

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: **Education and Children's Services**

DATE: **2 June 2015**

DIRECTOR: **Gayle Gorman**

TITLE OF REPORT: **Fairley Road Adventure Park - Update**

REPORT NUMBER: **ECS\015\031**

CHECKLIST COMPLETED: **Yes**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks to provide Education and Children's Service Committee with an update made on progressing the Fairley Road Adventure Park and seeks agreement for Adventure Aberdeen to undertake the final stages of fundraising, planning and building of the Fairley Road Adventure Park in Kingswells.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Committee are recommended to:
- (i) Note the progress made to date in developing the plans for a new Adventure Park on land at Fairley Road and Kingswells; and
 - (ii) Instruct officers from Adventure Aberdeen to continue fundraising and design work to create the Fairley Road Adventure Park.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The current capital estimates for the concept design is approximately £330.000. It is also estimated that an annual revenue budget of £10.000 will be required to maintain the park. This includes the inspection and maintenance of equipment, insurance, grounds maintenance and vandalism. The revenue costs will be raised through team development events over the year on the team challenge course and other income associated to the use of the area by Adventure Aberdeen
- 3.2 A grant of £10.000 has been secured from Aberdeen Green Space for landscaping and tree planting. The remaining of £320.000 is to be raised from corporate partners, benefactors and private monies from patrons or similar. It is anticipated that the fundraising element of the project will be complete by the end of August 2015. It is the services intention to raise all the capital before the procurement process starts

3.3 Preliminary works on drainage solutions top soil dressing, and design work have cost approximately £72.000. Funding for this work has come from a variety of sources including developer contributions, mainstream Education and Children's Service budgets and the Adventure Aberdeen budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Legal

4.1.1 The project will be required to go through the appropriate planning and procurement route as per standing orders. Legal elements and conditions associated with funding contributions are expected and will be brought to the attention of the contracts team of Legal Services.

4.1.2 The Council will have responsibilities and liabilities in terms of overseeing and managing the adventure park as per any other play space across the city.

4.2 Resources

4.2.1 Officer time on consultation and design has been met by Adventure Aberdeen. It is anticipated that the officer time will continue to see the project through and ensure it is set up as per design and public / service use ethos.

4.3 Property

4.3.1 The proposed Adventure Park space is the property of Aberdeen city Council. It is situated directly adjacent to the Adventure Aberdeen premises and is divided by a wall.

4.4 Equipment

4.4.1 The park will have specialist adventure equipment designed and built by contractors. This will be maintained as per the equipment checking contract

4.5 Sustainability and environmental

4.5.1 The Adventure Park is designed to bring people, predominantly young people, close-up to nature, engendering and developing ideas about sustainability and responsible use of green spaces. Aberdeen Green Space believe the park has the right elements to deliver on this both from an informal play perspective by young people from the local / city/ regional community and by using the space as an outdoor classroom in a more formal setting used by school from across the city / shire and by adventure Aberdeen Courses.

4.6 **Health and safety**

4.6.1 The design of all the elements of the adventure park has, and will continue to be, by specialist contractors who create equipment and play spaces to nationally recognised specifications. The build and maintenance programme will be of the same standard. The park will be for unsupervised public play / activity and for more organised activities organised by Adventure Aberdeen or other visiting organisations involved in play and activity.

4.6.2 The park will, like all play spaces still present hazards and risk to users. It is understood across the country that such elements are essential if young people are to be able to learn how recognise and manage and risk. Adventure Aberdeen has thirty years of experience of organising and managing adventurous activities and is therefore able to identify where undue hazards occur and place appropriate procedures in place to manage these risks.

5. **BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

5.1 On 28 March 2013 an outline proposal paper was agreed at the then Education, Culture and Sport Committee to develop the plan of an adventure park. The proposed Adventure Park is detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.

