

CABINET (LEISURE CENTRE) COMMITTEE**Wednesday, 18 September 2018**Attendance:

Councillors

Griffiths (Chairman)

Ashton

Warwick

Other Invited Councillors:

Huxstep

Prince

Laming

Stallard

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Bell, Porter and Thompson

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Stallard

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillors Huxstep and Warwick declared disclosable pecuniary interests as they were both County Councillors and the County Council had awarded £1 million to the project. However they both participated in the meeting and, in the case of Councillor Warwick voted on items as below, under the dispensation granted by the Standards Committee.

Councillor Ashton declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as his wife was a trustee of "Allegra's Ambition" which was involved with the project.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25 JULY 2018

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 25 July 2018, be approved and adopted.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Three members of the public and/or representatives of local sports groups spoke during public participation and their comments are summarised below.

Mike Fisher (Winchester City Penguins Swimming Club) noted that there had been a degree of negativity about the project recently which was in danger of

overshadowing the many positive benefits that a new Centre would bring. The Club had approximately 1,200 members who would all benefit from the increased capacity offered by a 50m pool, together with many other people including local school pupils and the general public. The increased water space would also offer a wider range of activities to take place. In summary, he welcomed the proposals and the opportunity to work collaboratively within the community to ensuring the success of the new facility.

Sue Falconer spoke on behalf of Emma Back (Winchester SALT) stating that everyone involved in the project wished it to succeed. However, as the scheme was progressing, they had concerns that there was no final agreement with the University of Winchester and the impact on the project's viability if the University were not involved. She highlighted that Weston Park Blades Netball Club had not been consulted until recently, despite the Council being informed about the club at an earlier stage and suggested that other clubs might have been excluded from the consultation. She stated that representations favouring provision of 12 courts at the new centre had been passed to the architects but had been misrepresented in the final report. She believed that this raised questions about the advice provided and whether it was biased in favour of a particular way forward. She queried how the new centre could guarantee sufficient demand and the support it would offer to local clubs.

Geoff Wright (resident of St Giles Hill) highlighted that the first two risks in the risk register contained as Appendix 2 to Report CAB3076(LC) had a current risk score of being likely and significant but the report did not appear to address this adequately. With regard to the projected underspend of £6m, he believed this suggested a significant slippage which was likely to increase the overall cost of the project. He did not consider this was adequately addressed in the report either.

4. **WINCHESTER SPORT & LEISURE PARK – PROJECT UPDATE AND BUDGET**
(CAB3076(LC))

The Chairman introduced the report and confirmed that comments made during public participation would be addressed (as far as possible) during the course of the meeting. She highlighted the following points:

- the summary of actions from Advisory Panels on the project which was contained as Appendix 1 to the report and had been provided in response to comments made at the previous Committee meeting;
- a preconstruction agreement for the construction of the new facility had been agreed with Wilmott Dixon, a firm with considerable experience of delivering leisure centres;
- the date for the Planning Committee to consider the planning application had not yet been set but was expected to take place in October 2018;
- Paragraphs 11.3 to 11.6 summarised earlier decisions taken by the Committee regarding the provision of bleacher seating in response to the matter being raised again at the previous Committee meeting;
- The “Frequently Asked Questions” section of the Leisure Centre project webpage had recently been updated to address recent questions raised.

She announced two forthcoming consultation events in November for which invitations would be issued and further publicity arranged in due course.

In response to questions raised by Members during the meeting and earlier in the public participation period, the following points were made. Responses were provided by the Head of Programme and the Head of Sport and Physical Activity, together with Mike Lawless (LA Architects) and Olivia Burton and Sean Clark (MACE) who were also present at the meeting:

Concern over seating, lighting and glass wall limiting use of sports hall

Mr Lawless confirmed that the lighting was designed to be flexible and it conformed to national guidance and Sport England requirements. Blinds would be installed over the glass for use as required. Although one elevation was intended to be glass, there was over 60m of other wall space in the hall which could be played against.

The flooring proposed was of a high standard and robust. However users would have to have regard to the type of seating brought in to prevent damage. For major competitions, usual practice was for a mat to be brought in to protect the floor.

