



## **Minute of Meeting Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Friday, 02 September 2016	10:30	Greenock Cut Visitor Centre, Cornalees Bridge, Inverkip, Inverclyde, PA16 9LX

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Bibby, Caldwell, Gilmour and J MacLaren (Renfrewshire Council); Nelson and Wilson (Inverclyde Council); and Dickson and Marshall (North Ayrshire Council).

### **CHAIR**

Councillor Gilmour, Chairman, presided.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

D Gatherer, Interim Regional Park Manager; F Carlin, Head of Planning & Housing Services, S Jones, Assistant Manager (Regeneration), V Howie, Finance Business Partner (Development & Housing Services), J Gardyne, Project Officer (Semple Trail Heritage), E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer and K Brown, Committee Services Officer (all Renfrewshire Council) and Dr A Sutton and C Sharp (both North Ayrshire Council).

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

**1 MINUTE OF JOINT COMMITTEE**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 27 May 2016.

**DECIDED:** That the Minute be approved.

**2 MINUTE OF CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Consultative Forum held on 27 May 2016.

**DECIDED:** That the Minute be noted.

**3 AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2015/16**

Under reference to item 3 of the Minute of the meeting of this Joint Committee held on 27 May 2016 there was submitted a report by the Treasurer relative to the annual accounts for the Joint Committee for 2015/16. The report intimated that the audit certificate issued by Audit Scotland provided an unqualified opinion that the abstract of accounts presented a true and fair view of the financial position of the Joint Committee as at 31 March 2016, in accordance with the accounting policies detailed in the accounts. A report on the 2015/16 audit by Audit Scotland was also attached to the report.

**DECIDED:** That the audited accounts 2015/16 be approved for signature and the report by Audit Scotland be noted.

**4 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING**

There was submitted a revenue budget monitoring report by the Treasurer in respect of the Joint Committee for the period 1 April to 22 July 2016.

The report intimated that gross expenditure was currently £12,000 overspent and income was currently £12,000 over-recovered resulting in a net breakeven position.

**DECIDED:** That the report be noted.

**5 CLYDE MUIRSHIEL PARK STRATEGY 2016/2021**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Planning & Housing Services, Renfrewshire Council relative to the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategy 2016/21 and seeking approval to use this strategy as the basis for further activity development of the Park. A copy of the strategy formed the appendix to the report.

The report intimated that Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park was currently working to a strategy adopted in 2008. Following a management review of the Park's resources and governance a new strategy had been developed which identified key strengths and future aspirations for the Park. The future priorities for the Park would be Leisure Activity and Health; Education and Outdoor Learning; and Environmental Management and these would form the basis of the Park Strategy for the next five years.

The associated action plan, incorporated within the strategy identified the means by which objectives would be achieved and set out corresponding timescales. The action plan objectives would form the basis of work plans for individual staff members.

Following approval of the strategy, and in order to progress effective change, a programme of consultation and engagement would take place to inform the delivery and implementation of the key objectives and activities as set out in the action plan. At the same time officers from the constituent authorities would undertake a review of the Procedural Standing Orders and the Minute of Agreement for Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority and report the outcome to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategy 2016/21, which formed the appendix to the report, be approved;

(b) That members advise the Head of Planning & Housing Services, Renfrewshire Council of any editorial changes to the Park Strategy; and

(b) That it be agreed that in light of the terms and actions set out in the Park Strategy officers would carry out a review of the Procedural Standing Orders and Minute of Agreement for Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Authority and report the outcome to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

**6 CLYDE MUIRSHIEL REGIONAL PARK ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Annual Report 2015/16 which detailed the activities delivered by Park staff. A copy of the Annual Report formed the appendix to the report.

It was noted that the first sentence in paragraph 4.4 should refer to 2014 and not 2015 as stated and it was proposed that members advise the Interim Regional Park Manager of any other editorial changes to the Annual Report. This was agreed.

A discussion took place relative to poor signage for Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and the grant funding detailed in the table in paragraph 6.5 of the Annual Report. It was further proposed that the Interim Regional Park Manager contact VisitScotland in order to obtain more brown signs and constituent authorities to obtain more black and white signs to improve signage to the Park and that the Interim Regional Park Manager and the Treasurer establish if any other grant funding should be detailed in the table in paragraph 6.5 headed Grant Income. This was agreed

**DECIDED:**

(a) That consideration of the report be continued to the next meeting of the Joint Committee to be held on 2 December 2016;

(b) That the first sentence in paragraph 4.4 be amended to read 2014 and that members advise the Interim Regional Park Manager of any other editorial changes to the Annual Report;

(c) That the Interim Regional Park Manager contact VisitScotland to obtain more brown tourist signposting and also constituent authorities to obtain more black and white signs to improve signage to the Park; and

(d) That the Interim Regional Park Manager and the Treasurer establish if any other grant funding should be detailed in the table in paragraph 6.5 headed Grant Income.

## **7 QUARTERLY ABSENCE STATISTICS**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the quarterly absence statistics for the Regional Park Authority for the period 21 March to 19 June 2016. The report provided information relating to the absence statistics and reasons for absence.

