

- Present:** Neil Murray (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Thomas Dyer, Karen Lee, Helena Mair and Tony Speakman
- External Representatives:** Mr V Hughes, Ms A Griffiths, Mr C J Smith, Mrs M Smith, Mrs C Steel, Mr A Sweeney, Ms S Tilford and Mr G Woolfenden
- Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Chris Burke, Mrs S Davies, Mrs E Langdon-Manning, Mr G Lisseman and Mr G Wright

**12. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**13. Confirmation of Minutes - 10 October 2016**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2016 be confirmed, subject to an amendment to the text for Item No 8 to read as follows:

Item No 8 Commons Management Plan:

Caroline Steel, representing Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, referred to:

- A meeting to be held with Simon Lawson, Community Contracts Manager in respect of issues with the pond on the south side of Canwick Hill.
- The absence of mowing on the race course.
- The presence of a rare plant water purslane thriving on the West Common.

**14. Matters Arising**

Minute No 7

Carholme Community Gala 2017

RESOLVED that the above matter be included as an agenda item at the next meeting of Commons Advisory Panel in order to monitor progress with the discussion of arrangements for the gala in future years.

**15. Standard Agenda Item: Commons Management Plan Update**

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer:

- a. provided a written update to Commons Advisory Panel on the Commons Management Plan covering the period to January 2017 and the forthcoming quarter, as detailed at Appendix A to the report
- b. reported that in January 2013 the Council's Executive approved the Lincoln Commons Management Plan 2012-2017 which included separate action

plans relating to each of the three Commons – South Common, West Common and Cow Paddle, together with an over-arching action plan

- c. confirmed that in August 2013 a revised action plan was agreed by the Executive; it was noted that opportunities to deliver on actions detailed within the plan were limited and in many cases subject to future funding or staff resources; since that time, a progress update had been provided prior to each Commons Advisory Panel meeting.

Panel members discussed the content of the report in further detail.

Caroline Steel, representing Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and George Woolfenden, representing West End Residents' Association/Open Spaces Society complimented all those officers involved in the pond work on the West Common and Canwick Hill. Despite financial restraints both areas were looking very good.

George Woolfenden suggested that instead of cutting and collecting the grass on the Commons it could be 'topped' twice a year.

Caroline Steel confirmed that collecting the grass was better ecologically for the area. She asked whether the appointment of a volunteer coordinator had been made.

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer, confirmed that the volunteer coordinator post was out to advertisement internally.

Councillor Neil Murray, Chair, welcomed the news that officers had been able to fulfil the aspirations of Commons Advisory Panel members in making improvements to the City Commons.

RESOLVED that the content of the Commons Management Plan update be noted.

## **16. Fallow Period**

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer, sought and received confirmation from the Panel of its continued support for horses to remain on the Commons in 2017 without the need for a fallow period as previously discussed at the last meeting held in October 2016. Next year's agreement would be diarised for discussion at a future meeting.

RESOLVED that Commons Advisory Panel's support for horses to remain on the Commons in 2017 without the need for a fallow period be agreed.

## **17. Update: Possibility of Having the Ragwort on Council Land Near the West Common Sprayed**

Sue Tilford, representing Lincoln Commons Horse Association on behalf of Emma Langdon-Manning:

- a. presented a report bringing the Panel's attention to an area of land near the West Common in council ownership which was covered in ragwort and believed to be impacting on the condition of the West Common

- b. asked for an update as to whether it was possible for the land to be sprayed due to having no grazing animals on it.

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer, confirmed that this piece of land was managed by the Council's Property Services Team. Investigations were currently ongoing into the potential for the land to be sprayed, which may lead to a viability study being required.

RESOLVED that subject to careful assessment the Open Spaces Officer would report back to Commons Advisory Panel with appropriate action if necessary.

#### **18. Dog Fouling on Carholme Golf Course: No Dog Refuse Bins**

Adrian Sweeney, representing Carholme Golf Club, expressed concerns over the increase in discarded used dog fouling bags found on the golf course following an increase in the number of dog walkers on the golf course. He enquired whether it was possible to install dog waste bins on Carholme Golf Course.

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer confirmed that dog bins were already in situ around the golf course six on either side. He suggested the problem was more about educating dog walkers to dispose of dog waste responsibly.

Councillor Sue Burke highlighted that the Common Rangers used to visit the area with the local PSO giving offenders the option to clean up the mess or face a fine. Could the animal warden carry out patrols?

Lee George, Community Contracts Officer, suggested that an Enforcement Officer from Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team be asked to monitor the area periodically according to staff resources and signage be erected as a deterrent. He highlighted that the council was not legally bound to provide dog fouling bins which were expensive to maintain and replace as the waste could be deposited in household wheelie bins.

RESOLVED that:

1. The availability of funding to include additional signage/dog bins on Carholme Golf Course be investigated by officers.
2. The option of issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling as a city wide problem be explored.

#### **19. Carholme Golf Club - Concerns on the Course: Damage by Horses and Bottle Diggers**

Adrian Sweeney, representing Carholme Golf Club expressed concern with regard to a number of illegal bottle diggers causing destruction on the Carholme Golf Club. Many man hours had been spent refilling the holes created by this intrusion. He queried whether it was the responsibility of the Carholme Golf Club to repair any damage. He confirmed that the police were aware of the problem but was concerned as to who would be liable should a dog walker or horse be injured falling into one of these holes.

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer, advised that he would need to look at the terms of the lease, however Carholme Golf Club was responsible for the maintenance of the golf course. He would seek legal advice as to liability and act accordingly. He would also speak with the local PCSO in the area to discuss the issue.

RESOLVED that:

1. Legal advice be sought to establish liability for repairing damage caused by bottle diggers on Carholme Golf Club.
2. Officers to liaise with the local PCSO regarding any preventative measures to deter illegal bottle diggers on the City Commons.

## **20. Other Matters**

### Car Parking – South Common on Match Days

Vic Hughes, representing Lincoln Civic Trust, asked for an assurance that charges for parking at Malandry Closes on match days were ring fenced for the City Commons.

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer, confirmed this to be the case.

RESOLVED that an update on expenditure to date in respect of ring-fenced income from car parking charges on the South Common on match days be included as an agenda item at the next meeting of Commons Advisory Panel.

### Sleeping on City Commons

Councillor Mair raised concerns regarding a rough sleeper currently residing on the West Common which was not ideal for homeless people.

Dave Charysz, Open Spaces Officer, advised that this was an increasing problem. He highlighted that some people did not want to interact with homeless charities and despite having being moved on in the past preferred to make their own way in life. It was a matter for the authorities to deal with in a humane way and officers were respectful in difficult situations. It was not easy to take the decision to evict or take enforcement measures in such circumstances.