

## **MINUTE**

**of**

### **DAMS TO DARNLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Minute of Meeting held at 10.30am in the City Chambers, George Square, Glasgow on 26 May 2015.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Bill Butler

Councillor Charlie Gilbert

Councillor Rashid Hussain

Councillor Paul O'Kane

Councillor Butler in the Chair (Item No.2 only)

#### **Attending:**

Fiona Campbell, Senior Planner, Development and Regeneration Services, Glasgow City Council; Stephen McHenry, Country Park Project Officer, East Renfrewshire Council; David Marshal, Land and Environmental Services, Glasgow City Council; John Shevlin, Account Manager, Financial Services, Glasgow City Council; Matt Greenan, Senior Planner, East Renfrewshire Council; and Ron Leitch, Committee Services Officer, East Renfrewshire Council.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

2. The Joint Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, East Renfrewshire Council, regarding appointments to the posts of Chair and Vice Chair of the Joint Committee for the coming year.

The report reminded Members that in terms of the Standing Orders for the Joint Committee the positions of Chair and Vice Chair were to be held alternately on an annual basis by a representative of either Council.

As the post of Chair had been held by Councillor Butler of Glasgow City Council for the past year, with the post of Vice Chair being held by Councillor O'Kane of East Renfrewshire Council, it was now necessary for new appointments to be made.

The Joint Committee agreed that Councillor O'Kane be appointed Chair and Councillor Hussain be appointed Vice Chair for 2015/16.

#### **Councillor O'Kane took the Chair at this point.**

Councillor O'Kane paid tribute to the work of Councillor Butler during his term of office as Chair of the Joint Committee. Councillor Butler responded in appropriate terms.

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

3. The Joint Committee considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 16 February 2015.

## **COUNTRY PARK 2014/15 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT**

4. The Joint Committee considered an oral report by the Executive Director of Financial Services and Deputy Chief Executive, Glasgow City Council (GCC) advising that the Country Park budget to the end of Quarter 4 had out-turned more favourably than anticipated at the end of Quarter 3 with a surplus in the order of £14,000 being recorded.

The Account Manager reported that the year-end accounts were currently in the process of compilation and that, as a result of a change in requirements by the External Auditor, the associated narrative would differ from that previously submitted to the Joint Committee with particular reference to the inclusion of a governance statement which would require to be formally approved by the Joint Committee. He anticipated that the year-end accounts would be submitted to the Joint Committee at its next meeting in August.

The Joint Committee noted the position.

## **COUNTRY PARK BUDGET 2015/16**

5. The Joint Committee considered an oral report by the Executive Director of Financial Services and Deputy Chief Executive, Glasgow City Council (GCC) briefly outlining the anticipated budget for 2015/16.

The Account Manager explained that revenue funding of £70,000 had been secured from Glasgow City Council for 2015/16 and that East Renfrewshire Council had committed £54,149. A surplus in the order of £14,000 from 2014/15 would be carried forward to 2015/16. It was anticipated that additional capital funding would be allocated to the Country Park through the Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal project and developer contributions. He concluded by explaining that he anticipated being in a position to present the finalised budget for 2015/16 to the Joint Committee for consideration at its meeting in August.

The Joint Committee agreed to note the position.

## **DAMS TO DARNLEY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE AND EAST RENFREWSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

6. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 16 February 2015 (Item 5 refers) when it had been noted that a further report would be presented to the Joint Committee following a meeting of East Renfrewshire Council on 25 March 2015 prior to submission to the Scottish Ministers of the Council's response to the Examination Report on the East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (LDP), the Joint Committee considered an oral report by the Director of Environment, East Renfrewshire Council, providing an update on progress on the Proposed Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) prepared for Dams to Darnley Country Park by East Renfrewshire Council (in consultation with Glasgow City Council), and advising the Joint Committee of the outcome of the East Renfrewshire LDP Examination.

The Senior Planner explained that both documents had been approved for adoption by East Renfrewshire Council at its meeting on 25 March 2015 and that the LDP had subsequently been submitted to the Scottish Ministers on 18 April. He went on to explain that the Scottish Ministers had requested an extension to the time required to respond to the Council but that it was hoped that the plan would be adopted in early June with a final report being submitted to the Joint Committee at its next meeting.

Following brief discussion, in the course of which it was clarified that no reason had been given for the request for additional time to consider the LDP but that it was not unknown for such additional time to be requested, the Joint Committee agreed to note the position.

