable locations for the signage.

Miss Williams informed the committee that the fortnightly maintenance days continue to take place.

The committee decided that the current situation be noted and that, further to minute PMC35/14, Mr C Carson would produce a plan of possible locations within the woodland area for the planting of Black Poplar trees.

PMC12/15 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

Further to minute PMC4/15, the committee considered the current situation regarding the maintenance of Manea Pit and its surroundings.

Mr J Short informed the committee that a work party had taken place the previous evening and that the focus had been the works to the pond dipping area; he mentioned that the handrail had been fitted to the pond dipping platform and that the works to provide this new facility are almost complete. It is felt that two or three more work parties during the summer/autumn would be sufficient to address the few minor routine maintenance works required to the pit area.

The committee "took stock" of the maintenance materials it currently possesses and the need for purchase of additional materials to be able to address the current maintenance issues. It was noted that there is still a supply of around four tons of gravel but it will be necessary to purchase twelve wooden sleepers for works to the fishing platforms etc and to acquire/purchase a supply of bark chippings for "topping up" the surfacing at the picnic area.

The committee decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) further to minute PMC4/15, Councillor Cole would obtain quotations for the installation of post and rail fencing at a specific location in the pit area;
- (3) Councillor Cole would arrange the purchase of additional wooden sleepers;
- (4) the Clerk would enquire of the contractor which undertakes the maintenance works to the trees owned by Manea Parish Council whether the company is able to supply bark chippings for use within the pit area;
- (5) the new signs (minute PMC 15/15 refers) be installed as part of the next work party.

PMC13/15 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan

Further to minute PMC5/15, Mrs P Smith informed the committee that, as a result of liaison with Mr C Carson, she had produced the revised wording of the plan to reflect the pit's loss of its County Wildlife Site (CWS) status and the

fact that every effort would be made to achieve return of the CWS through encouraging the presence of certain plants within the pit.

The committee decided that the situation with regard to the new management plan be noted and that, following inclusion of the textual changes to the latest version, Mrs Smith would send, by e-mail, an updated version of the plan to all members of this committee.

PMC14/15 Manea Pit – Health and Safety

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

The Clerk read to the committee an e-mail from Mrs L Stevens, stating that Manea Community Primary School is in the process of purchasing a life ring, which it would store in the pavilion with the nets and trays that would be used for the pupils' pond dipping activities. As a result of receiving this information, the committee considered whether, in the interests of health and safety, two life rings should be purchased for use (if needed) by the general public.

The committee decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that Mr I Fost would investigate the cost of purchasing two life rings.

PMC15/15 Fishing and other pit users' issues

Mr I Fost handed to the Clerk the sum of £117.00 in respect of the sale of fishing tickets.

The Clerk informed the committee that the Chairman had arranged the purchase of four signs bearing the wording: "This is a wildlife area; please keep dogs under close control" and two signs bearing the wording "Dogs are not allowed in the water".

The committee decided that the current situation be noted.

PMC16/15 Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership

Further to minute PMC8/15, the committee considered further the arrangements necessary for delivery of its programme of activities in Manea, as set at minute PMC56/14, to take place on 25 July 2015 (between 12 noon and 4.00 pm), as part of the OuseFest event. Members gave brief updates on the activities for which they are the lead organiser.

The Clerk informed the committee that the quarter one progress report to the Ouse Washes project becomes due at the end of June and he reminded the committee of the need for him to receive, for inclusion within that report, the records of time spent by volunteers on delivering the project.

The Clerk informed the committee of a training event, to be held (in association with the Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership scheme) at Littleport Village Hall on 9 July 2015 (running between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm), relating to identifying and controlling aquatic invasive non-native species; he informed the members of the booking details for the event.

The committee decided that the situation be noted and that the OuseFest event would be used to open formally both the community orchard/woodland and the pond dipping area.

PMC17/15 Next meeting

The committee decided that the next meeting be held - for the sole purpose of finalising the arrangements for the programme of activities in Manea as part of the OuseFest event - on 15 July 2015, commencing at 7.30 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.50 pm.

Signature:.....(Committee Chairman)

Date.....