



Minute of Meeting Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 27 May 2016	10:30	Barnbrock Farm, Clyde Muirshiel Park Headquarters, Barnbrock Farm, Kilbarchan, PA10 2PZ

PRESENT

Councillors Bibby, Caldwell, Gilmour and J MacLaren (Renfrewshire Council); Councillors Nelson and Wilson (Inverclyde Council); and Councillors Dickson and Marshall (North Ayrshire Council).

CHAIR

Councillor Gilmour, Chairman, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

D Gatherer, Interim Regional Park Manager; S Jones, Assistant Manager (Regeneration), V Howie, Finance Business Partner (Development & Housing Services), E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer and K Brown, Committee Services Officer (all Renfrewshire Council); J Arthur (Inverclyde Council); and C Sharp (North Ayrshire Council).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

ADDITIONAL ITEM

The Convener intimated that there was an additional item in relation to the Halkhill/Blairpark and Hydro Electric Schemes which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Convener, being of the opinion that the item, which is dealt with at item 13 of this Minute, was urgent in view of the need to consider the matter timeously authorised its consideration.

1 MINUTE OF JOINT COMMITTEE

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 19 February 2016.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 MINUTE OF CONSULTATIVE FORUM

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Consultative Forum held on 19 February 2016.

DECIDED: That the Minute be noted.

3 UNAUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Treasurer relative to the unaudited annual accounts for the Joint Committee for 2015/16 which were attached to the report. The report intimated that the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 had been completed and forwarded to Audit Scotland for audit. The accounts showed a surplus for the year of £47,126 against a budgeted breakeven position.

In accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2014 the unaudited accounts had only been signed by the Treasurer as proper officer. The audited accounts would be signed by the Convener and the Interim Regional Park Manager in accordance with the new guidelines. An amended page 10 of the unaudited annual accounts was tabled.

DECIDED: That the unaudited annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 be noted and that the accounts be further presented to the Joint Committee on completion of the audit.

4 AUDIT SCOTLAND ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Treasure relative to the annual audit plan 2015/16 for the Joint Committee which outlined Audit Scotland's planned activities in their audit for the 2015/16 financial year.

DECIDED: That Audit Scotland's annual audit plan 2015/16 be noted.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

There was submitted a report by the Chief Auditor, Renfrewshire Council, relative to the Internal Audit annual report 2015/16 for the Joint Committee. The report intimated that the public sector internal audit standards required that the Chief Auditor prepare an annual report on the activities of internal audit to demonstrate performance. The report must also provide an audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control system of the audited body.

The annual report for the Joint Committee was attached as an appendix to the report and outlined the role of internal audit, the performance of the internal audit team and the main findings from the internal audit work undertaken in 2015/16 and contained an audit assurance statement.

DECIDED: That the Internal Audit annual report for 2015/16 be noted.

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN 2015/16 AND HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN 2016/17

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to progress made in implementing the key tasks as set out in the Health and Safety Plan 2015/16, a copy which formed Appendix 1 to the report.

The Health and Safety Plan 2016/17 formed Appendix 2 to the report and continued to provide the framework for further improvements in health and safety within the park.

It was proposed that future Health and Safety Plans contain more detail in relation to missed targets. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

(a) That the progress made in implementing the key tasks within the Health and Safety Plan 2015/16 be noted;

(b) That the Health and Safety Plan 2016/17 and the efforts to meet the key tasks as set out in the plan be noted; and

(c) That future Health and Safety Plans contain more detail in relation to missed targets.

7 QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager providing information on the quarterly health and safety monitoring for the period January to March 2016 which detailed accident statistics, management action and training.

The report intimated that there had been no RIDDOR reportable accidents this quarter and one accident at Castle Semple. There had been two health and safety related courses held during the period with ten members of staff attending hedge cutting and strimmer training and one health and safety related Toolbox Talk delivered.

The report highlighted that further investigations were required to fully rectify the problem of water ingress at the roof of Muirshiel Visitor Centre.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that there were no RIDDOR reportable accidents or occupational diseases and a low number of other accidents considering the range of activities that took place in the Park; and

(b)That it be noted that the problem of water ingress at Muirshiel Visitor Centre continued to be under investigation and had improved following repairs.

8 QUARTERLY ABSENCE STATISTICS

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the quarterly absence statistics for the Regional Park Authority for the period 1 January to 20 March 2016. The report provided information relating to the absence statistics and reasons for absence.

DECIDED:

(a)That the quarterly absence statistics for the period 1 January to 20 March 2016 be noted; and

(b)That it be noted that the Interim Regional Park Manager would submit reports relative to absence statistics to future meetings of the Joint Committee.

