

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 APRIL 2010**

**Present:** Councillor Garland (Chairman) and  
Councillors Greer and Mrs Ring

**Also** Councillor FitzGerald  
**Present:** Mr R Corben - Cobtree Charity Trust Limited

72. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Ash.

73. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor FitzGerald indicated his possible wish to speak on all items on the agenda.

74. **URGENT ITEM**

The Chairman stated that, in his opinion, the report of the Cobtree Officer setting out the results of the public consultation exercise on the proposals shown in the draft master plan should be taken as an urgent item as the closing date for the return of the questionnaires was after the agenda for the meeting had been published.

75. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

76. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

77. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

**RESOLVED:** That the item on Part II of the agenda be considered in public, but the information contained therein should remain private.

78. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

79. FINANCIAL POSITION 2009/10

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance setting out details of the financial position in respect of the Golf Course and the Manor Park as at 28 February 2010. The report also included details of capital expenditure, the projected loan repayment position, deposits held and total investments held. It was noted that, with regard to the Golf Course, there was still a variance on employee costs as the Charity was continuing to make pension payments in respect of staff transferred to the management contractor. It was hoped that the situation would be resolved in the near future, but the payments would be recharged to the contractor. As at 31 March 2010, the balance outstanding on the loan due to the Borough Council was £26,000 and it was projected that the loan would be repaid this year. The market value of investments held was now £1.36million.

RESOLVED: That the financial position in respect of the Golf Course and the Manor Park be noted.

80. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

DECISION MADE:

That King & Taylor be re-appointed as external auditors for the Charity for the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=323>

81. PARK RANGER - PROGRESS REPORT

DECISION MADE:

1. That the progress report be noted.
2. That the Chairman should write on behalf of the Committee to thank those individuals who have contributed effort as volunteers over the period; in particular, the haulage company, DHL.
3. That the proposed course of action to establish a "Friends" Group for Cobtree Manor Park be endorsed.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=324>

82. COBTREE MANOR ESTATE - GATE OPENING AND CLOSING

DECISION MADE:

1. That Sight and Sound Security Services be engaged by a written contract to be in such terms as approved by the Head of Legal Services to open and close the gates at Cobtree Manor Park for an initial period of one year at an estimated cost of £11,500 (including a sum to cover additional charges for releasing vehicles locked in the Park after the gates are closed) and that the estimates for the financial year 2010/11 be adjusted accordingly.
2. That agreement be given in principle to the implementation of arrangements to recover where possible from the individuals concerned the additional costs of releasing vehicles locked in the Park after the advertised time for closure.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=325>

83. COBTREE MANOR ESTATE - ADDITIONAL TREE WORKS

DECISION MADE:

That an additional sum of £6,000 be included in the estimates for the current financial year to allow extra tree works to be carried out at the Cobtree Manor Park.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=326>

84. 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/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=327>

85. COBTREE MANOR PARK - MASTER PLAN

DECISION MADE:

1. That the draft master plan for the future development of the Cobtree Manor Park be endorsed with the following amendments:-

- (i) That the proposed overspill car parking area be deleted and that appropriate improvements to the existing car parking area and surfacing be investigated instead.
  - (ii) That consideration of the proposed cycle route be deferred pending reconfiguration of the route and that consideration of the proposed fitness trail be deferred until such time that the demand for the facility has been proven.
  - (iii) That the proposed dog agility area be deleted.
  - (iv) That the concerns expressed about existing maintenance standards, particularly in respect of the existing pond, be noted and that the current general improvements to the Park should continue to be supported.
  - (v) That a more interesting play area catering for a wider age range of children be included.
  - (vi) That although the proposed new lake should be retained within the master plan, no action be taken at this stage to investigate the technical feasibility of providing this feature.
  - (vii) That suggestions for the north west corner of the site, the Animal Cemetery and a tree top walk be included.
2. That the Officers be requested to report back to a future meeting with detailed proposals for the launch and implementation of the master plan, including the prioritisation of the elements to be progressed to detailed design stage with defined phasing, costings and funding arrangements.
3. That the Officers be authorised to approach the Charity Commission, in liaison with the Cobtree Charity Trust Limited, to seek approval to use part of the Charity's permanent endowment fund to implement the enhancements included in the master plan.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=328>

86. DURATION OF MEETING

9.00 a.m. to 10.10 a.m.