

COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP

A meeting of the **COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP** will be held in the **WREN ROOM, COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE, HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK, HUNTINGDON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE** on **FRIDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2007** at **10:00 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman of the Group for the ensuing Municipal Year.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 19th April 2007.

**Miss H Ali
388006**

3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to personal and/or prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any Agenda Item. Please see Notes 1 and 2 overleaf.

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Group for the ensuing Municipal Year.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP

To note the Membership of the Group for 2007/08 as follows:-

(a) Cambridgeshire County Council

Councillor Mrs E Kadic.

(b) Huntingdonshire District Council

Councillors M G Baker, Mrs M Banerjee, J D Fell and C R Hyams.

6. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE AND METHOD OF OPERATION: COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP (Pages 5 - 16)

To consider a report by the Head of Administration proposing a new terms of reference and method of operation for the Group.

**Miss H Ali
388006**

7. **2006/07 FINAL ACCOUNTS** (Pages 17 - 22)

To consider a report by the Treasurer regarding the final accounts for Hinchingsbrooke Country Park for 2006/07 and other countryside sites across the District.

Mrs S Martin
388107

8. **SENIOR RANGER'S REPORT** (Pages 23 - 24)

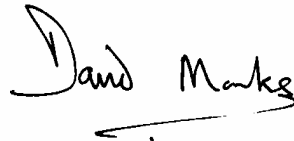
To receive a report by the Senior Ranger on Park Activities for the period April to September 2007

Mrs J Arnold
451568

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the next meeting of the Group will be held on 28th March 2008.

Dated this 3 day of October 2007



Chief Executive

Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
 - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
 - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
 - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or*
 - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*
2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

Please contact Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer, Tel No: 01480 388006 / e-mail: Habbiba.Ali@huntsdc.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Group.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website –
www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk (*under Councils and Democracy*).

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports
or would like a large text version or an audio version
please contact the Democratic Services Manager and
we will try to accommodate your needs.

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Agenda Item 2

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP held at the Countryside Centre, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire on Thursday, 19 April 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor M G Baker – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, Mrs J Chandler and J D Fell.

County Councillor Mrs E Kadic

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss H Ali, Mrs J Arnold, P Knight and Mrs S Martin.

10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 13th October 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Pursuant to Minute No 06/07, Councillor Mrs J Chandler reported that she had spoken to the Leader of the Council, Councillor I C Bates, on the future role of the Group now that its terms of reference had been broadened to encompass the range of District Council activities in the countryside. Given their extended remit, Members felt that biannual meetings were not regular enough to allow the Group to monitor, in sufficient detail, the work being undertaken in the various locations across the District. To overcome this deficiency the Group proposed that quarterly meetings be held at different venues. In view of the suggestion to widen the terms of reference and increase the regularity of meetings, the Group requested the Democratic Services Officer to seek the views of Cambridgeshire County Council on the suggested new arrangements and their contribution towards future meetings on the understanding that a minimum of one meeting per year would continue to take place at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Head of Administration be requested to prepare a quarterly programme of meetings at various locations across the District for consideration in the Autumn; and
- (b) that the views of Cambridgeshire County Council on the proposed new arrangements be requested.

11. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

12. SENIOR RANGER'S REPORT

In receiving and noting the contents of the Senior Ranger's report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) comment was made as follows:-

(a) Volunteers and Staffing

Members were pleased to note the contribution that continued to be made by volunteers in the Park. Having regard to the health and safety of volunteers, it was reported that all volunteers were now required to complete an application form, prior to providing their assistance in the Park.

(b) Countryside Centre

Details of the number of users of the Countryside Centre for the period October 2006 to March 2007 inclusive were presented. Although the number of users had decreased by 10% in comparison to that of the previous year, Members were encouraged to note that the range of users of the Centre had remained the same.

(c) Café

The Group were pleased to note the continued success of the Café and noted that buffets, catering for up to 20 people, were now being offered to users of the Countryside Centre.