## **COUNTRY PARK GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

7. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 16 February 2015 (Item 3 refers) when it had been noted that a further report would be presented to the Joint Committee in respect of proposed revisions to the governance arrangements for the Country Park, the Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of Development and Regeneration Services, Glasgow City Council, providing an update on officer discussions regarding governance arrangements and seeking approval to progress in accordance with the recommendation set out in the report.

The Development and Regeneration Services Senior Planner outlined the background to the establishment of the Country Park and the arrangements set out in the Minute of Agreement with reference to the various roles and responsibilities of each council, the Joint Committee, the Project Officer and the Steering Group. She went on to explain that since the inception of the project there had been operational changes, particularly in the area of project revenue funding, which had had an impact on project governance arrangements mainly in relation to finance and the operation of the Steering Group. The Steering Group had met frequently at the outset of the project with many organisations taking an active role in the establishment of the Country Park and the preparation of the first Development and Management Plan (2011-16) in 2011. Since then meetings had been more ad hoc as implementation and review of the plan had progressed. It was recognised that there was a need to re-establish the Steering Group, possibly on a less formal and more project specific basis, as the subsequent Country Park Plan 2014-17 which oversees the development direction of the park is revised and updated on an annual basis. In addition, capital allocations within both councils need to be explored and a revised capital plan produced.

The Development and Regeneration Services Senior Planner concluded by explaining that officers were currently in the process of convening a meeting of the refreshed Steering Group to take stock of progress across the park, future priorities, and the best process for ongoing partner organisation engagement. It was proposed that the Steering Group would consider possible revisions to the Minute of Agreement to address the matters outlined above and reflect future operational circumstances and present a report to a future meeting of the Joint Committee for consideration.

Following further discussion, in the course of which it was clarified by the Project Officer that any proposed revision to the Minute of Agreement would require to be approved by both councils, the Joint Committee agreed that a report by the Steering Group be presented to a future meeting of the Joint Committee for consideration.

## **COUNTRY PARK PLAN 2014 – 17 UPDATE**

8. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 31 March 2014 (Item 8 refers) when the Country Park Plan 2014–2017 had been approved, the Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment, East Renfrewshire Council providing an update on progress made towards implementing the plan during 2014/15 and seeking approval for the staff work plan priorities identified for 2015/16.

The Project Officer explained that the plan had set out objectives and actions relating to staff work plans for both the Project Officer and the Countryside Ranger Service over a 3-year period grouped together under the headings of recreation; facilities; natural heritage; built heritage; information, interpretation and education; training, volunteering and business; and management and maintenance. Progress made against each action and staff work plan priorities for 2015/16 was provided as an appendix to the report.

The Project Officer went on to note progress on key priorities for 2014/15. He concluded his report by highlighting a number of key priorities for 2015/16 including reaching agreement over the path link between Newton Mearns and Whitecraigs Rugby Club; continuing to seek a solution to the closure of the M77 footbridge at Patterton Station; and path improvements within Darnley Mill.

Having heard the Project Officer, in response to an enquiry from Councillor Butler regarding whether or not the Joint Committee would be consulted prior to the appointment of a preferred operator for the proposed Balgray Wake Park, confirm that he would take advice on the appropriate protocol to be followed and report back to a future meeting of the Joint Committee, the Joint Committee agreed to:-

- (a) note the report; and
- (b) approve the staff work plan priorities identified for 2015/16.

## **COUNTRY PARK COUNTRYSIDE RANGER SERVICE UPDATE**

9. The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment, East Renfrewshire Council, updating the Joint Committee on the work of the Country Park Countryside Ranger Service.

The Project Officer explained that the report focussed on Countryside Ranger led environmental education, events and volunteer activities including visits by pupils to the Country Park and visits to schools by the Countryside Rangers. In total, 598 nursery and primary pupils had taken part in 8 activities during the period of the report. In addition, the Countryside Rangers had also led an activity for pupils of St Mark's Primary School at Gerry Park, Barrhead as well as participating in 2 World of Work sessions at St Cadoc's Primary School. Topics studied had varied greatly including food chains, the senses and Darnley Bleachfields. During the period of the report 7 Country Park events had been held which had attracted 105 participants. This included a Try Science activity which had been the first in a series of events to be run within the park in partnership with the Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) network. A total of 225 people had taken part in 23 Country Park community activities organised by the Countryside Rangers. This included 7 volunteer activities attended by 82 people which had resulted in approximately 300 hours of work being committed towards improving the park.

The Project Officer concluded his remarks by explaining that the Country Park's Wednesday evening health walks had recommenced in April and would run until the end of August and

that following recent interviews, a new Countryside Ranger had been appointed and was expected to take up post in the near future.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**10.** The Joint Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 24 August 2015 at 10.00am in East Renfrewshire Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock.

CHAIR