

Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee

Friday 27 July 2012

PRESENT:

Councillor Peter Smith, Co Chair in the Chair.

Councillors Austin, Mrs Beer, Holley, Jarvis, Pearn, Mrs Pengelly, Kate Taylor, Trubody (Co Chair) and Vincent.

Co-opted Representatives: Sir Richard Carew Pole Bt, Cdr Crocker and Mr D L Richards.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Double, Mrs Foster and Preston.

Also in attendance: Ian Berry (Park Manager PCC), David Bennett (Accountant PCC), David Draffan (Assistant Director for Economic Development), David Marshall (Business Development Mount Edgcumbe House and Country Park, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery PCC), Paul Martin (CC), Nicola Moyle (City Curator Museum and Archives) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer PCC).

The meeting started at 2.30 pm and finished at 3.25 pm.

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.

1. WELCOME

The Co Chair took the opportunity to welcome new councillors to the Joint Committee.

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE JOINT CHAIRS

The Joint Committee noted the appointments of Councillor Peter Smith and Councillor Trubody as Co Chairs for the forthcoming municipal year 2012/13.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Sir Richard Carew Pole BT declared a personal interest in accordance with the code of conduct as he owned chalets along the coast.

4. MINUTES

The Joint Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2012 are confirmed as a correct record.

5. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

The Co Chair advised that Mr Michael Collins, a committee member for the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe had died after a short illness on Tuesday, 24 July 2012.

He had been a staunch supporter of the park and would be sadly missed. As a mark of respect the Joint Committee stood for a minute's silence.

With the permission of the Co Chair, the Accountant advised that the Annual Statement of Accounts 2011/12 and the Annual Governance Statement for 2011/12 needed to be signed, in order to be submitted to the Audit Commission within the prescribed deadline.

The Joint Committee agreed to sign the Annual Statement of Accounts 2011/12 and the Annual Governance Statement for 2011/12.

(In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Co Chair brought forward the above item for urgent consideration because of the need for a Member decision).

6. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2011/12**

The Director for Place submitted a report on the revenue outturn for 2011/12, which highlighted the following main areas –

- monitoring variations 2011/12;
- monitoring variations 2012/13;
- budget risks.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by councillors –

- (a) the delay in purchasing the marquee had been due to the procurement process and the suppliers not being able to deliver the marquee earlier in the season;
- (b) changes to the procurement process used in Plymouth City Council had recently been changed to allow for more flexibility in procuring goods and services; the Assistant Director for Economic Development undertook to champion any issues that arose.

The Joint Committee agreed to note the report.

(see also minute 10 below).

7. **STRATEGIC SERVICE REVIEW OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE**

The Director for Place submitted a report on the strategic service review of Mount Edgumbe, which highlighted the following main areas –

- (a) due to the current economic climate and the expected reduction in the government grant to local authorities in the next four years, it was considered prudent to undertake a strategic service review of both the house and the park;

- (b) the review would initially focus on establishing the true costs of operating and managing the business; followed by comparisons of Mount Edgcumbe with other similar venues, local authorities and organisations, benchmarking locally and nationally;
- (c) the review would also provide possible options for future funding and governance models that could be explored and developed;
- (d) the current business plan would be refreshed following the findings of the strategic service review;
- (e) the findings of the review would be presented to the Joint Committee at its meeting scheduled for 23 November 2012.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by councillors –

- (f) the findings of the strategic service review would inform the refresh of the business plan (there were items within the existing plan that would need to be retained, such as the weddings and the marquee);
- (g) the existing business plan would help to deliver a balanced budget for 2012/13.

The Joint Committee agreed that officers are mandated to carry out a strategic service review and table its findings at its meeting scheduled for 23 November 2012.

8. **TIME OF THE MEETING**

The Co Chair advised that a proposal had been put forward to hold future meetings of the Joint Committee at 1pm and not 9.45am.

Councillor Mrs Beer raised concerns regarding the short notice given to the change of time of this meeting. Due to her work commitments, it was not possible to change her working hours to accommodate this change and as such, she had taken a day's leave to attend the meeting. She had also planned in the Joint Committee meetings for the remainder of the year starting at 9.45am.

The Co Chair apologised for the oversight in not notifying councillors earlier of the change in time of the meeting and gave an assurance that should the times of future meetings need to be changed sufficient notice would be given.

The Joint Committee agreed that all future meetings would be held at 10am.

9. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

Agreed that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public are excluded 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 Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

10. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2011/12 (E3)**

Further to minute 6, the Director for Place submitted a confidential report on the revenue outturn for 2011/12.

The Joint Committee agreed to note the report.