Dear

I am writing to you about the VisionRCL closure of the Fairlop Outdoor Activities Centre that you are responsible for (as chief executive or VisionRCL) or (directly responsible for the control and oversight of the VisionRCL service to Redbridge council)

The Centre’s primary service is not a commercial centre hiring boats to the general public. It’s primary purpose is to support school and youth groups from across the borough. It supports Young People from all backgrounds and income brackets to gain life skills and build confidence. The Centre is heavily used by these groups in normal times, to the extent that its is nearly impossible for groups to book additional activity slots beyond what they already have. By closing the Centre you are closing a vital resource and in the case of some youth groups whole depend on it for their primary activity you will wipe them out.

Councillor Jas Athwal has said that the centre will not close ‘on this watch’ yet it is the undeniable truth that the Centre is closed. The gates are locked, it has not been maintained for the last year and the staff have all been told they no longer have a job there. In a meeting with the Campaign to Save Fairlop Outdoor Activity Centre this week Cllr Athwal promised that the Centre would open to its user community as soon as the government deemed it safe to do so. Given the Government’s commitment to getting grassroots sports and Youth activities moving again this is likely to be so, yet with no staff and a centre in disrepair that would be impossible to do. Could you please answer for me the following questions relating top the centre:

**Why was the centre not opened last year to provide its core service and raise essential income when it is capable of generating a good revenue stream?** Last year you did not allow the Centre to open even as most other similar places were opened and earned record incomes, in cases surpassing normal annual revenues in the time between lockdowns.

**Why did you not first consult the more than 20 permanent and temporary staff at the Centre and its core users that depend upon it before closing it?** Centre staff have identified ways of earning at least a further £65k a year from Centre activities and yet VisionRCL management are not interested in hearing this. Youth groups will close as a result of losing this resource.

**Why have you not allowed the site and it’s valuable equipment to be maintained so that it is able to open as soon as the government deems it safe to do so?** Staff at the site have been trying to do what they can even while they are not being paid but you have provided no support for this. Boats have been allowed to take on water.

**Why have you allowed the AALA license to lapse by ignoring the minor remedial action required within he required time to prevent de-listing of the site ?** A new AALA inspection will be required as a matter of urgency and must be initiated (and now paid for) a number of months before the centre reopens.

**Given that the site certification is tied to named members of permanent staff that you are laying off, how do you propose to operate the centre given that it is not closing?**

**Given that Cllr Athwal has committed to ensuring the Centre opens this year as soon as the government deems it safe to do why have you sacked all the staff required to make that happen?**

**Finally, why have you unilaterally closed the Centre and sacked the staff before the Council has approve the relevant budget item?** The budget proposal listing the centre is not approved and is currently only a proposal, one that cannot be approved given Councillor Athwal’s guarantee to reopen the centre (specifically at this site)

The staff and volunteers that support the youth groups impacted by this closure are willing and able to help. You can reach them on campaign@fairlopwaterslake.org.uk and https//fairlopwaterslake.org.uk

Yours,