

**CITY OF PLYMOUTH**  
**MOUNT EDGCUMBE JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Subject:** Strategic Service Review of Mount Edgumbe  
**Committee:** Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee  
**Date:** 27 July 2012  
**Joint Chair:** Councillor Peter Smith Plymouth City Council/  
Councillor Trubody Cornwall Council  
**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Peter Smith Plymouth City Council/  
Councillor Double Cornwall Council  
**CMT Member:** Director for Place, Plymouth City Council  
**Senior CC Officer:** Assistant Head of Service, Environment and Waste  
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**Ref:**  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

**Purpose of the report:**

This report informs Members of a Strategic Service Review of Mount Edgumbe House and Country Park that officers of the two constituent authorities will carry out. This process will take into consideration the current and future pressures affecting the way the site is managed, particularly around the issue of funding and how the implications of this will affect and determine what management options Mount Edgumbe may adopt in the next few years. This report gives a brief overview as to the process and to the timescales involved.

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**Corporate Plan 2012-2015:**

**Plymouth City Council.**

This report links to delivering the priorities within the Councils Corporate Plan particularly with regard to raising aspirations and providing value to communities

**Cornwall Council**

Business Plan Immediate Priorities: Use of resources and performance management

Environment, Planning and Economy Directorate Plan priorities:

- i) Creating a Green Cornwall
- ii) Creating a better place to live
- iii) Delivering excellent services

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:  
including finance, human, IT and land:**

None arising directly from this report.

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**Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:**

None.

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**Recommendations and Reasons for Recommended Action:**

It is recommended that:-

- i) officers are mandated to carry out a strategic service review and table its findings for the next joint committee meeting

**Alternative Options Considered & Reasons for Recommended Action:**

Given the ongoing pressure on public service finance and the desire to see Mount Edgumbe less dependent on financial support from the two constituent authorities it is appropriate that a Strategic Service Review of Mount Edgumbe is undertaken.

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**Background Papers:**

- i) Minutes of the Officers Meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

**Sign Off**

Fin		Leg	N/A	HR	N/A	AM	N/A	IT	N/A
Cornwall Council									

## **1. Strategic Service Review**

- 1.1. In the light of the general economic climate and the expected reduction in government grant to local authorities in the next four years (2014 onwards), it is prudent that a Strategic Service Review of Mount Edgcumbe House and Country Park is undertaken. The review will enable the Joint Committee, Management Team and the two supporting local authorities of Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council, make a more informed decision on how best to position Mount Edgcumbe onto a more sustainable business footing for the future, consolidating its reputation and standing as an important historical and environmental asset to south east Cornwall and the neighbouring city of Plymouth.
- 1.2. The review process will initially focus on what are the true costs to operating and managing the business; followed by comparisons of Mount Edgcumbe with other similar ventures, local authorities and organisations, benchmarking locally and nationally. It will also assess the business against future pressures such as reducing budgets and funding from central government and other risks associated with managing the site.
- 1.3. The review will also provide possible options for future funding and governance models that, upon consideration, could be explored and developed further into a more detailed business plan.
- 1.4. The review will be carried out with support from officers from Cornwall and Plymouth City Councils.
- 1.5. Please see appendix I for a brief setting out the scope of the strategic service review
- 1.6. It is also prudent that the current business plan is reviewed as part of the strategic service review, and that a refreshed business plan is written that takes account of the findings of the strategic service review.

## **2. Timescales and Milestones**

- 2.1. The findings of the review will be presented to the Joint Committee at the 23 November meeting together with a refreshed business plan.

## **3. Methodology**

- 3.1. The review will be carried out by officers from both authorities who will be responsible to the Mount Edgcumbe Officers Working Group.

## **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1. It is recommended that officers are mandated to carry out the strategic service review.

## **Strategic Service Review Brief**

The brief for the review will cover the following areas:

- a) the history and environmental value of the park and its statutory responsibilities
- b) a review of the business plan
- c) the value of the service now using two performance indicators to measure:
  - quality of service
  - volume of uptake

This will be used against the following criteria:

- social benefits
  - health and well being benefit
  - wider economic benefit to the community
  - list of community assets maintained by the service
- d) the current cost of the service looking at:
    - the operational costs per hectare
    - the cost of the house operation against income raised
    - the cost of other park operations against income raised
  - e) a comparison to similar services including non-local authority owned and operated sites, and will look particularly at:
    - rents
    - fees and charges
    - administration and management costs
    - catering and retain offer
    - visitor numbers
    - Friends/membership schemes
    - Staffing levels
    - Delivery models
  - f) A reduction in constituent authority financial support
    - what would happen to the current service if funding was removed completely
    - what would happen if 40% of funding was removed
    - what can be done within the current management model to fill any funding gap
  - g) Future governance options
    - how effective is the current model of management and governance

- what could a future management model look like and what liabilities might remain for the two constituent authorities. Future models could include:
  - (i) status quo
  - (ii) private sector management
  - (iii) charitable trust
  - (iv) social enterprise
  - (v) co-operative

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