

Cobtree Estate Update

Final Decision-Maker	Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee
Lead Head of Service	John Foster, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mike Evans, Leisure Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Boxley

Executive Summary

An update report on the Cobtree Estate and its constituent venues and facilities.

Purpose of Report

Noting

This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:

1. That the contents of the report are noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee	14 April 2022

Cobtree Estate Update

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the corporate priorities for the council.	Leisure Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the cross-cutting objectives of the council.	Leisure Manager
Risk Management	There are no risk management implications in this report.	Leisure Manager
Financial	Financial implications from this update are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Senior Finance Manager (Client)
Staffing	Staffing implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Legal	There are no specific legal implications at present as this report is presented for noting only.	Team Leader Contracts and Commissioning
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no new implications as a result of this update report and recommendation.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	No impact identified as a result of this update report and recommendation. An EqIA will be required for the project phase.	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	The Cobtree Estate works towards improving the health of our community and residents through its day-to-day operations.	Leisure Manager
Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies	Leisure Manager

Procurement	Procurement implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development & Section 151 Officer
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and there are no implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Cobtree Manor Park

- 2.1 Latest car park usage data to 27 March 2022 showed more than £110,000 nett income for the financial year. This equates to 66,266 paid vehicle visits and is a positive variance of £5,000 against the reprofiled budget.

Golf Course

- 2.2 The new golf course manager is in place and has overseen good course usage despite a period of mixed course conditions due to some extreme weather. In the January to mid-March period there has been a similar number of rounds (4,451) as in the same whole Quarter in 2019 (4,591).
- 2.3 The ongoing course improvement works, including drainage and arboriculture, has contributed to an improving aesthetic as well as playing experience for golfers. Boundary works by both MBC and MyTime Active have helped to manage the public rights of way through and around the course.

Kent Life

- 2.4 The venue has introduced a new pricing structure where there is one standardised entry fee for all. A new, online ticketing system has been implemented.
- 2.5 Severe weather in February led to the site having to close for one day and there was some minor damage sustained. The poor weather impacted on half-term customer levels not least following a need to close the lower car park due to flooding.
- 2.6 The Environment Agency is still using part of the venue car park as their works are over-running. There has been some discussion with their contractor on compensation for their extended use of the area, but no outcome yet.
- 2.7 Leak issues in the artefact store have been resolved through roof maintenance and some remedial works have taken place to reduce cellar

flooding; further investigations are in planning and a proactive insurance claim is being investigated still.

- 2.8 It was resolved at the last Committee meeting that Planning Solutions would be offered an extension to their current contract and legal documents are being prepared. The proposed extension would extend the contract end date from 2025 to 2030.

Cobtree Café

- 2.9 The operator has been required to carry out and has completed emergency plumbing works in the toilets. They are also required to resolve some maintenance issues there too, which will be completed in April. MBC has completed some minor drainage improvements at the toilet entrance thresholds.
- 2.10 In terms of café business, the operator reported a Quarter 3 performance 34% better than the same period in 2019 and comparable with 2018; although during Covid in 2020 business was 26% higher than this year.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Committee can note the information in this report.
- 3.2 Committee can choose not to note the information in this report; however the Committee has requested regular updates on the operations of the Estate.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the information in this report is noted.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 No consultation has taken place since the last update report.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Any comments from the Committee will be passed on to the relevant party.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- None
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None