5.2 The principle project aims are shown below:

- Creating a modern shared public / Council facility for the local, wider and Regional community that can be used an excellent example of public / Council partnership working
- Creating a natural play and adventure space that provides for creative, social, adventurous and physical activity that can enrich lives, bring park users close to nature, and nurture attitudes and life skills
- Creating a showcase of creativity and imagination on behalf of the Authority for others to see how ground can be transformed to have a diverse and far reaching effect upon the lives of young people

5.3 The Fairly Road Field is an informal playing pitch area, adjoining the Adventure Aberdeen base in Kingswells. The field has been out of use for many years mostly due to recurrent drainage problems. Although these issues appear to have been rectified, it must be remembered that the site is extremely low-lying directly adjacent to the Denburn and may still have seasonal issues of poor drainage.

5.4 Such is the pressure for local play and greenspace, arising from local residential developments, there is a need for the space to be re-

juvenated and brought back into sustainable use in a way that meets as many social, play, activity needs as possible

- 5.5 Adventure Aberdeen sees an opportunity in the development of the adjacent field into an adventure park to provide a direct service to the public and to create a larger adventure campus incorporating the space the service directly manages at present, recognising that there is an opportunity to bring the building and the outdoor space into greater use by the local and wider community public.
- 5.6 Following on from a consultation exercise involving the Kingswells School and local young people from the associated secondary school (Bucksburn Academy), the community council, local voluntary youth organisations and some local residents concept designs for the park have been drawn up to strengthen the vision for the Fairley Rd Adventure Park.
- 5.7 In line with the growing appetite for engaging and robust Natural Play opportunities, the Adventure Park will allow children to develop experience in managing the challenges of the real world and developing resilience. In addition, there will be opportunities for child driven experimentation e.gg in the extensive sand and water area which provides for construction and engineering, social and co-operative enterprises and sculptural and tactile experiences all of which sustain meaningful play over extended or revisited periods.
- 5.8 The multi sports area is designed to facilitate a broad spectrum of use both semi-formal and informal. This includes football goals and two basketball courts. The space also caters for tennis with net available from Adventure Aberdeen. The surfacing will be selected to serve the widest range of activity (budget allowing), and high end fencing to retain balls. Sections each side of the court will be open in line with anti-bullying design practice and to provide court side seating.

6. IMPACT

6.1 Smarter governance

- 6.1.1 We will seek to develop a sense of community in Aberdeen based upon principles of openness, fairness reciprocity and responsibility. We will encourage and support citizens to participate in development, design, and decision making of services to promote civic pride, active citizenship and resilience

6.2 Smarter living

- 6.2.1 We will enhance the physical and emotional wellbeing of all our citizens by offering support, and activities which support independence, resilience, confidence and self-esteem. We will improve access to and increase participation in arts and culture by providing opportunities for

citizens and visitors to experience a broad range of high quality arts and cultural events for the whole community and beyond. We will promote and improve opportunities for physical activity and sports to enable Aberdeen's citizens to lead more active healthier lives

6.3 **Smarter people**

6.3.1 We will provide high quality education services within our schools and communities which will improve attainment and life chances of our children and young people to achieve their full potential in education employment and training. Working with our Third and Public sector partners we will provide opportunities for lifelong learning which will develop knowledge, skills and attributes to our citizens to enable them to meet the challenges of the 21 century. Working with our partners we will create a city for learning which will empower individuals to fulfil their potential and contribute to social and cultural wellbeing of our communities

6.4 **Smarter environment**

6.4.1 We will design all new infrastructure to be energy efficient by maximising the use of low carbon technology and materials we will use recycled materials where appropriate. We will provide clean, safe and attractive street scape and promote bio- diversity and nature conservation. We will encourage wider access to greenspace in our streets parks and countryside

6.5 **Smarter economy**

6.5.1 We will work with partners to promote the city as a place to invest, work and export from.

6.6 **Smarter mobility**

6.6.1 We will provide a sustainable transport system including cycling which reduces transport emissions.

7. **MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

7.1 The significant risks to the council are perceptions from the local and wider community not to be seen not to be investing in the future of Aberdeen's young people by providing modern, play spaces that focus on creative, social, adventurous play and physical activity. Recent research shows that play and activity should allow young people to make contact with nature in challenging environments.

