

Oversight and Governance

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Published 11 November 2021

Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee

Date: Friday 19 November 2021
Time: 10.00 am
Place: Council House, Council Chamber, Plymouth

Committee Members-

Plymouth City Councillors-

Councillors Carlyle, Corvid, McDonald, Partridge, Penberthy, Salmon and Shayer (Joint Chair)

Cornwall Councillors-

Councillors Alvey, Daw, Ewert, Lennox-Boyd, Pascoe, Tivnan and Worth

Co-opted Members-

Sir Richard Carew-Pole and Mr D L Richards

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

For further information on attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link - <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/accesstomeetings>

Tracey Lee and Kate Kennally
Joint Clerks

Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee

AGENDA

1. To Note the Appointment of the Joint Chair (Plymouth City Council) and to Appoint a Joint Chair from Cornwall Council

To note the appointment of the Joint Chair (Plymouth City Council) and to appoint a Joint Chair from Cornwall Council.

2. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Joint Committee Members.

3. Declarations Of Interest

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2020 as a correct record.

5. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business, which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

6. Appointment of Co-Opted Representative

The Joint Committee will be asked to consider the appointment of a Co-Opted Representative.

7. Presentation on the National Marine Park (Presentation)

8. Mount Edgumbe Revenue Monitoring 2021/22 (Pages 7 – 12)

9. Park Activity Report November 2021 (Pages 13 – 20)

10. Friends of Mount Edgumbe Country Park Update (Pages 21 – 23)

11. Exempt Business

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Part II (Private Business)

AGENDA

Members of the Public to Note

that under the law, the Joint Committee is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

12. Treninnow and Wiggle Cliffs Ground Lease Report (To Follow)

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Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee

Friday 20 November 2020

PRESENT:

Councillor Trubody, in the Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Burden, Corvid, Michael Leaves, Nolan, Mrs Pengelly, Pugh, Peter Smith and Councillor Vincent (Joint Chair).

Co-opted Representative: Nicola Cull (Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Crago, Foot, Lennox-Boyd and Rennie.

Also in attendance: Chris Burton (Plymouth City Council), Kate Farmery (Plymouth City Council), Beverley Gardiner (Plymouth City Council), Peter Marsh (Cornwall Council), David Marshall (Plymouth City Council), Nicola Moyle (Plymouth City Council) and Helen Prendergast (Plymouth City Council).

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.

12. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the code of conduct, Councillor Mrs Pengelly declared a disclosable in relation to minute 21 (renewal of Trenninow and Wiggle Cliff ground leases – update and next steps).

13. **Minutes**

The Joint Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2020 subject to the following amendment –

- (1) funds had been set aside for projects such as new toilets and a children's 'shelter' (minute 9(h) refers).

14. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

15. **Presentation on Blitz 80 Display**

David Marshall (Business Development Manager) advised that an exhibition would be held in 2021, to mark the Blitz 80. In the Second World War, the Mount Edgcumbe house had been destroyed by German bombers during the 1941, Blitz on Plymouth. A number of draft display panels had been produced which included the following information (these were shared at the virtual meeting) -

- Dunkirk 1940;
- Plymouth Blitz: Why Plymouth;
- Plymouth Blitz: the First Night;
- Plymouth Blitz: the Second Night;

David Marshall (Business Development Manager) further advised that the upstairs rooms in the house would be re-positioned with the creation of a blackout room and a 1939 kitchen dinner. Items, exhibits and artefacts from this period would also be included within the exhibition. There would be 14 information display panels (and leaflets) which would also include information on woman at war, the impact of the Blitz on both the police and fire services, the rebuilding of the house and Plymouth's Abercrombie Plan. Information packs for school visits would also be available.

A question was raised by the Joint Committee as to whether members of the public could contribute artefacts and stories and whether the exhibition would have an audio component.

Councillor Peter Smith advised that the City Council would also be marking the 80th anniversary of the Plymouth Blitz and requested that officers worked jointly on this event.

16. **Revenue Monitoring 2020/21**

Nicola Moyle (Head of Heritage, Art and Film) presented the Mount Edgumbe revenue monitoring 2020/21 report which detailed the quarter two position and outlined progress to confirm the 2021/22 budget.

The report highlighted -

- (a) that Covid had a significant impact on the 2020/21 budget from the start of the new financial year to date which could continue to March 2021; management had been responding to managing and mitigating the financial impact on operations, in line with central Government's guidelines;
- (b) the amalgamated outstanding principal on capital borrowing terms had been extended to 25 years which had provided an in-year saving; however additional costs had been incurred within the House which related to lift repairs, removal of asbestos and fire extinguisher testing;
- (c) savings had been achieved on garden supplies and services; there was a shortfall within the rent budget due to vacant properties and electricity costs.

