

AT A MEETING of the  
SIR GEORGE STAUNTON COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
held at Sir George Staunton Country Park, Havant on 23 September 2013

**PRESENT**

**Hampshire County Council**

p Councillor Mrs. L. Fairhurst  
p Councillor Mrs A Briggs  
Councillor R Finch  
p Councillor D Keast  
p Councillor R.C. McIntosh

p Kerry Bailey, Country Parks Business Manager (SGSCP/QECP)  
p Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer  
a Adam Owen, Countryside Team Leader (Business Development)  
p Andrew Smith, Head of Countryside  
p Tim Speller, Visitor Services Manager (SGSCP/QECP)

**East Hampshire District Council**

a Councillor Mrs. D.K. Denston  
p Mr Martin Healey, Principal Countryside and Biodiversity Officer for EHDC

**Havant Borough Council**

p Councillor Mrs. Y. Weeks  
p Mr. Jeff Crate, Senior Economic Development Officer for HBC

The meeting began with a tour of the Country Park and Leigh Park Gardens, which included introductions to some of the staff and hearing about plans, wishes and other issues for the Park.

The Chairman welcomed Martin Healey who was taking over from Stephen D'Este Hoare as the officer for East Hampshire.

**16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Denston and Adam Owen.

**17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's

Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

		<b>Action</b>
<b>18.</b>	<b>DEPUTATIONS</b>	
	There were no deputations.	
<b>19.</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2013 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman, subject to one amendment :</p> <p>14. (page 3) Kerry Bailey indicated that a volunteer co-ordinator had not been appointed, but a casual member was overseeing the volunteers.</p> <p><b>Matters arising:-</b></p> <p>Item 4: Marketing - Jeff Crate indicated that he had provided details of the Park for inclusion in Havant's Borough News; Martin Healey undertook to follow up for East Hampshire's paper.</p> <p>Stakeholder Forum – Kerry informed Members that she was in the process of setting up 4 dates, with the first being in January 2014. It was agreed that these meetings should be held prior to the JMC to allow for timely feedback.</p> <p>Barbecues - Kerry told the Committee that two had been held without problems, but that they had not been actively promoting them. It was commented that the implementation of the barbecues had been started eighteen months ago, with the money spent but the Park had not reaped any benefit as yet. Members were informed that a business plan with a full cost analysis would be provided at a later date. The location of the barbecue in the American Grounds was commented on favourably.</p> <p>Business development plan – it was indicated that the Plan was</p>	<p>Martin Healey</p> <p>Kerry Bailey</p>

	<p>due to be completed in the next few weeks. The Committee agreed that an extra meeting of the JMC should be held to discuss the plan when it was ready. Members noted that during the tour a number of wishes and plans for the Park had been mentioned and asked if they could be provided with a list of these.</p> <p>Champions – Kerry would provide Members with a list of their agreed role and a contact at the Park.</p>	<p>Kerry Bailey/Sue Butler</p> <p>Kerry Bailey</p>
<p><b>20.</b></p>	<p><b>BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 - 1</b></p>	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Honorary Treasurer and Park Manager on the financial position of the Park as at 31 July 2013 (item 5 in the Minute Book)</p> <p>Members were informed that the current financial position was very positive and it was hoped that these early indications would continue to improve to enable the repayment of a greater amount of the deficit. The main reasons for this were the extended period of good weather and staffing changes. It was explained that staff work patterns were being reviewed in order to make better use of resources.</p> <p>Members raised the issue of catering at the Park, agreeing that the product and the service was good, but that the estimated income target for 2013/14, of £8,000, seemed rather low. They were informed that the Countryside Service agreed with this sentiment and were in discussion with HC3S. Currently the Park received 70% of the profits from catering. It was noted that the agreement had only been in place for one year, that the costs of the service were higher than the previous caterers, and that money had been spent on facilities. It was confirmed that any profit from the catering did come to Staunton, and was not spread between the other country parks and that HC3S would be liable if there was a loss, not the Park.</p> <p>Members applauded the aim to make the Park cost neutral. (3.11 in the report)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the JMC approved the content of the report and endorsed the work carried out to date by the seconded Park Manager in a bid to substantially reduce the existing deficit.</li> </ul>	

