Title: Proposed Youth Zone Development – Parsloes Park

Report of the Leader of the Council

Open Report  
For Decision

Wards Affected: All (and directly Alibon; Mayesbrook and Parsloes)  
Key Decision: Yes

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Accountable Director: Anne Bristow, Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services

Summary

The Cabinet will be asked to approve proposals for the development of a Youth Zone providing programmed activities for young people in Parsloes Park in partnership with OnSide Youth Zones; and provide a £3m capital grant towards the estimated development costs of c. £6m.

The proposal contributes to the wider vision to improve and encourage greater use for formal and informal recreation. The Youth Zone will provide a fully accessible facility for young people based on the successful Youth Zone model elsewhere in the country.

Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet is recommended to:

(i) Agree, in principle, the development of a Youth Zone in Parsloes Park subject to planning approval;

(ii) Agree the provision of £3,000,000 capital grant funding to the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone as the Council’s contribution to the overall capital development costs of the project;

(iii) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Children’s Services, the Chief Finance Officer and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to approve the final details of the project in respect of the grant funding agreement, lease, facility mix, connection to other Parsloes Park refurbishment proposals and operational detail;

(iv) Agree ongoing strategic support through representation on the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone Board of Trustees; and

(v) Note that whilst there is a guaranteed nil revenue funding requirement for three
years there is a potential future revenue risk if the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone fails to attract sufficient future funding support.

**Reason(s)**

The proposed Youth Zone development can make a significant contribution to making the Borough a better place to live and offers a potentially good fit with the themed Corporate Priorities of: Encouraging Civic Pride; Enabling Social Responsibility and Growing the Borough.

1. **Introduction and Background**

1.1 The Council has proactively positioned and promoted itself as London’s Growth Opportunity and has a clear message that ‘Barking and Dagenham is open for business’. In response to this call, the Council has been approached by OnSide Youth Zones with an investment opportunity to develop London’s first Youth Zone in Parsloe Park. Onside’s submission document ‘Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone -Proposal for Support’ is contained as Appendix 1.

1.2 OnSide Youth Zone is a registered charity established in 2008 (Registered Charity No. 1125893). Its mission is to build state-of-the-art youth centres, modelled on the success of the nationally-recognised Bolton Lads and Girls Club. To date, OnSide has funded, built and established five Youth Zones in the north-west of England (Carlisle, Manchester, Oldham, Blackburn and Wigan). A number of other projects are at various stages of development, with Youth Zones in Wirral and Wolverhampton scheduled to open in 2016. Other pipeline projects include Newcastle, Preston and Sunderland.

1.3 OnSide have met with the Leader of the Council and Officers on a number of occasions to discuss the outline of proposed development, its potential benefits, opportunities and risks. However, in order to confirm pledged external support for Barking and Dagenham, the Council needs to determine if it will support the project or not.

2. **Proposal Overview**

2.1 Onside have a positive track record of delivering Youth Zones and making a positive impact on young people and the wider community. Parsloe Park has been identified by OnSide as a preferred location as it is: reasonably central to both Barking and Dagenham town centres; can be considered a ‘neutral’ venue by young people; has good public transport accessibility and can make a positive contribution to the longer term ambition to refurbish and re-vitalise the park.

2.2 Parsloe Park is designated as Metropolitan Open Space, therefore any proposed development and planning application must fully consider the impact and overall benefit to the open space; design should also be sympathetic to its surroundings. The proposed facility would be over two floors with a footprint of c. 1,700sqm.

2.3 The indicative location of the Youth Zone is shown in Appendix 2. This location includes the redevelopment of a children’s play area, disused compound and dilapidated pavilion. This proposal would not involve intrusion into green open areas of the park and indeed would bring some areas back into use; it would also not alter
existing entrances or paths and retain much of the existing boundary planting. Careful configuration of the development would also ensure a buffer between the Youth Zone building and residential properties by creating a new, improved play area for the benefit of local families and an ‘off-highway’ drop-off zone.