The Senior Ranger reported that further consideration was being given to suggestions to extend the café.

(d) Events and Activities

The Senior Ranger presented the Group with details of the events and activities at the Centre over the autumn/winter period. Particular mention was made of the success of the Nordic Walking Group.

(e) Wider District

Members noted the range of work being undertaken in other parts of the District. Particular attention was drawn to Coneygeare Park where "drainage saucers" for the trees had been created and damaged trees had been removed and replaced. Members were encouraged to note that positive feedback had been received from the public on the progress that had been made.

(f) Park Management

The Senior Ranger informed the Group of the various work being undertaken at the Country Park which included path building around the lake area, new fencing for the llamas and repairs to the crack in the brick bridge.

(g) Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

Members were encouraged that membership of the “Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park” had increased and noted the range of fundraising activities which had been organised by the Group. Particular mention was made of the success of the Christmas Shopping Evening.

Arising from this, the Countryside Services Manager reported that it was the intention to form a new “Friends of Holt Island” Group which would be applying for charitable status. Members remained hopeful that this Group would continue to contribute funding for the Park activities.

(h) Miscellaneous

The Chairman drew Members’ attention to an article which had appeared in the local press, highlighting concerns raised by a local resident who believed that the Park was turning into a “wasteland” because of the increase in vehicle movements in the Park. Having been advised that the resident in question had arranged a public meeting, scheduled to be held on 22nd April 2007, Members expressed disquiet that the resident had not highlighted any concerns to staff located on site in the first instance and neither had a representative from the District Council been invited to attend the meeting. After much discussion on the proposed way forward, it was concluded that the Chairman, together with the Countryside Services Manager, should attend the meeting on the 22nd April in a personal capacity. Councillor Mrs J Chandler undertook to contact the Ward Member to ask if he could similarly attend the meeting.

13. PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE

Members received and noted the contents of the 2006 Annual Summary for Paxton Pits Nature Reserve (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which detailed a range of issues and initiatives that had occurred at the Nature Reserve over the previous year. Members were encouraged to note that around 2,200 members had joined the “Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve” Group.

14. WIDER DISTRICT

The Countryside Services Manager acquainted Members with a range of initiatives across the District which included details on Godmanchester Nursery, the Meadow Trail in St Neots and the Barford Road Pocket Park in Eynesbury. With regard to the Ouse Valley Biodiversity Project, Members were encouraged to note that the District Council were currently working in partnership with various other groups on the project.

15. COUNCILLOR MRS J CHANDLER

In light of her decision to retire as a District Councillor at the end of her term of office in May, the Group took the opportunity to express their appreciation to Councillor Mrs J Chandler, Executive Councillor for Leisure, who was attending her last meeting, for her contribution to the growth and success of the Country Park over many years and extended their best wishes to her for the future.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group noted that their next meeting would be held on 12th October 2007.

17. SHORT WALK AROUND THE PARK

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Senior Ranger led Members on a short walk to visit the llamas.

Chairman

**PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE AND METHOD OF OPERATION –
COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP
(Report by Head of Administration)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At their meeting on 18th May 2006, the District Council's Cabinet agreed to reconstitute the former Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Liaison Group as the Countryside Joint Group. The terms of reference of the Group were extended to include all matters relating to countryside and riverside and other parks and open spaces across the District.
- 1.2 Since then, Members have expressed uncertainty as to the new remit and status of the Group given that Hinchingsbrooke Country Park originally was a joint initiative between the District and County Councils.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report, therefore, is to respond to the Group's request for guidance, to confirm a terms of reference and method of operation and to propose a work programme which will more adequately reflect the new wider remit of the Group. Given the involvement of the County Council in the former Liaison Group and the continuation of their membership in the new Group, their views on the proposed new arrangements are reported in Section 3 of the report.
- 1.4 A copy of the former Liaison Group's Terms of Reference is appended hereto as Appendix A.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Bearing in mind the concept of the original Liaison Group and having regard now to its broader remit, it is proposed that the new Group should meet on 4 occasions each calendar year. Two of the four meetings should operate as formal meetings and the other two informally.
- 2.2 The formal meetings will continue in a similar way to that of the former Joint Liaison Group, with biannual reports to be submitted to Members by the Countryside Services and Service Development Managers of the District Council. Meetings will continue to take place at 10:00am on Fridays in March and October each year and be administered by the Democratic Services Team. Both reports will provide an overview of countryside, parks and open space areas with items relating to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park featuring within the Countryside Services Manager's report. It is suggested that these meetings take place in meeting rooms at the Country Park and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve.