The main area of questioning related to whether –

- (d) any members of staff had been furloughed;
- (e) comparison figures over the last three years could be provided (including, income, costs, savings, etc), as this would enable the Joint Committee to identify any trends

The Joint Committee agreed to note –

- (1) the financial position contained in the report along with the risks, issues and any mitigation actions;
- (2) the capital programme and proposals to be presented to Plymouth City Council's Investment Board.

The Joint Committee took this opportunity to congratulate officers and staff for operating the Mount Edgcombe estate during this difficult period.

17. **Park Activity Report (to November 2020)**

Chris Burton (Park Manager) presented the Park activity report that highlighted the works and activities carried out in the Park which included the following –

- Park matters;
- buildings and Park infrastructure;
- events;
- business development;
- weddings.

The report highlighted that –

- (a) it was important to recognise the continued commitment and hard work of staff in adapting to the new challenges encountered this year;
- (b) the overall situation of expanding income streams and a drive to reduce local authority contributions had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the current economic downturn; it was considered that successful negotiations of the Trenninow Chalets ground leases would put the Park in a much better financial position;
- (c) due to the Covid-19 restrictions a park inspection would not be taking place this year; as there was a constitutional requirement for an annual inspection to take place, the Joint Committee had authority delegated to it by each constituent authority and could recommend that an appropriate inspection was undertaken by officers.

The main area of questioning related to whether –

- (d) any of the businesses in the Park were currently open and if any offered a click and collect service;
- (e) the feasibility of operating electric vehicles in the Park had been explored;

- (f) consideration had been given to asking school children to plant trees in the Park which could compensate for those trees lost due to ash dieback;
- (g) in order to make it more convenient for people to pay the car parking charges the installation of the 'ring and go' app had been considered.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

The Joint Committee agreed that officers together with the Co-Chairs undertake an appropriate inspection of the Park and report back to the next Joint Committee.

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

Nicola Cull, Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgumbe presented the update report from the Friends of Mount Edgumbe which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) progress to date -
 - the cancellation of events had impacted the charity's funding streams, although legacy donations had been received and membership levels had been maintained;
 - the committee had been improving its ways of working (systems, policies and processes), so that the charity was ready for the future, in order for it to be able to deliver on its purpose;
 - due to the Covid restrictions, approximately £100k had been set aside for projects which would now be carried forward to 2021 (the Friends would be happy to reconsider priorities within the Park, if necessary); currently, the charity's funds were £135k;
- (b) summer 2020 Survey Results -
 - over 100 surveys had been completed; the themes emerging from the surveys included keeping the Park as a beautiful, natural space and enjoying the gardens, woodlands and nature;
 - over 50% of visitors surveyed were local to the area (Plymouth and Cornwall) and of those 43% visited the Park more than once a month (some as many as a few times a week); 45% of people arrived by car, approximately 30% by ferry and a few by walking; those arriving by ferry from Stonehouse, had asked for the City Council to consider providing an 'all day' charge for the car park in order to facilitate days in the Park;

- although the Park was much loved, visitors were keen to see improvements made to areas which were deteriorating, these included the restoration of closed/derelict buildings, statues, follies, local focal points and improvements to the existing toilet facilities and the provision of additional toilet facilities;
- two thirds of visitors surveyed would be happy to pay a nominal fee to have more/improved toilets; only half of the visitors were aware how the Park was funded and many assumed that there was sufficient funding to manage and maintain the Park;
- there had been little interest in visiting the house (however, this could have been due to the Covid restrictions as the house had been closed to the public);

(c) funding issues and deterioration of the Park and its assets -

- the survey had highlighted to the Friends that any further reduction in funding from the local government could cause further deterioration of the assets of the Park;
- the Friends considered that funding was critical at this time, as without sufficient funding the Park assets could suffer further deterioration which may be impossible to recover from; it was recognised that the Park staff did an amazing job with only a 'skeleton' staff and an unrealistic annual funding budget;
- whilst the Friends could support some areas with funding, the charity could not make up for the shortfalls of past years; it would fund on a year by year basis, based on funds built over the previous year;
- the Friends fully supported the future vision for the Park and would continue to work with Park management to make it a success but it considered that a stable and improved funding position for two to three years was critical; the Joint Committee was asked to consider this feedback when agreeing future funding for the Park;
- some particular areas of concern included the management of the woodland canopy, planting of new trees and removal of fallen trees, the poor condition of the toilets and the repair of the road around the Barrow Centre;

(d) 2021 plan included -

- a campaign for donations and legacies (to replace lost event income);

- encouraging local visitors to become active volunteers and join the Friends;
- the launch in 2021 of an online payment facility for donations and membership.

