

BAR END FORUM**9 November 2016**Attendance:Councillors:Winchester City Council

Ashton (Chairman) (P)

Pearson (P)

Tait (P)

Weir (P)

Hampshire County Council

Mather (P)

Highcliffe Community Forum for Action

Chris Allen (P)

Janet Berry (P)

St Giles Hill Residents Association

Geoff Wright (P)

Liz Cooper (P)

Highcliffe Allotments Association

Apologies

Chilcomb Lane Residents

John Doyle

Other Members in Attendance:

Councillors Bell, Burns, Hutchison, Laming, Weston, Warwick

Winchester City Council Officers in Attendance:

Ms J Anderson: Project Manager & Policy Officer

Ms M Ford : Head of Sport and Physical Activity

Mr A Hickman: Assistant Director (Policy & Planning)

Mrs A Perkins: Head of Policy and Projects

1. **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed approximately 20 members of the public, representatives of community groups etc to the first meeting of the Bar End Forum. Also present was Mr Justin Ridgmont from The University of Winchester.

The Chairman explained that he envisaged that the Forum would provide a positive mechanism for local people and relevant stakeholders to influence the project going forward. Specifically, this would include how a new Leisure Centre facility would 'fit into' the existing wider Bar End area.

The Forum would also feed into the Council's formal consultation process, but the Chairman clarified that it would not be the only vehicle for the public to have a voice.

Following a request, he advised that he would be pleased for the Forum to in future include a representative of the community living adjacent to the Garrison Ground on the other side of Bar End Road.

2. **REPLACEMENT LEISURE CENTRE UPDATE**

(Report BEF001 and oral update refers)

The Chairman reminded the meeting of how the replacement leisure centre project had evolved in recent years, which included that the new facility was to be sited at Bar End. Options for the exact siting of the building were still to be agreed; however a recent Council decision to progress the purchase of the Garrison Ground from Tesco will have ensured that the more preferable location for this fronting onto Bar End Road was achievable – subject to technical assessment of the site, subsequent financial appraisal and community views. The land had now been registered as an Asset of Community Value. The effect of this was that there was an interim moratorium period of six weeks to allow a Community Interest Group to potentially register an interest in acquiring the land – although it was not envisaged that this would take place. The Council had now committed that the whole 13.68 acres (5.5 hectares) of the Garrison Ground to be purchased from Tesco would be utilised for sports and community use in perpetuity. The Council would also work with several partners with regard to the new facility, to include the University of Winchester and the Pinder Trust. The latter were a charity associated with hydrotherapy.

During discussion, a number of matters were raised which were responded to where appropriate. These are summarised below:

- (i) Mr Hickman explained that whether an Energy Centre could fit into the project (i.e. to 'feed' the new Leisure Centre) would be investigated in due course.
- (ii) It was agreed that it was important for the Forum to understand the aspirations of the various stakeholders across wider Bar End area in

the context of a new Leisure Centre, so to create an overall concept for the wider project. This master planning should include also detail of roads, accessibility etc.

- (iii) Previous options for the new facility had included use of the old Council depot as part of its siting. The Chairman pointed out that the Council needed to consider how it could best get commercial return from its assets and as such this would be a key factor in determining whether any part of the Leisure Centre could be located on the Depot site. Its connection and/or involvement in the proposals should be accounted for within the master planning / framework for the area. It was acknowledged that the depot site featured within the Council's Asset Management Plan and also in the relevant Portfolio Plan as an asset to generate income for the Council.
- (iv) It would also be important to integrate the internal facility mix with the outside facilities that already exist.
- (v) It was confirmed that a Project Management firm had been appointed by the Council and they would be responsible for the procurement of an urban designer/architect and also to ensure robust public engagement throughout the process.
- (vi) There was uncertainty with regard to the future use of the existing RPLC site at North Walls. A Member suggested that this could potentially be utilised by the Cultural Trust, should the County Council decide to dispose of Chilcomb House. In addition to this, there may be capacity within the Central Winchester Regeneration area for this.
- (vii) The Chairman suggested that a masterplan for the area would be a detailed document describing and illustrating how planning and design policies and principles should be implemented into an area where there was a need to control, guide and promote change. The view of the forum was that development should be phased as opposed to there being a piecemeal approach. Mr Hickman confirmed that both Leaders of the City and County Council have already met to discuss the Leisure Centre Project and related issues in the area and hence such considerations were therefore underway. The Chairman reported that there should be a document that set out the community's aspirations for the whole area, having regard to those of relevant stakeholders etc. Mrs Perkins explained that much information for the master planning framework had already been gained, i.e. from the Highcliffe Community Action Plan.
- (viii) The Chairman described what he had envisaged could be influenced through consultation on the proposals for a new facility. This could include – orientation, internal layout, access, lighting, relationships with other facilities, visual impact, outside facilities (e.g. pitch size), materials, signage, car parking. The Chair presented an indicative timeline for the projects next stages. This is attached as an **appendix** to the minutes.