- 2.3 Informal meetings will only require the presence of District Council representatives and will be delivered in the form of site visits across the District. This will enable the Group to embrace their wider remit without conflicting the County Council's ongoing freehold interests in the Country Park. The District Council's Countryside Services Manager and Service Development Manager will be required to produce an itinerary of places to visit for District Council Members. Arrangements for these events will be made centrally by the Democratic Services Team. An informal tour of Countryside Services already has taken place.
- 2.4 The following programme of meetings is envisaged:-

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS		
FORMAL MEETING SCHEDULE	MONTH	VENUE
	March	Hinchingbrooke Country Park
	October	Paxton Pits Nature Reserve
INFORMAL MEETING SCHEDULE	January	Itinerary to be set by the District Council's Service Development Manager
	June	Itinerary to be set by the Countryside Services Manager

- 2.5 As part of the Group's new remit, newsletters and information on what is happening across the District will be circulated electronically to District Council Members for information purposes only.

3. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S COMMENTS

- 3.1 A letter was sent to the County Council seeking their views on the proposed new arrangements.
- 3.2 No objections had been received to the proposal and no further comments had been made.

4. AMENDMENTS TO THE GROUP'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 4.1 To reflect these new arrangements and the wider remit of the Joint Group, a revised terms of reference and a method of operation have been proposed. These are reflected in Appendix B hereto. The draft proposal is based on the agreement previously made with the County

Council and operating practices since the Joint Liaison Group was first constituted.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Joint Group are requested to endorse the proposed new approach to the work and responsibilities of the Countryside Joint Group as set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.5 of this report and recommend approval to the District and County Councils of the proposed terms of reference and new method of operation for a trial period of 12 months duration commencing in October 2007 after which time the success or otherwise of the arrangements will be reviewed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hinchingbrooke Country Park Joint Liaison Group – Terms of Reference
Cabinet Minutes – 18th May 2006
File LA/H/1 held by the Administration Division of the Central Services Directorate.

Contact Officer: Miss Habbiba Ali, Democratic Services
☎ 01480 388006

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HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK LIAISON GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. MEMBERSHIP

4 Members appointed by Huntingdonshire District Council
1 Member appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council.

2. ADMINISTRATION

Servicing of meetings of the Liaison Group will be undertaken by the District Council.

Attendance at meetings of the Liaison Group will be open to Officers of both the County and District Councils.

The Liaison Group will meet at least once each year.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

To monitor implementation of Clause 2 of the Agreement between the County Council and the District Council under which -

- ◆ the County Council wish to see the District Council continue to run the existing services listed in the attached Appendix and to adopt performance measures similar to those listed; and
- ◆ any change to the existing service levels will be agreed between the County Council and the District Council via the Liaison Group before its implementation.

To liaise, on behalf of the District Council, with users of services at the Country Park and to undertake periodic public consultation to which all users, Officers and Members are invited to discuss and plan future developments at the Country Park.

To agree annually the wider role of the Rangers at the Country Park in offering specialised expertise of importance to the residents of Cambridgeshire as a whole.

To ensure on behalf of the District Council that the Rangers continue to provide support for the Care in the Community Programme which provides work placements for handicapped adults.

To receive for information an annual budget for the Country Park.

Upon closure of the accounts in each financial year, to receive a statement from the District Council of all income received and expenditure incurred in the use of the Country Park, all surplus income over expenditure continuing to be reinvested in the Country Park in accordance with previous practice.