Peter Marsh (Cornwall Council) took this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the great work being done by the Friends of Mount Edgumbe Country Park and also appreciate the work that had been undertaken in conducting the survey which had provided some really useful data. This was a really important partnership and it was hoped that by working together areas highlighted within the report could be prioritised. It was hoped that the outcome of the negotiations on the chalet ground leases could enable decisions to be made which would accelerate those areas of concern. It was however, the right decision for the Park to become cost neutral.

The Joint Committee thanked the Friends of Mount Edgumbe Country Park for the comprehensive report and took the opportunity to thank them for their continued support of the Park.

19. **Exempt Business**

Agreed that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

20. **Renewal of Trenninow and Wiggle Cliff Ground Leases: Update and Next Steps**

Nicola Moyle (Plymouth City Council) and Peter Marsh (Cornwall Council) presented the update report on renewal of Trenninow and Wiggle Cliff ground leases and the next steps. These properties formed part of the wider Mount Edgumbe Country Park estate.

Following discussions, the Joint Committee agreed the recommendations contained within the confidential report).

(Councillor Mrs Pengelly was not present for this item).

Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee



Date of meeting:	19 November 2021
Title of Report:	Mount Edgumbe Revenue Monitoring 2021/22
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Deacon
Lead Strategic Director:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
Author:	Christopher Burton, Mount Edgumbe Park Manager
Contact Email:	Chris.Burton@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	2021/22
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This is presents the Q2 position of Mount Edgumbe for the financial year 2021/22

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that Joint Committee:

- Notes the financial position contained in the report along with the risks, issues and any mitigating actions
- Notes the capital programme and proposals to be presented to Plymouth City Council's Investment Board

Alternative options considered and rejected

None

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This monitoring report links to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan.

Financial Risks

As contained within the report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

Monitoring of commercial project delivery times and ensuring they perform in accordance with budgets set, with continued focus to sensibly capitalise on existing assets, to generate new and / or more income as soon as possible.

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Draffan											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 28/10/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: <i>approved by email</i>											
Date approved: 09/11/2021											

Section I**I.1 Q2 Revenue Position - Financial summary**

Business Type	2021/22 Budget			2021/22 Forecast			Variation to net Budget	Comments
	Income	Expenditure	Net	Income	Expenditure	Net		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Staffing & Operations	(80)	545	465	(80)	552	472	7	
House	(41)	38	(3)	(14)	44	31	34	COVID scaring - social distancing. May improve due to Sunday Opening.
Gardens	0	12	12	0	12	12	0	
Grounds	(27)	124	97	(27)	124	97	0	
Trading Activities:								
Alpacas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	New activity for 2021/22
Conferences	(4)	1	(4)	0	1	1	4	COVID scaring - social distancing
Rents	(156)	26	(130)	(157)	26	(130)	0	Bad Debt being chased (section 4)
Chalets	(199)	0	(199)	(199)	0	(199)	0	On target new contract
Parking	(91)	3	(88)	(91)	3	(88)	0	On track
Special Events	(38)	28	(10)	(36)	28	(8)	2	COVID scaring - social distancing Events cancelled
Holiday Lets	(126)	66	(60)	(147)	66	(81)	(21)	Positive COVID scaring
Glamping	(9)	5	(4)	(8)	5	(3)	1	COVID scaring - social distancing
Weddings	(40)	13	(27)	(36)	13	(23)	4	COVID scaring - social distancing Weddings moved
Misc. Activities	(5)	0	(5)	(1)	0	(1)	4	COVID scaring - social distancing
Total Operations	(816)	861	45	(795)	874	79	34	
Subsidy								
Cornwall CC	(45)		(45)			(62)	17	
Plymouth CC	(45)		(45)			(62)	17	
Total Deficit / (surplus)	(90)		(90)			(124)	34	

1.2 Commentary

COVID-19 had an inevitable impact on our ability to meet 2021/22 income targets. However, proactive interventions from park management and effective relationship management with tenants, along with ensuring all income generating opportunities were pursued when the pandemic allowed, have mitigated against this.

