

Cabinet

19 July 2017



Title	Play and refreshment facilities at Lammas recreation ground		
Purpose of the report	To make a Key Decision		
Report Author	Jackie Taylor Group Head Neighbourhood Services		
Cabinet Member	Councillor Nick Gething	Confidential	No
Corporate Priority	Clean and Safe Environment		
Recommendations	Authorise the Group Head Neighbourhood Services to go out to tender to design, install & run a new recreational facility and manage the refreshment kiosk within the Lammas recreation ground as detailed in 2.3 – option 3. Authorise the Group Head Neighbourhood Services in conjunction with the portfolio holder to evaluate the submissions and report back to Cabinet on preferred options and suppliers		
Reason for Recommendation	The Lammas is a primary park and it is important to retain key recreational facilities within this park		

1. Key issues

- 1.1 The Lammas recreation ground is located in Wraysbury Road, Staines upon Thames and is considered as a destination park within Spelthorne. The rear of the park benefits from a direct river frontage.
- 1.2 On site there are 2 play areas with associated equipment, a spray ground which is open to members of the public between the months of May & September, tennis courts, skate-park, band stand, youth shelter, toilet facilities, car park and pavilion.
- 1.3 Most facilities within the park are provided free of charge except the crazy golf and train when they were in operation for which a charge was made by the operator. In recent years, the council did not receive any income generated and associated with the licence to operate on this space within the park.
- 1.4 The Lammas and its facilities suffered some of the worst flooding from the river Thames in 2014 in many years which rendered the ground unusable for many weeks while the park underwent a large scale cleaning exercise as well as repairs and/or refurbishment of the worst affected areas.
- 1.5 The licence for the provision of the crazy golf and the train within the park ended in 2016 and the licence holder decided that he did not wish to ask for an extension as provision of both facilities were no longer viable for his company. Neither were making any profit and both were looking very tired

and neglected. The facility was also within the flood area affected by floods in 2014 and the supplier was not willing to invest in upgrading a facility that was at risk of flooding in future years.

- 1.6 The licence for the kiosk expired early in 2017 and the licence holder indicated that she did not wish to renew for a further 5 year period. The licence therefore came to a natural end at the end of its term.
- 1.7 The option of re-letting the kiosk on a short term basis for the 2017 season was considered. However on entering the kiosk for a post licence inspection we very quickly established that it was in a very poor state of repair and needed a complete refurbishment before any further use could be considered.
- 1.8 The licences for both the recreational and kiosk facilities have been renewed over the years in order to keep providing the facilities without fully exploring other opportunities which may generate additional income and provide better or increased use of the open space. We therefore need to carry out a tender exercise to establish if there are any companies who are interested in tendering for the provision of a recreation facility within the Lammas recreation ground.
- 1.9 The options for recreational facilities may include but are not limited to:-
 - Petting zoo
 - Assault course
 - Adventure golf
 - Train rides
 - Electric go karting
 - Water activities
- 1.10 When considering future options it is important to take consideration of the location, which is popular with families, the park's general family ambience, its riverside location and the character of the park.
- 1.11 Since the golf, train and kiosk have ceased operating Spelthorne Borough Council and Councillors have received many questions from members of the public raising concerns about the loss of all 3 within the park. To mitigate these complaints for the 2017 season we have sourced a temporary refreshment facility which is operating on a temporary licence for the summer 2017 period. Members have also allocated funding in 2017 with which to refurbish the kiosk.
- 1.12 Officers have carried out site visits to others parks in the surrounding areas and established that:-
 - Windsor, New Malden and Woking have adventure golf courses
 - Bocketts Farm in Fetcham hosts a petting zoo
 - The Cockrow railway in Chertsey hosts a miniature steam train
 - Sandown Park hosts go-karting for all ages
 - A children's assault course is open in Hitchin
 - Water based activities for all ages are open in Sandhurst

- 1.13 At this stage it is not known whether or not there is an appetite for a company to design build and run any facility on the site but it is anticipated that if the refreshment kiosk is part of the package this will create added interest from potential suppliers.
- 1.14 Given the nature of the park and its family ambience it is hoped that any potential suppliers design a facility which provides a customer experience which is interactive, fun and challenging. The facility would also need to include options for play by all age groups and abilities, and aim to be fully inclusive for all users.
- 1.15 It is anticipated that any new facility has the potential to provide a long term revenue income stream whilst enhancing the recreation activities for users of the park. Income generated from such a facility could be used to maintain the sites other facilities and/or the Council could consider providing a subsidy for its use by residents of Spelthorne.
- 1.16 If such a supplier could be sourced it is likely that as part of any licence agreement the holder would require a term of between 15 and 20 years and also take account of the areas within the park that have the potential to flood. This would however be subject to planning regulations both in terms of green space and also flooding related issues.
- 1.17 It is evident from recent feedback that park users who come from many different areas outside of Spelthorne visit the Lammas to use both current and past facilities available within the park. A high number appear to be unhappy about the loss of the train and crazy golf.
- 1.18 Given the Council's challenging financial future and the need to make the most of our open spaces it is important to secure a facility that will provide the Council with an income from this primary park.
- 1.19 Improved facilities will also ensure that income received from park users by way of parking charges is also maintained; parking charges within the Lammas achieved in excess of £30k in 2016/17, most of which can be attributed to use of the park.

2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 **Option 1** - We could do nothing, the crazy golf and train facilities have both been removed and the park land used for both has been put back into use as parkland. The kiosk is closed and we have sourced a temporary unit to cover the summer 2017 period.
- 2.2 **Option 2** - The kiosk could be refurbished and a suitable contractor could be sourced to run this facility. It is anticipated that this would create much interest from potential suppliers.
- 2.3 **Option 3 (preferred option)** - The preferred option is to go out to tender to design, install and run a recreational facility and refreshment facility within the Lammas recreation ground. The successful tenderer would be able to run the facility all year round in accordance with the opening times at the Lammas. It is anticipated that the option to run both the recreational facility and the kiosk together would generate more interest from potential suppliers than any other option. This option also has the potential for greater income generation in future years.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 At this stage there are none as the procurement exercise will be managed by Neighbourhood Services officers. Following receipt of the tender submissions they will be evaluated by the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services in conjunction with the portfolio holder. A further report will then be submitted to Cabinet..
- 3.2 Funding has already been made available for the refurbishment of the kiosk via the Leader's windfall grant.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1 The tender will require any potential suppliers to provide a facility that is suitable for use by all ensuring that equality for all is at the forefront of the design. The facility will also need to be designed and marketed to ensure that it is financially sustainable for future years.
- 4.2 Once the tender exercise has been completed and evaluated members have requested that users of the park are consulted on options available to enable them to have an input into any potential new play facilities at the Lammas.

5. Timetable for implementation

- 5.1 It is anticipated that subject to agreement a tender exercise will be undertaken during September 2017 when we would hope to get maximum take up from potential suppliers.

Background papers: There are none

Appendices: There are none