

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside
<b>Date:</b>	05 March 2015
<b>Title:</b>	Future Governance Arrangements for Sir George Staunton Country Park
<b>Reference:</b>	6563
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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### 1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval from the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside for the future governance arrangements of Sir George Staunton Country Park once the current Joint Management Agreement ends on 31 March 2015.

1.2. This paper seeks to:

- i) Provide reasons why the Joint Management Agreement will not be renewed following the current agreement expiring on 31 March 2015.
- ii) Propose future arrangements for members to contribute to the development and improvement of Staunton Country Park.

### 2. Contextual information

2.1. The current Sir George Staunton Country Park (SGSCP) Joint Management Agreement (Appendix 1) expires on 31 March 2015.

2.2. The original JMC was established on the basis that the partners East Hampshire District Council, Havant Borough Council and Hampshire County Council would contribute to the operational costs of the Park. The Joint Management Agreement also set out the terms under which capital contributions would be made by the three partner authorities.

- 2.3. East Hampshire District Council has notified Hampshire County Council that they would not be entering into a new agreement when the existing agreement comes to an end.

With effect from 1 April 2015 confirmed partnership funding will comprise:

HCC	£80,000
EHDC	£ 0 (2014/15 contribution £5,294)
HBC	£10,789

- 2.4. Hampshire County Council is committed to continuing to support and develop Staunton Country Park and secure its long term future. The Country Parks Transformation Programme is a £12.9m capital and external funding investment strategy that aims to revitalise and transform all 6 of Hampshire County Council's country parks and help them to become operationally self financing. The Programme will deliver significant improvements at Staunton Country Park both to the farm attraction and the wider parkland that will assist in attracting more visitors, generating greater income and bringing benefits to the local community.
- 2.5. Given the cost of operating and servicing the JMC and in the context of the county council's wider transformation programme for country parks, the current management arrangements are not considered to be either viable or affordable going forward. It is not therefore proposed to establish a new JMC. However, the hugely valuable contribution made by local county councillors over many years is a desirable and unique feature of the park and has undoubtedly contributed to its past successes. Officers will wish to agree an ongoing role with members that extends beyond the end of the existing JMC.

### **3. Finance**

- 3.1. The estimated balance held in SGSCP reserve as at 31st March 2015 is £135,986. It is proposed that the final balance be transferred into the Culture, Communities and Business Services Cost of Change Reserve and be ring-fenced for use at, or for the benefit of, Staunton. The Service would put proposals forward for consideration and release of funds as appropriate.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1. At the Joint Management Committee meeting held on 30 January 2015 members considered the future governance arrangements for Staunton Country Park. Members expressed disappointment that the JMC was to discontinue and felt that there should have been greater consultation.
- 4.2. Potential arrangements for the future involvement of members were briefly discussed however the suggestion of a group to provide advocacy and assist with fund raising was not well received by members.

**5. Future direction**

5.1. At the Sir George Staunton Country Park Joint Management Committee meeting held on 30 January 2015 it was resolved that:

- i) The Joint Management Agreement will cease on 31 March 2015 and will not be renewed.
- ii) A final JMC meeting would be held to agree the future arrangements for existing Members to contribute towards the development of Staunton, should they still wish to do so.

**6. Recommendation**

6.1 That the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside instructs Officers to engage with the local county council members in order to agree their ongoing role in respect of the future operation of SCP and report back to the EMCRC at a future Decision Day.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	no
Maximising well-being:	no
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<a href="http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearhmeetings/meetingsitemdocuments.htm?sta=&amp;pref=Y&amp;item_ID=6069&amp;tab=2&amp;co=&amp;confidential">http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearhmeetings/meetingsitemdocuments.htm?sta=&amp;pref=Y&amp;item_ID=6069&amp;tab=2&amp;co=&amp;confidential</a>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

#### **Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;

Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

The proposal concerns the governance arrangements for Sir George Staunton Country Park and has been considered against the impact it would have on groups with protected characteristics. The governance arrangements in themselves will not have an impact however decisions made under the arrangements will be subject to an assessment.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1. n/a

### **3. Climate Change:**

How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

n/a

How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

n/a