We are reporting an additional budget forecast requirement of £34k – see table 1.1: and in addition there remains a potential financial risk of £0.040k – see section four below – as a result of visitors staying at home and therefore not using the park plus a loss of rental income also due to the impact of the pandemic.

Section 2

2.1 Revenue budget planning 2022/23

Budget setting continues for 2022/23. The joint authority subsidy has been removed, and a review of existing and future income streams for Mount Edgcombe continues – this includes the new holiday property and the Trenninow chalets and the revenue implications of proposed new capital projects. It is expected that the new budget will be set in the New Year.

Section 3

3.1 Approved capital programme

Project	Funding	Prior Year £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Total £
Mount Edgcombe Cremyll Car Park	Service Borrowing	66,775.00	3,225.00	0.00	70,000.00
Mount Edgcombe Commercialisation	Service Borrowing	621,885.14	64,584.86	150,000.00	836,470.00

Section 4

4.1 2021/22 Risk Register

Risks are recorded below to reflect those activities that may happen and could affect the monitoring position.

Mt Edgcombe		£'000s
Rental income	Estimated risk of £14k of written off rent income invoices due to COVID19.	0.014
COVID19 income loss 21/22	That assumed PCC share of 75% MCHLG income to cover COVID loss is not received in full	0.026

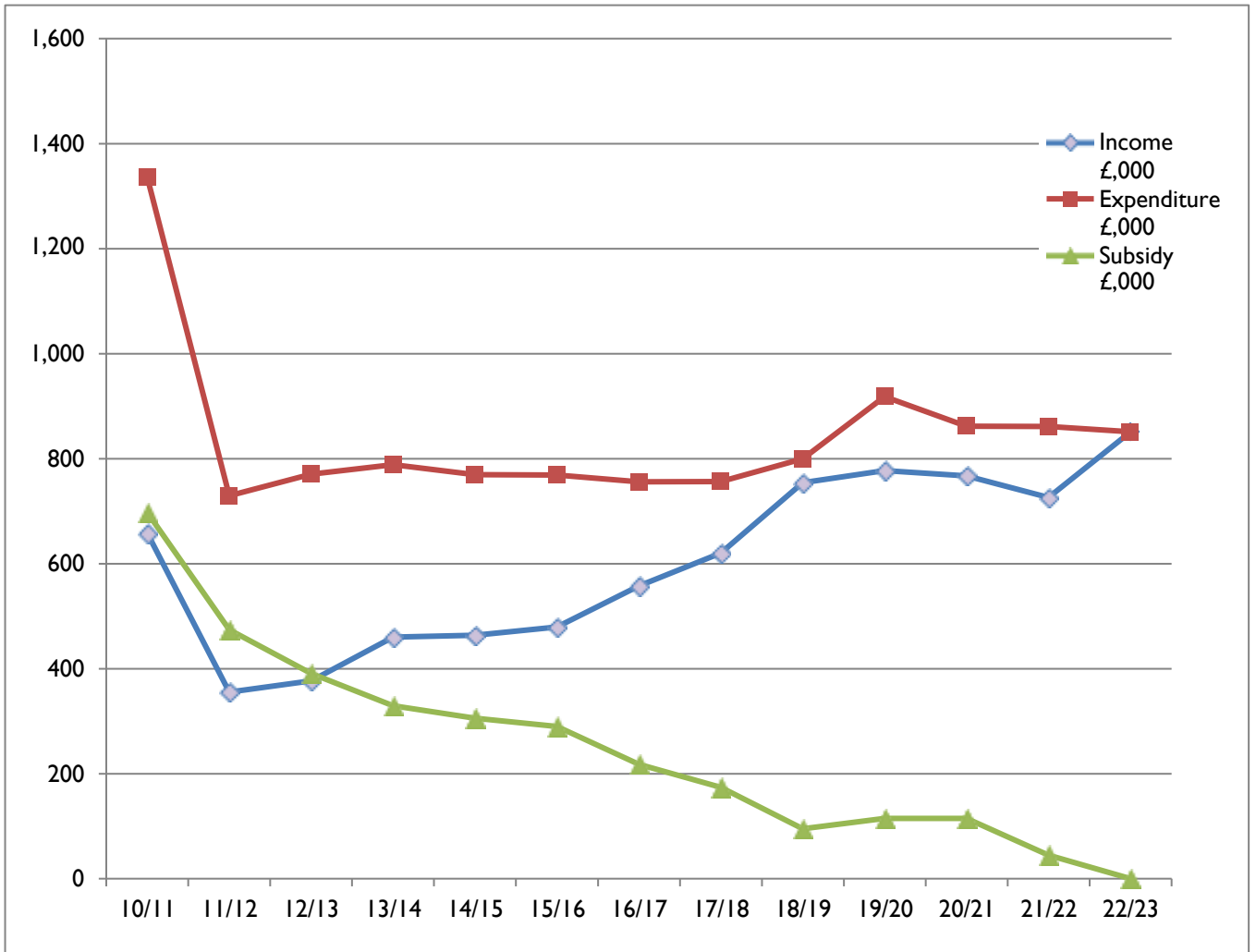
Section 5

5.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Joint Committee:

