

## **Cobtree Estate Update Report**

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

### **Executive Summary**

An update report on the Cobtree estate and its constituent attractions and facilities.

### **Purpose of Report**

For the Committee to note the work of the estate since its last meeting in June 2020.

### **This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the contents of the report are noted

### **Timetable**

<b><i>Meeting</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee	10 September 2020

# Cobtree Estate Update Report

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the corporate priorities for the council.	Mike Evans – Leisure Manager
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	The work of the charity links directly to its charitable objectives and the cross cutting objectives of the council.	Mike Evans – Leisure Manager
<b>Risk Management</b>	There are no risk management implications in this report.	Mike Evans – Leisure Manager
<b>Financial</b>	Financial implications from this update are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	Paul Holland, Senior Finance Manager (Client)
<b>Staffing</b>	Staffing implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies.	John Foster – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Legal</b>	Under the Council’s Constitution the Committee as Corporate Trustee is responsible for all matters relating to the Charity with the exception of daily management which will be undertaken by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement. There are no specific legal implications at present as this report is presented for noting only.	Corporate Governance Team Leader
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	There are no new implications as a result of this update report and recommendation.	Policy and Information Manager
<b>Equalities</b>	No impact identified as a result of this update report and recommendation.	Policy & Information Manager
<b>Public Health</b>	The Cobtree Estate works towards improving the health of residents through its day-to-day operations	Public Health Officer

<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Crime and disorder implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies	Mike Evans – Leisure Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	Procurement implications are managed day-to-day in line with council procedures and policies	John Foster – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Cobtree estate has continued its recovery following the Covid-19 lockdown earlier this year.

### **Cobtree Manor Park**

- 1.2 The park has been extremely busy since it re-opened to vehicles in May 2020. Car park income is recovering and it is expected to be fully recovered compared to pre-Covid expected levels by the end of this financial year.
- 1.3 In mid-August 2020 some elements of children’s play equipment had to be taken out of action because of urgent repairs are needed to them. The Leisure Manager is exploring ways in which these repairs can be completed in the current financial situation. Not completing these repairs could have a negative impact on the park’s reputation and the car park income.

### **Golf course**

- 1.4 The golf course continues to be busy, which has aided the economic recovery of its operator Mytime Active. Officers are still working with Mytime Active to ensure a sustainable long-term operation post-Covid. Mytime Active has requested an additional rental holiday, which CMEC will not be able to agree to because of the impact it will have on its own cashflow across the estate. Dialogue between the organisations continues and future updates and decisions will be brought to this Committee.

### **Kent Life**

- 1.5 Visitor numbers at Kent Life continue to be high. The outside areas of the site have made it a very popular destination since the lockdown was lifted. A number of summer festivals and events were cancelled because of the financial risk in delivering an event and not being able to guarantee ticket sales. The team has monitored customer confidence and government restrictions over the summer and is now able to deliver some autumn events including the *Hops 'n' Harvest Beer Festival*, *Apple Weekend* and the annual Halloween and Fireworks events.

### **Cobtree Men's Sheds**

- 1.6 The Elephant House is currently out of action following reports from the Council's corporate health and safety officer and building control team. The outstanding issues relate to building alterations made by the tenant and the safe working practices of the tenant. To ensure safe access a surveyor needs to attend, make an assessment and potentially install scaffolding to guarantee site safety. Officers are in discussion with the tenant about this. The current financial situation means CMEC is unable to pre-pay for any works on behalf of the tenant organisation who is keen to comply with the report recommendations.

### **Cobtree Café**

- 1.7 The café continues to work as a takeaway operation while the weather is good and trade is recovering. There have been some on-site issues with the monitoring of the toilets and the flushing of items that are not flushable. This has been rectified each time to ensure that the toilets remain in operation for the public.

### **Contracts**

- 1.8 The Senior Finance Manager's report covers the details of the current financial position. From a contractual point of view the relief amounts agreed by this committee on 11 June 2020 have been written into formal contract variations by the legal department. One of these has been signed and returned by the operator. Two have not. The relief amounts are not activated until a signed agreement is in place. For accounting purposes we are working on the basis that these agreements will be signed and the relief will be given.
- 1.9 The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development, Leisure Manager and Senior Finance Manager continue to monitor the budgetary situation and are investigating new workstreams that can increase revenue or produce budgetary efficiencies for CMEC.

### **Cobtree Young Farmers**

- 1.10 The Cobtree Young Farmers have established the paddocks on Forstal Field with high quality fencing surrounding the entire site. Animal shelters and running water have also been installed to support the operation and the land is now being farmed with sheep and cattle.

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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.

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#### **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

- None
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#### **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None