

North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet Briefing Note – Review on the Future Use of Wingerworth Lido and to Review the Decision-Making Process of the Asset Management Board (Environment Scrutiny)

INTRODUCTION

At full Council on 22 September 2025 a Motion in respect of the Wingerworth Lido was referred to the Environment Scrutiny Committee. The resolution was to:

- Invite the Environment Scrutiny Committee to review the decision of the Asset Management Board (AMB) regarding the future use of Wingerworth Lido
- Ask that Committee seek the views of stakeholders, including those of local residents and groups, the Parish Council, ward members and the Clay Cross Angling Club before reaching a decision
- Submit its conclusions and any recommendations to the AMB for consideration
- To require AMB to report its conclusion and any action it proposes to take back to the Environment Scrutiny Committee

Following the Council meeting on 22 September 2025 there has been a lot of social media interest in the Lido, as well as numerous emails being sent to Members and Officers setting out individual views on the Lido.

Given the level of attention the Lido was attracting, the Chair of Environment Scrutiny requested an informal meeting to seek the views of the Members of the Committee on whether or not to proceed with the Motion. The informal meeting took place on 27 October 2025. This meant that the initial discussion on whether to take forward the Motion, and where this would fit into the Committee's Work Programme, did not have to wait until the next meeting of the Committee on 17 November 2025.

At its informal meeting on 27 October 2025 the Environment Scrutiny Committee Members accepted that the Motion put forward should be a topic for review, given its level of interest amongst stakeholders, local residents and anglers. Members discussed a way forward at this meeting and suggested a timetable in place for the review, this included a meeting on 8 December to review evidence and proposing recommendations for submission to Cabinet. This was approved at the formal Environment Scrutiny meeting on 17 November 2025.

Following the informal meeting in October, as part of the Senior Scrutiny Officer's role, in conjunction with the Chair, preliminary work was undertaken to ensure that the Committee were able to meet the proposed timetable suggested.

WORK UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO REVIEWING EVIDENCE

To enable the Environment Scrutiny Committee to make informed recommendations to Cabinet, the following evidence was submitted for them to consider.

- Council Officer submission

- Results of the Public Consultation Survey on the future use of the Lido (survey undertaken from 3-23 November 2025)
- Written representations from key stakeholders
- Details of an independent online petition
- Correspondence from Countryside Alliance
- AMB Briefing Note dated August 2024
- Copy of the Lease in respect of Clay Cross Angling Association
- Copy of Notice to Quit in respect of Clay Cross Angling Association
- List of complaints
- Timeline of events
- Overview of the AMB process including Terms of Reference

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The review aimed to:

- Seek, and understand, the views of stakeholders on the future use of Wingerworth Lido
- Understand the statutory obligations placed upon the Council in terms of environment impact
- Understand the impact of decisions made surrounding the Lido
- Identify opportunities to enhance and promote the Lido, not only in line with statutory duties but also to compliment the Council Plan
- Evaluate what the public see as important factors to visiting and using the Lido
- Identify the potential future use of the Lido
- Understand the role of the AMB including how decisions are made
- Identify areas of improvement in terms of both the Lido and the operational side of the AMB

Given there were 2 elements to this review, the first being the future use of the Lido and the second being the operational side of the Asset Management Board, the Committee agreed to focus on each element separately.

KEY FINDINGS

Strengths/Observations

Wingerworth Lido

There was a great response to the survey and it was clear to see that many people, not just local residents, but also those from further afield, value the Lido and appreciate the natural surroundings it offers.

Views from the public and stakeholders were that they wanted the Lido to remain an area for recreational use with some expressing how visiting the Lido helps support mental health problems, relaxation and social interaction.

Residents and stakeholders were supportive in the need to improve biodiversity at the Lido.

There was a strong appetite to reinstate angling and from the responses received from residents/stakeholders there was nothing to suggest that angling and biodiversity could not work together, if managed properly.

Complaints received were generally around a particular time period, and following the death of a cygnet, prior to this the Committee were informed that there had been very few complaints. Complaints received were generally around the management of the Lido.

Overall, it was clear that despite individual views, everyone wants what is best for the Lido.

The Council has procured a Biodiversity Improvement Plan through Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, and this will identify areas for improvement. However, the Committee were informed that there were seasonal constraints on gathering data, so to get accurate feedback the work would not be undertaken until around March/April, with a view to the final report being made available early Summer.