- Notes the financial position contained in the report along with the risks, issues and any mitigating actions
- Notes the capital programme and proposals to be presented to Plymouth City Council's Investment Board, subject to a detailed business case

Mount Edgcombe Income, Expenditure and Subsidy



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Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee



Date of meeting:	19 November 2021
Title of Report:	Park Activity to November 2021
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Deacon
Lead Strategic Director:	Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place)
Author:	Chris Burton (Park Manager)
Contact Email:	chris.burton@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	n/a
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The report provides an update on activities in the park from July 2021 till November 2021.

Recommendations and Reasons

The Joint Committee will be asked to note the update.

Alternative options considered and rejected

n/a

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan:

In line with the Council's priorities, the Park provides a vibrant cultural offer.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The financial implications are set out in the revenue monitoring report which is included as a separate agenda item.

Financial Risks:

The financial implications are set out in the revenue monitoring report which is included as a separate agenda item at this meeting.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

n/a

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

n/a

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	djn.21 .22.15 6	Leg	LS/37 616/A C/9/1 1/21.	Mon Off	Click here to enter text.	HR	Click here to enter text.	Asset s	Click here to enter text.	Strat Proc	Click here to enter text.
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Draffan											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Anthony Payne Date agreed: 02/11/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Approved by Councillor Deacon (via email) Date approved: 10 November 2021											

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report informs members of the works and activities carried out since July 2021.

2.0 Park Matters

2.1 I am writing this report as we begin to stabilise after various lockdowns, this time for good one hopes. The measures that were in place in the first lockdown were repeated in second lockdown, with the exception of the closure of the lower formal gardens and Cremyll toilets. The Park has been fully open since July.

2.2 The last year or so has seen challenging times for the Park and the whole country. The Park has remained open throughout the pandemic, although some services have been limited in line with government guidelines. We are proud that we have been able to stay open to walkers, locals, and visitors. This has only been possible by working in partnership with our tenant businesses, who have been under significant stress during the pandemic. Despite the challenges, most of our businesses have been able to survive a couple left but have since been replaced. Rebecca Day 360 works at providing humanitarian business solutions around the world is now at the Barrow Centre, and Enigma Solicitors have also taken an office in the main building. This was made possible by offering rent payment holidays, working with our tenants to offer the best service we could and also looking at new ways of doing our core business.

3.0 Now for some great news! The Park will be the recipient of just under £1 Million for the development Maritime Heritage Centre at the Garden Battery. Fundamentally, this project is about delivering one of 5 proposed 'NMP Gateways' – major physical access points and centres for engagement of the public in the Plymouth Sound National Marine Park - featured in the City's £9.58m funding award (2021) under the Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Horizon programme.

3.1 The last twelve months have seen a 'boom and bust' scenario with holiday lets. When we have been open, we have had a surge of bookings and almost full occupancy across the portfolio. However, our accommodation has been closed for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time they should have been open during this reporting period. We have had to adapt our cleaning regimes which has inevitably increased costs, but this is more than compensated for by high levels of occupancy.

3.2 Rame Head Lookout <https://www.classic.co.uk/holiday-cottage/desc-4634.html> was completed in May. Equipping the holiday let proved challenging, with large delays on items such as beds and kitchens. However, there has been very positive feedback from guests, who can now enjoy watching sunsets from a hot-tub in a building that was once a disused toilet block.

3.3 Cremyll car park has remained open throughout the pandemic, although the Parks' other carparks have closed during lockdowns. Obviously, this has impacted on what is our third largest income stream. There is also a need to have a look at replacing the coin only machines with contactless-enabled ones.