9 PEDAL THE PARK 2016

There was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the success of the 'Pedal the Park' event 2016.

The report intimated that 75km and 100km rides had taken place. A total of 250 cyclists participated in these events with around 80% opting for the longer route. Feed stations were located at Greenock Cut and Duke of Edinburgh volunteers marshalled the route along with members of Ride63 cycle club. A time trial event was also held for para-cyclists with the Scotland West Special Olympics cycling squad participating in the event. It was noted that these events had raised £1,210 for CLIC Sargent Cancer Care for Children.

Within the Park ethos of continually looking to develop services and in light of reduced resources within the Park, this service development would be one of the ways the Park celebrated and developed cycling. Cycling participation in Scotland had increased by 142% since 2009 and this was an area which required development within the Park. The Pedal the Park event would be an annual event within the Park and the report detailed the measures of success for future events.

DECIDED:

(a)That the continued development of cycling related services within the Park be supported; and

(b)That the Park's continued efforts to increase income using the existing staff skill base within the Park be recognised.

10 UPLANDS PROJECT

Under reference to item 3 of the Minute of the meeting of this Joint Committee held on 12 September 2014 there was submitted a report by the Interim Regional Park Manager relative to the potential Upland Project.

The report intimated that the Upland Project proposal had emerged through discussions with officers.

After review by officers it was considered that many elements of the proposal might have been challenging to deliver.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that following consideration by officers of the Regional Park and relevant council staff the Upland Project referred to the Joint Committee in September 2014 would not be pursued; and

(b) That it be noted that the Interim Regional Park Manager would continue to investigate and pursue opportunities for new and emerging projects that supported the aims of the Regional Park in relation to leisure activity, health, education, outdoor learning and environmental management.

11 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

There was submitted a report by the Clerk relative to the recent audit tender exercise conducted by Audit Scotland on behalf of the Accounts Commission for Scotland (for local government) and the Auditor General for Scotland (for central government, health and further education bodies).

The report intimated that following the completion of the tender and consultation with the firms, the auditor of Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee for financial years 2016/17 to 2020/21 would be Audit Scotland.

DECIDED: That it be noted that Audit Scotland had been appointed as auditor of Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee for financial years 2016/17 to 2020/21.

12 CONSULTATIVE FORUM MEMBERS

Under reference to item of the Minute of the meeting of the Consultative Forum held on 19 February 2016 there was submitted a report by the Clerk relative to Consultative Forum members.

The report intimated that the Minute of Agreement of the Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee stated that 'The Park Consultative Forum shall consist of up to 35 members including the Chair and two Vice Chairs of the Park Authority who shall be ex officio members of the Park Consultative Forum. The Park Authority shall co-opt up to a further 32 non local authority members who shall be representative of the national interest in the countryside, tourism, recreation and conservation in the Clyde Muirshiel area and of appropriate local interests within that area. Without prejudice to the foregoing generalities the interests to be represented may include: farming, land ownership, enterprise, tourism, rambling, voluntary organisations, outdoor sports, protection of the natural heritage, wildlife and of the coastal strip'.

Membership of the Consultative Forum currently stood at 23 members and these members were detailed in the appendix to the report.

DECIDED: That the current membership of the Consultative Forum be noted.

13 **HALKSHILL/BLAIRPARK AND HYDRO ELECTRIC SCHEMES**

The Convener intimated that he had facilitated a recent meeting of interested parties in relation to the proposed Halkshill/Blairpark project and associated Hydro Electric Schemes.

Mr Blair, Largs Community Council updated members in relation to the proposed project and advised that the Forestry Commission would soon publish the Environmental Impact Assessment for the project giving relevant parties 28 days to respond.

The Interim Regional Park Manager advised that the Park Authority had held meetings with HS Limited and had raised concerns regarding the amount of sitka spruce being planted; and a road being established through Scottish Natural Heritage wildland near to a Schedule 1 bird nesting site.

The Convener advised that this matter would be discussed at the meeting of the Consultative Forum being held immediately following this meeting and advised that members should keep a watching brief.

DECIDED:

(a) That the update be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that this matter would be further discussed at the meeting of the Consultative Forum immediately following this meeting.

14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

DECIDED: That it be noted that the next meeting of the Clyde Muirshiel Park Authority Joint Committee would be held at 10.30 am on 2 September 2016 in the Greenock Cut Visitor Centre, Cornalees Bridge, Inverclyde.

After the meeting had closed, Councillor Nelson expressed his disappointment that an item of business relative to the outcome of the Corlic Hill Wind Farm public enquiry not been placed on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.