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APPENDIX 1
(Existing Services)

Service Provided	Performance Measure
<p>1. Site Provided</p> <p>(a) Visitor Centre to be open to the public every weekend during the year and a Ranger to be available on site every day for the public between April and October. Centre to be cleaned daily. Centre to be maintained to current standards. Annual safety checks by fire and police</p> <p>(b) Woodland - to be managed in accordance with the County Park Management Plan.</p> <p>(c) Grassland - to be managed in accordance with the Country Park Management Plan</p> <p>(d) Water bodies - no activities on surrounding land should be detrimental to either the water quality of Alconbury Brook or the lakes. Management of bankside vegetation and banks to be in the interest of public safety, wildlife and other users in accordance with the Country Park Management Plan.</p> <p>(e) Hardened paths including the Bund to be maintained in current condition using material which meet British Standard???</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback from visitors • number of visitors • quality and diversity of woodland habitats • public use of grassland • quality and diversity of grassland • water quality • habitat diversity • visual appearance and public use

- (f) Litter - the whole of the site to be kept clear of litter to the standard of 'a' class carriageways as defined by the Environmental Protection Act 1991.
 - visual appearance and public feedback
- 2. Casual Visitors**
- (a) Free and open access to all visitors' 24 hours a day.
 - number of visitors/traffic counted
 - (b) Visitors should have access to the visitor centre at weekends and summer afternoons.
 - (c) Visitors should have access to the battery cars at all times by prior arrangement.
 - usage of battery car
 - (d) Visitors should have access to refreshment facilities at agreed times
 - income received
 - (e) Visitors should feel safe and welcome in their visit and free to actively enjoy the facilities provided or just enjoy relaxing in a peaceful environment.
 - annual visitor welcome audit according to Countryside Commission guidelines, conducted by the County Council or their nominated representative
 - (f) Rangers should be available to answer questions and provide information when the Visitor Centre is open. Staff and volunteers should always be as courteous and helpful as possible.
 - public feedback (number of complaints/compliments)

3. Organised Visits

Performance Measures/Minimum annual totals

The County Council would expect the following services to continue to

be provided:-

- (a) School Visits by all schools in the county, charged at the same rate, and outside the area.
- (b) Youth Groups' activities, Cubs, Scouts, Guides, (including camping)
 - 1 school visit per week of the school year
- (c) Park based Youth Group activities, e.g. WATCH
 - 12 meetings
- (d) Continue to provide facilities for outdoor events e.g. mountain bikes, cross-country running, orienteering.
 - 1 event
- (e) Watersport events
 - Public sailing courses
 - 60 days public sailing. Numbers taking part
 - Public fishing by day and season ticket at reasonable cost
 - Numbers taking part, price of day ticket
- (f) Talks/guided walks to the public and organised groups.
- (g) Volunteers
 - number of long term volunteers
 - number of volunteer days worked in the Park
- (h) Provision for individuals with special needs. This will be very much on demand.
 - level of activity and number of individuals taking part. Feedback from client groups

4. Information and Advice

Standard Response Times to Written Enquiries

Rangers will be expected to be available to advise the following client

groups on a range of issues including those listed.

- (a) General Public; requests for information, advice, feedback on projects. • 3 weeks
- (b) Volunteer organisations; eg Wildlife Trust, RSPB, charities • 3 weeks
- (c) Parish Councils • 3 weeks
- (d) District Councils; site management advice, planning permissions, programme and strategy development, service provision as per current job descriptions • As requested
- (e) County Council; site management advice, comments on planning applications, strategy and policy development (eg Structure Plan, Rural Strategy, EAP) Annual Reports as per current job descriptions. As requested
- (f) National organisations, eg Countryside Commission, Sports Council. Comments and input into policies and projects as per current job descriptions. As requested
- (g) Sponsors; project bids, reports As requested