- 3.4 Orangery Lodge and Lady Emma's Cottage have received a makeover this winter as part of the continuing maintenance regime of the property portfolio. We now have ten properties but only one maintenance man who also serves the park's wider maintenance issues. This can at times be challenging as guests quite rightly wish things to be fixed quickly during their stay. We are investigating how additional resources can be secured.
- 3.5 The Tree House Project (to develop a tree house in woodland adjacent to Lady Emma's cottage as part of our holiday let portfolio) is under review, after initial feedback from both CC Planning and also Historic England that they would be likely to object to this proposal. The Park Manager is investigating an alternative project: a Wild Breeds Centre based in Barrow Field. Initial planning enquiries have been favourable about this and it could provide both something to do for our younger family visitors and a potential income generator for the Park. The Park Manager is drawing up a business case for this, for future exploration with the Committee and other stakeholders.
- 3.6 The first section of deer fencing of almost 1.8km has been completed. The total perimeter is 4.6km. The material for the first section of fencing has been kindly paid for by a donation from the Friends. A new group, the 'Rame Deer Working Party', has been formed comprising of the Park, land owners and deer specialists. A deer census has taken place this winter, in order to assess population and inform management. There has been a deer herd at the Park since 1515 and it is an integral part of the landscape.
- 3.7 Llama and alpaca trekking is also likely to be in place early next year as potentially highly lucrative business that the Park will take on in partnership with the Farriers Café. You could soon be able to take an alpaca for a walk and have a cream tea in the deer park.
- 3.8 Funds will need to be sought for the repair of the access road to the Barrow Centre, which has become very uneven and subject to flash flooding and dust storms in the summer (not very pleasant when you are having lunch at the Farriers). The cost of these repairs (likely to be around £50,000) are beyond the Park's routine maintenance budget. The increased income from Trenninow chalets is being allocated to this project along with other infrastructure priorities.
- 3.9 The Park continues to have issues with its ageing vehicle fleet. The Friends kindly replaced the Gator vehicle for us this year, allowing the gardeners to carry on after the existing 25 year old vehicle became uneconomical to repair. It is hoped to phase in vehicle replacement over the next four years as we are now in a situation where we spend more on 20 year old vehicles than they are worth. Again this is being considered in the new budget.
- 3.10 Tamar Powersland, one of our Park Rangers, has completed her QTRA tree survey course and is now a fully qualified in tree safety assessment. The Park has hosted a tree training course based around 'Quantifiable Tree Safety Risk Assessment' (QTRA) promoting national best practice and training a number of PCC and CC employees. The Park now has a 'Tree Safety Management Plan' in place, with surveys taking place on a rolling programme.
- 3.11 The Park's Austrian volunteers were repatriated due to c19 regulations in March and have not been replaced, this is a sad loss for the Park as it had come to rely on these essentially, full time, free staff. It is hoped to start new negotiations with KONA (the Austrian parent organisation for the Project) as soon as C19 allows, with a view to having them back for the winter season.

- 3.12 The spectre of Ash dieback, that will have a huge impact on the woodland ecology of this country, has reached the Park. Following the identification of a number of trees with this disease the Park has started a survey and assessment programme. There is no doubt that this will have major implications for the work stream and funding of the Park. This is a national problem however and national contingency funding is being put in place. The Park is in the process of removing the worst of the infected trees with some 30 having been removed so far. The issue of Ash Dieback has been raised on the corporate risk register.
- 3.13 A new camellia garden has been planted behind the saw mill and is part of a funding agreement with Cornwall Hospice Care marking their 40th anniversary. This will be a worthy addition to the National Camellia Collection that is based at the Park.
- 3.14 The Black Bee Reserve has been managed by staff and volunteers with around a dozen new colonies distributed around the South West. This is a great step forward in terms of supporting the reintroduction of this native species, Mount Edgcumbe is really on the biodiversity map for its ground breaking work with this project.
- 3.15 The gardeners have created a special sunrise flower bed as part of the lower garden display this year.

4.0 Buildings and Park Infrastructure

- 4.1 The English garden house has been awarded funding of £20,000 to carry out a development management plan by historic England. The English Garden House had been regraded to Grade 2* by Historic England and as such will be eligible for grants to restore it. This development grant is the first step towards the restoration of this nationally important building. In the first instance this will involve securing emergency funding to replace the roof and protect the assets from further deterioration due weather ingress, something that has been a problem since the lead was stolen some time ago.
- 4.2 This Blitz Display was launched in June with free entrance for schools throughout that month. The take up and the feedback was fantastic. 15 Schools and over 800 children have visited the display during the month.
- 4.3 Over a hundred specimen trees have been planted and protected in the amphitheatre, thanks to funding from the Friends. This area has long been associated with planted specimen trees and will in time return to its former glory. The trees are all labelled and will add an arboretum like display to the Park.
- 4.4 Plymouth College of Art are displaying several art installations throughout the Park as part of their 2021 season and these are well worth a look
- 4.5 The Tudor Block House has had iron railings and a gate fitted to prevent access to the upper storey replacing the rather unsightly marine-ply board. Power has been reinstated to the Garden Battery to help future proof the building.
- 4.6 Repairs to the South East turret have been undertaken in the main house and have made that office space available for rent.

