

Minutes of a meeting of the Monks Wall Nature Reserve Management Committee, 21st November 2016, in the Council Chamber, Guildhall, Sandwich at 7:00pm

Present: The Mayor, Cllr Paul Graeme (in the Chair)
Cllr JE Franklin
Cllr VA Liote
Cllr JJ Watts
Dr A Lipczynski
Mr A Henderson
Mr M Chandler
Mr K Chapman

Officer: Ms L. Fidler

05.11.16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Daw (who was on holiday). No apologies were received from Dr Walkey.

06.11.16 DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

07.11.16 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of 18th July 2016 and there were no matters arising not already covered elsewhere on the agenda.

08.11.16 REPORT: FINN'S

The Committee received a verbal report from Mark Chandler (Finn's) regarding management of the Reserve, as well as updates regarding negotiations with the Environment Agency and related issues. A copy of this report is attached to the official minutes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(i) When the outcome of the Higher Tier Stewardship application (for the Countryside Stewardship Scheme) with Natural England is known Mr Chandler will inform the Committee.

(ii) Mr Chandler will request that the EA install a control sluice at the location identified by the Warden as soon as possible.

(iii) Mr Chandler will share a copy of the Stewardship Schedule with the Committee for reference.

(iv) Mr Chandler will consider the costs involved to address the health and safety issues identified by the Council's H&S advisor. The Committee will then consider whether to continue to push for the EA to address these issues, as the problems stem from their work at the Reserve, or whether the Reserve's own funds should be used to undertake this work.

09.11.16 REPORT: WARDEN'S

The Committee received a written report from the MWNR Warden, Mr Ken Chapman. A copy of this report is attached to the official minutes. Mr Chapman also explained how he had managed to finally get water onto the Reserve, using a route that the EA's contractors had blocked up.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(i) Mr Chapman will search on the near-side of the bypass for the sluice identified as being at the north of the Reserve on the EA's paperwork (but which isn't there).

(ii) Mr Chapman should maintain high water levels at the Reserve throughout the winter using method recently identified (pending installation of the control sluice mentioned at 08.11.16(ii)).

10.11.16 MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received and considered the Interim Management Plan and considered if and how a long-term plan could be drafted. It was agreed that at present there are three parts to the management plan where there are unknowns; public access, water level control, and management of the reserve. And that until these are resolved a plan cannot be written.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(i) If the application for the Higher Tier Stewardship scheme is successful this will inform the management plan. Mr Chandler and Dr A Lipczynski will start to consider the management plan together when the outcome of this application is known.

11.11.16 FINANCE

(i) The statement of the Monks Wall Nature Reserve balance as at 31st October 2016 was not available in time for the meeting, this information will be emailed out to the Committee members as soon as possible after the meeting.

(ii) The Committee considered any forthcoming expenditure / income relevant to the Monks Wall Nature Reserve budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

(i) Mr Chandler will inform the Clerk of the cost of removing the water pump and engine in advance of commissioning this work, the same for flailing in the Spring (if required).

(ii) The Clerk's office will confirm if the funds from the Wayleave agreement (£4080.00) have been received in the bank account.

(iii) The warden currently requires the use of the SBBOT vehicle for accessing the Reserve. It was agreed that Mr Chapman can claim mileage at 45p/per mile between SBBOT and the MWNR in order to contribute to the fuel costs for this vehicle.

12.11.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 23rd January 2017 at 7pm, in the Council Chamber.