

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER SPORT & LEISURE PARK – RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION

25 JULY 2018

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr Lisa Griffiths. Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This report implements the Motion agreed and decided on the evening by Council on 27 June 2018 and deals with the matters raised.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the evaluation of the matters raised by the motion as detailed in this report be noted and agreed. Specifically that the matters raised are not considered to be material to the planning application and can be addressed during the current design phase of the project or through wider considerations such as the Winchester Movement and Access Study.
2. That when actioning the motion and considering responses from the planning application consultation and the engagement with the sports clubs and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) that no changes or amended plans be submitted in relation to the planning submission application.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 This project supports the Health and Happiness outcome of Council Strategy through the provision of new facilities to meet the needs of a broad cross section of our communities for now and in the future.
- 1.2 The agreed project vision and objectives are as set out below and may be helpful in relation to considering the issues raised on this motion.

The vision for the new Sport and Leisure Centre is a centre which

- a) Reflects sporting needs and aspirations for the people of our District.
- b) Is flexible to provide for current and future sporting needs and trends.
- c) Is deliverable and affordable.
- d) Is in a park setting providing additional sporting and leisure opportunities.
- e) Provides an excellent water based offer for community use.

The objectives for the project are:

- a) To provide accessible public sport and leisure facilities to improve the health and happiness of the District's residents.
- b) To increase participation in sport and active recreation.
- c) To improve the quality and energy efficiency of Winchester's main leisure facility.
- d) To provide a Sport and Leisure Centre that is financially sustainable.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 These could be significant if the project is delayed due a substantial rework of the design which is currently progressing through the RIBA Stage 4 process.
- 2.2 If a substantial change was made that required resubmission of whole/part of the planning application, there could be an additional cost to the council.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None directly but further delay to this project may impact on the existing River Park Leisure Centre and required maintenance.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 The engagement, listening and learning process to support the development of this project has been extensive and has allowed the project team to capture aspects of leisure centre design, management and operation that are important to key groups and partners.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The environmental considerations in relation to this project have been considered in line with the project vision and objectives. Energy usage is a key consideration in this regard and therefore issues such as natural light and ventilation need to be considered alongside requirements and desires of sports clubs and leisure centre users. Furthermore access issues and meeting the needs of all people who wish to use the new centre have to be considered and met in a balanced and an affordable way.
- 7.2 A Sustainability Advisory Group was established to consider the environmental impact of the new facility

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

- 8.1 Equality impact issues are considered in relation to the project vision and objectives as part of the work of the 4 Advisory Panels, the detailed design/ assessment work and engagement for this project.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 This project has a separate risk register which is managed by the Project Lead.
- 10.2 The RIBA Stage3 Design was agreed by the Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee on 26 March 2018 and has been used as the basis for the planning application submission. There is a significant risk to the project timetable if the design is altered resulting in amendments to the planning application. It is therefore important to consider carefully if any identified changes to the design as a result of Sports Clubs and NGB comments and through the wider engagement are material to the planning application or should be considered and dealt with as non material planning matters as part of the currently underway RIBA Stage 4 Design. Some matters may be

considered through wider work which is being considered such as the Winchester Access and Movement Study/ Strategy, general accessibility to the Bar End area and ongoing parking management work.

- 10.3 It should be noted that if the project is delayed by further review, that cannot be accommodated within the existing timescales of the planning application process, then this will incur a financial impact both in terms of the cost of the Design team (in the order of £100,000 per month) and any resulting impacts of inflation on the construction costs.
- 10.4 There is a risk that if the design does not meet the aspirations of Sports Clubs then these clubs will choose not to use the new facility this must be balanced against the needs of the wider community and those of residents.
- 10.5 It is considered that risks in relation to the design and layout of the proposed Sport and Leisure Centre have been mitigated throughout the design process by significant and extensive consultation and engagement; the use of 4 Advisory Panels; by having a highly experienced supporting design and consultant team and by seeking endorsement of the approach by Sport England and National Sporting Governing Bodies.

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 On 27 June 2018, Council voted in favour of the following motion;

This Council notes:

- *That a planning application has been submitted for the new leisure centre on June 14, 2018 – with a Statutory Expiry date before the next scheduled Full Council meeting*
- *That this application was submitted before councillors and local residents had been consulted on the detailed final design – and before local sports clubs had been given full access to detailed proposed plans for the scheme to check their practicality*

This Council believes that:

- *It should follow exemplary consultation practices, including detailed public and councillor consultation on its own planning applications before designs are agreed and submitted*
- *The proposed design has several design flaws that lie partly or wholly outside the scope of the planning process – but that need to be urgently addressed before construction starts – including:*
 - *- An impractical design of the main sports hall that does not meet the needs of local sport and recreation*
 - *- Poorly thought through access and parking arrangements – especially for residents in Highcliffe*

This Council therefore:

- *Reconfirms its commitment to a new leisure centre at Bar End*
- *Instructs the Council as developer and landowner to bring forward a revised plan that addresses these concerns – and other critical design concerns raised during public consultation and consultation with local sports clubs – to be submitted to the Council as the Local Planning Authority in sufficient time to minimise any delay to the planning and development process*

This report is drawn from information contained in other reports also on this agenda setting out responses to the planning application and the process of engagement and consultation with National Governing Bodies of Sport and Sports Clubs. It should be noted that these papers were due for consideration regardless of the motion agreed at Full Council.