AMB

Prior to the decision made to end the Lease with Clay Cross Angling Association, officers consulted with the Portfolio Holder, Finance and Legal colleagues through the August 2024 Asset Management Board along with consultation with local elected Members. At the time, there was no challenge on the decisions made and no objection through the consultation process. Issues only came to light as the Lease was nearing its termination date.

Committee were satisfied that the decision-making process undertaken by the AMB was compliant with the Council's Constitution.

Areas for Improvement/Observations

Wingerworth Lido

The Council has a statutory duty, and any further degradation of the Lido will have an impact on the Authority.

Following the publication of the Biodiversity Improvement Plan appropriate actions/steps will need to be put in place to make the necessary improvements.

There were concerns highlighted around how the Lido is managed, not only in terms of the surroundings but also the pond used by anglers. With responses suggesting a more collaborative management approach was required to balance the needs of different users. There was a proposal that the Council may want to speak to other organisations that manage angling activities to understand the procedures and processes they have in place.

The Committee recognised that, for angling to be reinstated, the drafting of a new agreement for fishing rights either interim or longer term will take a period of time

to both negotiate and agree. Also, the decision to enter any such agreement isn't just for the Council, it would be for the Angling Club too. Whilst the Council have done some proprietary work with both DWT and the Angling Trust, it is likely any new agreement won't be in place until early in the new year.

Committee had concerns around the interim arrangements for the management of the Lido, including littering and ASB issues, and were informed that the Council are currently managing the site with regular work being undertaken by Streetscene to maintain the grounds and the pond falls under the Reservoir Act so this is being maintained in line with the Act, with support from Clay Cross Angling Association.

Accessibility to the area was highlighted as an area for improvement so that those with limited mobility could safely visit the Lido. There was also a suggestion to make the site more educational by putting up signage on the natural wildlife.

AMB

Despite the AMB operating within its remit, it was felt that in this instance this may have needed greater consideration in terms of the impact it would have on the users of the Lido.

It was noted that no opposition Members sit on the AMB.

Committee were informed that Ward Members are consulted on the disposal of assets within their Wards, but often there is no response. There was also a concern around the transparency of decisions made by the AMB as unless you are a Ward Member the information was not available to other Members, unless it went through the Cabinet/Council for consideration.

There was a suggestion that the role of AMB may need a review to make sure it was fit for purpose. However, the Committee were informed that there was a Disposal & Acquisition Policy in place, that had been reviewed by the relevant Scrutiny Committee, and the Policy outlined the process involved with disposals and acquisitions. It was noted that assets was an executive function and decisions were either made by officers under delegated authority, or by Cabinet.

CONCLUSION

Given the discussions at the Environment Scrutiny Committee, they agreed to make specific recommendations to Cabinet. These are:

Wingerworth Lido

1. That the Cabinet approves the exploration of interim arrangements to reinstate angling at the earliest opportunity, prior to the completion of the Biodiversity Improvement Plan. Any reinstatement must be subject to robust management processes to ensure compliance with statutory duties and to prevent further degradation of the site, as advised by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

2. That the Council continues to undertake maintenance of the site and continues to allow Clay Cross Angling Association to inspect water quality and the welfare of their fish.
3. That Cabinet recognises the strong support for angling evidenced through the scrutiny review and public consultation and seeks to secure fishing as a long-term activity on the site beyond any interim arrangements, ensuring that all fishing activities and associated management contribute positively to biodiversity improvement.
4. That Cabinet ask officers to explore examples of best practice with other organisations on the running of an angling site i.e. Wingerworth Parish Council, Earl of Harrington's Angling Club (Derby City Council).
5. That Cabinet supports the enhancement of biodiversity at the Lido and recognises there may be financial investment required to deliver the Biodiversity Improvement Plan.
6. That Cabinet recognises the consultation feedback highlighting the need to enhance the area for greater accessibility, including improvements such as better pathways, seating, and educational signage to benefit children and those with mobility issues.
7. That the Council continues to work with stakeholders to develop an independent group (the same concept of a 'Friends of Group'), including the Parish Council, other local interest groups, and for the Group to be a consultee on the Biodiversity Improvement Plan and participate on implementation.
8. That the Biodiversity Improvement Plan is submitted to the Environment Scrutiny Committee upon its completion.
9. That the Environment Scrutiny Committee be informed of progress in terms of angling in the short-term and long-term.

AMB

1. That the Council provide training for all elected Members to understand the process of the AMB, and for them to be informed on the role they play in the consultation process.
2. An Annual Report on Asset Management decisions be submitted to Cabinet going forward, with the report being "open" to enable greater transparency of asset related decisions made.

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