

AT A MEETING of the
SIR GEORGE STAUNTON COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
held at Sir George Staunton Country Park, Havant on 6 February 2014

PRESENT

Hampshire County Council

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

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

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Robin McIntosh, Councillor Mrs Dorothy Denston and Tim Speller.

35. 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.

		Action
36.	DEPUTATIONS	
	There were no deputations.	
37.	MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2013 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>Matters arising:-</p> <p>Item 28 – Business Development Plan – a special meeting had been arranged for 12 March 2014, at which Adam Owen would be making a presentation on the Transformation of Hampshire’s Country Parks, with specific reference to Staunton. The Stakeholders and other interested parties would be invited.</p> <p>Item 30 – The Park Manager informed the Committee that an engineer had been to assess the problems with the lake, but that the current high water levels had made it difficult and a follow-up visit was expected. The Park Manager agreed to circulate the engineer’s report and Members agreed that costs should be sought and asked whether any funding could be applied for.</p> <p>Item 32 – It was noted that procurement had been contacted regarding working with Park Community Schools printing social enterprise.</p>	<p>Kerry Bailey</p> <p>Kerry Bailey</p>
38.	FINANCIAL UPDATE REPORT	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Honorary Treasurer and the Park Manager providing an update on the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial position and issues from the external auditor about the 2012/13 report (item 5 in the minute book).</p> <p>The Honorary Treasurer gave a brief summary of her report indicating that the financial position was on track. She noted that expenditure on supplies and services had been offset by savings on employees. The projected deficit of £43,950 was expected to</p>	

	<p>be plugged, mainly by increases in membership prices and savings on staff changes, although other options were still being considered.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that the 2012/13 accounts had been signed off, but that the external auditor had raised a number of issues; she stressed that these applied to all the country parks, not just to Staunton. The four issues were explained to Members, together with the responses from the Treasurer. The necessity to have a separate annual internal audits of the Park, which would be very costly, would be contested vigorously. It was accepted that minutes should indicate more clearly that risk had been considered by the Committee. It was agreed that all of the Park's fixed assets belonged to Hampshire County Council and therefore did not need to be declared on the return.</p> <p>Members were informed that Rowlands Castle Parish Council have left the Partnership which will result in a loss of £184.00 per annum. The Park Manager will contact the Council to discuss the benefits to the Parish Community of remaining a formal Stakeholder.</p> <p>It was commented that Staunton is currently performing better than Hampshire's other country parks. This was attributed to the indoor play barn bringing in visitors, even if only for a short while, and membership visits – the January figures showed an increase on last year.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Committee supported the work being undertaken to identify the savings required in 2014/15. • That the Committee supported the Officer responses to the Issues Arising report from the external auditor for 2012/13. 	Kerry Bailey
39.	PARK MANAGER'S REPORT	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Park Manager on the performance and activities at the Park since the meeting on 12 December 2013. (Item 6 in the Minute Book). Members' questions about the report were answered and were appreciative with the informative nature of the report.</p> <p>Members were updated on Rosie, the shire horse's progress</p>	

	<p>be altered during the year if needed and special member only offers could be added.</p> <p>Members were informed that the proposed pricing structure would cover the projected deficit. It was also mentioned, that due to the expense to the Park of changing direct debit charges, that for current members there would be no price increase, only a change to the scheme. The Committee commented favourably on the additional proposals (5 in the report) that would be worked on in the future.</p> <p>There was discussion about the proposed changes to the membership scheme and the number of free child places offered. It was also noted that the child price was not in alignment with adult prices and that there was a need to collect information on the number of children entering the Park. The Committee were informed that the plan was for a 5 Year re-pricing structure.</p> <p>A suggestion that Staunton membership, goods and Santa visits should be advertised and sold through the County's online shop was approved by members.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Committee approved the report and the Membership Package changes and the Price Structure for 2014/15. 	Kerry Bailey
41.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Weeks informed Members that she had attended the fish netting in January, which had been very interesting. The report was still awaited, but it was expected that restocking would be required. It was suggested that the anglers might be approached to donate towards this or to sponsor a fish. • Jeff Crate updated Members on Staunton Festival, indicating that corporate sponsorship of the event was being actively sought. It was agreed that ranger costs should be incorporated to provide a more accurate figure of the cost of the Festival to the Park and more effective use of the rangers should be made rather than just general policing. It was felt that there should be more local handicraft stalls, but that it was important to get the balance right between activity, charity and craft stalls. The possibility of using Hampshire's mobile climbing wall 	

	would be investigated. It was further agreed that there should be a better presence from Hampshire's other parks and museums to promote them.	
42.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 12 March 2014 at 2.30 pm at the Park, a special meeting to discuss the business plans for Hampshire Country Parks, in particular Staunton.</p> <p>The next main meeting was scheduled for Friday 25 April 2014 at 2.00 pm at the Park.</p>	