

---

## **FLOWERPOT CAFÉ AT VICTORIA PARK DAY CENTRE**

**Report by Director - Infrastructure and Environment**

---

### **AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**9 December 2021**

---

#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report summarises the content and context of a petition received by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The petition, titled “Flowerpot Café, Victoria Park”, received in the region of 30 signatures.**

#### **2 PETITION**

- 2.1 The petition requests the reopening of the Flowerpot café run by the Food Foundation (FF) which operated in the community garden at the Victoria Park Day Centre (VPDC) in the Summer of 2020.

#### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The FF is a social enterprise that aims to help develop skills and confidence in people. Prior to Covid they were supplying catering and buffet food for events. They have been using the kitchen and other areas at VPDC for many years for preparing the food and training people although no formal lease is in place.
- 3.2 VPDC is operated by SBC/SB Cares to provide the Peebles Learning Disability Day Service (LDDSS). In addition, VPDC also houses the Care at Home office base for the Peebles Homecare provision.
- 3.3 In July 2020, the FF opened an outdoor café operating from the garden at the centre with funding from SBC through the locality bid fund. At this time due to the pandemic the LDSS was temporarily closed in line with National guidance and limited staffing was in the building for Care at Home provision due to restriction on office working. This meant during this time FF were able to use many areas within the centre which were operated by SB Cares.

- 3.4 In February 2021, SBC/SB Cares resumed running their LDDS day in line with national guidance for opening up all Day Service provisions. Access to respite/day care to support unpaid carers and for families with a disabled family member was part of Scotland's Route map out of Covid in Phase 1. Some of the individuals being supported are in the shielding category and due to the nature of their learning and physical disabilities, all of these individuals are in the high-risk group should they contract Covid. In depth infection control, health and safety and individual risk assessments were carried out for the building and surrounding areas and stringent measures put in place, before agreement was given to re-open the service to these individuals.
- 3.5 The FF café was shut at the start of January 2021 as a result of the second National lockdown and the FF requested to reopen their café at the VPDC from April 26<sup>th</sup> 2021. Their request was investigated but due to the LDDS service having reopened from the building in February 2021, in line with the risk assessment and required protocols in place for operating a day service this was not viable. Requirements state specific social distancing, enhanced cleaning protocols, thus due to the areas within the building that FF staff would need access to the reopening of the community café was not possible.
- 3.6 The FF identified an alternative area within the centre grounds to open the café. This was reviewed with SBC/SB Cares and the Council's Health and Safety team. This area was deemed not to be safe for the operation of a café due to the unevenness of the ground and risk of slips and trips.
- 3.7 Another area within the grounds has been identified, reviewed and approved and a temporary occupation has been drafted to allow the FF to use this area for the café. This agreement also formalises the use of areas within the building by the FF. The temporary agreement was sent to the FF for their review at the end of September and will allow their use of part of centre and an area within the grounds while a longer term lease is negotiated with this hopefully being agreed in early 2022. It is expected that VPDC will remain an operational facility for the delivery of LDDS services for the foreseeable future and this will be a consideration when discussing terms for a long term lease Planning permission will be required for use of the outdoor area as a café but no planning application has yet been received. Use of this ground for a café has been approved by the Landlord so there will be no objection from the Landlord to a planning application for change of use of the ground.

**John Curry**

**Approved by  
Director Infrastructure & Environment**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Tricia Hill	Estates Surveyor

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Tricia Hill can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at [estatemangement@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:estatemangement@scotborders.gov.uk)