2.4 If Cabinet agree ‘in principle’ support for the project, subject to final detail and planning approval, Barking and Dagenham would be announced as the first Youth Zone in London. It should be noted that OnSide have an ambition to establish 20 Youth Zones including no fewer than three in London by 2020.

2.5 Each Youth Zone has its own locally established charitable organisation, OnSide will facilitate the recruitment of a private sector led Board of Trustees who in turn can contribute to the sustainability of the project. The Council will have representation on the Board as a strategic partner. It is envisaged that up to two places on the Board will be available for Council representation.

2.6 OnSide have projected that a minimum of 1,500 young people will visit the facility each week, based on the local demographic and experience elsewhere. The scheme will create up to 15 full time and c. 40 part time employment opportunities for local people and generate a minimum of 100 volunteering opportunities. As it has done elsewhere, the Youth Zone is committed to working with local partner organisations and stakeholder groups to broaden the offer.

2.7 The Council has been approached to provide:

- £3m capital support (50% of scheme cost);
- A long-term lease;
- Commitment to ongoing strategic support on the locally established Youth Zone Board of Trustees.

2.8 If Cabinet agree to support the project ‘in principle’ and commit to the £3m capital grant funding contribution, OnSide will commence the local mobilisation process with a target facility opening of spring 2018. OnSide will establish a project office in the borough, providing a local presence from the outset and commence the stakeholder engagement process immediately. Consultation will take place with: young people; local residents: statutory agencies and potential partner organisations. Local businesses will have the opportunity to participate in the design competition; the opportunity broadens considerably at the construction phase if planning consent is secured. In tandem, OnSide will start work on a phased recruitment process by appointing a General Manager of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone and set about securing millions of pounds from the private sector for investment in local young people. OnSide would commit to:

- Release the remaining balance of £3m to the capital construction cost;
- Charles Mindenhall (co-founder of a successful IT and digital business with a presence in the borough) to lead the project as inaugural Chair of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone.
- Source all funding required to operate the Youth Zone for its first 3 years;
- Proactively fundraise to ensure project sustainability without additional Council support;
- Full capital build responsibility including planning applications and community consultation;
• Creation of the new operating charity for the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone;
• Engage local young people to help shape their Youth Zone;
• Work alongside other local voluntary sector groups in support of young people;
• Recruit and train a minimum of 100 volunteers;
• Deliver a comprehensive marketing and communications plan;
• Recruit and support a local Board of Trustees responsible for strategic vision and long-term sustainability of the charity, including Council representation on the Board.

2.9 Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone will be open 7 days a week. During term-time, evening session opening hours mirror school timetables, typically opening from 16:00 – 21:00 from Sunday to Thursday, and until 22:00 on Friday and Saturday evenings. At weekends, the Youth Zone will operate family and junior sessions (8-12 year olds) in the morning and afternoon, in advance of the regular evening sessions which begin at 16:00. During school holidays, additional junior sessions will run from 08:00 – 18:00, offering affordable holiday provision for local parents. The Youth Zone may also open on bank holidays, dependent on the local demand for the service and feedback from parents.

2.10 The Youth Zone will be open until no later than 22:00. Experience from other Youth Zones indicate that, due to the length of the sessions and programming members tend to disperse at different times throughout the evening and not en masse when the facility closes. Based on experience elsewhere, it is anticipated that there will be little (if any) issues of concern in reality with regard for the potential for groups of young people congregating around the Youth Zone once the session is finished.

2.11 The operating model typically includes a small annual membership fee and a small fee per visit. The annual membership fee would be set at £5 and a charge of 50p per visit thereafter. All young people living in Barking and Dagenham aged 8-19 would be eligible for membership. The age range is extended up to the age of 25 for young people with a disability. Family orientated sessions catering for the 5-8 age groups will also be offered in recognition of the local demographic.

