

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOTES of the meeting of the HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK JOINT GROUP held in the Countryside Centre, Hinchingbrooke Countryside Park on Friday, 26 March 2010.

PRESENT: Councillor M G Baker – Chairman.

Councillor Mrs M Banerjee.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Ms M J Thomas.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J Arnold, Mrs D Breedon, P Knight, Mrs H Taylor and Mrs J Walker.

10. QUORUM

Arising from the meeting being inquorate, Members noted the following matters:-

Senior Ranger's Report

In receiving and noting the contents of the Senior Ranger's report, comment was made as follows:-

(a) **Volunteers**

Members noted that the number of volunteers for the period October 2009 to February 2010 was 335, this was considered to be high given the inclement weather during the winter months.

(b) **Countryside Centre**

Details of the number of users of the Countryside Centre for the period October 2009 to February 2010 were presented. Members were encouraged to note the increase in income over the previous months, although this was mainly attributed to bookings of the Countryside Centre by the District Council for statutory meetings during the building of the new headquarters. It was hoped that the meeting facilities would continue to be well used following the migration of Council meetings back to Pathfinder House.

(c) **Café**

Members were pleased to note that the café continued to be busy and income had exceeded that predicted for the first year, however wages had also been much higher than estimated. Measures have been put in place in an effort to improve efficiency.

(d) **Events and Activities**

Members were presented with details of events over the winter period. Particular attention was drawn to the Junior Rangers Event held in February which had been fully subscribed.

(e) **Wider District**

Members noted that a range of work had been undertaken in other parts of the District under the countryside services remit.

It was reported that 500 hours of volunteer time had gone into works at Holt Island.

The launch of Anglia in Bloom was held at Coneygear Park, which had been entered into the Best Open Space Category in the Britain in Bloom Competition.

(f) **Park Management**

Damage to the rabbit fencing alongside the School was being monitored and repairs were being undertaken where necessary. Tree work had been undertaken free of charge by Shuttleworth College who had carried out the works as a training exercise.

(g) **Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park**

It was reported that the Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park were organising the purchase of a camera for monitoring bird feeders as well as a monitor screen for the café. Funds were also being raised for some new interpretation signs.

(h) **Car Parking Charges**

Councillor Baker expressed discontent that the Joint Group had not yet been consulted over proposed parking charges at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

Chairman