

“First play services mutual gets green light”

By Adam Offord | 25 August 2016

Plans for staff at a London council to run half of its adventure playgrounds through an employee-led mutual have been rubber-stamped in what is thought to be the first move of its kind.



Awesome Community Interest Company (CIC) will deliver, operate and manage six of Islington Council's 12 adventure playgrounds from October after being awarded a three-year contract worth £1.8m.

A number of **youth mutuals** - designed to take on the running of local authority youth services - have already been established across the UK, but it is thought that Awesome CIC is the UK's first play services mutual.

Council documents state that the aim is to secure an adventure play offer for Islington which is high quality, reaches more and different children and families than the

current offer and delivers opportunities for "excitement, risk and access to nature while being safe in spaces with robust safeguarding arrangements in place".

It has been **reported** that Islington's six other adventure playgrounds will continue to be run by the **Islington Play Association**.

Joe Caluori, lead member for children, young people, and families at Islington Council, said: "We're delighted that Awesome has been awarded the contract.

"The staff have worked very hard to gain the skills needed to run their own organisation and children have been involved all the way - even in naming 'Awesome'.

"We're confident that Awesome will be able to deliver an exciting offer of adventure play in playgrounds that are free for Islington children and families."

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