2.12 Typically a Youth Zone would offer a minimum of 20 different activities each evening in a facility that may typically include the following spaces:

• A 4-court indoor sports hall with climbing wall;
• A fully equipped fitness gym;
• Dance studio;
• Music suites with both instruments and recording equipment;
• At least one outdoor multi use games area kick-pitch;
• A specialist arts and crafts area;
• Break-out rooms to include activities such as employability workshops, general and gender specific health/youth issue topics/projects and youth participation;
• A large open plan recreation area;
• A café serving hot nutritious meals for no more than £1;
• A boxing gym.
2.13 In addition to the above the Youth Zone proposal would include the re-provision of an outdoor children’s play area; this would be developed in accordance with the Council’s Play Strategy and existing design guidance. The mix of facilities is not finalised at this stage and would be negotiated with OnSide as the scheme progresses should Cabinet support the proposal.

3. The Youth Zone Operating Model

3.1 Youth Zones elsewhere in the country have created a safe, encouraging and positive environment in which children and young people can spend their leisure time; offering them ‘somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to’. They are bright, vibrant, iconic buildings that take their inspiration from the original and acclaimed success of the Bolton Lads and Girls Club.

3.2 One critical factor in the success of the OnSide Youth Zone model is the voluntary relationship that exists between the Youth Zone and its members. It is important that young people who attend do so because they choose to, not because they are compelled to. This is key to developing positive, healthy relationships between young people, the staff and volunteers; enabling the Youth Zone to deliver high quality, engaging youth work to those that need it most.

3.3 It is also vital that the Youth Zone maintains its cover charge of 50p per session. Income from young people only amounts to c.10% of annual turnover; however the fee is important as it creates a sense of value, ownership and equity. Experience from Youth Zones elsewhere have acknowledged that for the most deprived families, even finding the 50p cover charge can be difficult; in these instances the Youth Zone has never turned away young people who genuinely cannot afford the 50p cover charge. OnSide have committed to exploring the most appropriate way of integrating Youth Zone membership with the Council’s Splashcard and Streetbase schemes for young people.

3.4 Youth Zones are filled with a wide range of activities, catering for all sporting, creative, artistic and social interests. They are youth-led, responding to the needs of its members and driven by a commitment to help all children and young people, with special emphasis on those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds to help increase their confidence and raise aspirations.

3.5 The Youth Zone concept offers a high quality facility and the wide range of activities that represent a commitment to delivering best-in-class youth work. OnSide are experienced in working with diverse communities and dealing with cultural and gender specific issues. Youth Zones offer young people the opportunity to try out activities in which they may otherwise never have the opportunity to participate. The Youth Zone model creates the opportunity for young people to meet new people, make new friends and learn new skills. All of this goes towards building the confidence they need to develop into happy, mature, healthy and successful young adults. OnSide are well experienced with ensuring appropriate high standards of Safeguarding practice is put into place in all its Youth Zone developments.

3.6 It will be important for the Youth Zone operating model to be sufficiently flexible to ensure it meets specific local youth needs including a balanced programme that addresses any potential gender and disability inequalities. The proposed Youth
Zone must also have the capability to integrate with any other planned or future park improvements as far as possible e.g. park facing toilets, cafe, changing facilities etc.

4. **Strategic Fit and Need**

4.1 The Borough has an increasingly young demographic; the 2011 Census showed a rapidly increasing population between the ages of 0-14, with a higher proportion of this age group in the borough when compared to the London average. The rapid increase in young people particularly the 0-4 age band is amongst the highest in London. More recent population projections put the borough’s 0-14 population at 26% in 2015, rising to 27% in 2020. This remains above the London average which is projected to have a 0-14 population at 19% in 2015 and 19.4% in 2020. (GLA 2014 Short Term Trend Based); inevitably this will place increasing pressure on youth provision in the borough.

4.2 In common with many other services the budget for Integrated Youth Services has decreased significantly over recent years due to the broader financial pressures across the public sector. The Council’s Integrated Youth Service is increasingly geared towards statutory and targeted provision; this accounts for c. 70% of its available funding.

4.3 The Council’s youth provision is limited to three dedicated youth centres, four street based community youth clubs and a mobile youth club (the youth bus) for 11-19 year olds and up to 25 for those with a disability. However, this has been supplemented with a number of activity programmes for young people funded through the Public Health grants in addition to youth provision delivered through established third party organisations.

