



ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE CHARITABLE TRUST BOARD
20 MARCH 2023

Report Title: Go Ape Mini-Land Rover Proposal

Report of: Emma Dagnes, Chief Executive Officer

Purpose: To seek approval of a proposal submitted by Go Ape for a new activity in Alexandra Park.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - N/A

1. Recommendation

- i. To approve the proposal by Alexandra Park leaseholder, Go Ape, for a new mini-Land Rover activity, subject to planning permission and consideration of any advice or feedback from the Advisory and Consultative Committees.
- ii. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to negotiate a suitable lease agreement subject to satisfactory Charities Act Report and proposed ecological development plan, and;
- iii. To authorise the Council's legal officer to seal the lease, at the appropriate time.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Go Ape have operated a high ropes adventure course in the Park since 2017, investing around £1,000,000 and providing experiences for approximately 400,000 visitors.
- 2.2 To encourage adventurous activities for younger visitors, some of whom may not yet be tall enough to climb the junior ropes course, Go Ape are proposing a mini-Land Rover activity.
- 2.5 The Advisory and Consultative Committee were invited to consider the proposal on 9th March and comments are included below.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The Go Ape team first approached the Trust with a proposal for two new activities: mini-Land Rovers and Axe Throwing. Following initial discussions about the suitability and noise impacts, the proposal for an Axe Throwing activity was declined.
- 3.2 The mini-Land Rovers are fully functioning electric cars specifically designed for children between the ages of 3-11 years and operate at a speed of up to 5 miles an hour.

- 3.3 The project would require Go Ape obtaining planning permission. The infrastructure requirements include a delineated track around the field, a welcome building, storage container, an additional gate in the fence, new steps on the existing steep bank and associated signage.
- 3.4 The new welcome cabin and storage facility would enable the Go Ape team to hold ground-based games too and the Trust's Executive Team have discussed consequently renaming the area '*the Activity Field*'.
- 3.5 The area would be improved as part of the plan, for example creation of a wildflower meadow and native planting. The details of an ecological approval plan are subject to discussions with the Park Team.

4. Tenure

- 4.1 A 10-year supplementary lease has been proposed by Go Ape and this would be subject to the Trust's obligations to obtain the best rent reasonably achievable. The current lease for the high ropes course runs to 2038.

5. Public Benefit

- 5.1 The proposal has been considered through the Trust's internal Strategic Vision process and has progressed to this stage. The proposed activity is in line with our mission to be an all-year-round cultural visitor destination, where people come to be entertained, engage with our fascinating past, are inspired to explore their creativity and experience our unique heritage setting.
- 5.2 The former deer enclosure has remained closed since the deer were moved and has been used only occasionally for the Segway activity. This proposal offers a new use for this area with the benefits of the proposed ecological improvements and increases the opportunity for younger/ smaller children to participate in the Go Ape experience.
- 5.3 The advice of the Advisory and Consultative Committees is used to assist the Board when considering the proposal. The Functions of the Advisory Committee as laid down in the Alexandra Park and Palace Act 1985 include to promote the charitable objects and to consider and advise the Trustees on any proposal which require planning permission and the furtherance of recreation and leisure in the Park and Palace.
- 5.4 The Advisory and Consultative Committees were consulted at their joint meeting on 9th March and noted that the proposed area was currently fenced off and so there would be no loss of access to the public. There was general support for the new activity which would encourage families with young children to participate, provided the infrastructure was installed and operated with care, to protect the environment. Whilst the wild area of the Park would be sacrificed, it would benefit through the developments agreed between the Trust and Go Ape (for example, wildflower meadows or a pond to diversify the wildlife).
- 5.5 An additional comment was received by email from a Consultative Committee member suggesting that the Trust ensure the proposals include the provision of toilets.

6. Risks

- 6.1 There are no financial risks for the Trust in association with the proposal. The proposed activity would fall within Go Ape's public liability insurance, as the leaseholder for the site on which the activity takes place.
- 6.2 Health & Safety – Go Ape has appropriate risk assessment procedures in place and has shared a copy of its generic risk assessment for the operation of the Mini-Land Rovers. A site specific risk assessment would be completed by the site team prior to operation.
- 6.3 Reputational risk – Go Ape is a trusted leaseholder with a proven history of meeting the terms of its lease and very few complaints have been received by the Trust from visitors and local residents. The Trust would manage any complaints in relation to noise and disturbance associated with the additional activity in accordance with current policy and procedures.

7. Legal Implications

The Council's Head of Legal & Governance has been consulted and has no comments.

8. Financial Implications

The Council's Chief Financial Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Go Ape proposal document.

10. Background Papers – None