A Full Council decision was taken on this motion at the same meeting where the motion was presented. This was after the suspension of Council Procedure Rules. As such, the decision is already made and not referred back to Full Council. (Council Procedure Rules. Part 2 Council Meetings. Section 9 (6) Notices of Motion.)

12 Planning Application Submission Process

- 12.1 The authority and delegation to submit a planning application was agreed by Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee on 16 January this year as part of CAB2983 (LC)
- 12.2 No comment was raised on this authority or delegation by any Councillor of the Committee or Council on/ prior to 16 January 2018.
- 12.3 The timeline for the project has always stated that the planning application shall be submitted in June 2018
- 12.4 The Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee also agreed the RIBA Stage 3 design and progression to RIBA Stage 4, on 26 March 2018.
- 12.5 An update report was presented at Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee on 23 May 2018.
- 12.6 The Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee was fully briefed on the design during April 2018; this included two review meetings with presentations and discussions. The design process has been informed by 4 Advisory Panels on Design, Sustainability, Accessibility and Contract Management which have all met on at least three occasions – See Appendix 8.
- 12.7 The planning application for the proposed Sport & Leisure Centre contains a full Design and Access Statement, a Planning Statement, a detailed Statement of Community Involvement and all of the supporting assessments

and technical reports as well as the design and layout drawings for the proposed Centre and surrounding landscaping.

13 Consultation Approach

- 13.1 There have been four phases of engagement in the last 12 months; the following topics were covered:
 - a) Phase 1: site analysis, issues, concerns and aspirations
 - b) Phase 2: principles and early concept designs
 - c) Phase 3: designs
- 13.2 Phase 4 of the engagement consisted of public events on the Draft Design Framework and an exhibition in June 2018 on the planning application designs and supporting assessments/ background documents.
- 13.3 It should be noted that all 248 sports groups and NGB contacts were invited to the public engagement sessions (See Appendix 3 List of Sports Clubs and Appendix 4 List of National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs)). The Council has also met separately with a number of groups and organisations.
- 13.4 In addition two dedicated meetings were held for National Governing Bodies of Sports (NGBs) and local sports clubs in February 2018 where a presentation and question and answer session was held. See Appendices 5 invitees, attendees and responses received; Appendix 6 Minutes of NGB meeting and Appendix 7. Minutes of Sports Clubs meeting. Detailed floor plans were available to view at this meeting Clubs were asked to submit comments following this meeting to be considered in separate follow up meetings with the relevant NGBs.
- 13.5 The Council's architect has now met with NGBs and Sport England (see Appendix 2 for the Minutes of this meeting) to discuss the comments submitted by Sports Clubs. A full set of all comments received and is set out in Appendix 1. Detailed responses /comments have been provided to explain how each issue will be addressed or the reasons why any issues cannot be addressed.
- 13.6 Sport England's (SE) technical design advisor has undertaken a review on behalf of SE of The Councils RIBA 3 design for the new leisure centre. This has confirmed that the design is in accordance with SE design guidance including the Sports Hall and Swimming Pool areas.
- 13.7 The NGBs are satisfied that the designs meet their needs. The England Cricket Board has stated that they would prefer a rubber floor as this is the most ideal material for them. They have stated however that a wooden floor as featured in the Winchester design can be used for indoor cricket at Club

level if mats are provided. It should be noted that a rubber floor is not the best surface for most other sports such as netball, basketball and volleyball and is not suitable for wheelchair users.

13.8 England Volleyball had raised a series of issues but a recent update received from England Volleyball confirms that they 'can now see that the challenges raised by them have been thought through and that the Council has put in things in place to mitigate the objections'.

13.9 The content of Appendix 1 was fed back to interested groups at a meeting on 16 July 2018 where Sports Clubs and NGBs were invited to attend along with the members of the Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee.

14 Design Issues

14.1 The design issues which were raised in debate are listed below:

- The use of glass in the Sports Hall will cause issues for certain sports in relation to glare and the playability
- There are no viewing areas to the sports hall
- Space for storing bleacher seating in the Sports Hall
- Suitability of rebound screens in Sports Hall

14.2 The glazing in the Sports Hall will be very durable and will have rebound screens and netting in front of it. There will also be a blind which will be lowered when required for certain sports such as volleyball or badminton if being played during daylight hours. The glazing in the Sports Hall will greatly reduce the amount of energy required to light this space. This is accepted by Sport England and Sport Scotland as desirable in sports halls where increased activity and participation are required for all.