APPENDIX B

COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE AND METHOD OF OPERATION

1. The Joint Group will consider all matters relating to countryside, riverside and other parks and open spaces in the ownership of or managed by Huntingdonshire District Council.
2. The Joint Group will not have responsibility for any executive functions within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2000.
3. The Joint Group will be constituted in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the District Council's Constitution with a membership comprising four members of Huntingdonshire District Council (appointed by the Cabinet) and one Member appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council.
4. The Joint Group will meet formally on at least two occasions in each year. Its formal meetings will be open to the public. The quorum for formal meetings shall be not less than three Members and attendance will be open to Officers of both the County and District Councils.
5. The Joint Group also will meet informally on at least two occasions per year.
6. The Minutes of the formal meetings of the Joint Group will be presented for confirmation to the ensuing formal meeting and copies of the Minutes will be supplied to the District Council and the County Council. Servicing of meetings will be undertaken by the District Council.
7. The Joint Group will monitor implementation of Clause 2 of the Agreement between the County Council and the District Council in relation to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park dated 1st April 1998 under which –
 - ◆ the County Council indicated their wish to see the District Council continue to run the existing services listed in the attached Appendix and to adopt performance measures, similar to those listed;
 - ◆ any change to the existing service levels will be agreed between the County Council and the District Council via the Joint Group before their implementation;
 - ◆ the Joint Group will liaise, on behalf of the District Council, with users of the Parks and Countryside Service and undertake periodic public consultation to which all users, Officers and Members would be invited to discuss and plan future development;

- ◆ the Joint Group will consider annually the wider role of the Parks and Countryside Service in offering specialist advice to the residents of Cambridgeshire as a whole; and
 - ◆ the Joint Group will ensure, on behalf of the District Council, that the Parks and Countryside Service continue to offer support for the Care in the Community Programme which provides work placements for handicapped adults.
8. The Joint Group will receive financial information and an annual budget for Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, in particular, and the Parks and Countryside Service of the District Council as a whole. Upon closure of the accounts in each financial year, the Joint Group will receive a statement from the District Council of all income received and expenditure incurred in the use of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. All surplus income over expenditure will continue to be re-invested in the Country Park in accordance with previous practice.
9. The Joint Group may report with or without recommendations on any aspect of the management and operation of the land referred to in Clause 1 of this agreement to the District Council and County Council.

COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP

12TH OCTOBER 2007

2006/2007 FINAL ACCOUNTS (Report of the Treasurer)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 2006/2007 accounts have been finalised, and have been audited. This report contains details of actual expenditure and income levels at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and at the other countryside sites.

2. HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK

- 2.1 The financial position at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park for last year can be summarised as follows:-

Details	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variation £'000
Expenditure	338	357	+19
Income	107	117	+10
Net Expenditure	231	240	+9

Attached at Annex A is a more detailed breakdown of the variations from the budget.

- 2.2 The £19k variation on expenditure was mainly due to the following:-

- **Irrecoverable VAT** – previously, VAT has had no impact on the costs of running the country park because any irrecoverable VAT on “exempt” services e.g. room hire and courses, has been met by HDC. In order to comply with the Accounting Code of Practice £5k of irrecoverable VAT was charged to the country park last year.
- **Central Department recharges** – increased by £5k due to the impact of Financial Reporting Standard 17 which requires the accounts to reflect the cost of future pension commitments arising from current staffing levels. Recharges also increased by a further £7k due to changes in staff time allocations or changes in the method of allocating the costs of support services.

Apart from these two items of expenditure, which are outside the direct control of the Senior Ranger, other expenditure was controlled so as to achieve the overall budget target.

- 2.3 Income was £10k higher than the budget. The café, which opened in October 2005, generated £12k more income than expected. Other income was just £2k below the budget target.

3. OTHER COUNTRYSIDE SITES

3.1 The financial position for the remaining sites for last year is summarised below:-

Details	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variation £'000
Expenditure	344	423	+79
Income	35	88	+53
Net Expenditure	309	240	+26

Attached at Annex B is a more detailed breakdown of the variations from the budget.

