
Meeting	Goose Management Scrutiny Review Task Group
Date	3 March 2016
Present	Councillors Kramm (Chair), Gunnell, Richardson, Eastham and Mortimer (Co-opted Non-Statutory Member)

8. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, members were asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests they may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

9. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last two formal meetings of the Task Group held on 26th January 2016 and 2nd February 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under public participation.

11. Goose Management Scrutiny Review - Draft Final Report

Members considered the draft final report of the Goose Management Scrutiny review.

Members worked through the report and made the following comments and amendments:

- Paragraph 13 - highlight on the list in bold the attendees at the consultation meeting, include the information that the attendees provided and add a sentence to advise the attendees were asked to provide feedback on signage.

- Paragraph 14 – add a bullet point to state that there had been reports of geese attacking members of the public and their dogs.
- Paragraph 19 – add wording to reflect that in 2000 a complaint had been made to the Ombudsman regarding the process followed to obtain a cull licence and the decision was taken not to proceed until the complaint was settled by the ombudsman, by which point the licence had expired. Also the addition of a sentence to advise there was no co-ordinated national drive towards culling.
- Paragraph 20 – addition of text to advise that the chemicals make the grass unpalatable to geese although it is unclear what impact the chemicals may have on watercourses.
- Paragraph 20 – Education – add wording to reflect the fact that the Educational Officer from the Canal and River Trust had offered to share some educational literature. Also, add that attendees at the consultation event had expressed an interest in being involved in educational talks and events.
- Paragraph 20 – Collection of droppings and disposal – amend the wording to make it clear that the staff cost would be £15k per year, the equivalent of a full time post. It was also confirmed that if dried and added to the level 100 compost made at Harewood Whin, it would be suitable for that use.
- Paragraph 20 – other deterrents – add wording to reflect that the use of sprinklers was considered by members but none of the council’s public parks had the necessary infrastructure in place to facilitate this method. The task group recognised that this was a costly measure but that it could be explored further.
- Paragraph 21 – addition of wording to reflect that an officer had visited the London parks and noted that none were similar to York’s urban parks.
- Paragraph 23 – amend wording to make it clear that both Greylag and Canada geese were a problem in York.
- Paragraph 25 – add wording to state that in regards to a cull, the Task Group agreed that whilst there was some support for it and it would have an immediate effect, it would only be of short term benefit. They therefore accepted it would only be effective if carried out in conjunction with other measures, and that a suite of measures were likely to have the same long term effect.
- Paragraph 27 – deletion of the final sentence.

Resolved: Members then agreed that the draft final recommendations would be as follows:

- i) Officers to carry out a number of trials to test the effectiveness of various measures i.e.:

- A licensed chemical (if sourced)
 - A droppings collection machine
 - Ultrasound audio
 - Amend the fencing at War Memorial Gardens
 - Expand and refresh signage in public parks and open spaces
- ii) Funding be provided to carry out a survey of the city's Canada goose population to map nesting sites and movement
- iii) An integrated management strategy to be drafted for the Executive's consideration, which takes account of the findings from the various trials and the survey
- iv) Permission to be sought from private land owners for access to treat eggs laid on their land

Finally, assuming an integrated strategy is agreed, it was suggested that the Task Group also recommended that the Executive:

- v) Provide the necessary funding to implement the strategy
- vi) Monitor the strategy's effectiveness over a number of years, before deciding whether to consider the option of a cull.

Reason: To assist in the development of a suitable long term strategy for the management of geese in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols

Councillor Kramm, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.10 pm].