14.3 The sports hall will have large double doors opening directly onto a loading bay to enable temporary seating to be hired and brought in for special events. This is preferred by operators as a process of providing for events and high level sports competitions as it provides greater flexibility. This again is considered appropriate by Sport England and NGBs

14.4 It should be noted that viewing galleries are provided at first floor level. Viewing will also be accommodated at ground floor level from the adjacent corridor by looking over the rebound screens. The screens are 1.2 metres high so this will be an issue for wheelchair users but it should be noted that the first floor level viewing areas can be used by wheelchair users and they are accessible by the lift. Consideration will also be given to the use of some clear rebound screens at ground floor level, see below.

14.5 It should be noted that the business case for permanent bleacher seating to the Sports Hall was considered as part of the overall facility mix

consideration and agreement. It was agreed at that time that there was not a case for permanent seating but that this would be hired and brought in for events that require it. An example of this might be a high level netball match which would take place in the centre of the Sports Hall which allows for spectator seating to be located adjacent to the playing area.

- 14.6 The use of rebound screens in Sports Halls is commonplace and accepted practice in many similar halls. The National Governing Bodies of Sport have no objections to the use of rebound screens. The advantage of using screens is that it opens up the Sports Hall to ground floor viewing whilst allowing access through the Centre to the athletics Stadium to the rear which will enable integrated events to take place.
- 14.7 A number of points have been raised by NGBs and Sports Clubs and at engagement events which have already been considered and addressed as below or will be considered during the next stages of the detailed design. These are listed below and are not considered to be material to the planning application.
- Confirm size ratio of the two studios. They are currently of an equal size but it has been suggested that there maybe some merit in changing this. The design team will consider this further and confirm final sizes.
 - Considering adequacy of viewing areas to sports hall. This has been undertaken. First floor viewing areas are provided. There may be a need to include some clear rebound screens at ground floor level to allow wheelchair users to view the sports hall, this will be considered but it should be noted that the first floor level viewing areas can be used by wheelchair users and they are accessible by the lift.
 - Need for a child drop off and shoes off area to pools. This is considered to be a worthwhile suggestion and is being incorporated into the design.
 - Review of future flexibly for clip and climb in terms of being able to add a floor above in the future if at some point in the future it is deemed necessary to use this double height space for another use. This is considered to be a worthwhile suggestion and is being incorporated into the design
 - Determine Boxing Club location. This is being considered in relation to the feasibility study and engagement with residents in relation to a possible new Pavilion on KGV. An interim relocation option has been identified so that proper consideration of the Pavilion can be undertaken.
 - Review pedestrian access to the Sport and Leisure Centre. It should be noted that Cabinet has agreed when approving the Design Framework

that this this will be undertaken in conjunction with a review of residents parking arrangements in the area.

- Review need for larger external access doors to Sports Hall. This has been undertaken and the correct sized doors are included in the design.
- Review/confirmation of storage areas for gymnastics and include considerations for all sports/activities. This has ben undertaken and it is confirmed that the correct size areas are provided. It is also confirmed that roller shutter doors to sports hall storage areas will have been incorporated.
- Undertake a 'Secure by Design' Review to be undertaken by Hampshire Police. This has now been undertaken and the recommendations are being considered.
- Undertake an audit of pedestrian and cyclist access to the proposed new Centre. This has been undertaken and is reflected in the planning submission.
- Roller Derby usage in Sports Hall to be reviewed. There is concern that this activity could damage the floor and therefore agreement will need to be reached with the Cub about how this can be accommodated.
- Consider external access for triathletes from pool to bike transition area. This is a worthwhile consideration and is being considered.
- Discussion about the parkrun /junior parkrun and how this will be catered for. This is under consideration but will not affect the internal design of the Leisure Centre.

15 Access and Parking Issues

- 15.1 The access issues relate to pedestrians/ residents of the Highcliffe area being able to access the Sport and Leisure Centre from Milland Road. This has been acknowledged and it has been agreed to allow this (via a pedestrian gate) if the parking issues in Highcliffe are addressed in consultation with residents.
- 15.2 There are two sets of residents to consider; those who live in Milland Road who are concerned that if there is a pedestrian access off Milland Road then people will be dropped off by car at this point. There are also residents who may live further away who are not impacted by car drop-off but who would benefit from being able to walk to the Centre and access it from this point.
- 15.3 A resident's consultation is planned for the late summer 2018 to see if measures can be agreed to protect residents from on street parking issues

this will determine whether amendments or additions to the existing residents parking scheme are required. If acceptable parking measures can be agreed then pedestrian access via Milland Road entrance will be allowed.

