

AT A MEETING of the
SIR GEORGE STAUNTON COUNTRY PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
held at Sir George Staunton Country Park, Havant on 21 March 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 Gordon Gardner
p Tim Speller
p Jane Lovett
p Adam Owen

East Hampshire District Council

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

Havant Borough Council

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

The Chairman welcomed Adam Owen to his first meeting; he informed Members that his role was Business Development Manager for all Hampshire's Country Parks and Titchfield Haven and would be overseeing Staunton Country Park in the interim following Gordon's departure.

126. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Denston.

127. 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
128.	MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2013 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>Matters arising:-</p> <p>121: Jane Lovett informed the Committee that IT and telephone charges would be done either quarterly or annually in advance.</p> <p>121: The Chairman updated Members on a meeting she had held with Andrew Smith, the Head of Countryside, on the catering arrangements at the Park. He had apologised that the JMC had not been consulted and that a strategic decision had been taken to offer a contract to HC3S to provide catering at all the Country Parks as they had been willing to put in investment. The Chairman offered to investigate who had taken the decision.</p> <p>Adam Owen informed Members that the Park had made a loss this year on its catering due to an increase in salary costs, which were higher than the private contractor, investments in kitchen equipment, training to bring staff up to standard and the introduction of new menus. Business plans were being developed to redesign the main kitchen and storage facilities, expand the plant and gift centre into a café shop and convert the old toilet block in Leigh Park Gardens into a kiosk that would be used at busy times and events. It was noted that the current contract with HC3S was for three years and could not be changed.</p> <p>Members agreed that the catering had improved, but expressed concerns that the JMC would not be able to control the spending and that the costs of any investments would be added to the Park's deficit without their knowledge and agreement, at a time when the Committee was trying to raise revenue to clear the current deficit and break even. The Committee were assured that they would have the profit/loss figures for catering and that any profits would come into Staunton's accounts; also that investments were being made by HC Countryside and HC3S and going through the trading account and that any development plans would come to the JMC for a decision.</p>	Chairman

	<p>122: As requested at the meeting on 25 February 2013 Tim Speller updated Members on the Hayling Ferry indicating that there were no current funding problems (a link about the funding is provided at the end of these minutes) and it remained an integral part of the Shipwright's Way.</p> <p>He informed the Committee that work on the proposed statues for the Shipwright's Way was underway and would bring images and an update on the timescale for their completion to the next meeting.</p> <p>122: Maps of the projected work in the Park and Gardens were circulated as requested at the meeting on 25 February 2013.</p>	Tim Speller
129.	DEPUTATIONS	
	There were no deputations at this meeting	
130.	PARK MANAGER'S REPORT – PRICING POLICY	
	<p>The Committee received the report of the Park Manager outlining various proposals for a new pricing structure for 2013/14. (Item 4 in the Minute Book)</p> <p>Members were invited to give their comments on the proposed pricing options and It was generally accepted that prices needed to be increased .</p> <p>Tim Speller reported that at an anglers' meeting on 26 February 2013 it had been suggested that a surcharge of £2 on the day ticket should be made for those buying their ticket at the lake side, rather than the shop. There was discussion about anglers' fees and the number of day anglers and whether they bought a ticket; reference was also made to the voluntary work that the annual members were doing.</p> <p>Arising from the debate, it was agreed that the Adult Day ticket would be increased from £8.00 to £10.00, and those that were found without a ticket would be charged £20.00, unless they went to buy one. The impact of the increase and any incidents arising from its implementation would be monitored and reported on at the meeting on 15 July 2013.</p> <p>The Park Manager explained that the cost savings that were</p>	Tim Speller

	<p>part of Option 4 included a small cut in marketing costs, the removal of some one-off expenses from 2012/13, and a reduction in the number of casual staff employed.</p> <p>The Park Manager expressed the view that, whilst he agreed that the child price should remain under £4.00, the current charge was too low, particularly when compared to similar venues, and there had not been an increase in a least the last four years. A suggestion was made that it could be worthwhile to have summer and winter prices.</p> <p>Members asked whether there could be an appraisal of the cost effectiveness of the new initiatives that the JMC had implemented and it was commented that it should be cautious about undertaking any new ones.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the discussions the Committee agreed to adopt Option 2 with some amendments. The Committee also asked for a six month review, at the JMC meeting on 30 September 2013, of the effect of the new prices on visitor numbers and revenue. It was further agreed that, in order to change direct debit payments for annual memberships without incurring additional charges, the pricing structure for 2014/15 would be discussed at the meeting on 12 December 2013.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the JMC approved the adoption of Option 2 from 1 April 2013 with the following amendments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Child ticket (3-15) to be increased to £3.50 not £3.95 - the Adult Angling Day ticket to be increased from £8.00 to £10.00 if paid in advance and £20 for payment at the lake side - the cost savings from Option 4 to be implemented • That there should be a six month review of the effect of the new prices on visitor numbers and revenue. • That the pricing structure for 2014/15 be discussed at the JMC meeting on 12 December 2013. 	<p>Jane Lovett/Adam Owen</p> <p>Jane Lovett/Adam Owen</p>
131.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	

	<p>The Park Manager told the Committee that the barbecues should be in place by the end of April 2013 and that progress was being made on the lambing barn.</p> <p>Members were informed that the wet and muddy conditions in the car park would be addressed in the near future.</p> <p>The Committee expressed their thanks to Councillors Mrs Ann Buckley and Ian Beagley for all their work on the Committee and support for the Park, as they were standing down as Councillors at the elections in May 2013.</p>	
132	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday 15 July 2013 at 10.00 am at the Park.</p>	

Link to Hayling Ferry funding:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hantswebnewslst?id=536308&stdat=&pagetitle=County%20support%20for%20Hayling%20ferry%20infrastructure>