

AT A MEETING of the  
SIR GEORGE STAUNTON COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
held at Sir George Staunton Country Park, Havant on 25 February 2013

**PRESENT**

**Hampshire County Council**

p Councillor Mrs. L. Fairhurst (Chairman)  
p Councillor I.F.E. Beagley  
p Councillor Mrs. A. Buckley  
p Councillor R.C. McIntosh  
p Councillor F. Pearce (Vice-chairman)

p Colin Hudman  
p Gordon Gardner  
p Tim Speller  
p Jane Lovett  
a Adam Owen

**East Hampshire District Council**

p Councillor Mrs. D.K. Denston  
p Mr. S. d'Este Hoare

**Havant Borough Council**

p Councillor Mrs. Y. Weeks  
a Mr. Jeff Crate

**117. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Jeff Crate and Adam Owen.

**118. 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>119.</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2012 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p><b>Matters arising:-</b> All matters arising were dealt with within the reports.</p>	
<b>120.</b>	<b>DEPUTATIONS</b>	
	There were no deputations at this meeting	
<b>121.</b>	<b>BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN POSITION 2012/13</b>	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Honorary Treasurer on the financial performance of Sir George Staunton Country Park as at 31 December 2012 and were provided with a forecast outturn to 31 March 2013. (Item 4 in the Minute Book)</p> <p>The Honorary Treasurer introduced Jane Lovett who would be taking over his role. He summarised his report and answered Members' questions.</p> <p>Members' attention was drawn to table 4 (page 4 in the report); this detailed the income from various grants, sponsorship and donations, which had been requested by Members at the meeting in December 2012.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the income from the start of 2013 had been impressive and that at the end of the financial year 2012/13 the Park should come close to achieving the revised budget forecast.</p> <p>The Committee noted with pleasure the 66% increase in memberships and that the Park would be paying back some of its deficit to the County Council.</p> <p>It was noted that the increase in marketing costs was due largely to the return to post of the marketing officer and questions were raised as to whether this needed to be full time post. The Park Manager stressed the importance of encouraging new visitors to the Park and informed Members</p>	

	<p>that it was likely that the officer would also be working at Queen Elizabeth Country Park which would decrease the expenditure.</p> <p>Questioned about the service charges for telephone and IT (2.9 in the report), the Treasurer reported that these would not be significant and that they had been factored into the budget forecast. Members asked the Treasurer to investigate whether these charges could be paid more regularly throughout the year.</p> <p>Concerns were raised by the Committee over the catering arrangements (3.3/3.4 in the report). Members had been under the impression that HC3S, the County Council's in-house caterers, had been brought in as a temporary measure when the previous caterers, Lime, went bankrupt and that the aim had been for the Park to do its own catering. It was reported that there was now an agreement between HC3S and the Countryside Service to provide catering to all the Country Parks. After discussion, Members asked that Andrew Smith, the Head of the Countryside Service, be asked to attend the next Joint Management Committee meeting to explain why the Committee had not been consulted or informed about this decision.</p> <p>It was noted that the expected loss from catering was due to the higher rate of pay for County Council staff and the improved facilities; the loss would be met by the Countryside Service, not the Park, as the profits from other country parks would offset this loss.</p> <p>Colin was thanked for his work as Treasurer and wished well for the future.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the JMC approved the report.</li> </ul>	<p>Jane Lovett</p> <p>Gordon Gardner/Tim Speller</p>
<p><b>122.</b></p>	<p><b>DEVELOPMENTS ON THE STAUNTON ESTATE</b></p>	
	<p>The Committee received a report from Tim Speller, Visitor Centre Manager for Staunton and Queen Elizabeth Country Parks, on developments on the Staunton Estate. (Item 5 in the Minute Book)</p> <p>Attention was drawn initially to the Shipwrights Way briefing paper produced by Cath Hart. Members expressed concerns about reports of funding difficulties with the Hayling Ferry, which was the final part of the Shipwright's Way. The</p>	<p>Tim Speller</p>

