

Meeting with Playfootball Limited

10 July 2014

Meeting on Thursday 10 July 2014 between Cllr Guy Vincent, Lyn Carpenter, Bi-Borough Executive Director Environment, Leisure and Residents Services and Barry Hunter, Chief Executive Officer of The Sports and Leisure Group Limited to discuss the development of Hammersmith Park sports facility by Playfootball Limited (a subsidiary of The Sports and Leisure Group).

Agenda

1. Agreement to record of meeting being placed on LBHF website.
2. Background of Playfootball Limited and business model.
3. Current state of project.
4. LBHF concerns.
5. Current litigation and indemnity.
6. Way forward.

Mr Hunter gave a detailed description of the business of The Sports and Leisure Group Limited and Playfootball Limited. They are owned by the Civil Service Sports Council. Playfootball owns a number of small sided football operations across the country. The company works closely with local communities providing access to schools and runs academies for young footballers. As part of the company's growth plan Playfootball tendered for the Hammersmith Park site. The tender was successful and Playfootball intends to invest £2.5m to build a new state of the art centre providing 13 football pitches, a basketball facility, changing rooms, a cafe and a bar. The local community will be given access to two pitches at no charge.

Planning permission has been granted and an agreement to lease signed with LBHF following consultation by Playfootball with the local community. Whilst Playfootball are now on site the project is being delayed by judicial review proceeding.

Cllr Vincent set out the concerns of LBHF. These included loss of a public amenity; blight of Hammersmith Park; loss of tennis courts; lack of adequate consultation; reduction in community access to football pitches and basketball courts; noise pollution; light pollution from floodlights; the creation of a bar; traffic congestion; the operation of the football pitches until 10pm, together resulting in significant hostility to the scheme from local residents.

Mr Hunter challenged these complaints and made clear that Playfootball felt that there was support in the community for the new sports facility as has been clearly

demonstrated by two planning approvals following extensive community consultation.

It was suggested that there should be a period during which both parties could consider the position of the other. There would be another meeting in 14 days to discuss ways of resolving these issues.