

This report will be made public on 23 January 2024



Report number: **FPPG/23/04**

To: Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Ground Charity – Board of Trustees
Date: 31 January 2024
Head of Service: Andy Blaszkowicz, Director – Housing & Operations
Subject: Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds – Update Report

Summary: This report provides the Board with an update in relation to all those decisions taken by the Chief Officer – Corporate Estate and Development, since August 2023, under his delegated authority to deal with charity assets.

Recommendations:

1. To receive and note this report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Folkestone and Hythe District Council ('the Council') act as trustees on behalf of the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity ('FPPG'/the Charity') in managing all the Charity's assets. The council provides an update report to the Charity trustees every six months.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report provides the Board with the 6-monthly update in relation to all those decisions taken by the Chief Officer – Corporate Estate and Development since August 2023. This report also covers other matters relating to Charity land.

3. DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE JULY 2023

3.1 Lower Sandgate Road Recreation Ground (Coastal Park)

- a. The Council has been approached by the Leas Lift Community Interest Organisation who are starting works this year to reinstate the Leas Lift including extension of the café facility. This will involve moving the Leas Lift café in a container on a temporary basis whilst the works proceed. They have enquired as to whether a temporary container could be placed on Charity land close to the Lift. The Council has been supportive of the project thus far and is exploring the option of the temporary siting of a container in the Park, adjacent to the eastern entrance, in front of the car park and next to the proposed Changing Places toilet.
- b. Go Folkestone would like to see the inscribed foundation stone of Folkestone's former Victoria Pier permanently positioned in a location close to where it would have originally been laid. The council is willing to accept the gift of the stone (privately-owned currently), with the final positioning to be agreed.
- c. Beach huts, Marine Walk: the leases of the 115 beach huts were reaching expiry between Spring and Summer 2023 and new leases were agreed. Under the terms of the leases, tenants can serve notice to bring the agreements to an end. At the start of 2024, seven tenants served notice to end their agreements, citing various reasons. New agreements will now be offered to the next candidates on the waiting list.

3.2 East Cliff and The Warren Pleasure Ground

- a. Warren Campsite: a new two-year lease has been agreed with the existing tenant – the Caravan and Camping Club (CCC) – from January 2024 at a rent of £8,600pa.
- b. Little Switzerland Campsite: it has been agreed that a new two-year lease will be granted to the existing tenant from 1 March 2024. The rent proposed is £26,700pa.
- c. Warren Access Road: The road leading to the Warren, including the Warren Campsite, is part-owned by the Charity, together with Network Rail. The three parties share responsibility for repairs to the road. CCC has undertaken a condition survey of the road which has estimated the cost of repair as £30,000-£35,000 for each party. Whilst the lease

requires CCC to pay a fair proportion of the costs of maintaining the road, at this estimate the amount would exceed the rent. The Council intends undertaking some maintenance and repair to the access road, however does not have budget to undertake widening of the access road, as requested by CCC.

- d. East Cliff Pavilion: The premises are let on a long lease to the tenant. It was found that numerous alterations were made to the building without permission and officers have been following this up with the tenant to regularise the position. As part of the previous report, the Board agreed with the recommendation that a Licence to Alter is granted to the tenant to consent to the alterations. The tenant has confirmed to the Council that they anticipate remedial works to be undertaken this year.
- e. Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) was granted a licence until 31 October 2025 to enable it to undertake archaeological fieldwork and excavations. CAT's 2024 works are due to comprise two excavations: one within, and the other adjacent to, the Roman villa site. As it is the centenary of Winbolt's 1924 excavation of the villa, CAT may be considering events that are beyond its normal archaeological works. Any event proposals are expected to be submitted via the council's Event App.
- f. In 2022, a lease was granted to CAT for a small hut off Wear Bay Road, which is used in conjunction with the above archaeological works. The intention is to offer CAT a further lease of up to two years from March 2024.

3.3 Radnor Park

- a. Last year, East Kent College Group (EKCG), the tenant of Radnor Park Lodge, confirmed its decision to withdraw from the lease and property. The council has been liaising with EKCG in relation to the tenant's dilapidations liability. EKCG has now confirmed that it would pay a settlement sum of £18,000 as liquidated damages for dilapidations. FHDC has confirmed that it would be agreeable to EKCG's proposed settlement, subject to a surrender of the lease being completed immediately after a satisfactory final inspection of the lodge and with the settlement sum payable. EKCG is agreeable to this proposal and has requested that FHDC prepares the deed of surrender. The intention is to relet the tearoom once EKCG has vacated and the repair works required are completed. The Council has the budget allocated to undertake the works. The lease opportunity will be advertised on the Kent Business Portal where the intention would be to seek a commercial tenant with the rent income contributing to the Charity's account.
- b. Pétanque: Report FPPG/22/10 detailed the proposal for installation of pétanque courts at Radnor Park, to be funded in part by the Radnor Park Community Group. Works are now complete, with the courts located behind Radnor Park Bowls Club and being used by the community.

3.4 Various Charity Lands

- a. The tender and award of the contract for the installation of a Changing Places toilet facility in the eastern end of the Coastal Park, and Radnor

Park adjacent to the toilet block, has taken place. Works are due to be completed within Quarter 4 of 2023-24.

- b. In 2023, a lease was granted to Creative Folkestone for the siting of nine existing Triennial artworks on charity land. Creative Folkestone has already opened discussions with the council in relation to the next Triennial which will be held in 2025.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It is anticipated that the next update report will be provided in July 2024.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

- 5.1 **Legal Officer's Comments** All legal related issues are covered within the report.
- 5.2 **Finance Officer's Comments** All finance related considerations are covered within the main body of the report.
- 5.3 **Communication Implications** All communication implications are covered within the report.
- 5.4 **Diversities and Equalities Implications** There are no diversities and equalities implications arising from this report.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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APPENDICES

None

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None.