	<p>Committee asked for a further update on the Shipwright's Way to address these concerns.</p> <p>Members were informed that an 'access 'meeting in December 2012 had been well attended. Upgrades to Staunton Way paths, restricted horse access for six months, to allow for the level of usage to be assessed, and improved disabled access at Witchers Gate were highlighted. It was also reported that from April 2013 there would be new way marking for cycle and walking trails in Leigh Park Gardens and the new Welcome Leaflet would include a map of the Gardens. A meeting with local police would take place on 4 March 2013 to look at the problem of motor bikes on the trails. Members were told that the next Access meeting was to be on 4 April 2013 at 1.30 pm and all Committee members would be welcome.</p> <p>Members were updated about a meeting with Southmoor and Staunton Anglers on 10 January 2013. The Staunton Anglers were very keen and active and had set up a club; two members had taken up posts as bailiffs to ensure permits have been bought, a notice board had been erected and there were regular working parties. The results of water quality and fish sampling tests were awaited.</p> <p>Members' attention was drawn to a meeting held on 14 January 2013 to discuss a new Chinese Project for the Park. The meeting had discussed the possibility of making the Staunton archive, which is located in various repositories, accessible in some format, using the Gothic Library, where it was originally housed, as a cultural and interpretational centre. It was noted that there were a number of academics working on Sir George Staunton and his Chinese connections. It was agreed that the historical aspects of the site should be the next phase in the Park's development. Members felt that Chinese tourism should be encouraged and links with the local Chinese community should be forged; it was agreed that the Chinese ambassador should be invited to the Park, with the aim of encouraging sponsorship for the project.</p> <p>It was noted that all the historic buildings and remains in the park were being reviewed using some old maps, and individual action plans were being drawn up. The JMC would be provided with the maps.</p> <p>Finally Members were updated on the progress of the boundary project. The Park had approximately a dozen problems of encroachment to deal with, details of which would be provided for the JMC. The Park, in conjunction with the County Estates service, were discussing how to</p>	<p>Tim Speller</p> <p>Tim Speller</p> <p>Tim Speller</p>
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	<p>tackle the problems before approaching the relevant householders.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the JMC noted the report.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>123.</b></p>	<p><b>PARK MANAGER'S REPORT:</b></p>	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Park Manager giving an update on developments at the Park. (Item 6 in the Minute Book). He answered questions raised by Members about his report. It was indicated that the lambing barn (2.1 in the report) may not be in place by the beginning of May and marquees would have to be used again. The Butterfly House had proved a very popular new attraction. He drew Members' attention to an error in the report; 8.2 should read £4.95, not £4.00.</p> <p>Members discussed in detail the proposed changes to the pricing structure for the Park. A number of concerns were raised about the proposed large increase to the child price; that it was too much at once, local people would not be able to afford it. It was explained to Members that current child prices were low compared with similar sites, that there would be a 10% reduction in the grant from Havant Borough Council for 2013/14, and that the Park needed to find an extra £20,000 in 2013/14 to keep the Park on track for reducing its deficit and to look forward to a further 8% reduction in funding for 2014/15. Members were also informed that a previous visitor survey had shown that the majority were not local people. Questions were also raised about the lack of increase in the angling membership tickets; Tim Speller was asked to discuss angling ticket prices with the anglers. Arising from the discussions, a number of suggestions were made, including cutting down on projects to save expenditure, having modest increases in all ticket prices, introducing an annual car parking ticket separate from the annual pay zone ticket, and putting up the child ticket to £3.95 and the family ticket to £25.00. It was noted that there had been only two complaints about the introduction of car parking charges and that largely there was compliance; it was felt that the suggested 50p increase would not deter people.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the discussions the Committee did not approve the proposed price changes and asked that the Park Manager should produce some alternative suggestions that would be circulated to Members as soon as possible for approval. Members were reminded that the new pricing structure needed to be in place by the end of March 2013.</p>	<p>Tim Speller</p> <p>Gordon Gardner</p>

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the JMC approves the content of the report.</li> <li>• That the Park Manager would provide alternative pricing structures for the JMC to consider.</li> </ul>	
<b>124.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	<p>The Chairman and Committee gave a vote of thanks to Gordon Gardner, the Park Manager, and Colin Hudman, the Treasurer, who were both leaving Hampshire County Council, for all their work for the Park, and wished them well in their future careers.</p>	
<b>125</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
	<p>The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday 15 July 2013 at 10.00 am at the Park.</p>	