4.4 Experience from existing Youth Zones indicates that the vast majority of Youth Zone members are ‘new’ customers, i.e. they do not already access existing local youth provision. For those young people that do attend other local centres, the Youth Zone is seen to them as an additional offer as opposed to a substitute. Currently in Barking and Dagenham, the three existing centres (The Vibe, Gascoigne and Sue Bramley Centres) open for a combined total of 16 open access hours per week; additional hours are provided by community (Streetbase) youth clubs and the youth bus. The Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone alone will be open for c. 48 hours per week, offering specialised tutored activities not available from the Integrated Youth Service; as such the Youth Zone represents a significant increase in choice and availability for local children and young people.

4.5 Based on the National General Fund benchmarking (2014), Barking and Dagenham spend per capita was £23, significantly below the London mean and median spend of £48. The significance of the proposed investment in young people through the Youth Zone should not be underestimated as it has the potential over the medium to long-term to reduce youth related anti-social behaviour and offending rates and positively enhance the quality of life not only for young people but for all residents. The Youth Zone can also play a key role in reversing the high rates of teenage pregancy, young people not in education, employment or training through its engagement and support activities.

4.6 In Wigan, local police reported a 77% reduction in anti social behaviour over a 12
month period in the area around the Youth Zone since the facility opened. Recent research undertaken on three established Youth Zones reported a positive impact on young people and the wider community since the establishment of a Youth Zone. Some of its key findings are indicated below:

Users (Young People)
- 76% stated that they were getting on better with family since attending the Youth Zone;
- 72% stated that they are staying out of trouble as a result of attending;
- 60% of respondents believed that the Youth Zone has helped them understand the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs;
- 51% said that they were less likely to miss school or college since attending the Youth Zone;
- 89% reported feeling more self-confident as a result of attending the Youth Zone.

Stakeholders Reported:
- reduced crime and anti-social behaviour (including youth offending and arson);
- 75% of local businesses commented that the reduced fear of crime was a positive benefit to the area;
- providing valuable support for troubled families;
- improved health and wellbeing;
- improved community cohesion;

4.7 The proposed Youth Zone would complement and significantly enhance the offer to young people. Not only will the age range of the Council’s current youth offer be extended, but Barking and Dagenham will have London’s first Youth Zone, bringing 21st century youth provision to the borough within a high quality design, with state-of-the-art equipment and facilities. In addition and most importantly, the Youth Zone brings the capability of significantly enhancing the lives and future prospects of local young people. Young people will be involved in the design and branding of the Youth Zone ensuring that it is relevant to its target users.

4.8 Despite Parsloes Park not being within one of the boroughs identified growth hubs, the Youth Zone has a strong fit with the promotion of Barking and Dagenham as London’s Growth Opportunity and that the borough is ‘open for business’. The Youth Zone can positively contribute to the borough’s strategic priorities:

- Encouraging civic pride
- Enabling social responsibility
- Growing the borough

5. Funding, Opportunity and Risk

5.1 The Council does not currently have sufficient funding to meet the needs of its growing young population through direct delivery. Established third party youth organisations already deliver and make a significant contribution to youth provision in the borough. However given the growth in the number of young people in the borough, this will increasingly put pressure on existing provision that will not be able to meet demand. The Youth Zone is considered to be an exciting ‘game changer’ in terms of addressing demand for youth provision in the borough.
5.2 A match funding capital grant of £3m to develop a Youth Zone with a nil revenue contribution guaranteed for three years is a very attractive proposition. Prior to the approach from OnSide to develop London's first Youth Zone, an investment of this scale was not part of the Council's capital ambition. However, the opportunity for Barking and Dagenham to have London's first Youth Zone based on the financial proposal as described in 2.7 is unique; and it potentially delivers on the Council’s strategic vision in a number of ways as highlighted above. It should be noted that the heavily subsided pricing policy may have an impact on income generation on the Council’s leisure centres. However, given the high number of young people in the borough, and experience from other Youth Zones as indicated in 4.4, it is more likely that the Youth Zone will be a complimentary offer to young people as opposed to direct competition.