- (ix) It was appreciated that residents were more likely to be supportive of proposals being put forward when they had been kept informed of the detail throughout the process.
- (x) It was believed that the County Council had an ambition to continue to improve sporting facilities in response to the legacy of London 2012. Therefore, it was possible that they may be willing to contribute to new facilities at Bar End.
- (xi) The technical studies process (to include ascertaining land ownership matters and any physical constraints that may determine the exact siting of the buildings etc) was likely to be have been completed by February 2017. The technical studies create the parameters which would then, in turn, be fed into the architect's technical brief. The Chairman summarised that the brief for the architect should be a concept based on all technical constraints, reflect the facility mix (already agreed) and the exact location (to be agreed in February 2017). The masterplan/framework to be developed for the wider area should include the King George V playing fields, the depot site, HCC/Cultural Trust, as well as having regard to the aspirations of the County Council with regards to a sporting legacy and related transport, access and parking.
- (xii) Winchester City Council, Hampshire County Council and the University controlled all the land required to develop a new sports and leisure facility on either the East or West options. Therefore, some very precise planning could be done in the context of the new centre. The Forum would allow local residents to influence the process.
- (xiii) Reference was made to the 'planning for real' process which was a useful process to create a visionary document and masterplan.
- (xiv) A steering group would be an efficient process going forward to develop a masterplan. This would include all stakeholders, land owners etc.
- (xv) It was noted that the facility mix of the new centre had already been agreed. In addition this this, Ms Anderson advised that the internal space would be designed to be as flexible possible so to help 'future proof' the facility as much as possible. Ms Ford explained that in addition to this, Sport England had also been consulted, as had all relevant sporting governing bodies and local clubs etc.
- (xvi) The Chairman clarified that the University, as a partner in the project, would wish the new facility to work as well as possible for them as well as being of benefit to the whole community.
- (xvii) Any broader framework to be drawn up for the area would have regard to all associated plans – including the University's Strategic Vision, which may impact on what it envisaged to be built.

During discussion of Report BEF1, a number of matters were raised which were responded to where appropriate. These are summarised below. The Chairman also explained that he would be pleased to receive questions outside of the Forum meeting via email.

- (xviii) With regard to paragraph 2.4 on page 3, it was queried whether the public engagement exercise referred to (of the Roberts Limbrick verification plans) had actually been completed? It was stated that whatever consultation that had been undertaken at that time had been inadequate and that residents would look forward to a more positive experience going forward. In response, Mrs Perkins clarified that the plans taken to this event had already been informed via public consultation. The event was not intended to be looking to achieve an in-depth consultation and was, rather, one of a series of events.
- (xix) During further discussion, the Chairman clarified that Forum Update Report (BEF1) and references to KGV and Fields in Trust had been written prior to the Tesco land 'deal' and therefore these issues needed to be considered carefully in relation to the outcome of that deal. If the transaction with Tesco's was concluded satisfactorily, then this presented a different scenario and opened up other opportunities in relation to Fields in Trust designations.
- (xx) With regard to section 8 of the Report on Transport Issues, it was explained that although a draft interim version of the Stuart Michael Associates Report had now been received; a new assessment would need to be completed as a new facility was to be located to the 'front' of the site. In addition, latest decisions regarding the facility mix would need to be reflected including the impact on parking spaces required. It was acknowledged that it would be helpful to see whether there was evidence of likely transport gain from having the new facility located at Bar End.

6. **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Future dates for Forum meetings would be communicated in the first instance to Forum members via email. The Chairman envisaged that the next meeting would be held before Christmas.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.20pm.

Chairman

Appendix

Time lines

