

AGENDA

COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Wednesday 13 July 2011

Time: 5.00 p.m.

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Garland, Greer, Hotson and
J.A. Wilson (Chairman)

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Visiting Members
3. Disclosures by Members and Officers
4. Disclosures of Lobbying
5. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.
6. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2011

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Continued Over/:

Issued on 5 July 2011

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Alison Broom

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ**

7. Report of the Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services - Master Plan Funding - Cobtree Manor Park

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JUNE 2011

Present: Councillor J. A. Wilson (Chairman) and
Councillors Garland, Greer and Hotson

Also Present: Mr R Hext and Mr L Martin –
Cobtree Charity Trust Limited

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor J A Wilson be elected Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year 2011/12.

4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Garland be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year 2011/12.

5. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

6. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

7. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items be taken in public as proposed.

8. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed.

9. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 49 – Funding Proposals for the Master Plan – Cobtree Manor Park
The Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services reported that the Charity Commission had been approached to release funds from the permanent endowment and a response was awaited. The Officers had also met with the Heritage Lottery which had indicated that it could make funds available but would not be happy to see the scheme start in part before it had considered a bid. He indicated that he would report on the options available to the Committee at a special meeting to be held before Cabinet on 13 July 2011.

10. ACCOUNTS 2010/11

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance and Customer Services regarding the Accounts 2010/11.

RESOLVED: That draft Report and Financial Statement for the financial year 2010/11 be noted.

11. PARK RANGER PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Cobtree Officer setting out the work of the Park Ranger since the last meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the actions taken by the Park Ranger as detailed in Appendix A to the report of the Cobtree Officer be noted.

12. GARDEN COTTAGE FINAL ACCOUNT

The Committee considered the report of the Cobtree Officer setting out the final costs arising from the underpinning works at Garden Cottage including additional costs funded from the contract contingency sum.

RESOLVED: That the final account for the underpinning works at Garden Cottage including the additional costs which were required to be met from the contract contingency fund be noted.

13. COBTREE MANOR ESTATE - RISK MANAGEMENT

DECISION MADE

That the Charity's Risk Assessment document attached as an Appendix to the report of the Cobtree Officer be endorsed.

For full details of this Record of Decision, please follow this link:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=457&T=5>

14. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011/14

DECISION MADE

That the Asset Management Plan for the Charity known as the Cobtree Manor Estate, attached as an Appendix to the report of the Cobtree Officer, be endorsed.

For full details of this Record of Decision, please follow this link:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=458&T=5>

15. GUIDED TOUR OF THE ESTATE

The Committee considered the report of the Cobtree Officer on the annual guided tour of the Cobtree Estate to be arranged for September.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that a date will be set in early September for the annual guided tour of the Cobtree Estate and that other Members of the Council, the Trustees to the Cobtree Charity Trust Limited and those Officers most closely associated with the operation of the Cobtree Estate will be invited on the basis set out in Appendix B to the report of the Cobtree Officer.

16. MR BRIAN LATIMER, COBTREE OFFICER - VOTE OF THANKS

The Committee was informed that Mr Brian Latimer was leaving the post of Cobtree Officer.

RESOLVED: That the thanks of the Committee be given to Mr Latimer for the work he has undertaken at the Cobtree Estate for many years.

17. DURATION OF MEETING

5.00 p.m. to 5.27 p.m.

Agenda Item 7

THE CHARITY KNOWN AS COBTREE MANOR ESTATE

COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE

13 July 2011

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATORY SERVICES

Report prepared by: Jason Taylor

Date Issued: 5 July 2011

1. MASTER PLAN FUNDING - COBTREE MANOR PARK

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the options for funding the Master Plan which was accepted by the Committee on 9th March 2011.

1.2 Recommendation of the Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services

1.2.1 That the Committee agrees and approves the following:-

i) To progress with a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Parks for People Scheme for £500,000 towards the total cost of the Cobtree Manor Park Master Plan;

ii) To agree for this bid to be submitted in time for the August 31st 2011 deadline;

iii) To agree in principle to match funding 50% of the HLF Parks for People application.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 At the meeting of 9th March 2011 the Committee agreed the principles of the Revised Master Plan for the future enhancement of Cobtree Manor Park.

1.3.2 This Plan included estimated project costs of £873,300 and it was proposed to fund the project from the Charity's permanent endowment. This course of action needs to be approved by the Charity Commission. A verbal update on the situation regarding this

approval may be available at the meeting on 13th July, 2011.

- 1.3.3 After approval is confirmed by the Charity Commission it was proposed to complete the works in the Master Plan in sections, beginning with the installation of the play area at a cost of £250,000.
- 1.3.4 Following a site visit attended by Officers, the Chairman of the Committee and the HLF it is proposed that whilst waiting for a decision from the Charity Commission a bid to the HLF Parks for People scheme be progressed and submitted by 31st August 2011.
- 1.3.5 If this bid is successful it will give the Charity Committee the option to maximise the funding available to them by working with the HLF; and if the bid is unsuccessful then nothing has been lost. In the event of a successful application the Committee would not be committed to working with the HLF but could agree to proceed in another direction.
- 1.3.6 Further information on the HLF Parks for People scheme and its requirements are available at <http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowtoApply/programmes/Pages/parksforpeople.aspx>
- 1.3.7 Applicants for grants up to £1m must provide at least 5% of the project costs in match funding. It has been implied by HLF that the higher the match funding element of a bid the more likely it is to succeed. With this in mind Officers have initially suggested that if 50% funding was offered then this would hopefully show commitment to the HLF as well as allowing the Charity to maximise its available funding.
- 1.3.8 There are however a number of issues that the Committee does need to consider:
- 1.3.9 The HLF will only fund "whole projects" so when the Charity Commission do approve the release of the permanent endowment the installation of the play area would have to be delayed until the whole project is ready to start.
- 1.3.10 Match funding required by the HLF cannot be backdated.
- 1.3.11 The current Master Plan does not fit the HLF project outcomes exactly so some additional work, particularly consultation and additional historical research would have to be carried out. This is likely to take the current Master Plan cost from £873,300 to around £1m.

1.3.12 The HLF Parks for People scheme is a two part competitive bidding process which if successful will take around two years before work could begin on site. The bid could be turned down by the HLF at any time in this process.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could decide not to proceed with the HLF application and just to use the permanent endowment, once approved by the Charity Commission, but this is not recommended as this would restrict the opportunity for the Committee to maximise the resources available to them.

1.5 Impact on Charity Objectives

1.5.1 The whole essence of the Master Plan is to seek to better meet the objects of the Charity by increasing the attractiveness of the Manor Park and thus the number of visitors.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Risk assessments will need to be reviewed at each stage of the application process. The greatest risk is that the bid to the HLF Parks for People Programme could be turned down at any stage.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

Financial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staffing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considerations for Disabled Persons	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental/Sustainable Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.7.2 **Financial** - The funding implications are set out in the body of this report.

1.7.3 **Staffing** - Additional Officer time will be required to put the bid together.

Background Documents

Cobtree Manor Park Master Plan, Report and Decision of 9th March 2011

NO REPORT WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THIS BOX BEING COMPLETED

Is this a Key Decision? Yes No

If yes, when did it appear in the Forward Plan? _____

Is this an Urgent Key Decision? Yes No

Reason for Urgency