

**Cobtree Manor Estate Charity
Committee****26th January 2017**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes**Cobtree Manor Park Visitor Centre/Café Update**

Final Decision-Maker	Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Jason Taylor – Parks and Leisure Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Boxley

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. The Committee is asked to note the contents of Visitor Centre/Café Update.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all -
- Ensuring that there are good leisure and culture facilities

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee	26 th January 2017

Cobtree Manor Park Visitor Centre/Café Update

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The information in the report is to update the committee on the performance of the Cobtree Manor Park Visitor Centre as agreed at the Committees 3rd August 2016 meeting.

1.2 Within this report is a table which shows the financial performance of the Visitor Centre/ Café since it opened in August 2015.

1.3 Appendix 1 gives an update of the Cobtree Manor Park Café Business Review which initially took place in July 2016. It details the perceived problems at the time and the remedial action taken.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The Cobtree Manor Visitor Centre/ Café opened in August 2015, and has been operational for 18 months.

2.2 The financial performance of the café and visitor centre is included in the report on the Cobtree Manor Estate Financial Position elsewhere on this agenda. The table below is taken from that report shows the full year budget net expenditure for the café/visitor centre of £72,940, but the forecast outturn is now predicting a net expenditure of £94,670, which is £21,370 greater than the budget.

Cobtree Visitor Centre / Café	Budget Year to Date	Actual Year to Date	Variance	Budget Full Year	Forecast Outturn Year End	Variance	2015/16 Outturn
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Employee costs	73,280	97,413	-24,133	98,710	120,000	-21,290	93,183
Running Costs	118,050	126,394	-8,344	159,560	170,000	-10,440	63,180
Set-up Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	33,515
Income from sales	-180,530	-196,505	15,975	-220,000	-230,000	10,000	-98,662
Rechargeable costs	26,000	26,000	0	34,670	34,670	0	1,450
Total	36,800	53,302	-16,502	72,940	94,670	-21,730	92,666

2.3 Below is a breakdown of the month on month café/ visitor centre costs and income from when the facility opened to the current time

	Salaries	Agency Staff costs	Total Staff costs	Catering Provision costs	Staff & Catering Provision costs	Average Service costs	Total costs	Sales (Income)	Outcome
Aug-15	2392	5719	8111	4709	12820	2844	15664	-13591	2073
Sep-15	3822	6485	10307	6562	16869	2844	19713	-16349	3364
Oct-15	3179	9883	13062	8766	21828	2844	24672	-18972	5700
Nov-15	2768	7725	10493	8471	18964	2844	21808	-8729	13079
Dec-15	3159	7779	10938	3949	14887	2844	17731	-9730	8001
Jan-16	2205	6344	8549	1314	9863	2844	12707	-8367	4340
Feb-16	3584	7727	11311	5029	16340	2844	19184	-12392	6792
Mar-16	6064	5191	11255	2625	13880	2844	16724	-14082	2642
	27173	56853	84026	41425	125451	22752	148203	-102212	45991
Apr-16	6185	5314	11499	8393	19892	3286	23178	-21027	2151
May-16	6403	2850	9253	6464	15717	3286	19003	-19805	-802
Jun-16	8024	2403	10427	11493	21920	3286	25206	-19818	5388
Jul-16	9632	854	10486	11704	22190	3286	25476	-39893	-14418
Aug-16	10674	3526	14200	7535	21735	3286	25021	-32848	-7827
Sep-16	12667	1348	14015	17293	31308	3286	34594	-21179	13415
Oct-16	10672	453	11126	15058	26184	3286	29470	-21605	7864
Nov-16	9726	47	9773	10162	19935	3286	23221	-10942	12279
Dec-16	7287	0	7287	3409	10696	3286	13982	-11888	2094
	81271	16795	98066	91511	189577	29574	219151	-199005	20145

2.4 Observations from this table are:

2.5 There is now less reliance on employment agency staff, which has resulted in a reduction in total staffing costs. Agency staff are now only used as a last resort to cover staff sickness.

2.6 Sales (income) has continually increased. Particularly when compared to the same months in 2015.

2.7 Service costs include utilities, waste disposal, cleaning, building maintenance, IT and equipment servicing. These are costs of running the whole visitor centre building not just the café.

2.8 The café is now attracting customers who only come to the park to eat. This not only results in café income but also increases car parking income.

2.9 Currently we are looking at ways to improve the speed that customers are served at busy times, by increasing the counter space to allow for self-service and a second till. It is hoped that this will include an outdoor serving hatch to reduce queuing inside the building.

2.10 Enclosed as Appendix 1 is the update of the Cobtree Café Business Review previously brought to this Committee for information.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 The committee could choose not to note the information contained in this report and Appendix 1, and do nothing, however the committee has requested regular updates on the Visitor Centre/ Café performance.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that the information in this report and Appendix 1 regarding the performance of the Café/ Visitor Centre is noted.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 The committee has previously resolved to receive regular updates on performance of the Café/ Visitor Centre.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Any comments from the Committee will be passed on to the relevant parties.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objects and the corporate priorities of the Council.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Risk Management	Risks to running the estate are dealt with in the annual Estate Risk Management Report.	
Financial	Financial risks are considered in the ongoing finance updates.	Cobtree Finance Officer
Staffing	No implications.	
Legal	No implications.	Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership
Equality Impact Needs	No implications.	

Assessment		
Environmental/Sustainable Development	No implications.	
Community Safety	No implications.	
Human Rights Act	No implications.	
Procurement	No implications.	
Asset Management	No implications.	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Cobtree Manor Park Update Report January 2017

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None