

WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, 21 November 2016

Commenced: 10.30 am

Terminated: 11.20 am

Present: Councillors Robinson (Deputy Chair), Bell, Bowden, Buglass, Mr Ainger, Mr Galvin, Mr Gradwell and Mr Hodgkinson

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Cooper and J Fitzpatrick

Mrs Margaret Eddowes

In opening the meeting the Chair was saddened to report on the recent death of Margaret Eddowes. Members of the Committee paid tribute to her dedication over many years to the Hyde War Memorial Trust and Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee. The whole community was saddened by her loss and her friends and colleagues would miss her enthusiasm, support and contribution.

A minutes silence was held in her memory.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 July 2016 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 25 July 2016.

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 2016; and,
- Wildlife Nature Conservation.

With regards to Maintenance of Sites, an update was provided on the footpath near Higham Cottages. Three contractors had been approached to tender for the installation of 36 metres of steps, a new stile and the replacement of a short section of post and rail wooden fencing. Hyde War Memorial Trust had agreed at a recent meeting to fund the cost of the project. The area had been cleared and the successful contractor would commence work later in the month.

It was reported that the greenspace volunteers had been very busy throughout the summer months on a variety of projects, in particular the control of non-native flowers such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. Data from the sites was being monitored and recorded on a spreadsheet, which was appended to the report, in order for the information to be analysed at the end of the year. This would enable the identification of sites to target in the following year as well as giving an overall picture of the problem faced by the Country Park.

The report included attendance at public events for the Country Park's summer 2016 programme and details of the 2016/2017 winter/spring programme. Visitor monitoring data for 2016 was also provided.

Following a bequest from an estate to fund a suitable project to improve the Country Park, it had been decided to reseed one of the hay meadows with a wildflower mixture. A mixture of wildflower and grass seeds had been purchased for South Meadow near Windy Harbour, which would be cast later in the month. The meadow would flower annually and would improve the ecology of the area and the ambience and landscape of Werneth Low.

RESOLVED:
That the report be noted.

12. GRASS CUTTING

Further to discussions held at previous meetings regarding the Borough's tractor grass cutting programme, the Committee were provided with an update for Werneth Low.

It was reported that the gateway areas to the Country Park and grassland on Baron Fields and Aspland Road had been cut over the summer, however, due to reduced resources and budget constraints a sustainable solution needed to be found going forward. It was proposed that the Council continued to maintain the Council owned land and the Trust be responsible for the land which they owned. A map was shown to the Committee detailing the land owned by the Council, which would be circulated to all Committee Members.

Following discussions it was agreed that the Greenspace Development Officer would attend the next meeting of the Hyde War Memorial Trust to present and discuss the proposal and would provide an approximate cost analysis.

RESOLVED:
That the information provided be noted.

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:
That the Joint Committee meets as follows:-

DATE	VENUE	TIME
Monday 13 February 2017	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	10.30 am (preceded by a tour of the Country Park at 9.30 am)

14. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.