

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Media Release reference: SMV/2022-05-24/#6

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Contact: (Redacted)

mobile: (Redacted)

email: (Redacted)

## EXPOSED: CARDIFF COUNCIL'S SECRET PLAN TO USE BUTE PARK SO IT CAN BUILD NEW SCHOOL

A secret plan by Cardiff Council to use over 31,000 square metres of Bute Park in a land swap has been exposed by Save Maindy Velodrome (SMV) campaign group. Cardiff Council has wanted to take land at Maindy Park for a new secondary school but is unable to do so lawfully because the land is protected by a charity covenant that it be used for recreation and leisure by the people in perpetuity. On Friday last week, 20 May 2022, a small notice which did not bear the name of either Cardiff Council or Maindy Park Charity (MPC) in the heading appeared in the Western Mail. This stated the proposal for MPC to dispose of the land at Maindy in favour of the Council and receive some other land in return. .../more Although the Notice said details were available from the Council website, despite several people from SMV conducting multiple searches using different relevant terms and references, there was no information available to the public. SMV has since been able to obtain information from the Property Department of Cardiff Council that a large area of Bute Park, comprising 31,400 square meters (approximately 8 acres) at Blackweir, would be given to a third party (MPC) as part compensation for giving up Maindy Park. In addition, the Council would also give to MPC a large area of Caedelyn Park, comprising 29,470 square meters (just over 7 acres). The maps were attached to an email from Cardiff Council which stated: "We are sorry about this oversight with the website. We have been advised that the website will be updated as soon as possible so that links are available. In the meantime please find attached the plans for this notice which will also be available on the website once it has updated." [Source: provided from email address Propinfo@cardiff.gov.uk dated as being issued at 11.56am on Tuesday 24 May 2022] On examining the maps attached it was revealed the extent of the Council's plans for the land swap. "It is another sign of the contempt that Cardiff Council has for its community by giving away large parts of Bute Park and Caedelyn in order to circumvent the legal protection of Maindy Park that has existed for over 100 years" said Chris Lewis, speaking on behalf of SMV. .../more "Others shall have to draw their own conclusions but they may wish to consider that, as the Council conducted a consultation on school provision over a year ago, the fact that it has delayed giving Notice of its intention to give away part of Bute Park until after the local elections was a deliberate decision by Cllr Huw Thomas and his Cabinet to keep the plan secret from the people of Cardiff." "We have alerted the Charity Commission to what we believe is a further example of inappropriate stewardship by Cardiff Council." – ENDS – Notes for editors: (1) Attachments below are 3 plans – 1 each of Maindy Park, Bute Park (Blackweir) and Caedelyn Park – provided by Cardiff Council in response to enquiry about the Notice of land swap (received from email address Propinfo@cardiff.gov.uk dated as being issued at 11.56am on Tuesday 24 May 2022) (2) Save Maindy Velodrome (SMV) is a community-led group objecting to Cardiff Council's plan to change the purpose of the charitable trust. As at 16 November 2021 it had gathered a petition against the plan totalling 4,271 signatories of which 1,499 were address-verified\* individuals. The petition was presented at a full meeting of the Council on 24 November 2021. Source: <https://www.change.org/p/cardiff-council-save-maindy-velodrome> \* Cardiff Council will only allow petitions there are signatories with a valid address within the Council area (3) Maindy Park was designated a place for recreation for Cardiff people under a covenant from

1922 with the condition that it is to remain Open Space in perpetuity, and protected by charity law in England & Wales. The charity name is Maindy Park and its registered charity number is 524137. The covenant sets out the purpose as follows: "Recreation or other leisure-time occupation for the benefit of the inhabitants of the City of Cardiff with the object of improving the conditions of life for those inhabitants" Source: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charitydetails/524137> (4) The Charity Commission registers and regulates charities in England and Wales, to ensure that the public can support charities with confidence. The Charity Commission is a non-ministerial department.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>