

Report of: Head of Stronger Communities

Report to: Outer West Community Committee
[Calverley & Farsley, Pudsey, Farnley & Wortley]

Report author: Mike Stevenson

Date: 1st December 2020

To note

Outer West Community Committee – Pudsey Park Visitor Centre Consultation (Parks & Countryside)

Purpose of report

1. To bring to members' attention details of an open consultation relating to Pudsey Park Visitor Centre, including planned objectives and approach options.

Consultation on Proposals for Visitor Facilities at Pudsey Park

About this Consultation

2. We are seeking your thoughts and opinions on Leeds City Council's proposals to close the West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre and associated plant display-house, with the aim of making £90,000 per year in savings for the Council.
3. Subject to a suitable business case, we are also interested in your thoughts on the idea of providing a café in place of the visitor centre and potentially locating the children's play area next to it.
4. A report to the Council's executive board in October 2020 highlighted a budget gap in 2021/22 of £118.8 million, of which £59.1 million is due to the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19. In response to this financial position, the council is undertaking a programme of service reviews to identify savings that will contribute towards closing the budget gap and enabling the authority to present a robust, balanced budget position in 2021/22 and beyond.

5. In line with the council's ambitions and values, these proposals aim to protect services that support the most vulnerable, whilst ensuring that the council becomes more financially resilient and sustainable for the future.
6. If you want to share your views, please read through the following information and indicate your responses to the questions at the end. You can do this by the following means:
 - Online via www.leeds.gov.uk/parksconsultations
 - Send your answers to the questions below to: **Pudsey Park Consultation, Parks and Countryside, Farnley Hall, Hall Lane, Leeds LS12 5HA.**
7. If you require more paper copies of the consultation then e-mail us at parks@leeds.gov.uk using the subject title 'Pudsey park consultation' or ring us on 0113 3786002.

Timescales

8. The consultation period commences on **Monday 16th November 2020** and will close on **Monday 14th December 2020 at 5pm**. Following this, detailed proposals will be prepared to inform a decision due to be taken before the end of February 2021.

West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre

9. The West Leeds Country Park is a 32 km circular trail running from the city centre, through the green corridor of the Aire Valley, around Calverley, south of Pudsey and into Armley and Wortley.
10. The West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre, in Pudsey Park, is free to enter for the public and is a registered zoo. It keeps captive, native British species including birds, mammals and fish, and describes the different natural habitats of west Leeds and how they benefit wildlife. Next to the visitor centre there is a display house containing a range of temperate and tropical plant species that visitors can explore.
11. The buildings have been closed to the public since Covid-19 restrictions were introduced in March 2020.

12. The visitor centre, plant display house and playground are located in the park as follows:



- Yellow rectangle: West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre
- Red rectangle: Display-house
- Orange rectangle: Current play area

13. Closing the visitor centre and display-house would save approximately £90,000 on staffing, animal feed and veterinary costs along with the running costs of the buildings. If the centre does close, the animals will be relocated to other animal collections in Leeds, e.g. at Lotherton, or in the UK as per the guidelines set out by BIAZA (British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums).

Potential Cafe

14. If the visitor centre is closed, there are two options for the buildings: they could be demolished and the area returned to parkland, or, subject to a suitable business case a café could be developed.

15. The proposal for a café to replace the visitor centre at Pudsey Park is as follows:

- Replace the visitor centre with a café with a terrace overlooking the park.
- Consideration could also be given to upgrading and moving the children's play area to the current location of the display house, so that parents and carers can enjoy refreshments from the café whilst keeping an eye on their children.
- The existing playground could be re-landscaped and incorporated into the park.
- Retain elements of the West Leeds Country Park visitor centre such as the interpretation panels describing the wildlife of west Leeds; and, in the spirit of the West

Leeds Country Park, create new wildlife habitats in the park (e.g. an orchard, a meadow, nest-boxes).

- Provide accessible public toilets during café opening hours.

16. Cafes, public toilets, playgrounds and wildlife were all highlighted by the public as something they want more of in parks, in the Leeds-wide Parks and Green Spaces Strategy consultation that took place earlier this year.

17. Funding for such a development would of course need to be secured, and would rely on a robust 'spend to save' business case, based on prudential borrowing in accordance with council policies and procedures.

18. Any new café facility would be managed and operated by the in-house (Leeds City Council) Parks and Countryside service.

Pudsey Park Visitor Facilities – What do you think?

19. We are keen to hear your thoughts on the proposals outlined above. Let us know what you think by answering the questions below.

i. Your interest in Pudsey Park?

ii. How close do you live to Pudsey Park?