5.0 Events

- 5.1 C19 has had a huge impact on events, all of which were cancelled during the spring/summer period.
- 5.2 The Armchair Adventure festival was a welcome relief and a great return back for the Park to major events with over 4000 tickets being sold. The event was a huge success and will be repeated next year, music and adventure where the focus, with key speakers who had travelled all over the world. The organisers travelled around the world by scooter and had received their training at Survival Wisdom based at the Park.
- 5.3 The 'Summer Fete' and 'Doggy Day Outs' organised by Miss Ivy Events saw the welcome return to events this autumn and were well attended. The decision to cancel the Car Rally this year was made by the Car Rally committee in July it will take place next year. The Christmas Fayre will be going ahead this year.

6.0 Business Development

- 6.1 The Park continues to develop its holiday let portfolio, with Rame Head now completed. We now have nine holiday lets and hope to add more. Those coming on line recently have a higher profit margins as they are predominantly higher end properties, but with the same service costs. A pricing review took place this summer with Classic Cottages, which resulted in small income raises and some re-banding.
- 6.2 There has been a significant reduction in income during lockdown periods in terms of the holiday let portfolio, despite an exceptional summer season with unrepresented levels of occupancy. The Park was able to offer a long term let for some properties and even had at one point the de facto Kenyan Embassy here!
- 6.3 Business Tenants of the Park were given a three month rent holiday during the pandemic. This will be paid back incrementally.
- 6.4 The opening of the 'Farriers' in July breathed a new lease of life to our catering scene in the Barrow Centre and was very well received by the public and staff! It has provided a consistently good level of service. The new owners are keen to be involved in all aspects of the Parks offer. It has been a difficult time of course for all retailers in this current pandemic and we are working closely with all business partners to help each other through these trying times.
- 6.5 The Park will be implementing previously agreed changes to the Lease agreement at Trenninow Chalets this autumn, which once fully delivered will have a significant impact on the Park's financial wellbeing.

7.0 Weddings

- 7.1 A limited number of C19 compliant weddings took place this September and again in the early summer, but 85% of weddings were cancelled or postponed during the C19 restrictions. This has of course had an impact on this year's income. Since weddings rely on a two year booking rota, the effect of C19 on the wedding market will be felt for some time to come.

8.0 Summary

- 8.1 The Park has moved in recent years from having a subsidy approaching £450,000 to one of £45,000 per Council, a significant success that we should all be proud of. The Park now has 20 businesses employing around 45 people. This will allow the focusing on infrastructure improvements that have been highlighted earlier.
- 8.2 The overall trajectory of expanding income streams and reducing LA contributions has been undermined by the C19 pandemic. However, successful renegotiations of the Leases on Trenninow Chalets should see the Park on a more secure fiscal footing from 2021 onwards.
- 8.3 The Park faces several infrastructure and repair bills that will need to be addressed in the future, these are being collated and addressed by the Park manger and his line manager, with a view to a phased approach over the forthcoming years focussing on immediate priorities first.
- 8.4 The Park looks forward to the return of its volunteers, on whom it relies for ongoing delivery of service excellence. The Park also acknowledges the help of the Friends throughout this year.
- 8.5 We look forward to working with the Committee and other stakeholders on the next phase of the Park's development.

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FRIENDS OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE COUNTRY PARK (FOMECP) (CHARITY NO. 295261)

Report to The Joint Committee, 19 November 2021

This paper provides an update on activities, priorities and future plans for the FOMECP.

Our Vision

To work in partnership with the Park Management by jointly agreeing funding requirements and projects.

To continue to support the Park, as set out in our constitution: 'to preserve, or assist in the preservation of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park, Cornwall, for the benefit of the public, as a place of historical, botanical, horticultural, architectural and natural beauty'.