3.2 The variations shown above have arisen mainly because the budget did not include figures for Coneygear Park. If this is taken into consideration and other changes to capital charges and central department recharges (which are outside the direct control of Countyside Services staff) are ignored then net expenditure across all these sites was actually £4k below the budget target.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Overall, expenditure and income is managed very well by staff in Countryside Services. Budgets under the direct control of Countryside Services staff were £6k under-spent whilst budgets outside their direct control (Irrecoverable VAT, Capital Charges and Central Department Recharges) were £41k above the budget target level.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is recommended that members note the contents of this report.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Source Documents:

1. FMS Summary
2. 2006/07 Closedown File – Accountancy Section

Contact Officer:

Sue Martin - Principal Accountant

 (01480 388107)

**HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
FINAL ACCOUNTS 2006/2007**

Actual 2005/06 £	Details	Budget 2006/07 £	Actual 2006/07 £	Variation £
EXPENDITURE				
199,709	Employees	208,890	221,182	12,292
35,003	Premises	46,810	23,815	-22,995
34,295	Supplies & Services	28,450	41,604	13,154
5,436	Irrecoverable VAT	0	4,809	4,809
38,130	Central Department Charges	27,000	38,560	11,560
27,633	Capital Charges	27,210	26,954	-256
340,206	Total Expenditure	338,360	356,924	18,564
INCOME				
-636	Donations/Contributions Sales,	-1,160	-304	856
-778	Publications/Plants etc	-930	-529	401
-838	Fishing	-460	-753	-293
-37,653	Catering (Café)	-36,880	-48,566	-11,686
-3,478	Commuted Sum	-1,820	-3,606	-1,786
-14,686	Social Services	-14,960	-14,743	217
-50,410	Room Hire etc	-51,250	-48,963	2,287
-108,479	Total Income	-107,460	-117,464	-10,004
231,727	HDC NET EXPENDITURE	230,900	239,460	8,560

Note:-

Staff based at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park also oversee the following sites as part of their day to day duties:-

Holt Island
St Ives Sites – The Thicket and Wilhorn Meadow
Spring Common
Stukeley Meadows
Ouse Valley Way
Coneygear Park

ANNEX B

OTHER COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES SITES
FINAL ACCOUNTS 2006/07

Actual 2005/06 £	Details	Budget 2006/07 £	Actual 2006/07 £	Variation £
Paxton Pits				
Expenditure				
66,345	Employees	70,320	68,630	-1,690
29,553	Other	25,440	28,945	3,505
0	Irrecoverable VAT	0	739	739
8,263	Central Department Charges	6,460	12,225	5,765
17,579	Capital Charges	18,990	18,339	-651
121,740	Total Expenditure	121,210	128,878	7,668
-18,743	Income	-11,550	-16,801	-5,251
102,997	Net Expenditure	109,660	112,077	2,417
Coneygear Park				
Expenditure				
17,409	Employees	140	21,369	21,229
2,978	Other	0	4,892	4,892
0	Irrecoverable VAT	0	0	0
1,132	Central Department Charges	460	1,855	1,395
0	Capital Charges	0	31,183	31,183
21,519	Total Expenditure	600	59,299	58,699
-22,256	Income	0	-26,261	-26,261
15,369	Net Expenditure	600	33,038	32,438
Spring Common				
Expenditure				
14,495	Employees	15,790	16,099	309
849	Other	9,760	1,044	-8,716
0	Irrecoverable VAT	0	0	0
1,191	Central Department Charges	1,560	1,179	-381
0	Capital Charges	0	0	0
16,535	Total Expenditure	27,110	18,322	-8,788
-1,166	Income	0	-4,330	-4330
15,369	Net Expenditure	27,110	13,992	-13,118
Holt Island				
Expenditure				
1,083	Employees	0	517	517
829	Other	2,200	1,229	-971
1,912	Total Expenditure	2,200	1,746	-454
-475	Income	0	-408	-408
1,437	Net Expenditure	2,200	1,338	-862

