

MANEA PIT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

NOTES OF MEETING

20 OCTOBER 2016 – 7.15 pm.

Present: Councillor Hirson; Chairman; Councillors Cole, Mrs Desborough, Emery and Fielding plus Mr A Cooper, Mrs L Eves, Mr I Fost, Mr M Hindry, Mr R K Miller, Mr S Payne, Mrs J Ramsay, Mr C Scott, Mr J Short, Miss M Williams and Mrs S Woodard.

Apologies: Mr C Carson, Mr G Simpson and Mrs L Stevens.

The minutes of the (inquorate) meeting of 7 September 2016 were confirmed and signed.

PMC35/16 Deaths of Carp at Manea Pit

Further to minute IPC/16, the committee received a presentation from two representatives of the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) to both explain the role of CEFAS and its understanding of the situation at Manea Pit, as well as to give advice in relation to fisheries management.

One of the representatives of CEFAS explained to the committee the types of diseases in fish which must be notified to CEFAS; one of those diseases is Koi Herpes Virus (KHV). The representative commented that KHV in fish could be seen as the equivalent to "foot and mouth" disease in cattle and occurs only when water temperature is between 16 and 28 degrees Centigrade and fish become stressed (stress of fish can result from a number of sources, including thunder storms). The disease could lie dormant in fish for a number of years until it is "activated" by stress; once a fish has become infected by KHV, the infection remains for the life of that fish. Research had shown that the virus is able to stay alive outside of the body of a fish for a minimum of 21 days.

As part of the presentation, the committee was informed of statistics in relation to the number of KHV designations across the UK for each year for the period 2007 (the first year in which diseases in fish became notifiable to CEFAS) to 2014 inclusive. The representative of CEFAS commented that 2016 had shown the greatest number of designations (that being 30 sites) since the requirement to notify CEFAS of diseases in fish came into effect.

The committee was informed of the manner in which assessment is undertaken by the Fish Health Inspectorate at CEFAS of diseases in fish.

The representative of CEFAS explained the biosecurity measures (to enable anglers to "sanitise" their fishing equipment) which would need to be put in place at Manea Pit. These measures had been explained by the Chairman to the committee at minute IMC1/16).

The representatives of CEFAS responded to the committee's questions.

The committee decided that the information presented be noted and taken into account in any decision-making relating to fishing activities at Manea Pit.

PMC36/16 Decisions made by Manea Parish Council

The Clerk reported that Manea Parish Council had decided, at its 12 September 2016 meeting (minute M66/16 refers), that, given that Carp Syndicate members had been able to use Manea Pit for angling purposes for only 25% of the 2016/17 financial year, 75% of the membership fees paid to Manea Parish Council for that financial year be

refunded to the Carp Syndicate. The sum refunded to the Carp Syndicate is £3,577.50 (which is 75% of the £4,770.00 paid).

No decisions had been made at 17 October 2016 Parish Council meeting in relation to Manea Pit.

Mr A Cooper expressed the opinion that the Carp Syndicate would be prepared to pay back to the Parish Council the refund of membership fees in the event that fishing activities could re-commence relatively soon. In response, the Chairman reminded the committee that Mr Cooper had stated at the last meeting of this committee (minute IMC1/16 refers) that the members of the Carp Syndicate had no wish to undertake fishing activities at Manea Pit until the next fishing year, i.e. April 2017; this would give the surviving Carp a sufficient period of time to re-gain their strength.

It was agreed that the information reported by the Clerk and the comments of the Chairman be noted.

PMC37/16 Field adjoining Manea Pit – use as community orchard/woodland

Further to minute IMC3/16, Mr M Hindry updated the committee on the activities of the group of volunteers which is undertaking the maintenance and development of the community orchard/woodland. He circulated a proposed action plan for such activity for the twelve months period October 2016 to September 2017.

Mr Hindry proposed to the committee, to both achieve the objectives of the management plan and to comply with the terms of the grant funding provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the following:

- a reduced mowing regime to facilitate the growth of wildflowers and finer grasses; this would also reduce the cost to the community; the group proposes that mowing be ceased with immediate effect and started again in the new year when a revised, lesser mowing regime could be put in place
- a reduction in maintenance requirement to a monthly (instead of fortnightly) regime between May and August as this should be all that is required going forward. In August there would be additional work to cut the longer grass and, after it has dried, move the grass to areas within the orchard to help encourage wildlife and aid over-wintering species.
- adding more native plants, seeds and bulbs over the next five years to achieve the maximum environmental benefit, whilst adding to the enjoyment by the public
- to leave woody and the longer grass cuttings on-site to encourage wildlife within the area
- pruning of trees this year and annually thereafter
- Mr Hindry to publicise, via the Manea Matters publication, the aims for this area.

Mr Hindry informed the committee that the woodland group believes that, by implementing the suggested plan, it would achieve the vision of having a relatively low maintenance area to be enjoyed by all sections and ages of the community.

The committee decided that the current situation be noted and that

- (1) the proposal presented by Mr Hindry be approved; Councillor Emery and Mr Hindry to discuss cessation of regular mowing;
- (2) Mr Hindry would inform the community of the orchard/woodland plan via the Manea Matters publication;
- (3) the trees at the orchard be pruned this year and then annually, at a cost of £50 per occasion;
- (4) Mr Hindry would make enquiries into sourcing re-enforcement mesh to aid access to the picnic tables;
- (5) further to minute PMC26/16, provision of a hide and 'simple' benches be discussed at the next meeting.

PMC38/16 Wildlife at Manea Pit

Further to minute IMC4/16, the Chairman informed the committee that the Owl box is now the home to a number of Barn Owl chicks.

No other member of the committee had anything to report in terms of sightings of wildlife at Manea Pit.

The committee decided that the situation be noted.

PMC39/16 Management Plan - improvement/development works and projects

Further to minute IMC5/16, the committee considered the current situation regarding the maintenance of Manea Pit and its surroundings.

Given the current issues affecting the pit area (minute IMC1/16 refers), no work parties had take place since the last meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee.

It was mentioned that there is a need for weeds control at some of the fishing platforms.

The committee decided that the current situation be noted.

PMC40/16 Manea Pit – Revision of the management plan

Although there was no specific discussion of this item of business, one member of the committee expressed the opinion that the management plan should be seen as a "living" document.

PMC41/16 Manea Pit – Health and Safety

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

The committee decided that there are no new health and safety issues at this time.

PMC42/16 Fishing and other pit users' issues

No members of the committee had any matters to raise under this agenda item. The main concern currently is the issue mentioned at minute PMC35/16.

The committee decided that the situation be noted.

PMC43/16 Next meeting

The committee decided that the next meeting of the Manea Pit Management Committee be held on 1 December 2016, to commence at 7.15 pm, at the British Legion Club, East Street, Manea.

Meeting finished at 8.55 pm.

Signature:.....(Committee Chairman)

Date.....