- 15.4 It should be noted that some of the wider access and parking issues discussed in this report and raised in the Motion can be considered outside of the planning process. On-street parking management in Highcliffe and future reviews of the operation of the Park and Ride services are specific examples of such matters.

16 Other Transport Concerns Raised

- 16.1 The local bus service has also been raised as a concern by some residents. This is a wider issue for local residents rather than just access to the Leisure centre. The community would like Service Number 4 to run more regularly and longer into the evening. This was discussed with Stagecoach and it was pointed out that there would a significantly greater number of potential customers once the new centre opens, Stagecoach are considering this. Connected to this are the concerns about on-street parking impacting the bus service this has been reviewed and it is hoped to implement parking restrictions later this year as part of the wider review of resident parking in Highcliffe.
- 16.2 The Sport & Leisure Centre will also be served by Park and Ride services which pass the new centre every 15 minutes from Monday to Saturday; a new stop will be created on Barfield Close to serve the new centre. There are concerns over capacity issues on the buses during the morning and evening peak periods which will make it difficult for people to use the services to access the new Leisure Centre. It should be pointed out that extra capacity has recently been provided. There are also concerns that the park and ride services do not run late enough into the evenings. During the next stages of the design and progression of the new Sport & Leisure Centre, the Council will continue to review capacity and enhancements to the park and ride service.
- 16.3 In terms of the planning application and associated Transport Impact Assessment the new Sport & Leisure Centre will be adequately served by public transport and there is scope and potential to enhance this by providing more regular services which run later into the evening. The Council is committed to consider this as part of the wider Winchester Transport Strategy.
- 16.4 In terms of pedestrian and cycle access a number of important improvements will be provided as part of the new Sport & Leisure Centre, and are included in the planning application proposals. This includes new pedestrian and cycle crossing points across Bar End Road and a new cycle route link to the National Cycle Network 23 route through the City. An audit has recently been completed by independent consultants to identify potential issues regarding walking and cycling routes to the Centre. These have drawn on the findings of the

Winchester Walking Group audits undertaken last year. Appropriate measures will be included as part of the off site works for the new Sport & Leisure Centre.

17 Responses to the Motion

- 17.1 The motion instructs the council as landowner to consider issues raised in the motion as set out above in Section 1. It should be noted that the consultation period for the planning application closed on the 18th July and this report was published on the 17th July. Any comments submitted between the two dates will be reported to the Committee on the day of the meeting.
- 17.2 The consequence of undertaking a comprehensive design review could mean that the overall project programme is delayed in terms of bringing together the required elements including the procurement of an operator and agreeing construction cost in time to consider the Full Business Case and starting the construction early next year.
- 17.3 However, it is important that the Cabinet (Leisure Centre) Committee carefully consider the will of council. This report along with information provided in reports CAB3067(LC) and CAB3068(LC) demonstrate that all comments received have been carefully considered along with a review of the designs, wider issues and supporting documents and this indicates that there are no matters of material planning consideration that require new plans to be submitted in relation to the planning application.
- 17.4 The reports set out that what were seen as objections by Volleyball England have been resolved, and it indicates that some further matters will be considered during the next stage of detailed design work and consideration of wider issues such as the Winchester Access and Movement Study/ Strategy will continue.
- 17.5 Careful consideration has been given to comments regarding transport and access and the Transport Impact Assessment has been reviewed by consultant team.
- 17.6 It is considered that the overall design, bearing in mind the compromises and choices which need to be made in relation to different sports and their varying requirements, is sound and supported by Sport England and NGBs. The design also supports the wider objectives of the project which were agreed at the outset including sustainability objectives such as reducing energy requirements through the use of natural light, ventilation and having a high quality design both internally and externally. This is enhanced by the use of glazing together with providing a multifunctional facility which meets the needs of those seeking to use it whether for serious sport, health and wellbeing, pleasure or for community activities. Some areas of review have been identified and will be considered during RIBA4 but these are not considered to be material to the planning application submission.

18 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

18.1 Given the technical view is that no amendments need to be made to the planning application, there are no other options to consider.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Motion to Council by Cllr Lucille Thompson, 27 June 2018

Other Background Documents:-

NONE

APPENDICES:

- 1 Sports Club and NGB Comments – July 2018
- 2 Sport England Meeting Minutes - 14/5/18
- 3 List of Sports Clubs
- 4 List of National Governing Bodies
- 5 NGB and Sports Club Meeting – 15/2/18 – invitees, attendees and responses received
- 6 NGBs Meeting Minutes – 15/2/18
- 7 Sports Group Meeting Minutes – 15/2/18
- 8 Overview of Advisory Panels and Membership
- 9 Planning Application Broadsheet
- 10 Overview of Engagement Phases 1 to 3.