

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

6th September 2022

AGENDA ITEM 9.1 PROTOCOL FOR CLOSING IROS

1. REPORT

- 1.1 On 2nd and 16th August 2022, Council decided to erect a fence at the IROS in order to try to mitigate the problems caused by excessive numbers of visitors to the lake in good weather during the summer.
- 1.2 Contact has been made with the successful contractor but there is still a dialogue between your Council and CEC's Public Rights of Way officer.
- 1.3 Council has not yet decided how the closing of the land is to be organised, that is:
 - When it is to be closed to the public, and
 - How the process of opening and closing will work.
- 1.4 A request has been made to members for views on these questions and the following propositions have been submitted prior to this meeting. They are listed in the order of receipt by the Clerk.
- 1.5 Councillor Shore has put forward the following proposition:
 - From 1st March until 31st October the IROS to be open each day between the hours of 10am to 4pm. Between the hours of 4pm to 10am the IROS would be closed to all but public footpath users.
 - From 1st November until the last day of February, the IROS to be open 24 hours each day.
 - Special circumstances (ideally in consultation with the Police) may require the opening hours to be reduced.
 - Residents of Pickmere be recruited to assist the Parish Council with opening and closing IROS access
- 1.6 Councillor Shore's explanation of the reasoning behind this proposition is appended below.
- 1.7 Councillor Bold has put forward the following proposition:
 - Clerk and Chair in conjunction with the Police agree to close all open access gates at times when the weather is likely to attract large numbers - predicted temperatures over 70 degrees for example and/or at weekends/Bank Holidays. Public footpath to remain open of course.
- 1.8 Councillor Dobson has put forward the following proposition:
 - Gates/land to be closed every weekend (including bank holidays) from 1st April to 30th September.

- Such closures to commence on the Friday lunchtime, and gates to be reopened Monday mornings (Tuesday if Monday is a Bank Holiday)

1.9 Councillor Dobson's comments on this proposition are appended below.

2.0 PROPOSED DECISION PROCESS

2.1 At the meeting, each councillor will be asked to explain their proposal. Having heard those explanations, each proposition will be put in turn and a seconder will be sought to the main principles of each. If no seconder is found, the proposition will fall. If seconds to the main principles of each are found, members will be asked for an initial show of hands as to which seconded proposition in principle seems to be the most popular. That proposition will then be the subject of discussion in detail and potential amendment. If that proposition (as amended if relevant) is carried, then the decision is made and the debate concluded. If that proposition fails to be carried, then an indicative vote on the principles of the remaining propositions will be taken, and discussion will progress to the next most popular proposition in the same way.

2.2 It is hoped that this somewhat complicated procedure will enable all suggestions to be considered in a systematic way.

2.3 Among the considerations to be taken into account in these discussions will necessarily be:

- Who will carry out the opening and closing of the gates at the relevant times?
- What will happen if there are already people lakeside or on the IROS when Council wants to close the gates?

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That members decide on the basis of the propositions what protocol will be used to govern the opening/closing of the IROS gates.

Jack Steel

Clerk to the Parish Council

APPENDIX

IROS Land Use Protocol Proposition – Councillor Shore

The purpose of the new fencing restricting access to the PPC owned land known as the IROS is to reduce the demand for visitor parking in the village. It is also a means by which inappropriate use of the lake can be controlled.

To ensure the erection of new fencing and signage has the most impact on the reduction of visitors and inappropriate use of the lake it is essential that :

- Maximum impact is gained through publicity that the IROS is Private Land and will be managed as such through its closure on regular / routine basis. Opening times would align with any new parking restrictions to be agreed.
- Closure times/ dates are clear and made public well in advance of any closure.
- Prominent signage erected showing opening times (Closure time).
- The intention of closures is to reduce demand from the visiting public and not Pickmere Residents although some restricted access to the field and lake is inevitable.

IROS Land Use Protocol Proposition – Councillor Dobson

We need to be clear to the public as to whether the land is closed or not, so as to prevent people just turning up 'on spec' - therefore unfortunately I would suggest that the gates are closed every weekend and bank holidays from 1st April to 30th September. Because many people come on sunny Friday afternoons, I would start the weekend on Friday lunchtime and to open the gates again on Monday morning.