

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cobtree Manor Estate Committee

15th January 2014

REPORT OF THE COBTREE OFFICER

Report prepared by Joanna Joyce

1. Staffing at Cobtree Manor Park

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the need for additional staffing at Cobtree Manor Park over the summer period of 2014.

1.2 Recommendation of the Cobtree Officer

It is recommended that additional members of staff are employed to cover the period when the staff currently in the park are not scheduled to work, during the busiest periods of the year.

1.2.1 That, as with the summer of 2013, additional members of staff are employed to cover periods when the park is unmanned; from the last weekend in March to the last weekend in September; all school days from 3-8pm (or closing time if earlier) and weekends and bank holidays from 11am to 6.30pm.

1.2.2 That MBS staff are used on overtime for littering at weekends for 2 hours per visit.

1.2.3 That the future staffing requirements of the park are reviewed to take into consideration the requirements of the visitor centre, when completed; and future operational needs of the park once the charity's income from the golf course is finalized following the re-tender next year.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The large number of visitor's now using Cobtree Park has led to the need for additional staffing to collect litter, increase maintenance and be available to deal with any issues from members of the public as they arise. The current staffing pattern does not allow for weekend or evening working, the points at which the park is at its busiest.

1.3.2 **Exempt Appendix A** details the staffing options and shows that the recommended staffing solution using agency staffing is the cheapest option for providing staff to cover those periods when the park is currently unmanned. This was used last summer when it worked well.

1.3.3 Delaying a full staffing review will allow for the re-tender of the golf course to be undertaken, giving a better picture of the charity's resources going forward. It will also enable the requirements of the visitor centre to be taken into consideration.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The alternative is not to provide additional staffing cover over weekend and evenings and littering at weekends. This is not recommended as with visitor numbers increasing from around 40,000 to around 333,000 per year not littering or having staff available at weekends and evenings is likely to lead to an increased number of complaints due to increased litter and no one being around to deal with issues as they arise.

1.5 Impact on Charity Objectives

1.5.1 Staffing the park directly supports the objects of the charity.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There is a risk that failing to increase the staffing in the park will lead to increased litter and complaints related to this at the weekend when the park is at its busiest.

1.6.2 There is a risk that if the financial implications of additional staff are not carefully considered this could lead to increased expenditure not being correctly budgeted for. By imposing a fixed rate on the agency and not exceeding the number of additional hours requested the costs can be controlled. There are sufficient funds to cover this for the year.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial
2. Staffing
3. Legal
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

X
X

- 5. Environmental/Sustainable Development
- 6. Community Safety
- 7. Human Rights Act
- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

1.7.2 Additional staff will lead to increased expenditure. The financial implications for each option are discussed in **Exempt Appendix A**.

1.7.3 The costs of either agency or directly employed staff are outlined in **Exempt Appendix A**.

1.7.4 As the post is only for one year there are no long term staffing implications.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Exempt Appendix A outlines the costs of different staffing options.

1.8.2 Background Documents

Cobtree Manor Park Master Plan.

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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