Actual 2005/06 £	Details	Budget 2006/07 £	Actual 2006/07 £	Variation £
Barford Road Pocket Park				
Expenditure				
18,643	Employees	19,420	23,093	3,673
5,964	Other	6,220	6,399	179
0	Irrecoverable VAT	0	0	0
1,280	Central Department Charges	1,060	1,868	808
0	Capital Charges	0	0	0
25,887	Total Expenditure	26,700	31,360	4,660
-22,924	Income	-22,770	-23,710	-940
2,963	Net Expenditure	3,930	7,650	3,720
Ouse Valley Way				
Expenditure				
1,320	Employees	0	323	323
1,965	Other	2,220	157	-2,063
3,285	Total Expenditure	2,220	480	-1,740
-0	Income	0	-200	-200
3,285	Net Expenditure	2,220	280	-1,940
Countryside Management *				
Expenditure				
75,003	Employees	56,730	87,661	30,931
18,942	Premises	10,250	12,398	2,148
34,777	Other	38,880	33,432	-5,448
46,026	Central Department Charges	52,430	42,766	-9,664
5,730	Capital Charges	5,750	7,321	1,571
180,478	Total Expenditure	164,040	183,578	19,538
-1,544	Income	-1,060	-16,706	-15,646
178,934	Net Expenditure	162,980	166,872	3,892

* Includes Godmanchester Nursery and one-off projects.

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COUNTRYSIDE JOINT GROUP

12TH OCTOBER 2007

**SENIOR RANGER'S REPORT
APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2007
(Report by Senior Ranger, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park)**

1. STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

- 1.1 Approximately 350 volunteer days have been worked. There has been a noticeable increase in youth offenders work parties. Year 10 work experience meant 8 weeks of 2 or 3 young people each day, the standard has again been high and the students have been willing to work hard. One young man from Hinchingsbrooke School enjoyed his time so much that he came regularly throughout the summer as a volunteer.
- 1.2 Our Countryside Centre Assistant left us in September to take up a post elsewhere within the Council. Following interviews for a replacement, an external appointment has been made, and will be joining us at the end of October.

2. COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE

2.1

Groups 2007	Amount from groups		Schools we worked with	Amount from schools
181	£20,311		30	£4095

3. EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 Courses for adults and children have been successful over the summer, the favourites again involving mini-beasts and pond dipping. Where booking was necessary, we had 146 places reserved.
- 3.2 Responsible dog ownership – PDSA.

4. WIDER DISTRICT

- 4.1 Countryside Services attended the International Bird Fair and was able to promote the district as a tourist centre.
- 4.2 Work parties have been held at various sites including:-
- (a) Spring Common (mowing and constant litter picking)
 - (b) Holt Island – boardwalk repairs and tree clearance
 - (c) Colne Graveyard


- (d) SSSI work at Eastfield House
- (e) Stukeley Meadows
- (f) Godmanchester Nursery
- (g) Ouse Valley Way: - Removal of fallen trees
- (h) Barford Road assisting with fencing and mowing

5. PARK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 Much of the summer work has involved footpath clearance, mowing and thistle removal.
Fencing the wildlife area due to increases in visitors numbers and the need to maintain the under story.
Storm damage - tree work.
Disabled access fishing platform constructed.
Continuation of footpath around the lake- the weather hindered the progress this year.
The improvements to the hard surfaced paths of Chestnut Avenue and the circular path has been funded by a grant of £29,000.

6 MISCELLANEOUS

- 6.1.1 The police and PCSOs have worked alongside rangers and after a poor start to the summer when all benches were burnt (cost of £1,000 to replace), vandalism and anti social behaviour has become virtually nil.
- 6.1.2 Lightening caused damage to the alarm system which initially cost £1000 to repair, but has since had a knock on effect and has cost another £1000 due to surges.
- 6.1.3 The Friends of HCP have been very active. The fun run in April raised £1000, the wine evening a profit of £350.

Contact Officer: Mrs Judith Arnold, Senior Ranger,
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