

# WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

19 November 2018

**Commenced:** 10.30 am

**Terminated:** 11.55 am

**Present:** Mr Gradwell (Chair), Councillors Robinson (Deputy Chair), Bell, Bowden, Buglass, Cooper, J Fitzpatrick, Mr Ainger, Mrs Evans and Mr Hodgkinson

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

**Apologies for Absence:** Mr Galvin

## 8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 9. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee held on 16 July 2018 were approved as a correct record.

## 10. 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 July 2018.

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
- Service of Remembrance 11 November 2018
- The Lower Higham Visitor Centre
- Wildlife Nature Conservation

With regards to Maintenance of Sites it was reported that quotations had been received from contractors for two small footpath repair projects, with a view to commence the works in spring 2019. The report contained a list of recently completed projects that had been funded by Tameside MBC including reforming ditches, repairing drystone walling and installing new drainage that totalled more than £9,000. In addition, the Council had invested £30,000 installing a usable footpath and riding track along Werneth Low Road. Members of the Joint Committee were notified of three incidents of flagstone theft from outside the visitor centre during August and September, which were subject to an insurance claim by the Hyde War Memorial Trust. The Chair provided an update on the claim and requested that a reporting line be put in place in order for earlier notification of any future incident.

The Greenspace Development Officer reported that the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Agreement would cease in 2020 and since the agreement commenced in January 2010 the Country Park had received £42,420 of grant income from Natural England. It was confirmed that officers would seek details of further appropriate schemes in the future. Volunteers had worked hard over the summer controlling non-native invasive weeds, such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed, which were dynamic weeds that moved around sites meaning that numbers tended to fluctuate year on year. Data was recorded on a spreadsheet, which was appended to the report and explained to the Joint Committee. The Council utilised a variety of methods to control the weeds, dependent on the location, and followed statutory guidance. Work to replace 1,800 fence posts across the Park was underway by the Park's Volunteer Service and a list of further work and wildlife nature conservation projects for the period October 2018 to April 2019 was appended to the report and considered by members.

Reference was made to the Service of Remembrance held on Sunday 11 November 2018, which marked the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1918 Armistice. The event was very well attended and was a fitting tribute to the 710 men connected to Hyde who sacrificed their lives for the Great War. Thanks were extended to all who were involved and contributed to this impressive and moving event.

In relation to the Lower Higham Visitor Centre, it was reported that a defibrillator had been installed on the garage wall at the Centre thanks to the fundraising efforts of Mr Simon Walker, who had also raised the necessary funds for defibrillator machines around the borough. A training session had been arranged for the Greenspace Development Officer and volunteers and signs would be placed in notice boards around the Country Park informing visitors of its location. Members questioned the suitability of the location of the defibrillator and officers responded that this was the most suitable location however, a second defibrillator could be installed at an alternative location in the Country Park at a later date dependent on the usage of the initial machine. Following a detailed discussion it was confirmed that people who wished to use the defibrillator needed to contact 999 to access the code.

A Member of the Joint Committee raised concern over members of the public walking along the footpath in Werneth Low Golf Club due to the risk of injury that could be caused by stray golf balls. They requested that a warning be put on the Council website notifying members of the public of the risk. The Greenspace Development Manager agreed to look into this matter, however, suggested that signage along the footpath would be a more appropriate warning.

Members of the Joint Committee requested an update on the 1979 agreement that was due to expire in 2020 and stressed the importance of making progress. The Greenspace Development Manager advised that they had recently met with Legal Services to discuss the agreement and had offered to meet with the Chair in order to make progress on the joint agreement with a view for a report to be brought to the next meeting, scheduled for 18 February 2019. Following discussion it was agreed that a sub-group be established that comprised of three Council representatives and two representatives from Hyde War Memorial Trust in addition to Council officers and a legal representative. The Greenspace Development Manager would make the necessary arrangements for the initial meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the report be noted; and**
- (ii) That a sub-group to discuss the 1979 agreement comprised of three Tameside MBC representatives and two Hyde War Memorial Trust representatives, be established.**

**11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Joint Management Committee meets as follows:-**

DATE	VENUE	TIME
Monday 18 February 2019	Lower Higham Visitor Centre	10:30 am