Weston Park Blade Netball Club

The Head of Sport and Physical Activity confirmed that discussions had taken place with the Club who were happy that their matches could be accommodated in the new centre. They intended to use existing chairs for matches but consider hiring in additional seating if necessary.

Provision of changing rooms for umpires of club matches

Provision of adequate changing rooms was highlighted as a key matter by two Members.

Query regarding RIBA stage 5/construction costs

The advisors from MACE stated that RIBA stage 4 involved detailed level of design being agreed which reduced the risk for the Council on handing over the scheme to a contractor. An element of RIBA stage 5 was also part of the pre-construction stage and was split due to the design and build contract adopted by the Council.

The contract would be awarded on a fixed price basis. The costs for the pre-construction period had been agreed with Wilmott Dixon and it was hoped that by the end of 2018, the final cost would be set.

Spend Profile (re underspend)

The Head of Programme advised that further detailed consideration of the facility mix (as had been requested by members) had resulted in some delays in the programme and associated spend slippage. However, the project was still within the budget figure set at the time that the final facility mix was agreed. .

Proposed advance works (paragraph 11.13 of the report)

The Head of Programme advised that it was intended to provide a link path between the Garrison Ground and KGV playing fields and Officers were working with the County Council to enable this. In addition, if planning permission was granted and construction began, it would be necessary to construct a temporary pedestrian access to the Garrison Ground and KGV playing fields. The meeting was shown slides giving an indication of these proposals.

Risks (including University of Winchester and other partners' involvement)

The Chairman confirmed that discussions with the University were ongoing but until final agreement was reached it remained a risk to the project. Councillor Ashton emphasised that preparation of the outline business case had included financial modelling of replacing partnership funding with borrowing to ensure the project could remain viable. A final decision would not take place until the Full Business Case had received agreement.

The Head of Programme advised that the University had confirmed in writing they were content with the agreed eight court provision. The Council also had agreements in writing with the Pinder trust and the County Council had allocated funding in its capital programme.

The Head of Programme explained how the risk scoring in Appendix 2 of the report had been completed. He emphasised that Officers were taking steps to reduce the likelihood of any of the risks stated taking place.

Operator Procurement

In response to comments made on behalf of Winchester SALT during public participation, the Head of Programme recognised the importance of the Operator contract and that the contract specification confirmed the priority of local clubs. The procurement process was underway and it was intended to bring a report to the 14 January 2019 Committee meeting to agree a preferred bidder. However, appointment could not be confirmed until agreement of the Full Business Case, scheduled to be considered by the Committee in February 2019.

Councillor Ashton noted that the cost of the operator contract was a significant risk in the viability of the project but Officers had taken measures, such as soft market testing, to minimise this risk. In addition, the high standard of design, specification and facility mix should ensure a high degree of interest.

Comments of sports clubs etc being properly taken into account

In response to points made by Winchester SALT during the public participation session, the Head of Programme emphasised that previous meetings of the Committee had considered fully comments from local clubs and sports groups, in addition to Sport England the The Sports Consultancy. Inevitably, there were some issues that could not be completely resolved and some compromises required but these had all been agreed by the Committee and the scheme still met the requirements of the original brief. Officers continued to discuss proposals with local clubs as the project moved forward.

Movement Strategy

It was noted that the County Council Movement Strategy was due to be available in October 2018. The Head of Programme confirmed that some improvement works, such as street lighting in Domum Road, could take place in advance of this.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the latest progress on the project be noted and the next steps as set out in this report including the completion of RIBA Stage 4 and the commencement of RIBA Stage 5 Design be agreed.
2. That the appointment of a site supervisor for the construction element of the project be agreed and the Head of Programme be given delegated authority to make this appointment.
3. That expenditure of up to £665k from the existing approved capital budget be approved to:
 - a. cover the cost of additional work incurred during RIBA Stage 4
 - b. transition from RIBA Stage 4 to RIBA Stage 5
 - c. carry out some advance works as detailed in this report
4. That recommendation 3a above and to recommendation 3b and 3c be agreed subject to the pending planning application being approved at Planning Committee and in advance of discharging any related conditions, and that delegation is granted to the Head of Programme in liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing to determine the extent of works to be undertaken based on the ongoing assessment and discussions.
5. That a specialist contractor be agreed to undertake the path construction and associated clearance works in accordance with Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 6.10pm

Chairman