Committee Changes

Following the resignation of a number the FOMECP 2021 committee – including the key posts of Chair and Treasurer - a Special General Meeting (SGM) of the membership was held on 5 September 2021. Following the SGM, all posts on the committee were filled – the first time this has occurred in many years. The committee changes are:

Officer Posts:

- Chairman – Nicola Cull resigned - Ged Edgcumbe was elected.
- Vice Chairman – Alan Drummond stood – Gordon Crocker was elected.
- Treasurer – Gill Bunnell resigned – Carol Drummond was elected.
- Membership Secretary – Ged Edgcumbe stood down – Alan Drummond was elected.
- Secretary – Carol Drummond stood down – Glenis Edgcumbe was elected.
- Committee Members:
- David Louis-Puttick, Katherine Storr, Rosemary Ferguson and Agnies Calkoen resigned.
- Neil Rugg remained in place - Tony Hutchins, Steve Creese, Anne Creese, Mike Tong, Teresa Budd, Harry Vosper, Janet Vosper, Rozanne Griffiths-Woodcock and Malcolm Cross were all elected to the committee.
- All changes have been reported to the Charity Commission.

Policy Changes

We have notified the Park and the Joint Committee of a change to our policy to remove 'ex-officio' members from our committee. We await confirmation in writing that this is acceptable.

Membership

During the COVID 19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown, FOMECP membership figures reduced and the number of new members being signed up was extremely sporadic. Since May 2021 and the easing of some of the lockdown restrictions, membership numbers have slowly risen back to pre-pandemic levels (circa 620) and we are now seeing an encouraging increase in new members.

The FOMECP committee is currently considering a series of 'membership drives' for 2022 to not only increase membership numbers, but also to try and attract families and a broader range of age groups.

Financial Update of The Year to Date

The cancellation of events in 2019 & 2020 has had a significant impact on our fund-raising efforts. Our funds currently stand at circa £120,000 and as previously reported a large proportion of that has been set aside for specific projects.

We are aware that supply chain issues and other factors have significantly increased the costs of timber and building materials. Whilst we remain committed to new projects such as statue restoration, new/updated toilets and a children's shelter, the increase in material costs may impact on what we can do and/or when we will be able to do it. We will monitor the situation and reconsider priorities with the Park Management if necessary.

During 2021, FOMECP provided £26,795 of funding for projects in the Park, which included a utility vehicle for use by the gardeners (£12,345), fencing material for a deer fence (£5,000), a tool to assist in erecting the deer fence (£3,450), bedding plants (£4,000) and mannequins for the Blitz Exhibition (£2,000).

Lambert Lodge – our second-hand bookshop re-opened in June and is attracting new members and also raising some much-needed funds. The Lodge is also proving to be an extremely useful information centre for visitors to the Park.

The full annual accounts can be viewed on-line at fomecp.org.uk.

Joint Committee Funding and Deterioration of the Park and its Assets

We fully support the future vision for the Park and will continue to work with the Park management to make it a success. However, the Friends remain concerned by speed and timing of zero funding, particularly in the aftermath of Covid.

We understand that a review of the condition of the Park, its buildings, contents, vehicles and plant has been undertaken and we are keen to fully understand how much support the Park will receive from the councils to make good various assets **before** all funding is removed.

The Summer Fayre and Car Show

The Summer Fayre & Car Show is an annual event run jointly with Cornwall Hospice Care. The event was cancelled this year, although planning for next year's car show is already in hand. The event is the single biggest annual revenue source for the FOMECP.

For the 2022 event, the joint FOMECP and Cornwall Hospice Care sub-committee agreed are investigating a change from a charge for car parking (£10 per car) to a charge for all adults over 18 (£5 each). This will impact primarily those arriving from Plymouth on the Cremyll Ferry who previously would have entered the event free of charge.

The reason behind this change is the greatly increased use of time-consuming card payments, which will reduce the rate at which cars can enter the car parks and this would be likely to cause queuing and obstruction of the highway.

We will give a great deal of publicity to this change and the assistance of the members of the Joint Committee in getting the message about this change across to the public will be much appreciated.

Other FOMECP Events

All Friends' events have been cancelled this year due to Covid with the exception of a successful trip to the Breakwater on 29 August. However, with lockdown restrictions easing we are currently planning our 2022 events programme to include our annual Easter Egg Hunt, Car Rally and Halloween Trail.

2021/22 Actions in Discussion

1. Membership campaigns
2. Encouraging our existing FOMECP members and local visitors to become active volunteers for all events held in the Park
3. Recruiting a volunteer(s) to run and manage the FOMECP online presence – e.g. website, Facebook etc.
4. Continuing to promote and support traders in the Park

Prepared 5 November 2021

Ged Edgcumbe

FOMECP Chair

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