



CLARE TOWN COUNCIL

8 August 2012

Update on Clare Castle Country Park

Clare Town Councillors presented the Council's business plan for the Country Park to a panel of Suffolk County Councillors and officers on Tuesday 31 July. The business plan, including appendices, ran to over 250 pages. We also showed a video made by our very supportive community groups and this can be viewed on YouTube by searching for Clare Castle Country Park.

We were promised a response on 3 August as to which group would become SCC's preferred organisation for further discussions on the transfer of ownership of the park. The letter we have received states that SCC is "minded" to make Clare Town Council the preferred organisation but they have asked us to review certain financial aspects of our proposal and to return for another meeting at the end of August. We do, however, know that we are the only group with which SCC is now holding further meetings.

The issue under discussion is that SCC has offered a fixed sum as a contribution to bring the park buildings into a state of repair. Clare Town Council has undertaken a detailed assessment of the likely actual financial costs and this figure is higher than the fixed contribution proposed by SCC. Your Councillors are very clear that SCC will need to find ways to meet the actual cost of putting the buildings back into an acceptable condition.

As you will be aware, part of our plan once we own the park is to have the Goods Shed used by youth groups such as the Youth Club, the Budding Artists and the Scouts. Instead of making our youngsters wait a few more months we have been trying to get SCC to agree to give Clare Town Council an interim, short term lease on the Goods Shed while discussions on the transfer of ownership are continuing. This would enable our youth groups to make use of the facility immediately. Sadly, SCC has not agreed to this.

We will continue to work in the very best interests of our community.

Keith Haisman
Chairman
Clare Town Council