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24 June 2020

Cllr Ray Berry
Chair of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee
Leighton-Linslade Town Council
The White House
Hockliffe Street
Leighton Buzzard
LU7 1HD

Dear Ray

CAFE IN THE PARK CONCESSION FEES

As you are aware, we have asked Ian Haynes, Head of Grounds and Environmental Services, whether, in light of current circumstances, the Concession Fees for Café in the Park could be waived in 2020-21 as these are crucial to whether the Café is financially viable this year. I understand you have asked that we write a formal letter to you with our request.

There are, as you know, extraordinary circumstances this year and we have not been able to open the Café during April, May and June due to the current Coronavirus and the break-in at Easter. We are currently considering when it is sensible, appropriate and safe to open the Café but the expected footfall will inevitably be much lower this year, especially while the park's attractions remain closed and social distancing remains in place. We are working with Ian to ensure we can open as soon as possible and we remain committed to providing the Café as long as it is financially viable.

When we discussed the concession fees for Café in the Park with Ian, the Food and Beverage Concession was based on the Café being open all year. We have found that keeping the café open through the Winter is not financially viable. We had hoped that an active Summer season would have allowed us to retain funds for a winter opening but due to the lower than expected footfall and variable weather this was not possible last year. In the current circumstances it will not be viable to remain open all year this year. We are therefore planning to close the Café for the winter season.

In the circumstances I wonder if the Council will be prepared to waive the Food and Beverage Concession and the Ice Cream Concession Fees for 2020/21, either in full or part?

Yours sincerely

John Gelder
Director

