

FRIENDS OF DUNWOOD PARK
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
21st January 2010

Apologies for absence were received from: Debbie Dex, Harold Gadsby

Minutes of previous meeting were confirmed as a correct record:
Proposed by M Wood
Seconded by P Bennet

The Treasurer's Report was presented and accepted by the members.

The following Officers were elected. M.McGrother (Chairman), R Woodward (Deputy Chairman), R. Syddall (Treasurer)

Election of management committee: All the present members of the management committee were re-elected. Those co-opted were invited to continue for a further year.

Mr Richard Vink (Oldham Parks and Open Spaces) informed the members that the final bid had been submitted and the response was expected by the end of March 2010. He had no reason to think it would not be successful. He gave a brief outline of the probable timetable for the work to be done with a re-opening scheduled for September 2012. It was not intended that the Park would be closed during this process but areas would be cordoned off as required for access and safety reasons. Some work on the small pond and the river area were planned in advance.

Keith Bennell (Consultant for the Parks Dept) Described the Audience Development requirements of the bid. These are seen as of great importance by Big Lottery. The Friends of Dunwood Park occupy a central position in any strategy devised to achieve this development. It is essential that the Friends group takes up and develops a role which will promote the various aspects of this development. This is the challenge of the future of the Friends of Dunwood Park.

Chairman's report

The chairman paid tribute to the work of the committee and in particular to the work done in developing the Dunwood Partnership during the past year. This now includes 650 members. This has been a key feature of our response to the requirements of the Big Lottery to show how we might energise the community of Dunwood Park. He also thanked the committee members for their efforts, at the risk of life and limb, in delivering the certificates of membership and invitations to the AGM to the partners during the recent dreadful weather.

The Chairman thanked Mr Vink and Mr Bennell and endorsed the efforts they had made on behalf of the Parks Department to conduct real consultation over the period of the bid.

The Chairman then addressed the following to the members:

You , the Friends of Dunwood Park, have been, and remain, crucial to the success of this bid. You decided to risk all in going for this Parks for People lottery bid and you did all that was asked of you and more.

Your presence at this meeting, your support for the partnership and for your committee, your comments and responses have been gold nuggets in this process. The Dunwood Community partnership which you have sponsored now has more than 650 supporters and will form the basis of

our efforts in the future.

Soon we will know if we have succeeded and that hoped for success will inevitably bring about a change of direction for our efforts in the future.

As Mr Bennell has indicated that the Friends of Dunwood Park now need to consider how to evolve our role so as to play our part in the future life of Dunwood Park.

It is not our business to manage the park. That is the responsibility of the Parks Department. It is however our responsibility to pursue our constitutional aims which remain:

*To provide, or assist in the provision of, or the improvement and upkeep of, facilities within the park
and*

To promote the protection, preservation and conservation of the environment for the flora and fauna of the park.”

Praiseworthy though our efforts to date may be, the true measure of our success as Friends of the park will not be the provision of new and better facilities but rather in the contribution we make to the development of the park as a living community.

The Master Plan set out five years ago for the physical renovation of the park provided us with a relatively simple task, one on which it was easy to focus, one which had a recognisable outcome – a new park! The new Master Plan is not so simple - but is equally essential. Its outcome is not so easily defined and the steps to be taken are no longer a tick list. There is no end product, only an on-going process. Our role will be to help to breath life into the community of the park. In the words that Keith Bennell has used to

“play our part in the Audience Development.”

To do this we need a strategy and this is why you have a committee. Your committee have acknowledged the need for the role of the friends to evolve and have taken the view that, in pursuit of our constitutional aims, this evolution should be in the direction of promoting, facilitating and, where appropriate and needed , co-ordinating the community use of the park.

So how do we achieve this? As before, with your support.

If you have a little time to spare we can use you. Before you leave here put your contact details on a piece of paper with any comment you wish to add, if you have some skills to share we can use you. If you represent a group who might use the park, talk to us. We might be able to help. If you want something to happen in the park let us know and we might be able to help to bring it about. If you want to do something in the park then, assuming it is safe and legal, let us hear about it.

You may be assured that your committee will not be idle during the next 12 months. They have a strategy and will be pursuing it. We now working with 30 or so Partnership Members, different groups, schools, organisations and such - as some of you here will already be aware. Our first meeting will be on 4th February and if anyone here wishes to play a part, however small you will be made welcome to join us on that occasion. You can make a difference. If you know someone who would enjoy being involved then get them to contact us.

The Meeting gave a vote of thanks to the chairman for the work done since the Friends group was constituted.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.30 p.m.