

# Mount Edgcombe Joint Committee

Friday 24 November 2017

## PRESENT:

Councillor Trubody, in the Chair.

Councillors Burden, Fry, Foot, Dr Mahony, Mrs Pengelly (Joint Chair), Pugh, Smith and Vincent.

Co-opted Representatives: Mr D L Richards and Mr Neil Rugg.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Frank James and Sparling.

Also in attendance: Amelia Boulter (Observer), Chris Burton (Park Manager), Nick Butcher (Head Gardener/Ranger), Sarah Fell (Finance Business Partner), Jon James (natural Environment Manager), Nicola Moyle (Head of Heritage and Arts), Jonney Steven (Head of Commercial Enterprise) and Helen Prendergast (Democratic Adviser).

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.45 am.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

## 11. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the code of conduct, Councillor Pugh declared a private interest as he owned a holiday property.

## 12. **Minutes**

The Joint Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2017 are confirmed as a correct record.

## 13. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

## 14. **Commercial Opportunity - Tree Houses**

Jonny Steven (Head of Commercial Enterprise) and Chris Burton (Park Manager) provided a presentation on the commercial opportunities within the Park which highlighted the following key areas -

- (a) how to enhance the existing offer at the Park (holiday accommodation, weddings/events/conferences, micro businesses and lettings and parking) whilst increasing income and developing the Grade I Listed site sensitively;

- (b) investigating other buildings within the Park which could be utilised for accommodation such as Captain Blake's Hut, part of the Coast Guard look at Rame Head, tree houses, the English Garden House and Garden Battery;
- (c) a feasibility study was currently being undertaken into the provision of tree houses (three) at Wilderness Point; the trees would not be damaged as the structures would be built around them using screw piles; this would also be sensitive to the environment and have no visual impact on this area;
- (d) the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park had donated £10,000 to undertake preparatory work to bid for a grant from the Heritage Lottery for the English Garden House.

The key areas of questioning related to –

- (e) the timescale and funding for the provision of the tree houses;
- (f) the feasibility of converting part of the Coast Guard building into holiday accommodation;
- (g) whether the tree houses would be able to be marketed all year.

The Joint Committee noted the presentation and requested that an update on the tree houses (including the business case) be provided at the next Joint Committee meeting.

#### 15. **Revenue Budget Monitoring**

Sarah Fell (Finance Business Partner) presented the revenue budget monitoring 2017/18 report which highlighted the current financial position.

The main area of questioning related to whether the constituent authorities had made provision for contingency funds should there be unexpected expenditure within the Park.

The Joint Committee noted the financial position contained in the report along with the risks, issues and any mitigating actions.

#### 16. **Commercial Development**

Chris Burton (Park Manager) provided the Joint Committee with a presentation on the commercial development opportunities within the Park. This included the increase in the public offer at the Park including 18 small businesses, three holiday cottages, glamping (shepherd huts) and the new website.

The key areas of questioning related to the decrease in the number of weddings and whether wedding parties were taking advantage of the accommodation available within the Park.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

17. **Park Activity (September 2017)**

Chris Burton (Park Manager) presented the park activity report to September 2017 which highlighted the works and activities carried out in the Park which included business development, building and Park infrastructure and weddings.

The key areas of questioning related to whether there –

- (a) was a power supply to Captain Blake's Hut;
- (b) had been any noticeable deterioration of the cycle paths which could be attributed to the cycle hire based within the Park;
- (c) would be an opportunity to expand the hostile environment training courses.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

18. **Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park Update**

Mr Neil Rugg, Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park provided an update on the key areas of work that the Friends undertook in supporting the Park which included financial and practical support and social events.

On behalf of the Joint Committee, the Joint Chairs thanked the Friends for their continued and highly valued support.

19. **Repair Works to the Sea Wall**

Jon James (Cornwall Council) provided a verbal update on the current position relating to the repair works on the sea wall which highlighted that -

- (a) as previously stated the repair works on the sea wall had been completed; the savings achieved through the contract (£150,000) had enabled further repair works to be undertaken at Mount Edgcumbe Quay, Toll House Quay, Lower Lodge and the Garden Battery Beach;
- (b) whilst undertaking these works the contractor discovered a large stone arch at Barn Pool which was thought to be the remains of a medieval barn;
- (c) the stone arch had been placed in the garden at the front of the house; it was the intention to erect visitor information boards at this site.

The Joint Committee noted the report.