

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**RECORD OF DECISION OF THE COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY
COMMITTEE**

Decision Made: 11 January 2012

**INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRONIC GATE COUNTERS AT COBTREE
MANOR PARK**

Issue for Decision

To consider the introduction of electronic gate counters at Cobtree Manor Park in order to count the number of visitors coming into the Park by vehicle.

Decision Made

1. That agreement be given to the introduction of electronic gate counters at the main entrance to Cobtree Manor Park in order to count the number of visitors coming into the Park by vehicle.
2. That agreement be given to expenditure of £2,005.50 to cover the cost of installing electronic gate counters at Cobtree Rural Park.
3. That the visitor figures should be reported to the Committee on a quarterly basis.

Reasons for Decision

Accurate visitor figures are essential for measuring the success of the Master Plan and whether visitor numbers increase as a result of the implementation of improvements.

Accurate visitor figures will make it easier to sell concessions in the Park in future, should such sales be considered to be for the benefit of the Charity.

Visitor figures are currently collected by the Park Ranger counting cars in the car park each week and this is then recorded. This is not particularly accurate, but does give some indication as to the number of people visiting the Park. The introduction of an electronic counter will be more accurate as it continuously counts all vehicles and will free up the Park Ranger for more important tasks. The new gate counter will count all vehicles entering the Park; an average number of occupants will then be allocated to each vehicle to produce a number of visitors. At present most people come to the Park by vehicle so it is not considered worthwhile

counting pedestrians separately, although this could be done in the future (at extra cost).

The appropriate software has already been purchased by the Council as part of the Mote Park project, which means that the cost of installing and running the equipment in Cobtree Manor Park is considerably reduced.

Once the equipment is installed there will be no long term revenue implications to the Committee, other than if the equipment is damaged. The only ongoing cost is the replacement of the batteries annually and this will be minimal. The counters at Mote Park are downloaded quarterly. This takes approximately half an hour and can be done at Cobtree by existing staff. The data is then formatted to show monthly visitor figures.

Alternatives Considered and Why Rejected

The alternative action is to continue counting manually at set times. This is not considered appropriate as it is both time consuming and inaccurate.

Background Papers

Cobtree Manor Park Master Plan

Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Head of Change and Scrutiny by: 20 January 2012.
