

AT A MEETING of the SIR GEORGE STAUNTON COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held at Sir George Staunton Country Park, Havant on 29 July 2010.

PRESENT

p Phil Halliwell
p Gordon Gardner

Hampshire County Council

p Councillor I.F.E. Beagley
p Councillor Mrs A. Buckley
p Councillor Mrs L. Fairhurst
p Councillor R.C. McIntosh
p Councillor F. Pearce

p Mike Walls

East Hampshire District Council

p Councillor Mrs. D.K. Denston
p Councillor Mrs. J Marshall (observing)
p Mr. S D'Este-Hoare

Havant Borough Council

p Councillor M. Fairhurst
p Jeff Crate

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs M. Harvey, East Hampshire District Council and Ms Claire Hughes, Havant Borough Council.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that, where they believed that they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally, at the time of the debate, declare their interest, and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code .

23 MINUTES

It was agreed that the following would be added to Paragraph 16 in the minutes:

“It was agree that the Committee would review the pricing structure in six months at a further meeting”.

24. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations at this meeting.

25. TREASURER’S REPORT

The Joint Committee (JMC) received the report of the County Treasurer giving an update on the current financial situation at the Park (Item 5 in the Minute Book). It was confirmed that due to the lower grant expected from government, the 2010-2011 budget was subsequently reduced and it was more important than ever to attract as many visitors into the park as possible to compensate for this and the current deficit.

It was confirmed that overall, expenditure had decreased in 2009-2010 despite investing in the gift shop and temporary classroom. £100,000 had been ring-fenced to be spent on parks in Havant, but this was not necessarily allocated to Staunton and may no longer be available due to funding cuts, but Mike Walls agreed to investigate to see if it was possible that this could be used to do improvement works at Staunton.

Appendix D to the report tabled the contributions from Hampshire, East Hampshire and Havant Councils and it was confirmed that any potential cuts, particularly from Hampshire County Council, would not be known until later in the year. The Park Manager confirmed that the conferencing post had not been fulfilled and was being left vacant until more income was generated from conferencing to justify it.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Joint Management Committee approves the content of this report.

26. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Joint Committee received the report of the County Treasurer giving an update on the return to Audit for the current financial year (Item 6 in the Minute Book). It was explained that the return assures the Audit Commission that Staunton is being run correctly, according to the Codes of Practice.

RESOLVED:

That:

- i. The Annual Governance Statement for 2009/2010 is approved and signed off.

27. PARK MANAGERS REPORT

The Committee received the report of the Park Manager (Item 7 of the Minute Book) giving an update on developments at the park.

The Park Manager circulated a new leaflet that had been produced promoting membership of the park. A logo is going to be added in due course, but it was felt that the advertising would help attract higher visitor numbers. The Committee agreed that the leaflet was effective, but that the East Hampshire and Havant Council logos would be added in addition to the Hampshire County Council logo to show the authorities working together and supporting the park.

The JMC discussed conferencing at the park and it was agreed that the park was ideal for team building and away days, providing an unusual venue. The park has several rooms available for hire and it was proposed that in future local authorities are charged for hiring them as it was not longer viable to allow free hire.

Car Parking was another possible way of the park getting extra money and the Park Manager proposed installing ticket machines so that those who used the car park for Leigh Park Gardens were contributing. Those visiting the park would have the fare refunded. In a recent two day survey done by Staunton, 51% of those using the car park were visiting Leigh Park Gardens and it was anticipated that around £15,000pa could be earned through ticketing. The JMC agreed that a management and business plan be put together that identified all costs, risks, requirements and possible income involved so a well informed decision could be made.

Discussion took place on the walled garden and enhancing it, particularly for during the winter months. It was agreed that it was not a priority for funding at the moment, but that small scale improvements could be made to make it more attractive in the winter.

The Park Manager highlighted education at the park and confirmed that Kerry Bailey was currently putting together a report on Education and that this would be presented at the next Staunton JMC meeting in November. It was agreed that Education was an important thing to support as it benefitted local schools and the community. Mike Walls agreed to look at some of the deficit occurred as a result of funding

education being taken out of the Education budget, so that the park did not have to cover the costs themselves.

RESOLVED:

- i. That a Business and Management Plan is put together and sent around to the JMC for consideration at the next meeting.
- ii. That a new events area is created and no more loss-making events are held at the park.
- iii. That the JMC approve the content of the report.

28. KEY OFFICERS GROUP MEETING

The minutes from this meeting were noted and approved by the JMC.

29. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the JMC would meet four times a year rather than two as per the 2004 terms of reference and the next meeting would take place on 10 November 2010 at 9:30

30. AOB

The Chairman informed the Committee of plans to put together a 'Friends of Staunton' group who would take a lead in raising money and sponsorship for the park. Any proposals for volunteers were encouraged and it was expected that the group would have its first meeting in September.