

WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 20 November 2017

Commenced: 10.30 am

Terminated: 11.15 am

Present: Councillors Bell, Cooper and J Fitzpatrick
Mr Ainger, Mr Galvin and Mr Hodkinson

In Attendance: Nicola Marshall Greenspace Development Manager
David Cannon Greenspace Development Officer

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Robinson and Buglass

ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED:

That in the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, Councillor J Fitzpatrick be appointed Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Councillor J Fitzpatrick in the Chair.

MR PAUL COOPER

In opening the meeting the Chair was saddened to report on the recent death of Paul Cooper. Members of the Committee paid tribute to his dedication to the Hyde War Memorial Trust and more recently to Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee. Thoughts were with his family at this sad time.

A minutes silence was held in his memory.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee held on 24 July 2017 were approved as a correct record.

11. 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 24 July 2017.

The report outlined the following:-

- Maintenance of Sites;

- Environmental Stewardship – Higher Level Agreement 2010-2020 Update;
- Public Events;
- Werneth Low Country Park Greenspace Volunteer Service;
- Visitors 2017; and,
- Wildlife Nature Conservation.

With regards to Maintenance of Sites, the summer grass cutting programme had been completed by the end of September, including the area surrounding Lower Higham Visitor Centre, car parks, access points, picnic areas and strips along footpaths. The cost of the programme was funded by Tameside Council. It was reported that Council engineers had repaired two sections of tarmac on the main drive at Lower Higham Visitor Centre.

The report included attendance at public events for the Country Park’s summer 2017 programme and details of the 2017/2018 winter/spring programme. Visitor monitoring data for 2017 was also provided.

It was reported that since the last meeting of the Joint Management Committee volunteers had held four meetings and at their October meeting had agreed the programme of works to be undertaken during winter and spring 2017/18. It was confirmed that there were 18 members in the volunteer service at present, two of whom were skilled in the art of hedge-laying. One volunteer had re-laid 200 metres of hedgerow during the autumn near Higham Lane in Shepley’ Meadow. The project had been funded by Heritage Lottery and jointly managed with Manchester City of Trees. It was anticipated that the project would achieve £5.00 a metre and would be completed by Christmas. Hedgerows were an important part of nature conservation and provided boundary habitats for wildlife in addition to complimenting the surrounding landscape.

Members enquired how volunteers were recruited. It was confirmed that the most effective method was word of mouth, however, advertising on the Council’s website and social media was also utilised. Members suggested displaying information on how to volunteer in the Visitor Centre.

The Committee was advised that the exhibition in the Visitor Centre had been updated for Remembrance Day and the data had been used to suggest the naming of a new street in Tameside (as per the Leader’s Pledges) after one of the men who had fallen during the Somme.

The Greenspace Development Officer sadly informed the Committee about the death of Dr John Smith who was one of the original signatories of Werneth Low Country Park. Members of the Committee expressed their condolences.

Members of the Committee commented that they would like to be kept informed of the progress of the renewal of the 1979 agreement, which was due to expire in 2020. The Greenspace Development Manager advised that updates would be brought to future meetings of the Joint Management Committee.

RESOLVED:
That the report be noted.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:
That the Joint Committee meets as follows:-

DATE	VENUE	TIME
Monday 19 February 2018	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	10:30 am

13. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.