

TASK & FINISH GROUP - COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING COMMUNITY ORCHARDS

HELD: Thursday, 16 March 2023

Start: 5.30 pm

Finish: 6.10 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: R Molloy (Chairman)

Councillors: K Mitchell (Vice Chair)

Officers: Gillian Wossick, Environmental Sustainability Manager
Dan Massey, Outdoor Recreation Manager
Helen Peek, Democratic Services Officer

19 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for Absence were noted from Councillor: Marilyn Westley

20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

21 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting, held on 17 November 2022, be received as a correct record.

22 **INFORMATION DOCUMENTS.**

AGREED:

A. That the report and recommendations by Task and Finish Group, Submitted to Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 December 2022, and Cabinet 24 January 2023, be Noted.

B. That the Minutes, in relation to recommendations by Task and Finish Group, endorsed by Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8 December, and Minutes containing approved recommendations by Cabinet 24 January 2023, be Noted.

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23 PROJECT PLAN REVIEW: COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING COMMUNITY ORCHARDS

AGREED: That the Updated Project Plan for Community Environmental Improvements, Including Grot Spots, Task and Finish Group, be Noted.

24 COMMUNITY ORCHARDS PLANTING - PRESENTATION

Members received a presentation by both the Outdoor Recreation Manager, and the Environmental Sustainability Manager, outlining The Community Consultation process, responses and outcomes:

- 164 responses, of these:
 - 124 were completed via 'Your Voice...West Lancashire'
 - 27 postal responses for all sites but Brookhouse/Cotton, 3 did not give their consent*
 - 13 postal responses for Brookhouse/Cotton (8 were received by the Community Connectors), 1 did not give their consent*
 - 9 volunteering expressions of interest, 1 did not give their consent*

*Where people did not give their consent for the council to collate and process their feedback / personal details, their responses were not included in the results.

- Comments received about the project were overwhelmingly Positive.
- In response to how people would use the Community Orchard, 80% enjoying the environment, just under 70% wildlife watching, over 60% collecting fruit.
- Brookhouse Road and Cotton Drive, Ormskirk: 25 (93%) in favour of planting out area, 2 (7%) not in favour. Majority preferring wildflowers and/or Fruit trees.
- Concerns: vandalism was highest concern, with dog fouling being of medium concern.
- Community Garden Elswick, Tanhouse: 9 in favour (no other responses). Concern vandalism
- Eskdale, Tanhouse: 14 in favour, 1 unsure. Concerns young people and vandalism, suggested measures fix fences and CCTV/security
- Kiln Lane playing fields/Greenhill: 17 in favour, 2 unsure, 1 not in favour.

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Concerns Vandalism and Litter. Suggested Measures to overcome concerns: away for houses, Funding for upkeep, Maintenance.

- Manor Road Park, Burscough 20 in favour, 3 not in favour. Concerns Young People and Vandalism highest concerns. Suggested measures to overcome Concerns: Herb garden/shared allotments, more benches, do not allow dogs on site, spend money on play park, CCTV/security.
- Thompson Avenue field, Ormskirk: 21 in favour, 1 unsure 2 not in favour. Concerns Young People and Vandalism. Suggested measures to overcome concerns: Move site.

Delegated Powers were Given by Cabinet in January 2023, for action to proceed based upon 50%+ positive feedback from consultation. Therefore the following actions will be in place to proceed:

AGREED:

- A. Brookhouse Road and Cotton Drive: Over 50% positive response rate. Proceed with the project but to consider planting areas in relation to the feedback. To attend the site when the ground surveys are taking place to identify the final sites for trees and wildflowers, with the aim to locate them where they will not stop residents from using the shared space.
- B. The Community Garden, Elswick, Tanhouse: Over 50% positive response rate. Proceed with the project.
- C. Eskdale, Tanhouse: Over 50% positive response rate. Proceed with the project.
- D. Kiln Lane playing fields, Greenhill: Over 50% positive response rate. Proceed with the project.
- E. Manor Road Park, Burscough: Over 50% positive response rate. Proceed with the project. Rats have been an issue in this area. To make sure fruit is picked up off the floor.
- F. Thompson Avenue field, Ormskirk: Over 50% positive response rate. Proceed with the project but to change the planting design. To move the orchard from a group to a row that follows the boundary of the allotment hedge.
- G. Signs: To attach QR Codes to at least one tree stake at each site. The QR code will take the visitor to the Council website where they can learn about the orchards, tree types and when to pick the fruit.
- H. To plant root stock fruit trees, which should only grow to

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approximately 15' tall.

- I. To plant bulbs around base of trees, to add colour, at each site where possible.

25 FORWARD PLAN / NEXT STEPS

AGREED: The following next steps:

- A. March 2023 - Order maps that show utilities.
- B. March 2023 - Risk Assessments.
- C. Before planting - Ground Surveys.
- D. End of April 2023 -Planting.
- E. May 2023 – Signs.
- F. May 2023 – Webpage.
- G. August 2023 - Staff training.
- H. T&FG Concluding Meeting June – Findings & Recommendations to be submitted to Corporate & Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee September 2023, and on to Council & Cabinet as appropriate.

26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED: The date of the next meeting be held 29 June 2023, at 17:30hrs, Via TEAMS.