

**WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK
JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

27 July 2015

Commenced: 10.30am

Terminated: 11.55am

Tameside MBC: Councillors Robinson (Chair), Bell, Bowden, Cooper, R Miah and Peet

Hyde War Memorial Trust: Mrs Eddowes
Messrs Ainger, Galvin and Gradwell

In Attendance: David Cannon, Greenspace Development Officer and Andy Cush, Planning Officer

Apologies for Absence: Councillor J Fitzpatrick and Mr Errington

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted from members of the Joint Management Committee.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2015/16

It was reported that the following representatives had been appointed to serve on the Joint Management Committee for the Municipal Year 2015/16:-

Representing Tameside MBC –

Councillors Bell, Bowden, Cooper, J Fitzpatrick, R Miah, Peet, Robinson and White.

Hyde War Memorial Trust –

Mrs Eddowes and Messrs Ainger, Errington, Galvin and Gradwell.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR 2015/16

RESOLVED

- (i) That Councillor Robinson, Tameside MBC, be appointed Chair of the Joint Management Committee for 2015/16.**
- (ii) That Mrs Eddowes, Hyde War Memorial Trust, be appointed Deputy Chair of the Joint Management Committee for 2015/16.**

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Joint Management Committee held on 16 March 2015 were approved as a correct record.

5. GREENSPACE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

The Greenspace Development Officer submitted a report, informing Members of the activities undertaken within the Country Park since the last meeting of the Joint Management Committee held on 16 March 2015.

The report outlined the following:-

- Maintenance of sites;
- Public Events;
- Werneth Low Country Park Volunteer Service;
- Visitor Monitoring; and,
- Wildlife Nature Conservation.

Members were informed that the refurbishment of Baron Fields was due to commence mid-August 2015 and would take approximately 3 weeks to complete. The material and stone had been purchased and placed in storage. A formal written submission had been gratefully received from Hyde War Memorial Trust to pay 50% of the costs. It was confirmed that access ways would not be affected and that contractors, following a risk assessment and method statement, would erect warning signs.

It was reported that two dry stone walling weekends had been arranged with the next scheduled event due in September 2015. The events were organised in conjunction with the Cheshire branch of the Dry Stone Walling Association and work was overseen by a master craftsman. These events offered members of the public the opportunity to build their skills whilst providing good advertisement of the Country Park.

Members heard that volunteers assisted with public events, staffing the visitor centre and the maintenance and general upkeep of the sites. A programme of work to target the control of non-native species, such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed, had recently been agreed. Clarification was sought and provided on hogweed and giant hogweed. It was confirmed that the Park did not have any giant hogweed species.

The Committee were informed that this summer had been an exceptional year for wild flowers in particular the Common Spotted Orchid, *Orchis fuchsia*, which had been seen in great numbers in the meadows.

RESOLVED

That the Greenspace Development Officer's report be noted.

6. ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The Greenspace Development Officer presented the Werneth Low Country Park Annual Report, which highlighted the work undertaken during 2014/15 and planned activities for 2015/16. Arrangements were being made to share the report with interested parties and a wider audience via publication on the Council's website.

A history of Werneth Low, location and size, ownership and creation of the Country Park was provided to the committee as detailed in the report. The vision for the Park was outlined which complimented the Tameside Greenspace Service priorities.

Members heard about the management of the Country Park and initiatives which involved the community. A variety of photographs were shown including the Cown Edge Ramble, hedge laying, stile alterations, woodland management and dry stone walling.

The highlights of 2014/15 were provided and included:-

- 4,010 visitors were welcomed to the Lower Higham Visitor Centre;
- The Country Park Greenspace Volunteers completed a total of 4,908 work hours;
- Using electronic counters the number of visitors recorded on the footpath from Lower Higham to the Cenotaph was 61,870 and the total recorded on the footpath near Quarry Car Park was 55,684;
- The Greenspace Development Officer had organised 12 events at which 871 people attended.

Members of the Joint Management Committee congratulated the Greenspace Development Officer for an excellent report and another successful year and asked for their thanks to be extended to all volunteers.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Report 2014/15 be approved.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the Joint Committee meets as follows:-

DATE	VENUE	TIME
Monday 23 November 2015	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	10.30 am (preceded by tour of Country Park at 9.30 am)
Monday 29 February 2016	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	10.30 am (preceded by tour of Country Park at 9.30 am)

8. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no items for urgent consideration at this meeting.

CHAIR