

## PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

**Subject:** Interim Management Report  
**Committee:** Mount Edgcumbe Joint Committee  
**Date:** 28 November 2014  
**Joint Chair:** Councillor Peter Smith, Plymouth City Council/  
Councillor Hannaford, Cornwall Council  
**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Peter Smith Plymouth City Council/  
Councillor Hannaford Cornwall Council  
**CMT Member:** Anthony Payne, Strategic Director for Place

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**Ref:** ME  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** I

### **Purpose of the report:**

The report provides an overview of the work undertaken this year.

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### **The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17: 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:

- a) Creating a Green Cornwall
- b) Creating a better place to live
- c) Delivering excellent service

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

There are no resource implications.

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**Other Implications: eg. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:**

N/A

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**Equality and Diversity:**

N/A

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**Recommendations and Reasons for Recommended Action:**

Members note the report.

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

N/A

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**Background Papers:**

N/A

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Originating SMT Member: David Draffan													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report?													

## **I. Interim Management Report**

- 1.1 It has been a challenging year for Mount Edgcombe with the introduction of several changes in the way the park operates. This included developing the overall visitor attraction by expanding the programme of events and introducing a variety of commercial tenants in the Barrow Centre and across the park.
- 1.2 New operators for both the Stables Café and Orangery Restaurant have brought an element of commercial stability and consumer confidence to the park.
- 1.3 Following the recent retirement of the park manager, staff have continued working together to help move the park forward. I have been privileged to oversee activities on a part time basis, visiting when possible. The vacant post of Park Manager has recently been advertised and interviews are expected to take place mid-December.
- 1.4 The efforts of staff and volunteers in helping to deliver the wide package of initiatives should be acknowledged. The enthusiasm and experience of staff is recognised as vital for the continued success of the park and to help deliver future projects.

## **2. Review of Events**

- 2.1 Each major event has been analysed closely to ensure they are self-financing and to measure the amount of publicity generated for both the park and the commercial tenants.
- 2.2 A larger programme of events has now become established with good prospects of becoming a healthy income generator for the park.
- 2.3 The new event in May featuring the Green Man was a huge achievement highlighting the skills of the gardening team and volunteers. The efforts of everyone involved with the park generated high levels of interest on social media resulting in Lee Stenning (foreman/gardener) being interviewed on both ITV and BBC television news. This was great publicity for the park.
- 2.4 The Smugglers market in May was a good example of the park working in partnership with Plymouth City Indoor Market. The event formed part of the national “love your local market” campaign with Plymouth market featured in a video presentation at the national conference of markets in London.
- 2.5 In September, Mount Edgcombe hosted the Kings Troop for a week and we were treated to a display on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September which attracted large crowds to the park.
- 2.6 October featured a group of Landrover discovery enthusiasts celebrating 25 years of Landrover by camping at Mount Edgcombe for the weekend.

- 2.7 Len Goodman and Angela Rippon visited the park to film an episode of the BBC One series “Holiday of My Lifetime.” This was aired on the BBC in October.
- 2.8 Anecdotal feedback from local stakeholders indicate that local tourism has benefitted from the series of events this year. The Rame Traders Association, Whitsand Bay Caravan Park and the Cremyll Ferry have all indicated increased business this year.

### **3. Future Events**

- 3.1 We are looking forward to next year’s events including a similar programme with a few new activities already added to the diary.
- March will see a special “Home and Garden” event taking place in and around the House and Barrow Centre.
  - Then in August the Deer Park will host 5,000 Scouts when they set up their national camp for a week.
  - In September the Plymouth college of Art and Design will hold their international conference utilising the house, marquee and Belvedere conference space.

### **4. Lettings**

- 4.1 I have been particularly pleased with the efforts of all the new commercial tenants in the park. Feedback indicates that businesses have made good progress from their start-up in April, and to date none have indicated any intention to vacate or re-locate elsewhere.
- 4.2 The Segway operator that set up in May 2013 has reported a dramatic increase in business during this summer and is now considering expanding his operation to include another commercial initiative within the park.
- 4.3 The enthusiasm of new tenants is infectious and together they are now introducing their own initiatives to develop incidental promotional activities. All of which help to create additional sustained activities for visitors to the park.
- 4.4 Other commercial partners include “Miss Ivy events”, responsible for regular vintage fairs, and “Tamar Grow Local” who put on monthly producers markets. Both these operators have indicated they wish to expand their operations in the park next year.

### **5. New Lettings**

- 5.1 The Cremyll shop which has been run by the park staff on limited resources has recently been let to an external commercial operator.

- 5.2 A Blacksmith has taken temporary occupation of unit 2 in the Barrow centre whilst waiting for a bat licence that will enable him to work in the actual Blacksmith unit.
- 5.3 A Garden Centre has agreed terms for utilising the old barn and polytunnel, working in partnership with the gardening team to offer visitors a wide range of plants and gardening items.
- 5.4 Subject to contract, we have agreed outline terms with the Silvanus Trust to move their head office to vacant offices within the house and utilise the Sawmill as a permanent exhibition space.

## **6. Friends of Mount Edgcumbe**

- 6.1 Recent discussions with the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe have focussed on their intention to undertake a major project for the benefit of the park. Proposals for consideration include –
- The creation of a “Friends Garden Area” adjacent to the fire station, with the possibility of a new sculpture to commemorate 500 years of Mount Edgcumbe.
  - The renovation of historic statues around the park;
  - Expansion of a play area;
  - Lighting the Folly structure;

These exciting ideas are a few examples currently being considered.

## **7. Other Current Initiatives**

### **7.1 Vehicle Review**

The existing stock of vehicles is clearly experiencing some challenges with a list of expensive repairs needed to a variety of land rovers, vans, trailers and buggies.

We will undertake a full review of stock and examine expenditure in order to evaluate overall requirements and explore if alternative options are available.

### **7.2 Review of Waste Management**

Cost of waste disposal have increased this year and we will look at ways to manage the waste in a more cost effective way and look to introduce further recycling opportunities if possible.

### **7.3 Staff Resources**

A fundamental review of rotas and working practices is being undertaken to reflect the changing needs of the service and reduce pressures on staff to work regular overtime.

#### 7.4 Land Train Purchase

Part of the phase one improvements included the purchase of a land train to reflect the Steam Train named after the “Earle of Mount Edgcumbe”, and to help drive footfall to the barrow centre.

Unfortunately, this train experienced a series of delays. However, it has now been commissioned and will arrive at Mount Edgcumbe in time for the new season.

#### 7.5 Cremyll Lodge Holiday Let

Furniture for the lodge has now been purchased and we will be offering the property for holidays as a “slow launch” prior to full commercial lettings from the start of next season.

### **8. Audit Risk Assessment report**

8.1 Following the small bodies audit report there is a requirement to produce a risk assessment for the operation of the park.

This will include reference to countryside management issues, health and safety procedures and overall commercial business planning and risk.

8.2 There are currently several management reviews being undertaken to evaluate these issues in context of the operation of the park and therefore the final audit risk management report should be postponed until completion of the individual assessments.

### **9. Conclusion**

9.1 Outputs of recent initiatives include –

- Higher profile of Mount Edgcumbe as a visitor attraction;
- Increased number of jobs created by approximately 35 as direct results of commercial lettings;
- Growth in volume and value of tourism;
- Greater community pride;
- Increase in visitor satisfaction;
- The number of Visitors “liking” the Mount Edgcumbe Facebook page have more than doubled within the last 6 months.

### **10. Recommendations**

10.1 Members are asked to note the report.