

Report Title: **Park Update**

Report of: **Mark Evison, Park Manager**

1. Purpose

1.1 To update the Joint Committee on the recent considerations of the Board in relation to the Trust's properties and concessions in the park.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the committee notes the content of the report.

Report Authorised by: **Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive...**



Contact Officer: **Mark Evison, Park Manager, Alexandra Park & Palace Charitable Trust,
Alexandra Palace Way, Wood Green, LONDON N22 7AY
Tel No. 020 8365 2121**

3. Executive Summary

3.1 Leases have been granted for the Old Station building and a further seven properties or parts in various buildings around the park. The park tenants' activities include various community or business uses that either promote the Trust's charitable objects directly, or are ancillary to the use of a public park.

4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

4.1 N/A

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

5.1 N/A

6. Background

- 6.1 At its meeting of 29th November 2011 the Board considered an annual Property report which give an overview of the situation and focuses on some of the details which require Board decisions. This report was not published as it contained information classified as exempt under paragraphs 2 & 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.).
- 6.2 This report is an update for the Advisory and Consultative Committees based on those parts of the Board's discussions which can be made public.
- 6.3 The Trustees have powers to let any part or parts of the park, up to 40 acres (16.2ha), for the purposes of recreation or for playgrounds in connection with any school, but not more than 20 acres (8.1ha) can be let for purposes of recreation other than games. The current area leased is approximately 30 acres (12.1ha), of which under 10 acres (4.0ha) is let for 'purposes other than games'.

7. Individual Tenant Updates

- 7.1 **The Old Station:** The lease for the Old Station building has recently been renewed. The tenant, CUFOS (Community Use For the Old Station), runs the building as a 'village hall' for hire and about 25 local groups meet there regularly. They include a preschool, several toddler groups and a range of educational and leisure activities for children and adults. These include language, art and drama classes, several bands and health groups like yoga, Weightwatchers and the local Multiple Sclerosis Society. It is also hired out for private parties at weekends and so is fully used seven days a week
- 7.2 **The Garden Centre:** The developments proposed last year by the tenant, Capital Gardens Ltd, have not been progressed. A new proposal to erect a small glass gazebo was granted planning permission and it has been installed as a cut flower outlet.
- 7.3 **The Islands:** The redevelopment of the Islands Building by the tenant, 345 Preschools Ltd, has now been completed. The building is much improved and fit for purpose. The grounds have also been improved with a new patio and fencing.
- 7.4 **The Actual Workshop:** The Little Dinosaurs soft-play centre has been operating in the Actual Workshop since Christmas 2009. They calculate approximately 29,000 visits by children and 21,000 paying adults per annum.
- 7.5 Members will recall a planning enforcement case was taken against the tenant. The necessary remedial works were completed by the deadline of 30th November 2011.
- 7.6 Some outstanding issues with regard to planning conditions have been raised (exterior lighting and signage). The Board agreed that the Chief Executive and Park Manager meet with the tenant to discuss these issues. This meeting is likely to take place sometime in the New Year.
- 7.7 **The pitch and putt course:** This has been operated successfully by Golfwise Ltd since 2007. The tenant's proposal to re-landscape the course was withdrawn some time ago, but the Tenant is still considering the mini-golf option.

- 7.8 As the mini-golf proposal could have an impact on the views and the landscape of the park the Board requested detailed plans before any further consideration. The Chief Executive will meet with the tenant early in the New Year to discuss the proposal before any designs are obtained.
- 7.9 **The Lakeside Café:** this facility continues to operate successfully and it provides a permanent daily presence in the park. In spring 2011, the tenant also started operating the boat-hire facility. This has historically been let as a separate licence to the café. Moving to a single operator has increased the opening hours and improved customer service. The much loved swan boats have returned, and they were joined by new dragon boats in the late summer.
- 7.10 The toilets at the lakeside and the play area are currently managed by the Trust and cleaned once a day by private contractor. This means that a single person can easily make a huge mess of the facility and there is no-one available to respond until the cleaner returns the next day. During busy periods, such as sunny Bank Holidays, the toilets can become extremely messy, dirty and attract complaints from users. An extra cleaning session is booked when this is foreseeable. But the current situation is that there is no attendant or responsive service for the park toilets.
- 7.11 The Board authorised negotiations with the café operator with a view to incorporating the toilet facilities and the boat hire into the Lakeside Café lease.
- 7.12 **The Cricket clubhouse and grounds:** Members will recall that the Board approved Phase 1 of a scheme by the Council's *Building Schools for the Future* Team (BSF) to improve drainage on the grounds and reconfigure the clubhouse to enable the Heartlands High School to sub-let the facility.
- 7.13 Additional requests were received from the BSF team in November 2011 in relation to installation of a new foul sewer and an irrigation system including a water storage tank.
- 7.14 On the 29th November 2011 the Board considered the new proposals. Concerns were raised about the short amount of time given to the Board to consider the proposals and that no appraisal of alternative options had been presented.
- 7.15 The Chief Executive stated that the matter required proper consideration, particularly by the Advisory Committee. Board members agreed that they were not able to take a decision without further information and the advice of the Advisory Committee.
- 7.16 The matter is therefore on the agenda for full discussion at the meeting on 6th March. Any advice from the Committees will then be considered by the Board on 3rd April.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the committee notes the content of the report.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 The Trust solicitor has been sent a copy of this report.

9.2 The Council's Acting Head of Legal Services has been sent a copy of this report.

10. Financial Implications

10.1 The rent from the lessees provides a regular reliable income for the Trust. The turnover agreements and other licences provide a further variable income.

10.2 London Borough of Haringey's CFO has been sent a copy of this report.

11. Use of Appendices/Tables/Photographs

11.1 Appendix 1: Park plan showing the leased properties