

**Minutes of a meeting of the Monks Wall Nature Reserve Management Committee, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015, in the Mayor's Parlour, Guildhall, Sandwich at 6:00pm**

**Present:**       **The Mayor (in the Chair)**  
                  **Cllr RA Daw**  
                  **Cllr Mrs P Russell**  
                  **Cllr JJ Watts**  
                  **Dr A Lipczynski**  
                  **Dr M Walkey**

**Officer:**       **Miss T Weir**

**01.04.15        APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Laslett due to ill health. No apologies were received from Mr Gibbs and Dr Griffiths.

**02.04.15        DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS**

No interests were declared at this point in the meeting, however please note that interests were declared later before discussion of agenda items 5, 9 and 10 (minuted as 05.04.15, 09.04.15 and 10.04.15 below).

**03.04.15        MINUTES**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015. A query was raised under minute 16.01.15 as to whether any photographic evidence had been taken of the Environment Agency works on the Reserve site. The Mayor confirmed that he had not yet given a camera to the Warden for this purpose. There were no other matters arising.

**04.04.15        PROGRESS REPORT**

The Warden was not present at the meeting to present a verbal report and no written report was received.

**05.04.15        BASIC PAYMENT 2015 (REPLACING SINGLE FARM PAYMENT SCHEME)**

*Dr Lipczynski arrived at this point in the meeting.*

Cllr Daw and Dr Lipczynski declared an other significant interest in this item as Trustees of Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory, and Dr Walkey declared an other significant interest as a Member of Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory.

The Committee considered a letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015 from Julian Sampson (GW Finn & Sons) to Dr Lipczynski and associated emails regarding the Reserve's eligibility for the Basic Payment Scheme 2015 and potential sale of Entitlements.

**RECOMMENDATION: That Julian Sampson (GW Finn & Sons) be instructed firstly, to sell the Reserve's Entitlements at the best possible price and secondly, not to make an application for Basic Payment Scheme in the current year.**

#### 06.04.15 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Committee received a verbal update from the Town Clerk through Miss T. Weir, Assistant Town Clerk & Mayor's Secretary, regarding the corporate Health & Safety review. The intention was that an inspection of the Reserve would take place with the Council's Health & Safety Advisor (Sheila Coupe, East Kent Human Resources) at a convenient date determined by the Environment Agency's departure from the site.

**RECOMMENDATION: That upon receiving a confirmed termination date from the Environment Agency, Committee members should inspect the site with the Council's Health & Safety Advisor and with representatives of the Environment Agency, at the same time confirming that all land has been reinstated by the Agency as agreed.**

#### 07.04.15 SPRAYING PLAN

The Committee considered the spraying plan for the coming year. It was noted that the main weed issue on the Reserve tends to be thistles, and as such spraying – if necessary – would need to take place in late June to July. Dr Walkey stated that he had allowed for spraying in the draft budget figures he had prepared for agenda item 10 (minuted as 10.04.15 below), *Budget*. It was noted that the Environment Agency had agreed that while they were working on site, if weed and grass cutting was required either they would pay for this or their contractors Jacksons would carry it out. A query was also raised as to whether the area left by Pfizers to Sandwich Town Council would be drawn into one with the rest of the Reserve – it was noted that several months ago this area was rough and that a management plan for the area was still outstanding. There was also some discussion regarding the road laid by the Environment Agency for access into the Reserve and it was confirmed that the Agency would be obliged to reinstate the Reserve to the condition it was in when their work began on site but that the road could be kept in place if the Council so desired.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Warden and other representatives of the Management Committee (Cllr Daw, Dr Lipczynski, Dr Walkey) visit the site as soon as possible (Dr Walkey to inform Dr Griffiths of the agreed date and time) to assess the need for weed control, reporting back to the Town Clerk on the action required; and that due to time constraints, the Town Clerk be authorised to take forward whatever action is required.**

#### 08.04.15 FENCING

The Committee received email correspondence (latest dated 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015) from Richard Saville, Environment Agency, and Stephanie Mergen, CH2M Hill, forwarded to Dr Lipczynski by Julian Sampson of GW Finn & Sons, along with associated fencing plans and considered proposed fencing infrastructure for the Reserve. It was noted that there had already been some discussion between the Warden, Mr Sampson and the Environment Agency regarding the fencing plans but it was unclear whether the Agency had been asked to fence alongside the Monks Way bypass.

**RECOMMENDATION: That in the Warden's absence, Julian Sampson (GW Finn & Sons) be asked to confirm whether fencing alongside the Monks Way was included in the current proposals and if not, please**

would he investigate the possibility of this stretch being included in the plans.

**09.04.15 FINANCE**

Dr Lipczynski declared a pecuniary interest in this agenda item due to receiving professional expenses.

The Committee received the Monks Wall Nature Reserve accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 (end of financial year 2014/15). It was noted that these accounts were as yet unaudited.

**RECOMMENDATION: That these accounts be noted.**

**10.04.15 BUDGET**

Dr Lipczynski declared a pecuniary interest in this agenda item due to receiving professional expenses.

The Committee considered likely expenditure requirements and income streams relating to the Reserve. Further to a recommendation of the last Committee meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015, as approved by Council on 26<sup>th</sup> January, this matter had been deferred until the next Committee meeting (13<sup>th</sup> April) and Mr Gibbs, Dr Griffiths, Dr Lipczynski and Dr Walkey were asked to work together in the meantime to produce a draft document listing likely expenditure requirements and income streams and offering recommendations for incorporation in the Reserve budget, also to be brought back to Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> April. Dr Walkey accordingly had prepared a draft budget proposals paper which was tabled at the Committee meeting.

The following observations were made regarding the proposals as presented:

- under Income, that the Reserve could no longer expect £5,200 from the Rural Payments Agency in 2015/16 but that some one-off income could be hoped for from the sale of Entitlements (as per minute 05.04.15 above)
- under Income, that the Reserve did not receive £1,000 from Sandwich Town Council in 2014/15
- under Income, that the Reserve could not be grazed in 2015/16 and as such could the £1250 income noted from grazing in fact be claimed from the Environment Agency in compensation?
- under Expenditure, that the Warden's honorarium was agreed by the last Committee meeting and confirmed by Council to be £3,000 for 2015/16, not £3,638
- under Expenditure, that provisional budgets were drawn up last year (informing the current proposals) which incorporated work to meet the requirements of the Basic Payment Scheme but that as per minute 05.04.15 above, these requirements would no longer affect the Reserve.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: (i) That the Town Clerk confirm the extent and timing (i.e. relevant to which financial year) of compensation received by the Reserve so far from the Environment Agency in respect of loss of grazing income, and that if compensation had not yet been received or claimed for 2015/16, such a claim should be made.**

**(ii) That the Warden's honorarium (at the agreed level of £3,000) and professional fees be confirmed as definite expenditure in 2015/16; and that the Town Clerk be asked to update other income and expenditure figures depending on the outcomes of the Environment Agency's work on**

**the Reserve site and possible sale of Entitlements – the revised document to be brought to the next Committee meeting (20<sup>th</sup> July 2015).**

**11.04.15**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015, at 7:00pm, in the Council Chamber, Guildhall.

DRAFT