

MANEA PIT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

27 MAY 2015 – 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Desborough, Chairman; Councillors Cole (from 7.45 pm), Fielding and Woodard plus Mr P Catling, Mr I Fost, Mr R K Miller, Mr J Short, Mrs P Smith, Mrs L Stevens and Miss M Williams.

Apologies: Councillor Emery plus Mr C Carson.

The minutes of the meeting of 8 April 2015 were confirmed and signed.

PMC1/15 Open Forum

Dogs in the pit area

A resident of the village informed the committee that she walks her dogs, off the lead, around the pit area on a regular basis and that on one occasion recently her dogs had run into the pit at a point close to where an angler was fishing. She commented that, although no damage was caused to his fishing equipment, the angler reacted to the incident in a rude and aggressive manner towards her and that, when she was leaving the area, she overheard a number of anglers talking about her and the incident; as a result, she felt intimidated.

The resident expressed the opinion that all residents, whether they be dog owners or not, should be able to use the pit area and not feel intimidated by others.

In response to the resident's comments, the Chairman explained the situation with regard to dogs being allowed within the pit area.

Another resident asked for clarification as to the ownership of Manea Pit and the manner in which its use is controlled. In response, the Chairman commented that the Parish Council had entered into a lease with the Environment Agency for "ownership" of the pit and that the responsibility for its operation, development and management is undertaken by the Manea Pit Management Committee on behalf of Manea Parish Council.

The committee decided that the comments of the residents and the Chairman's responses to the residents' questions be noted.

PMC2/15 Decisions made by Manea Parish Council

The Clerk reported on the decisions made by Manea Parish Council since 8 April 2015 meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee in relation to matters affecting the operation and management of Manea Pit.

At its meeting on 20 May 2015, Manea Parish Council had decided (at minute M12/15)

- (1) to procure the manufacture of handrails for affixing to the pond dipping platforms, at a cost of £700.00;
- (2) that 20 tons of hardcore be purchased for use in undertaking certain maintenance works at Manea Pit.

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

PMC3/15 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute PMC51/14, Mrs Smith reported that she had placed an order for the provision of “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 is anticipated by the end of June 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 informed 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 would be producing a “close down” report for submission to the HLF.

The committee viewed examples of artwork, produced by a local artist, which could be used to illustrate the interpretation material.

Further to minute PMC51/14, Miss Williams gave an update on the operational aspects of this project. She informed the committee that

- maintenance days continue to take place
- the mulching works to the fruit trees had been undertaken
- meadow seed mix and wildflower seed had been sown
- chippings had been laid around the new trees (provided by the Woodland Trust) which had been planted recently
- there would be a need to consider, at some future date, undertaking some weed control at the woodland area
- she is investigating the feasibility/possibility of the meadow grass being cut by scything.

The committee decided that

- (1) the information reported by Miss Williams and Mrs Smith be noted;
- (2) the content for the interpretation boards, once written by the identified members of the committee, be forwarded to Mrs Smith.

PMC4/15 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

Further to minute PMC52/14, the committee considered the current situation regarding the maintenance of Manea Pit and its surroundings.

Mr P Catling informed the committee that a work party had taken place recently and that works undertaken included repairs to the surfacing of a number of the fishing platforms and to the access roadway to the pit area. He stated that he would aim to arrange for work parties to take place on a monthly basis throughout the summer/autumn to keep “on top” of the routine maintenance of the pit area.

Mr Catling suggested that the committee considers the possibility of filling the dyke which runs alongside the road which provides access to the pit area; undertaking the work in phases, due to what is likely to be a significant cost.

The committee decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted;
- (2) a working party, for the purpose of undertaking further works to the pond dipping platforms, would take place on 22 June 2015'

- (3) Councillor Emery be requested to investigate, via the owners of the dyke, the possibility of the dyke which runs alongside the road which provides access to the pit area being filled;
- (4) consideration be given to installing post and rail fencing at a specific location in the pit area.

PMC5/15 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan

Further to minute PMC53/14, Mrs P Smith informed the committee that she is still to make amendments to the wording of the plan where necessary to reflect the pit's loss of its County Wildlife Site (CWS) status. She commented that it might be appropriate to include within the plan some wording to the effect that the Manea Pit Management Committee would make efforts 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 making the necessary 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.

PMC6/15 Manea Pit – Health and Safety

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

Councillor Woodard expressed concern regarding the stability of the edges of the access roadway adjacent to the pit area and suggested that the committee should consider undertaking works to reduce the potential risk to those who drive motor vehicles along that road.

The committee decided that the comments of Councillor Woodard be noted and that the access roadway be viewed as part of the annual village inspection to be undertaken by Manea Parish Council on 15 June 2015.

PMC7/15 Fishing and other pit users' issues

Mr P Catling handed to the Clerk the sum of £480.00 in respect of (4) Carp Syndicate membership fees for 2015/16.

Mr I Fost handed to the Clerk the sum of £575.00 in respect of the sale of fishing tickets.

Mr Catling suggested that the committee may wish to consider, for the purpose of producing a historical/photographic record of the fish within Manea Pit, allowing fish which had been caught by anglers to be "chipped"; subsequently, each fish caught would have its "chip" read by a scanner.

Mr Catling informed the committee of a recent incident of a dog which was not on a lead attacking another dog in the pit area. Consequently, the committee discussed possible measures to address recent dog-related incidents in and around Manea Pit.

The committee decided that the information reported by certain members of the committee be noted and that

- (1) Mr Catling would obtain quotations for the cost of purchasing equipment for the "chipping" and scanning of fish;
- (2) the Chairman would arrange 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".

PMC8/15 Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership

Further to minute PMC56/14, the committee considered 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 of the committee are confident that the necessary arrangements are in hand.

With regard to local publicity for Manea's OuseFest activities, Mrs Stevens informed the committee that the pupils at the school would be designing posters and that letters would be sent to pupils' parents.

The committee decided that the situation be noted.

PMC9/15 Next meeting

The committee decided that the next meeting be held on 24 June 2015, commencing at 7.30 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

Meeting finished at 9.05 pm.

Signature:.....(Committee Chairman)

Date.....