7.2 There is a risk that investors / benefactors / patrons cannot be found to realise the project. In this position it will not be possible to develop the Adventure Park without Council financial assistance.

- 7.3 The project still requires planning permission. There is a risk that some members of the community may see this facility as not required or inappropriate. Work is on-going with officers from Planning and with the local community to mitigate this risk.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Education, Culture and Sport Committee (28 March 2013) Agenda Item 20 (Adventure Aberdeen – The Fairley Road Field)

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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PROPOSED PLAN FOR THE FAIRLEY ROAD ADVENTURE PARK

Fairley Rd Adventure Park & Adventure Aberdeen

Features:

1. Disabled parking/maintenance access
2. Toddler proof gate to river platforms
3. Flexible games area: football goals and basketball hoops. Tennis net/posts available from Adventure Aberdeen. Bench seating
4. Vertical climbing logs
5. Troll bridge over wetland (no standing water)
6. Balancing log crossings
7. Water pump
8. Drainable water channels with lock gates (emptied of standing water each day)
9. Cargo box
10. Small moveable stumps & timber discs
11. Boulder wall
12. Seating area with temp canopy/tables
13. Twin tunnels
14. Split level stage/meeting area
15. Basket swing
16. Embankment slide
17. Pendulum swing
18. Picnic tables
19. Shelter (no walls) with deck and seating. Adjacent cycle racks
20. Cycle track with pump track and jump elements
21. Tangle balance beams
22. Adventure course (see detail A)
23. Zip slide (25m)
24. Woodland walk/clearings
25. Storage structure—access from 2 sides sliding doors. Storage of loose play materials, construction toys etc
26. Planters
27. Wide gates, keyholders Adventure Aberdeen
28. Wall seat
29. Pedestrian access from public parking

- Drainage**
- Self binding gravel path
 - Reinforced crushed stone
 - Wetland planting beds
 - Cobble sets
 - Bark/woodchip
 - 500mm contours



Following the very positive response from the 2014 public engagement events, these plans seek to incorporate proposals to strengthen the vision for the Fairley Rd Adventure Park. The vision for this space is to establish a public play area and community greenspace for the developing local community of Kingswell, as well as a destination park for those travelling from surrounding communities. The space seeks to provide a wide range of flexible play features within a natural landscape for all ages to enjoy. This includes the built/organic, village green, multi sports area, water play, bark and woodchip, sand and water area, seating and adventure play features. Adventure Aberdeen are leading this initiative, and will also use the space to deliver their staffed outdoor activity/ outdoor learning sessions for young people, and taking of teaching staff from across Aberdeen City and surrounding the authorities. The features have

been carefully designed to be suitable for both un-staffed and staffed use, and to appeal also to runners, cyclists, walkers, picnickers, nature lovers, dog walkers and those who just like to relax in a quality greenspace. Events in the park, organised by Adventure Aberdeen will provide a further focus for the local community to come together. In line with the growing appetite for engaging and robust Natural Play opportunities, the Adventure Park will also include a discovery experience in navigating the challenges of the real world and developing resilience. In addition there will be opportunities for children's experience for eg in the extensive sand and water area which provides for construction and engineering, social and co-operative role play and outdoor and tactile experiences all of which contain meaningful play over extended or reduced periods.

The multi sports area is designed to facilitate a broad spectrum of use both casual formal and informal. This includes football goals and two basketball courts. The space also caters for tennis with net available from Adventure Aberdeen. The surfacing will be selected to cater the widest range of activity (budget allowing, and high and fencing to retain balls. Sections next side of the court will be open to the wind and building design profiles and to provide court side seating. This scheme also proposes a greater than that with the current Adventure Aberdeen space. Tables allowing access into the Adventure Aberdeen space will open when the two play spaces can merge. Feasibility could include a wall of trees or parking for the public's use as it is understood that for this regional facility some park users will arrive by car. Disabled access parking is proposed within the park.

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