

**UPDATE ON TERMS OF REFERENCE  
(Report by the Head of Administration)**

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> 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 were extended to include all matters relating to countryside and riverside and other parks and open spaces across the District.
- 1.2 Members will recall that subsequent to this decision, discussions took place at meetings of the Countryside Group as to the new remit and status of the Group. During which time, a proposal was made that the new Group should meet on four occasions per year and that two of these meetings should be delivered in the form of site visits across the District.
- 1.3 The Group also expressed a desire to exercise increased decision making over the Countryside Service and to enhance their management responsibilities. This view, together with the constitutional implications of the proposed changes was to be presented in a report by the Head of Administration to a meeting of the Cabinet in February 2008.
- 1.4 At their last meeting, Members were updated on developments with regard to the proposed new terms of reference and method of operation for the Group. A report had been submitted to the Cabinet meeting outlining the proposals but had subsequently been withdrawn from the Agenda.

**2. DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services subsequently met with District Council Officers on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2008 to progress the situation.
- 2.2 At this meeting, the principle of holding two formal and two informal meetings per year was discussed. It was suggested that formal meetings should continue on a biennial basis in October and March and that informal site visits should be arranged twice a year to the Countryside facilities within the District.

- 2.3 The first of these site visits was arranged for 10<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and invitations were extended to Members of the Joint Group, local ward councillors and newly elected councillors. The visit was later cancelled due to lack of interest.
- 2.4 Subsequently at their meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008, the Cabinet reconstituted the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group with their original terms of reference, a copy of which is attached at Appendix A. Councillors M G Baker, Mrs M Banerjee, C R Hyams and Ms M J Thomas were appointed to the Group for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

### **3. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK JOINT GROUP**

- 3.1 As the Cabinet at its meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May decided to reinstate the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group, Members may wish to consider whether there is any need to hold biennial visits to Countryside facilities within the District Council and whether to retain a formal meeting cycle of two per year.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Cabinet Minutes – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2006 and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008  
Countryside Joint Group Minutes – 14<sup>th</sup> March 2008  
Previous reports and agendas of the Countryside Joint Group

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