5.3 Subject to Cabinet approval of a £3m capital grant in support of the Youth Zone, this will release £3m of funding that has been secured by OnSide through its own Foundation.

5.4 The first of the major supporters is The Queen’s Trust. They have pledged a £1.5m capital gift for the first Youth Zone in London, together with an additional £600k donation towards running costs, to be split over the first three years of operation. The Queen’s Trust trustees are delighted that Barking and Dagenham is OnSide’s preferred first London location, but have asked that all projects that they support in London be fully operational by no later than 2018.

5.5 The second major project supporter is The Jack Petchey Foundation. Similar to the Council, The Jack Petchey Foundation is celebrating two milestones in 2015; the Foundation’s 15th anniversary, and also the 90th birthday of its founder, Jack Petchey CBE. The organisation has strong roots in East London, and is by far the area’s most renowned supporter of voluntary sector-led youth provision. The Foundation has been an admirer of OnSide’s Youth Zone model for a number of years and has pledged £1 million towards the costs of developing and constructing a Youth Zone in Barking and Dagenham. The remaining capital funding requirement has been provided through supporter donations to the OnSide Foundation.

5.6 It is important to note that as with the Council’s proposed grant, the above pledged funds to the OnSide Foundation are in-principle agreements, subject to successful planning application and the formal legal and administrative frameworks being put in place. In order to ensure that the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone can be operational by spring 2018, Cabinet approval is sought in order to take full advantage of the unique and exciting funding package that is currently available.

5.7 If Cabinet agree to support the Youth Zone, then the Council’s overall capital ambition should be reviewed in line with the potential funding sources derived from future developments and relevant timelines.

5.8 It is proposed that OnSide are offered the £3m as a capital grant, and then OnSide directly lead the development. Officers have considered the issues of issuing a one-off capital grant of this scale to a single entity and whilst it is theoretically possible that another organisation could offer £3m match funding, a guaranteed nil revenue contribution for three years, an established and successful delivery model of 21st century inclusive youth provision, in all likelihood the probability of this is remote.
5.9 Given that Barking and Dagenham would be the first Youth Zone in London, OnSide has committed to securing all the revenue funding for the first three years. The operating costs of a Youth Zone are typically c. £1m per annum, the majority of which is attributed to staffing costs.

5.10 The operating model that has been successful elsewhere is to secure 3 year funding commitments from multiple locally based private sector sponsors who wish to make a charitable donation and investment in local young people. The Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone Board will be responsible for ensuring project sustainability. Given that this has worked effectively in the north west, the opportunities locally and pan London are potentially equal if not more likely to be delivered, therefore whilst the risk of a revenue gap in year 4 exist, the potential of London’s investment capacity mitigates against this risk. The Council will not be committing to any future revenue contribution into the Youth Zone by agreeing the recommendations of this report.

5.11 It is important that the proposed Youth Zone contributes to the overall Parsloes Park offer. Separately Officers are developing a potential bid to the Football Foundation for two 3G (artificial all-weather) pitches and associated changing facilities in the park. In addition, a master planning process has recently been commissioned to create a longer term vision and restoration plan for the park, whilst this is some time away from being completed; it will inevitably require substantial external funding in addition to Council resources to be realised. The Youth Zone and the 3G pitches could become cornerstones of a longer term restoration project if progressed.

5.12 If Cabinet are supportive of the proposed Youth Zone there is the opportunity for it to be integrated within the redesign of the site and relieve some pressure from the current infrastructure. It will be important for the Council to ensure the established Youth Zone model is sufficiently flexible to meet not only the needs of young people but the wider community.

5.13 There are also additional potential positive revenue/service delivery implications for the Council if the Youth Zone was progressed (although these are not quantifiable at this stage):

- Meeting future open access youth provision needs that the Council may not be able to offer directly in the future at nil cost (assuming project sustainability).
- Revitalise and energise a part of the park that is currently poorly maintained and used.
- Provide additional passive supervision and positive engagement with young people that can help develop a sense of ownership and civic pride.
- Potential to manage/oversee other elements of the park e.g. toilets; café; play area etc., subject to detailed discussion with OnSide.

