

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK JOINT GROUP held in the Countryside Centre, Hinchingsbrooke Countryside Park on Friday, 13 October 2017.

PRESENT: Councillor R J West – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs A Dickinson, J E White and T D Sanderson.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of County Councillor D Wells.

16. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That District Councillor R J West be elected as Chairman of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

19. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That District Councillor Mrs A Dickinson be appointed as Vice Chairman of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

20. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP

The Membership of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group for 2017/18 was noted as follows:

(a) Cambridgeshire County Council

Councillor David Wells – provisional appointment, to be confirmed at Cambridgeshire County Council's Communities and Partnership Committee on 26 October 2017.

(b) Huntingdonshire District Council

Councillors Ms A Dickinson, T D Sanderson, R J West and J E White.

The Group expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication given by former County Councillor P Ashcroft.

21. SENIOR RANGER'S REPORT

In receiving and noting the content of the Senior Ranger's report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on park activities for the period March – August 2017, comment was made in relation as follows:

Contractual Arrangements

The Head of Operations advised the Group that negotiations were ongoing with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) regarding the ownership and subsequent lease of the site. The current lease was due to expire in 2026, however Members requested further assurance of security to continue long term investment in the site. Members were advised that further research into future options for running the park were ongoing and that Specialists had been compiling reports which it was anticipated would be ready in the New Year. Cllr Sanderson undertook to further discuss this further with CCC and to report back to a future meeting of the Group.

Volunteers

Volunteers continued to provide significant assistance to the Rangers, details of which were included in the report. Members were advised that several requests for work experience in 2018 had already been received.

Huntingdonshire Beekeepers Association

Members were acquainted with how the Huntingdonshire Beekeepers Association (HBKA) provided assistance for school visits covering pollination which was on the Curriculum. A ramp had been installed to allow access to the hives and funding for this came from Huntingdon Town Council and Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park (FHCP).

Wider District

Cllr West noted his appreciation of efforts made by both staff and volunteers which had lead to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park being recognised as one of four nominees for the best open public space award at the recent Anglia in Bloom awards.

Members noted that cross site working continued and that a system was in place for regular users of facilities to act as site checkers and report back any findings for the team to act upon.

Countryside Centre

Members were advised that short children's craft workshops had been trialled at the Centre over the Summer and had proved very

popular.

Members also noted that the advertising of the facilities provided by the Countryside Centre had proved successful. Members wished to acknowledge their appreciation and recognition of the hard work of Alex at the Centre who had driven much of the recent activity at the Centre which has proved so successful.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group noted that their next meeting would be held on 16 March 2018 at 10am.

Chairman

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