- 0 – 1 mile
- 1 – 3 miles
- 3 – 5 miles
- 5+ miles

iii. How often do you visit Pudsey Park?

- Once a week or more
- Once a month
- Four times a year
- Once a year
- Less than once a year
- Never

iv. Why do you visit Pudsey Park? Choose no more than 3 of the options below:

- To relax, think, or for peace and quiet
- To enjoy the beauty of the surroundings
- To walk the dog

- To walk (without a dog)
- To get some fresh air
- To get from one place to another
- To enjoy nature
- Children / family outing
- To meet friends
- To visit the play area
- To visit the skate park
- To visit the plant display-house
- To keep fit / play sports / exercise
- To visit the West Leeds Country Park visitor centre
- To attend events e.g. music at bandstand
- To use the bowling green
- Other (please state):

Closing the West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre

v. Given the council's financial position outlined above, do you think the West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre, and the display-house next to it, should be closed to save the council £90,000 per annum?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Creating a café in Pudsey Park

vi. Do you support the idea of creating a café (as described above) in Pudsey Park, if it can be developed without impacting negatively on the council's financial position?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

vii. If a café were created in the proposed location, would you personally use it?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Comments

- viii. If you have any comments on the proposals, or any suggestions relating to them which won't increase costs to the council, please write them here.

Equality Monitoring: Please note that this section is voluntary

20. Leeds City Council is committed to fair treatment of all our existing and potential customers, our existing and potential employees and our partners. We are committed to ensuring that our practices and services are free from unlawful discrimination and they meet the needs of all sections of the community.
21. We would appreciate it if you could complete the equality monitoring questions below. This will help us in monitoring the fairness and effectiveness of our service delivery and employment practices and to develop future policies and services. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested and it will not make any difference to the service you receive if you do not answer them. However the more information we can collect the more effective our equality monitoring will be. The categories included have been informed by the National Census 2011 and characteristics protected by equality legislation as well as other questions that are relevant to local communities in Leeds.
22. The information you supply will be used for monitoring and reporting purposes around the fairness and effectiveness of our service delivery and employment practices only. You will not be identified in any statistics that the council publishes. The information you supply will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be held in accordance with the GDPR and

Data Protection Act 2018. If we need to share any information with a third party we will make sure the same levels of protection are in place.

Sex and gender identity:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non Binary <input type="checkbox"/> Other please write below <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say Is your gender the same as the sex you were assigned at birth? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say
---------------------------------	--

Date of birth: <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

Are you a parent or carer of children under 16? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Ethnic origin: Please indicate which best describes your ethnic origin		
A White <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Welsh <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Irish <input type="checkbox"/> British <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background - please write below	B Mixed/ multiple ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Any other mixed or multiple ethnic group – please write below	C Asian or Asian British <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Kashmiri <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background – please write below
D Black or Black British <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background – please write below	E Other ethnic groups <input type="checkbox"/> Arab <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Traveller <input type="checkbox"/> Any other background – please write below	

.....	
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say	

Disability
Do you consider yourself to be disabled? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

If you have said yes, you consider yourself to be disabled, what is the nature of your impairment?
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical impairment, (such as using a wheelchair to get around or difficulty using your arms)
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment, (such as being blind or partially sighted)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing impairment, (such as being deaf or hard of hearing)
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health condition, (such as depression or schizophrenia)
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning disability, (such as Downs syndrome or dyslexia) or cognitive impairment (such as autism or head-injury)
<input type="checkbox"/> Long-standing illness or health condition, (such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy)
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

Sexual orientation
Please indicate which best describes your sexual orientation (Please note: if you are under the age of 16 years old you do not have to complete this section)
<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/ straight <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian/ Gay woman <input type="checkbox"/> Gay man <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify.....
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

Religion or belief
Please indicate which best describes your religion or belief

<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh <input type="checkbox"/> No religion <input type="checkbox"/> No belief <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please write below
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say	

<p>Carers</p> <p>The council considers that a ‘carer’ is someone who provides care for a relative, neighbour or friend who is dependent on them because they cannot manage without their help because of physical or mental ill-health, disability, frailty, sensory impairment, old age or substance misuse.</p> <p>In the context of employment a ‘working carer’ is someone who balances these unpaid caring responsibilities with full or part-time employment.</p>
<p>Please indicate whether you consider yourself to be a carer</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

<p>Where you live</p>
<p>What is the first part of your postcode? (for example LS10):</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

Thank you for completing this equality monitoring form.