<b>21.</b>	<b>PARK MANAGER'S REPORT</b>	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Park Manager outlining recent and future developments at the Park. (Item 6 in the Minute Book). Members congratulated her on the format of the report. She answered questions raised by Members on her report.</p> <p>Members were informed that a meeting with the county engineers would be taking place in the next few weeks to discuss concerns about the water levels in the lake and how these would be addressed; also that there was now a lake management plan in place (2.3 in the report).</p> <p>Questioned about the Health and Safety Audit, the Park Manager explained to Members that the officers carrying out the audit were well-qualified and in-house; also that county inspectors audited every three years, there was a local annual check, and internally ad hoc spot checks were made. It was suggested that the JMC should have sight of a précis of the report and an update on progress being made with improvements. It was agreed that Councillor McIntosh would be sent the report (2.4 in the report).</p> <p>The Park Manager explained the aggressive behaviour issues that had occurred and indicated that they had been resolved (2.4 in the report).</p> <p>It was indicated that the new three year partnership with Portsmouth Water would fund Gemma Summerfield's post and would have specific objectives incorporated. It was noted that Portsmouth Water had repaired the upper lake free of charge for a couple of ranger day's work (2.5 in the report).</p> <p>Tim Speller informed Members that the Angling Club was doing well despite the problems with water levels, including success in collecting fees from casual anglers. Jeff Crate asked to be copied in to the minutes of the angling club meetings. It was explained that the high number of angling memberships for July 2013 was the result of annual renewals. (2.7 in the report).</p> <p>A new partnership agreement was being drawn up with the Beacon Community Partnership which, it was anticipated, would run for three years instead of the current one year (8.2 in the report).</p>	<p>Kerry Bailey</p> <p>Tim Speller</p>

	<p>The Park Manager informed Members that her secondment had been extended until the end of May 2014; Members welcomed this news, but expressed disappointment that the Committee had not been consulted on this.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the Committee approved the report.</li> <li>• That the Committee agreed the format of the report and would welcome presentations where appropriate.</li> </ul>	
<b>22.</b>	<b>REVIEW OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT THE PARK</b>	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Countryside Team Business Development Manager reviewing business development at the Park and the Emerging strategy (item 7 in the Minute Book).</p> <p>Members agreed that this item should be deferred until it could be discussed alongside the forthcoming Business Development Plan for the Country Park.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee agreed to defer the report until the special meeting on the Business Development Plan for the Park.</li> </ul>	
<b>23.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	<p>Staunton Festival – The Park Manager was pleased to note that this had been very successful, with about 4,500 attendees on the Saturday and 7,500 on the Sunday. She indicated that there had not been a noticeable increase in membership following the event and the income from car parking was unknown as yet. The JMC felt that money from the event should be coming to the Park and asked that at the forthcoming Festival ‘wash-up’ meeting on 18 October that no commitment was made to the existing festival committee for them to organise the event in 2014. Members also asked that a full business case be provided, with true costings, particularly in terms of ranger and other staff time. It was suggested that one of the local radio stations might be approached to sponsor the stage in 2014.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the whole events programme at the Park was being reviewed, as currently there</p>	Kerry Bailey

	<p>were only the holiday activities.</p> <p>Members remarked that they received many positive comments about the facilities at the Park, but felt that the 10+ age group were the least well catered for and needed more to engage in.</p> <p>There was discussion about the use of membership cards and secondary spend by customers, particularly members. The Park Manager explained to the Committee that there were plans to offer discounts to members in the café and shop; this would enable data to be collected about secondary spends, which would inform future decisions on whether membership fees should be increased. The Committee also discussed options for ensuring that membership cards were being used correctly, particularly the idea of cross-checking with other ID.</p> <p>Tim Speller informed Members that he was meeting with Wedderburn, the company who provide the till system, to discuss the type of reports that can be generated from the system; he would be investigating whether it was possible to include the café sales and membership data.</p> <p>The JMC agreed in principle to the checking of cards, but agreed not to begin these until Tim Speller reported back from his meeting with Wedderburn.</p> <p>The Park Manager informed members that filming had taken place recently at the site for a BBC antiques programme and for Hampshire Air on all the county's country parks; also, in October, a Chinese film crew were coming to film about 19<sup>th</sup> Century links between China and Sir George Staunton. The Chairman offered to become the Park's champion for the China project.</p> <p>The Committee were also notified of the garden auction, with Brian Kidd as the auctioneer that was taking place on 2 October.</p>	<p>Tim Speller</p>
	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p>	
	<p>The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Thursday 12 December 2013 at <b>2.00</b> pm at the Park.</p>	