



**LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**20 JUNE 2016 AT 13:00**

**Agenda Item No:**

**8**

**Report No:**

**S/51/19**

## **COMMUNITY ACCESS FUND**

Presented by Sports Development Manager and Youth and Schools Manager

### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Members with a detailed evaluation of the delivery of the Community Access Fund (CAF) between July 2015 and March 2019.

The CAF has been used to engage with hard to reach community groups and schools across the region and provided financial support for access to Authority venues, open spaces and services. The CAF has enabled officers to work closer with boroughs, creating sustainable programmes and fully maximising the opportunity to raise awareness of the Authority's visitor offer and encourage longer-term repeat visits.

Members approved an initial budget of £113,000 (Paper E/389/15) for the CAF from 2015 to 2016 of which £101,700 has been specifically used by the Authority's Sports Development Team to engage with different community groups and to help them with access to Authority venues and services raising the profile and awareness of the Park. The remaining 10% (£11,300) has been used by the Authority's Youth and Schools Team to specifically support schools from across the region with transport costs and access to the Authority's Outdoor Learning programme.

After the initial CAF pilot, Members approved a yearly budget of £80,000 towards CAF delivery between 2017 and 2020, Members also recommended that the allocation of budget be split with 80% of the budget being used specifically by the Authority Sports Development Team and 20% by the Authority's Youth and Schools Team, this was based on the success of the Authority's Youth and Schools Team being able to attract schools from further afield.

Up until March 2019, CAF has supported 230 different community groups and 13,500 individuals accessing sporting and physical activity provision across the Park. The CAF access fund for outdoor learning has supported 78 schools/organisations from 41 different boroughs across the region, with 6592 young people benefitting from this programme.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members Note: (1) the report.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 1 For the sports section of the project 16 Local Authorities from across the region were selected to engage with in the first year of the project, to act as a pilot and to provide a more effective process of delivery. The rationale for selecting 16 boroughs was to ensure the CAF was manageable and officers had the capacity to deliver and communicate with the various community groups.
- 2 In the first year 10% of the total CAF (£11,300) was specifically earmarked to support schools from across the region access the Authority's Outdoor Learning programme managed by the Authority Youth and Schools Team. The funding supported schools with transport fees to the Park, with schools covering the costs of activities. This approach was taken as the Service had previously found that coach costs are the principal barrier to schools visiting. Education establishments with transport such as family centres and carers were also given assistance to access Youth and Schools activities. Following very positive feedback on outdoor learning engagement in the first year and the ability of the Authority's Youth and Schools team to attract schools from further afield, Members recommended that this was increased to 20% over subsequent years.
- 3 After the initial pilot project, Members approved a yearly budget of £80,000 towards CAF, to be used to attract additional community groups and schools and to further expand the reach of CAF across the region.

### **Local Authority Engagement**

- 4 Officers from the Authority's Sports Development Team have engaged a wide spread of Boroughs from across the region. This was mainly done through key community Borough leads who provided excellent links to local 'hard to reach' community groups. CAF has enabled the Authority Sports Development Team to make contact with some really challenging groups who normally experience barriers to participation in sport and physical activity.
- 5 Officers from the Authority's Youth and Schools Team engaged a wide spread of 41 boroughs across the region. Outdoor Education Advisors from across the region helped identify schools in need of support. The fund enabled the Service to raise the Park's profile across the region and engage with young people from deprived areas. Officers also worked with Children's Centres and Futureversity a charity that supports underprivileged children from low income families providing them with holiday activities and developing their life skills.
- 6 Funding from CAF was used to support projects that had multiple borough attendance across the region, these included funding to help facilitate the hosting of the London Youth Games road cycling, time trial and BMX competition, additional support for a London wide 'Bike it' Festival and funding to engage with young people from across Essex through the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust. These three programmes alone attracted over 550 participants from multiple Boroughs.
- 7 The CAF enabled officers to engage with new 'hard to reach' community groups and schools, and provided officers with an ideal opportunity to further cement relationships with boroughs from across the region. The CAF proved to be an excellent mechanism for achieving some of the more challenging targets within the Authority's Lottery Funding Agreements with Sport England, particularly

around engaging with black and ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities and women and girls. Without CAF, these targets would have been very difficult to achieve. The CAF project also supported the profile of the Park's open spaces as a centre for outdoor activity and engaged with hard to reach schools enabling the Youth and Schools Team to expand the reach and impact of their work across the region.

- 8 96% of all Boroughs across the region have received some CAF engagement, only Merton and Kingston Upon Thames remain, both boroughs have proved to be difficult to engage with. The aim is to engage with these Boroughs during 2019/20 to get full regional coverage.

### **Participant Data**

- 9 230 different community groups/organisations made use of the Community Access main fund, with:

- 13,500 individuals participating in sporting activity;
- 45% of participants were female; and
- 55% of participants were from black and minority ethnic groups.

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20% of the 13500 individuals registered as having a disability.

- 10 The outdoor learning access fund engaged with:

- 6592 individuals participating in a variety of Outdoor Learning programmes;
- 78 different schools/organisations; and
- Engaged 41 different boroughs, 32 of which were non-riparian.

Of those surveyed 100% of teachers who had participated in the outdoor learning sessions said most or all of their students had made progress in general motivation and enthusiasm/ understanding of the subject. 85% of teachers said their awareness of Lee Valley Regional Park had increased.

- 11 Between July 2015 and March 2019, 20,092 individual people have benefited from CAF, with a total of 308 different community groups and schools engaged and 96% of the region covered.
- 12 The CAF has been used as a way of providing one-off visits to the Park for both community groups and for schools, in addition to this longer term relationships have developed with certain groups coming back to the Park either funded through CAF or via self-funding. Where community groups and schools engage in longer-term activity in the Park, participants have noted an even greater impact on their lives in terms of health benefits and mental wellbeing.
- 13 To fully capture and document the true impact of the CAF on people's lives, a video diary was commissioned which will be used to further promote the project to other groups and schools across the region.

### **Finance**

- 14 A total budget of £293,700 has been allocated to the CAF programme facilitated by the Sports Development Team with a spend per head of roughly £25. The most popular activity continues to be white water rafting and other paddles sport activities, although activities such as horse riding has proved increasingly more popular particularly with women and girls and BAME groups.
- 15 A total spend of £59,300 was allocated to the outdoor learning access fund facilitated by the Authority Youth and Schools Team, with a spend per head of £9. Schools and organisations accessed a variety of outdoor learning products. This generated £30,808 worth of income for the Youth and Schools Service, and an additional £2375 worth of income for Trust venues. Schools and organisations accessed a wide variety of outdoor learning products. To deliver the CAF project over the three years the Youth and Schools Service has led 96 full days and 110 half days of outdoor learning.
- 16 In total across a 4 year period, £350,000 has been invested into the CAF project up until March 2020. This has engaged 20,092 people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 17 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 18 Any future funding of the CAF to be looked at as part of the 2020/21 budget process.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 19 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 20 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 21 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 22 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Executive Committee	E/389/15	2015/16 Revenue Budget and Levy	22 January 2015
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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CAF	Community Access Fund
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