

Report Title: **Park Update Report**

Report of: **Mark Evison, Park Manager, Alexandra Palace Charitable Trust**

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides an update on a number of issues relating to the Park.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Board notes the contents of the report.

Report Authorised by: **Emma L Dagnes, Interim Chief Executive, Alexandra Palace & Park**



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3. Executive Summary

3.1 Consultations on the future Vision for the Park are underway and the results will be presented to the Board in the Autumn.

3.2 A Framework Agreement has been identified as a possible route for awarding the Grounds Maintenance Contract.

3.3 The Go Ape project has a new timeline based on an opening date of Spring 2016.

3.4 Heartlands High School has approached the Trust to discuss hire of sports pitches.

3.5 An evaluation of the graffiti wall is underway following concerns raised by members of the Advisory and Consultative Committee.

3.6 Officers are continuing negotiations with the playgroup at the Campsbourne Centre to attempt to reach a solution.

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 Park Vision

To date, the discussion document has been presented to a number of groups and each workshop has provided very useful feedback. The groups that have been involved so far are:

- The Friends of the Park Committee
- The Friends of the Park AGM
- John O'Conner Grounds Maintenance Team
- Alexandra Palace Senior Management Team
- Advisory and Consultative Committee members

The responses will be collated and a feedback report with recommendations will be presented to the Board in the Autumn.

6.2 Grounds Maintenance Contract

Further to the information reported at the April meeting, a suitable Framework Agreement for Grounds Maintenance Service has been identified; this may make it possible for a direct award of the contract. Haringey's Legal Service have been instructed to review the terms and conditions of the Framework Agreement.

The Specification Document is under review by the Park Manager. This review will incorporate changes to improve value for money and will involve input from the Facilities Manager and Head of Event Operations amongst others.

6.3 Go Ape course

The ecological survey of the Go Ape site has been carried out but the report is currently outstanding. However, the initial feedback is good. Once the written report is available it will be submitted to the Council for feedback by Go Ape. It is expected that the Planning Application will be submitted in July. The current intention is for the construction phase to begin in the Autumn with the opening planned for Spring 2016.

The lease and commercial documents are under consideration by Go Ape and progress is expected by the time of this meeting.

7. Heartlands High School – use of pitches

The Head Teacher at Heartlands High School recently approached APPCT about use of Alexandra Park for sports activities. For the initial phase the school hope to hire part of the Upper Football Field for use in term-time.

The school will fund a survey to establish the condition of the field and recommend any works required to make it playable. The school has capital funds available to carry out any such remedial works and to pay for any additional maintenance required such as line-marking. This could provide a new regular income as well as supporting the activity objectives of the school and increase usage of this area of the Park in quiet periods.

The Board will recall that a similar proposal was made in 2011 for the school to sub-lease the facilities at the Cricket Ground. The ground improvement works took longer than planned due to bad weather and the school had to find alternative accommodation so the sub-leasing arrangement did not take place. Officers will encourage the school and the Alexandra Park Club to explore these options again.

The school is interested in a long-term relationship with AP and have further ideas which will be fed into the Park Vision project through the planned workshops.

8. Graffiti Wall

The Board may be aware that questions were raised by members at the Joint Advisory and Consultative Meeting about the drift of paint spray from the graffiti wall.

This matter was reviewed in 2011 by the Trust's then Health and Safety Consultant, Sally Wearing. Her research into the COSHH statements of paint cans found that spraying should take place in a well ventilated area and as the wall is in the open air no further action was required.

Officers have undertaken a fresh review and considered new advice from the Health and Safety Executive attached as Appendix 1. This advice is primarily concerned with isocyanate-based paints which usually comprise a two-part mixture. The advice is for a minimum cordon of five meters, preferable ten.

The paints most commonly used on the wall are pre-packaged cans and are not isocyanate-based. So, although the spray drift may be unpleasant for Park users, it is not thought to pose a health risk. New signage to request that graffiti artists consider the effect of spraying on Park users and paint the far side of the wall when the play area is busy is a reasonable response.

The graffiti wall could be demolished, this option is likely to encourage graffiti to appear elsewhere in the Park and on the Palace building. A new wall could be constructed on the far side of the skate park away from the play area.

The closest item of play equipment to the wall is a sand pit dating back to the tenure of the Greater London Council in the 1960-70s. The sand pit has been declared low risk by independent safety inspectors (see Appendix 2), but the hard concrete design is not ideal. Following an incident in 2014 Officers have been considering adapting the design within budget constraints. Considering this alongside the spray-drift issues raises the opportunity to relocate the sand pit away from the wall.

Therefore, there are three options to consider:

- Install advisory signage
- Remove the existing sand pit and build a new one, to modern designs outside the ten metre cordon suggested
- Build a new graffiti wall on the far side of the skate park and demolish the existing wall and install replacement fence

9. Campsbourne Centre

Unfortunately, lease terms have not yet been agreed for the Campsbourne Centre. The playgroup has so far been unwilling to accept the rental offer.

Negotiations are ongoing and Officers are now taking legal advice on the best way to take this forward.

10. Legal Implications

10.1 The Council's Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and has no comments.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 The Chief Financial Officer has been consulted on this report and has no specific comments to make.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1: HSE advice note INDG473, SMART paint spraying.

12.2 Appendix 2: ROSPA Play safety report on sandpit.