5.14 OnSide have a good track record of delivering Youth Zone capital projects to budget and ensuring revenue sustainability elsewhere in the country, although it is noted that the revenue model proposed for Barking and Dagenham is unique.

5.15 If in the worst case scenario, the project failed and the Barking and Dagenham
Youth Zone Trust were dissolved the Council would inherit the asset/liability of the building without the resources to operate it or meet enhanced community expectations. However, there would be the opportunity to re-engineer the facility and deliver a viable alternative offer from the facility that would mitigate the impact to some extent.

6. Options Appraisal

6.1 The options in this instance are limited. The Council had not considered developing a major purpose built youth facility in the borough before being approached by OnSide; therefore considering the proposal as presented, the options are limited as indicated below.

6.2 Option 1 - Do nothing. Reject the proposal and do not offer Council support. The impact of this would result in OnSide withdrawing its £3m investment offer into the borough and looking towards an alternative host authority. The opportunity to create sustainable youth provision in the borough would be lost. **This option is not recommended.**

6.3 Option 2 - Full Council led development. This would result in the Council needing to provide 100% capital and revenue funding (less any grant funding it could raise); Council would be required to follow EU Procurement Regulations that would add time and cost in addition to carrying capital overrun project full risk of capital project overrun and revenue liabilities. In this instance the Council investment is likely to be in excess of £7m. **This option is not recommended.**

6.4 Option 3 - Support the proposal. This would require a £3m capital grant from the Council to OnSide (50% of the capital build). OnSide have committed to deliver 50% of the capital cost; 100% of revenue costs for the first three years. **This option is recommended.**

6.5 It should be noted that there are considered to be three key risks to the recommended option:

   a) OnSide withdraw their capital funding offer to develop the project. This is considered to be a low risk; should this be realised the Council would withdraw its grant offer.
   
   b) Revenue shortfall in from Year 4. This is considered to be a moderate risk; however the Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone Board would be charged with securing on-going revenue support exploiting its network of supporters and potential funders.
   
   c) Project Failure. If the project failed at some point in the future and the local Trust dissolved the lease would be nullified and the building would become a Council asset/liability. The success of OnSide’s Youth Zones elsewhere in the country suggests this is a low risk.

7. Consultation

7.1 A Ward Member briefing was held on Tuesday 9th June and Monday 13th July at Barking Town Hall; in addition an informal meeting has taken place with the Metropolitan Police who indicated general support for the proposal. Full statutory agency, young people and community consultation will commence once the project
has ‘in principle’ Cabinet approval and as part of the statutory planning process.

8. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Kathy Freeman, Group Manager Corporate Finance

8.1 The report is seeking a £3m contribution from the Council to match fund the development of the first ever Youth Zone in London. The project will be delivered by OnSide on behalf of the Council.

8.2 The Council’s contribution constitutes 50% of the capital construction costs and the rest of the project will be financed by externally sourced income, namely £1.5m from the Queen’s Trust, £1m from the Jack Petchey Foundation and OnSide have committed to sourcing the remainder through donations from their supporters.

8.3 It is proposed to fund the Council’s £3m contribution from £1m of s106 funding held to support the development of leisure facilities and £2m has been identified from previously held unallocated and unspecific capital grants.

8.4 The project is expected to complete in 2018 and OnSide have committed to securing the revenue operational costs for three years after following the completion. The Queen’s Trust has pledged £0.6m revenue for the first three years to contribute to the sustainability of the project. During the first three years of operation, the Youth Zone Board will be tasked in developing a sustainable model for the future that does not require additional support from the Council.

8.5 In terms of risks, OnSide have previously delivered other Youth Zone projects successfully. However, once Cabinet gives the in principle decision to support the project, the legal documents drawn up will be assessed for financial implications ensuring that the Council minimises risks by agreeing payment milestones through contract delivery. The achievement of project milestones and the monitoring of the contract will be undertaken by officers to ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget.

