

PETITION REQUESTING INSTALLATION OF A WATER FOUNTAIN AND TOILETS AT THE RUNNING TRACK AT KINGS COLLEGE PLAYING FIELDS

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Cabinet Member(s) | Councillor Jonathan Bianco |
| Cabinet Portfolio(s) | Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services |
| Officer Contact(s) | Adrian Batten, Residents Services |
| Papers with report | None |

HEADLINES

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary | This report concerns a petition received requesting the installation of a water fountain and toilets at the running track at Kings College playing fields. |
| Putting our Residents First | This report supports the following Council objectives of: Our People; Our Natural Environment; Our Built Environment; Our Heritage and Civic Pride; Strong financial management. |
| Financial Cost | Installation of a water drinking fountain, excluding running and maintenance costs: £3,868 (completed) Installation of a toilet facility, approximately: £45,000 with annual maintenance costs approximately £5,000. |
| Relevant Policy Overview Committee | Residents', Education and Environmental Services |
| Relevant Ward(s) | Eastcote and East Ruislip |

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services:

- 1. meets with and listens to the petitioners' concerns;**
- 2. notes the actions/investigations already undertaken by officers; and**
- 3. subject to recommendation 1, considers asking officers to commission further independent surveys at Kings College to be agreed with petitioners and Ward Members.**

Reasons for recommendations

To give the Cabinet Member the opportunity to discuss with the petitioners their concerns and aspirations.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Options will be discussed with the petitioners.

To investigate in further detail the potential to address the petitioners' concerns.

Update the lease agreement in March 2019, when the current lease expires, to include extending the toilet opening hours and look into feasibility and cost to modify the building to provide access to the toilets once the cafe has closed, including management of the new layout within the updated lease.

To purchase and install a toilet facility, similar to the one at West Drayton Cemetery. This will include an initial cost of a minimum of £45,000 plus ongoing costs, including regular cleaning, opening and closing the building, water rates, electricity and ad hoc maintenance at approximately £5,000 a year.

For residents to apply for a toilet facility through Hillingdon Council's Chrysalis programme, should this option be required.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. A petition with 30 valid signatures has been received by the Council from residents who live in the vicinity of Ruislip and Eastcote. The petition is worded as follows:

"Petition for toilets and water fountain at Kings College Playing Fields Ruislip".

2. The petitioners are specifically concerned with what they report as:
 - *A lack of a drinking fountain at Kings College Playing Fields.*
 - *A lack of a toilet facility at Kings College Playing Fields.*
3. Kings College playing fields is a large site in the middle of a built up part of the Borough. It is popular with many local residents and contains a running track, outdoor gym and skate park. The site offers a tranquil area to walk around as well as pleasant cut through. A conservation party meet on site to carry out regular works, managing the site for the benefit of wildlife. It is the home ground of Ruislip Rangers football club. At the site, there is a cafe that has toilet facilities.
4. The concerns about a lack of a drinking fountain has been addressed as part of a Borough wide project to reintroduce drinking fountains across the Borough to encourage people to either recycle their plastic bottles or to reduce the need for a plastic bottle, instead drinking directly from the fountain. A new drinking fountain was installed in 2018.
5. Following receipt of the petition, officers have spoken to the cafe owner about concerns that he was not allowing those who needed to use the onsite toilets to do so. The cafe owner has confirmed that he has no objections to those who need to use the toilet doing so within opening hours. Concerns have been expressed that the cafe closes early so there is no access to a toilet at all times, hence the petitioners' request. Although officers have been working with the incumbent to allow the toilet facilities to be open later, due to a downturn in

use, longer opening hours are not a viable option. However, more could be done to advertise that the toilet in the cafe is open to the public and free for them to use.

6. It should be noted that less than 10% of open spaces in the Borough have toilet facilities on site.

Financial Implications

The installation of a water drinking fountain was completed in 2018 at a cost of £4k. There is no additional annual running costs for this facility.

The report recommends the investigation of the proposed installation of an additional toilet facility at Kings College Playing Field at a cost of £45k which can be funded from the £1,000k Chrysalis 2019/20 budget subject to the relevant approvals. The cost estimate is based on the recent provision of a toilet facility at West Drayton cemetery.

The installation of the toilet facility will incur additional annual maintenance costs of £5k for which a funding strategy will need to be identified.

An alternative option would be not to build the additional toilet facility but provide daily access to toilet facilities within the on site cafe by modifying the building. As the lease for the cafe is up for renewal next year, a clause can be written in the new lease agreement to allow the toilet facilities open to the public. The current lease holder of the cafe does not have any objections to the public using the toilet facilities within the cafe. The cost to modify the existing building is expected to be below £10k and may be taken into account in lease renewal negotiations.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The Petition Hearing will allow for consideration of petitioners' concerns with the required facilities and possible options to come to an amicable agreement.

Consultation carried out or required

None at this stage.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms that there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommended consideration petitioners' concerns. Specific costs relating to potential courses of actions are detailed above.

Legal

Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition 759.