

Mount Edgumbe Joint Committee

Friday 8 July 2016

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Pengelly Co-Chair, in the Chair.

Councillor Austin, Frank, Fry, Mavin (substitute for Councillor Vincent), Dr Mahony, Sparling and Smith.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Candy, Carson, Mrs Duffin (Co-Chair), Ellison, Hobbs, Trubody and Vincent and Co-opted Representatives Sir Richard Carew Pole Bt and Mr D L Richards.

Also in attendance: Simon Arthurs (Senior Financial Analyst), Chris Burton (Mount Edgumbe Park Manager), Councillor Davis (Chair of the Torpoint and Rame Peninsula Coastal Communities), Jon James (Natural Environment Manager), David Marshall (Business Development Manager), Nicola Moyle (Head of Heritage and Arts), Mr N Rugg (Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgumbe) and Helen Wright (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 10.10 am and finished at 12.00 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. NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE JOINT CHAIRS

The Joint Committee noted the appointment of Councillors Mrs Pengelly and Mrs Duffin as Joint Chairs for the forthcoming municipal year 2016/17.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by Members in accordance with the code of conduct.

3. MINUTES

The Joint Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2015 are confirmed as a correct record.

4. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

5. THE TORPOINT AND RAME PENINSULA COASTAL COMMUNITIES GROUP

Councillor Davis (Chair of the Torpoint and Rame Peninsula Coastal Communities) gave a presentation on the 'economic plan consultation roadshow' which included the following key areas –

- (a) the background which included -
 - Torpoint Town Council was the lead for the partnership which was established in July 2015;
 - this was a government initiative to form a network of teams to identify the issues and opportunities faced by coastal communities;
 - the first priority had been to complete an economic plan by 31 January 2016;
- (b) the process which included -
 - strengths;
 - opportunities;
 - weaknesses;
 - threats;
- (c) the vision – 'in 2030 Torpoint and the Rame Peninsula's natural and built environment will define the area. The town, an important gateway into Cornwall and the villages and hamlets will be seen as one; part of a thriving and healthy balanced area with communities that will have a vibrant and viable local economy in which local people of all ages can fulfil their potential;

Torpoint and the Rame Peninsula will be sought after places to live and a location for high quality sustainable holidays – whilst still Cornwall's 'hidden corner' – people love to visit';
- (d) the focus areas included –
 - tourism – promoting the visitor economy;
 - transport – enhancing accessibility and communication;
 - environment – enhancing the attractiveness of public areas and encouraging sustainable uses – making the most of heritage, natural and cultural facilities;
 - community – providing improved community facilities;
 - jobs – supporting employment opportunities (across sectors including agriculture, retail and tourism);
- (e) the next steps included -
 - the completion of the economic plan consultation roadshow;
 - securing finance and support to secure the future of coastal

- communities team;
- further develop and encourage partnerships;
- coastal community fund applications.

The main areas of questioning from Members included –

- (f) the lack of focus within the economic plan of the provision of new housing;
- (g) the inclusion of Saltash regarding provision of water transport links;
- (h) the provision of a cycle route.

The Joint Committee agreed that –

- (1) a report is submitted to the next meeting on 25 November 2016 regarding water transport links;
- (2) a web link to the Torpoint and Rame Peninsula Economic Plan is provided to committee members;
- (3) a further update on the economic plan is provided at a future committee meeting.

The Head of Heritage and Arts (Nicola Moyle) undertook to provide information to committee members on the current water taxi provider.

6. **BUDGET OUTTURN 2015/16**

The Strategic Director for Place (Anthony Payne) and the Head of Commissioning and Asset Management (Peter Marsh) submitted the revenue budget outturn 2015/16. The Senior Finance Analyst (Simon Arthurs) presented the report and highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) 2015/16 outturn variations – overview;
- (b) review outturn variations which included -
 - Mount Edgcumbe House;
 - Mount Edgcumbe Park;
 - Mount Edgcumbe Trading;
- (c) future budget;
- (d) small bodes audit;
- (e) capital.

The Joint Committee noted the report and agreed to maintain an updated risk register, specifically given the range of initiatives to be delivered and the reduced budget target.

7. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2016/17

The Strategic Director for Place (Anthony Payne) and the Head of Commissioning and Asset Management (Peter Marsh) submitted the revenue budget monitoring 2016/17 report. The Senior Finance Analyst (Simon Arthurs) presented the report and highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) monitoring variations 2016/17 (overview)
- (b) revenue monitoring 2016/17 which included -
 - Mount Edgcumbe House;
 - Mount Edgcumbe Park;
 - Mount Edgcumbe Trading;
- (c) Budget risk;
- (d) future year budgets.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

8. THE WAY FORWARD

The Mount Edgcumbe Park Manager (Chris Burton) introduced himself to the Joint Committee and gave a brief summary of his recent work experience. He gave a presentation on the way forward for the Park which included the following key areas -

- the vision – to be regional leader, connecting people with landscape, wildlife and heritage;
- history of the Country Park;
- achieving the vision, included -
 - ▶ achieving capacity with a capital injection of £250,000, through prudential borrowing; this would enable the Park to develop a series of business initiatives that would help it to push towards a zero budget in the next five years;
 - ▶ sensitively developing commercial activities was a must for the Park, given its wealth of designations and its core values;
 - ▶ increasing the visitor offer, by having more ‘stay opportunities’ and increasing visitor time and spend, was a key to the Park’s financial future; the Park was free to enter but events/activities could be charged for (ie high ropes, Segway, holiday cottages);
 - ▶ making Mount Edgcumbe a ‘staycation’ with a portfolio of holiday lets, glamping and a wide varies of activities to participate in;

- ▶ outsourcing would be key theme throughout the business plan; the Park did not have the staffing capacity to hold regular events but it was able to let others effectively hire a first class venue and pass on the risk and capacity to them.

The main areas of questioning from Members related to –

- (a) whether there was an opportunity to encourage private investment in the Park to renovate properties and project manage these works;
- (b) improving social media for the Park which also included the website.

The Joint Committee noted the presentation.

9. **PARK ACTIVITIES TO SEPTEMBER 2016**

The Strategic Director for Place (Anthony Payne) and the Head of Commissioning and Asset Management (Peter Marsh) submitted the Park Activity to September 2016 report. The Mount Edgcumbe Park Manager (Chris Burton) presented the report which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) park matters including High Level Stewardship;
- (b) buildings and park infrastructure;
- (c) events;
- (d) business development;
- (e) weddings.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

10. **FRIENDS OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE COUNTRY PARK UPDATE**

The Joint Committee welcomed Mr Neil Rugg, the newly appointed Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park.

The Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park (Mr Neil Rugg) provided an update on with work of group which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) the recent retirement of Commander Gordon Crocker as Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park;
- (b) since the last Joint Committee meeting in November 2016 the number of members had increased by 32 to 568;

- (c) the Friends continued to provide financial support to the Park which included funding up to £20,000 for the creation of a garden to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday;
- (d) social events (including an Easter egg hunt and a black tie dinner);
- (e) World War I project.

The Joint Committee agreed to send a 'thank you' letter to Commander Gordon Crocker for his services as Chair of the Friends of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park.

The Co-Chair undertook to contact the Rotary Club with a view to their members volunteering to assist with events at the Park.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

11. **MOUNT EDGCUMBE COASTAL DEFENCE WORKS**

The Strategic Director for Place (Anthony Payne) and the Head of Commissioning and Asset Management (Peter Marsh) submitted a report on Mount Edgcumbe coastal defence works. The Natural Environment Manager (Jon James) presented the report which highlighted the following key areas –

- (a) Cornwall Council was in the process of submitting a second round of funding applications for sea defence/coastal protection works through the Flood Defence Grant in Aid process (FDGiA) which was managed by the Environment Agency;
- (b) in July 2015 a summary application was submitted for sea defence works between Cremyll Quay and Garden Battery Beach; following this application the Environment Agency had requested further information; in order to provide the information it has been necessary to carry out a Project Appraisal Report (PAR);
- (c) Royal Haskoning had been appointed to prepare the PAR which was due to be completed by mid-July; however early indications had shown that there may not be sufficient residential properties requiring protection by the sea defences, therefore the economics would be focussed around the loss of visitors to the Park, the ferry and associated infrastructure;
- (d) the estimated cost of the project for the Cremyll Quay, Cremyll slipway quay and sea wall works would be £600,000; it was hoped to secure 50% of the funding through the FDGiA funding stream.

The main areas of questioning from Members related to –

- (e) the unacceptable length of time it had taken to progress this scheme (12 months in total);

- (f) the likelihood of securing funding for the scheme based on the Environment Agency's focus on the protection of residential properties.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

12. **COLLECTION ITEMS FOR DISPOSAL**

The Strategic Director for Place (Anthony Payne) and the Head of Commissioning and Asset Management (Peter Marsh) submitted a report on collection items for disposal. The Mount Edgumbe Park Manager (Chris Burton) presented the report which highlighted the following key areas -

- (a) that storage of the collection at Mount Edgumbe was problematic due to the limited space available (the bulk of items not on display, largely furniture were being stored in the attic space);
- (b) a review of the collection had taken place from February to May 2016;
- (c) the review had identified 10 items of furniture in the collections that were candidates for disposal.

The main area of questioning related to whether the items could be advertised to be sold. The Park Manager advised that any items that had not been accessioned into the collection could be considered for sale.

The Head of Heritage and Arts undertook to look at the feasibility of selling those items not accessioned in the collections that had been identified for disposal.

The Joint Committee agreed the disposal of items identified within the report.

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