**DECIDED:** That the quarterly absence statistics for the period 21 March to 19 June 2016 be noted.

## **8 QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager providing information on the quarterly health and safety monitoring for the period April to June 2016.

The report intimated that there had been one RIDDOR reportable accident; two accidents involving Park staff and four incidents involving visitors. There had been two health and safety related courses held during the period which four members of staff attended and one health and safety related Toolbox Talk delivered.

It was noted that Park staff continued to work with Renfrewshire Council Health & Safety officers to align its Health and Safety policies, plans and accident prevention programmes with those currently in use with Renfrewshire Council.

The report highlighted that further investigations were required to fully rectify the problem of water ingress at the roof of Muirshiel Visitor Centre.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That it be noted that there had been one RIDDOR reportable accident and a further six accidents/incidents during the period; and

(b) That it be noted that the problem of water ingress at Muirshiel Visitor Centre continued to be under investigation and had improved following repairs.

## **9 SEMPLE TRAIL HERITAGE PROJECT**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Planning & Housing Services, Renfrewshire Council relative to the Semple Trail Heritage Project.

The report intimated that over the period 2012/16 the Semple Trail Heritage Project had been successfully delivered through a funding package of £860,000 secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire LEADER, Historic Scotland, the Forestry Commission Scotland, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, RSPB and Legacy 2014. The main aims and key objectives of the project were detailed in the report.

The project had been delivered on budget and had benefited significantly from added volunteer value with more than 300 hours of volunteer time recorded. Further details of the project achievements were detailed in the evaluation report by the Heritage Lottery Fund, a copy of which formed the appendix to the report.

To celebrate the end of the project, an event was held at Castle Semple Visitor Centre on 7 August 2016 which was well attended by project partners and stakeholders. Feedback from key project stakeholders had been extremely positive and Renfrewshire Council and Park staff would continue to promote and monitor the online visitor survey which would be open until December 2016. The information gathered would inform the second evaluation report due for submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund before July 2017.

The Project Officer (Semple Trail Heritage) gave a presentation to members on the Semple Trail Heritage Project.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That the achievements of the Semple Trail Heritage Project as outlined in the Heritage Lottery Fund evaluation report, which formed the appendix to the report, be noted; and

(b) That the presentation be noted.

**10 DEVELOPMENT OF ACCESSIBLE SPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to joint working between Park staff and Renfrewshire Access Panel to purchase bell boats and side-by-side bicycle's to further increase capacity for the Park's disabled clients.

The report intimated that Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park had been at the forefront of accessible sport and development for a number of years which had resulted in an increase in visitors with a disability to the Park. Park staff were continually looking at new ways to improve the service provided to disabled clients and had been working with the Renfrewshire Access Panel who had the advantage of being a registered charity and as such could access additional funding streams.

Renfrewshire Access Panel received £25,000 to purchase two bell boats and three side-by-side bicycles to further increase capacity for disabled clients. The equipment was in daily use and had attracted new clients to the Park. One growth area for the Park would be Duke of Edinburgh bell boats expeditions as the equipment could be transported to other venues.

**DECIDED:** That the Park's continued efforts to increase income and provide a quality service to visitors through partnership working be recognised.

**11 CASTLE SEMPLE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER GROUP: TESCO GRANT SUBMISSION**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the successful bid by the Castle Semple Conservation Volunteer Group, securing £10,000 from Tesco's Bags of Help/Greenspace Scotland Grants Initiative, to construct a new wildlife pond at Muirshiel Country Park.

The report intimated that the new pond would increase the local biodiversity of the area, make better use of a waterlogged site and improve facilities for visitors. The new pond would also maintain a link with both the natural water source from the hills around Muirshiel estate and the species migration via the small ponds spillway which would directly link the new pond with the original small pond.

**DECIDED:** That the ongoing funding initiatives with community organisations to enhance the biodiversity of the area be supported.

## **12 PLANNING APPEAL - CORLIC HILL, GREENOCK**

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the decision by the Reporter, appointed by the Scottish Government's Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals, in relation to an appeal submitted by Inverclyde Renewables against the decision of Inverclyde Council to refuse planning permission for an application for eight wind turbines and ancillary equipment at land to the north and east of Corlic Hill, Greenock.

In relation to paragraph 3.4 of the report it was noted that the Traffic Management Plan, Radar Mitigation Scheme and Television and Radio Reception Survey required to be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority.

It was proposed that the Chair advise members of the Joint Committee of all planning applications affecting Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park submitted to local authorities. This was agreed.

### **DECIDED:**

(a) That it be noted that, following a Public Inquiry, the Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals upheld the appeal submitted by Inverclyde Renewables in relation to a proposal for eight wind turbines and ancillary equipment at Corlick Hill, Greenock; and

(b) That the Chair advise members of the Joint Committee of all planning applications affecting Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park submitted to local authorities.

## **13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**DECIDED:** That it be noted that the next meeting of the Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee would be held at 10.30 am on Friday 2 December 2016. Members would be advised of the meeting venue.

### **VALEDICTORY**

The Chair referred to Cameron Sharp's imminent retirement from North Ayrshire Council and paid tribute to his service to the Park Authority. On behalf of the Joint Committee he thanked Cameron for his contribution to the development of the Park Authority and him wished well for the future.