8.6 Should Cabinet agree in principle to this proposal, a full financial analysis will be required to assess the business case of the project to ensure the costs are within the agreed funding envelope. The Council’s contribution will be capped at £3m and any overspends incurred on the project will be met by OnSide.

9. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Paul Feild, Senior Governance Lawyer

9.1 The development is proposed to be located in Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). Any development would need to be fully justified on the merits of specific development proposals. The Boroughs Local Development Framework makes clear that significant areas of public open space are to be identified and protected from development. In addition, The Mayors 2015 London Plan Policy 7.17 states essential ancillary facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they maintain the openness of MOL and 7.18 (B) accords that the strongest protection should be given to London’s Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of
10. Other Implications

10.1 Risk Management – the associated risks at this stage of this proposal are set out in paragraph 6.5 of this report.

10.2 Contractual Issues – it is proposed that OnSide will lead and be fully responsible for the procurement and subsequent management of the construction project (subject to planning approval) local companies will have the opportunity to tender for the construction related works. The detail of the operational arrangements will be developed pending planning approval as per the recommendations (Recommendation (iii)).

10.3 Staffing Issues – None. Staff would not be employees of the Council and no existing Council employees will be affected by this proposal if approved.

10.4 Corporate Policy and Customer Impact - this proposal supports a number of corporate objectives highlighted in this report notably, Encouraging Civic Pride; Enabling Social Responsibility and Growing the Borough.

10.4.1 An analysis of the Age equality group has been used to inform the business case. The report clearly recognises the changing demographic profile within the borough, with an increase in young people which is also predicted to continue to increase. It addresses how this proposal could help to mitigate the potential impact of reduced local authority funding for youth provision.

10.4.2 If this report is accepted in principle, it will be important for all future work to take account of other protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010); ensuring any provision is fully inclusive to all young people and that an equality analysis / impact assessment is carried out at critical stages of the project.

10.5 Safeguarding Children – OnSide are an established organisation with considerable experience of Safeguarding policy and practice.

10.6 Health Issues – Youth Zones are an established model with good examples running across the country in places such as Wigan, Carlisle and Oldham. Most are based on the evolved thinking around community development, inclusion and positive youth work through a range of activities, including sport, fitness, dance, arts, music, media and self improvement. The approach supports the outcomes and priorities of our joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

10.7 Crime and Disorder Issues - In principle this is a development which would be welcomed. Experience elsewhere in the country has shown that Youth Zones have had a positive outcome in terms of crime and disorder levels and also in terms of the impact on young people generally. Consideration would have to be given to the security of the site once operational, dispersal and also general issues around site security during construction. Outline discussions have been held with the Metropolitan Police who were generally also supportive of the proposals. Should the development be agreed in principle clearly there would be need for more
specific discussions around the above issues.

10.8 **Planning Issues** - Parsloes Park is designated in the Local Plan as both Metropolitan Open Land and Public Open Space, whilst some parts are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. Metropolitan Open Land is afforded the same level of protection from inappropriate development as the Green Belt. The development of an indoor facility such as the Youth Zone would, by definition, be an ‘inappropriate’ use of the land and would need to be carefully justified by very special circumstances. The need for the facility and the potential for the building to encourage additional use of the outdoor spaces in the park could be put forward as such circumstances. A planning application would need to be referred to both the Mayor of London and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government who have the power to call in the application or direct refusal.

10.9 **Property / Asset Issues** - The proposal would positively develop an area of the park that is already used for play equipment and an area used by the Council for operational purposes. The area would therefore benefit from a development of this size in retaining suitable access by the public. Capital funding would need to be made available along with clear lease arrangements (including repairing liabilities) in order to protect the Council from future changes. In keeping with the Council’s carbon reduction initiatives, the design of the building should explore and incorporate any many energy efficient measures as possible to reduce the buildings carbon footprint.

**Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:**
- A New Manifesto for The Young People of Great Britain
- Executive Summary ‘Defining the Impact of a Youth Zone

**List of Appendices:**
- **Appendix 1** - Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone – Proposal for Support
  - Source: Onside Foundation
- **Appendix 2** - Indicative Location Plan of proposed Youth Zone Development