

WERNETH LOW COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

15 July 2019

Commenced: 10:30

Terminated: 11:26

Present: Councillors Robinson (Chair), Bowden, Fitzpatrick, Cooper and Kitchen

Mr Gradwell (Vice-Chair), Bell and Mrs Evans

In Attendance: David Cannon Greenspace Development Officer

Apologies for Absence: Mr Ainger

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR 2019/20

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Councillor Robinson, Tameside MBC, be appointed Chair of the Joint Management Committee for 2019/20.
- (ii) That Mr Gradwell, Hyde War Memorial Trust, be appointed Deputy Chair of the Joint Management Committee for 2019/20.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the previous meeting of the Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee were approved as a correct record with the inclusion of the following.

Members of the Joint Management Committee discussed the progress of the Joint Management Agreement which was in the process of being reviewed by the Councils legal team. It was explained that future dates of the GM were to be scheduled and that there was provision for the current management arrangements to be rolled over the next 6 months.

4. GREENSPACE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

The Greenspace Development Officer submitted a report to the Joint Management Committee report informing members of the activities undertaken within the Country Park since the last meeting of the Joint Management Committee held on 18 February 2019.

The Joint Committee was informed that the summer grass cutting programme for 2019 had started. The programme included: grass cutting of the Lower Higham Visitor Centre area, car parks, access points, picnic areas and strips along footpaths. The cost of this programme was paid by Tameside Council.

In the last meeting the Joint Management Committee discussed the need for repairs and further resurfacing of footpaths. Quotations from contractors had been received and costs outlined in the

report. The Greenspace Development Officer explained that to avoid damage to the wildlife nature conservation value of the park footpath further resurfacing would need to be undertaken between July and October. The Greenspace Development Officer informed the Joint Management Committee of the result of an audit on all the footpaths within the Country Park. It was found that a total of 1,185 metres require repairs or further resurfacing. An estimate of £11,345 had been received on the repairs from a contractor.

Members of the Joint Management Committee discussed the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Agreement 2010 – 2020. The Greenspace Development Officer discussed the work required in the scheme and how the grant income was used.

The Greenspace Development Officer outlined the projects and the costs over the previous months. It was explained that the gas heater in the main from of the Visitor Centre has not worked for many months and needed replacing. A quote had been received for £1,065 for a new Drugasar wall heater.

RESOLVED

That the information provided be noted.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

Consideration was given to the 2018/19 Joint Management Committee Annual Report and the key points set out by the Greenspace Development Officer.

A presentation was given of the Werneth Low history starting with the ancient British Bronze Age outdoor cathedral to the more recent history of the cenotaph unveiling ceremony in 1921. The presentation outlined the location, size, ownership and creation of the country park.

The Green Space Development Officer presented the Joint Management Committee's vision for the Werneth Low Country Park and the aims:

- To facilitate access for all, irrespective of ability or background.
- To manage the Country Park for its cultural and historic importance.
- To engender an understanding of the various aspects of the Country Park through programmes of lifelong learning.
- To provide a high quality service to visitors, involving them in decision making about how the Country Park is run.
- To maintain a safe and healthy environment, befitting the Country Park.

The Joint Management Committee was presented with the 2018/19 highlights, the highlights included the works programme completed by the Operations Maintenance Team and contractors.

The Green Space Development Officer outlined the extent of the community involvement with the Werneth Low Country Park. Particular attention was given to the 3,827 visitors that were welcomed to the Lower Higham Visitor Centre an increase from 3,433 from the previous year and the recorded 4,020 work hours completed by Greenspace Volunteers. Members of the Committee expressed their gratitude for the work and dedication of the volunteers, in particular volunteer Sam Simpson who had been a volunteer for 31 years.

Members enquired on the grant income from the Environmental Stewardship agreement. The Environmental Development Officer explained to members the work undertaken to comply with the Countryside Stewardship and explained that to undertake such an agreement is not without risk and failure to comply would incur penalties or reductions. To of received this agreement was confirmation that past management of Country Park land had been correct. The agreement was

implemented through a programme of annual works and during the period of this report the Country Park had been compliant.

Further to member's discussion on Conserving Habitats, Wildlife and the Environmental Stewardship agreement, the Joint Management Committee expressed their gratitude to the tenant farmers who during the 2018/19 period helped meet the Country Parks objectives.

RESOLVED

That the information provided be noted.