

WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 29 February 2016

Commenced: 10.30 am

Terminated: 11.30 am

Present: Councillors Robinson (Chair), Bell, Bowden, Cooper, J Fitzpatrick, R Miah, Mr Ainger, Mrs Eddowes, Mr Errington, Mr Galvin and Mr Gradwell

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Peet

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2015 were approved as a correct record.

16. 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 23 November 2015.

It was reported that following a review of the Borough's tractor grass cutting programme, two sites on Baron Fields had been identified as areas that potentially would not be cut this summer. It had been suggested that the areas could be transformed into woodland, however no final decision had been made.

Members voiced concern over the areas being transformed into woodland and stated their preference that the two sites remained as recreational areas. Members suggested reducing the frequency of cuttings and exploring alternative ways of cutting the grass.

Following on from a request at the previous meeting for an approximate market price of carrying out works (Minute 11 refers) a cost analysis was provided to Members of the Country Park Volunteer Service compared against the market price. From January 2015 until December 2015 volunteers completed 3,730 hours of work, which, based on an hourly rate for an agricultural worker, would have cost over £30,000.

Public events for the 2015/2016 winter/spring programme, visitor monitoring data for 2015 and combined visitor figures over a ten year period were highlighted.

Members were informed that signage, as per appendix 2 of the report, would be displayed around the Country Park in the coming weeks requesting that visitors kept to footpaths to protect ground nesting birds. A discussion ensued around responsible dog ownership including keeping dogs on a lead and dog fouling. It was confirmed that the Greenspace team actively promoted responsible dog ownership and enforcement was carried out by Neighbourhood Officers.

The Greenspace Development Manager updated Members with regards to their previous request for internet access in the visitor's centre (Minute 11 refers).

RESOLVED:
That the report be noted.

17. PLANNING MATTERS

The Planning Officer advised Members of a planning application relating to a property on Werneth Low Road.

RESOLVED:
That the update be noted.

18. URGENT ITEMS

The Greenspace Development Officer advised Members of two donations to Werneth Low Country Park.

The Chair presented a 'Book of Remembrance' to be displayed and utilised in the visitor's centre of the Country Park.

Mr Errington notified Members of his retirement. Members of the Joint Committee joined the Chair in thanking him for his commitment and support as both a Member of the Joint Management Committee and Hyde War Memorial Trust and wished him well in his future endeavours.

CHAIR