

Council
29 JUNE 2016

Present: Councillors: John Bailey, Andrew Baldwin, John Blackall, Toni Bradnum, John Chidlow, Jonathan Chowen, Philip Circus, Roger Clarke, Roy Cornell, Leonard Crosbie, Jonathan Dancer, Ray Dawe, Brian Donnelly, Matthew French, Tony Hogben, David Jenkins, Nigel Jupp, Adrian Lee, Gordon Lindsay, Tim Lloyd, Paul Marshall, Christian Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Godfrey Newman, Brian O'Connell, Connor Relleen, Kate Rowbottom, Jim Sanson, David Skipp, Simon Torn, Claire Vickers and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Alan Britten, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Paul Clarke, David Coldwell, Christine Costin, Ian Howard, Liz Kitchen, Josh Murphy, Stuart Ritchie, Ben Staines and Michael Willett

CO/11 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 27th April and 25th May 2016 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

CO/12 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

CO/13 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman:

- Announced that he had sent a letter on behalf of the Council offering sincere condolences to the Mayor of Orlando and expressing deepest sympathy for the families affected by the mass shooting at an Orlando Nightclub on 12th June 2016. He also advised that prayers had been offered and he had spoken at the civic service on both this and the death of Jo Cox MP.
- Reported that 24 groups from West Sussex had achieved the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service over the fourteen years since it had been created. This year the Community Minibus Association (West Sussex), which was based in Horsham, had been granted the Award and would be presented with it by Mrs. Susan Pyper, the Lord-Lieutenant at a special ceremony later in the year.
- Announced that he had sent congratulations to the following residents who had been recognised in the Queen's Birthday

Honours List and made Medallists of the Order of the British Empire (BEM):

- Miss Sarah Louise Holmes from Steyning for services to the Order of St. John; and
- Mr. Stuart Stevens from Steyning for services to Scouting and the community in Steyning.
- Also, Mr. Sean Ruth the Deputy Chief Operating Officer for West Sussex County Council and County Fire Officer who had been awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal.
- Advised Members that the Council and Democracy pages on the Council's website had been refreshed and updated and now included additional information about the Chairman. He also encouraged Members to take advantage of the offer of being copied into all Council press releases as a way of keeping up to date with Council news.

CO/14 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

(1) Mrs Kornycky asked the following questions:

The existing BBHLC has 3 separate halls, a Badminton Hall, a Table Tennis Hall and 'Hall-Space' at the top-end of the Tube.

The new leisure centre will have one multi-purpose hall with dividing curtains; with total space approaching 1000 sq metres, i.e. an increase of no more than 10%.

For over 6 months, users have been requesting schedules & layouts to show how the many different activities will both fit & feasibly co-exist into this multi-use space. Even as part of the recent 'concept design' exhibition our request for some typical examples (e.g. Table Tennis and Badminton, Archery and Trampolining) was denied.

In good faith, the Joint User Group has proposed for evaluation, an innovative layout for the Sports Hall which appeared to solve many of these issues identified by users.

Q1. Please explain the logic of fixing the sports hall layout in concept design, yet only establishing the feasibility of the activities in the later detailed design phase?

Q2. Why will you not at least evaluate, preferably with 'at the table' user input, the alternative layout proposal to determine the optimal sports hall configuration?

Councillor Jonathan Chowen, the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture replied as follows:

Thank you Mrs Kornycky for your questions, as always we welcome your input into the process.

A1. The process to fix the design follows best practice in the design of leisure centres. The council has employed a highly experienced project team with many years of expertise in designing and constructing leisure centres. Members of this team have worked with Sport England to develop guidance on sport hall model layouts. They are therefore well qualified to inform the concept design and have a thorough understanding of the type of activities that can be provided.

During the original consultation the Joint User Group (BJUG) asked for 'activity time-tabling' of the new sports hall which we undertook and shared with you and your members. This programming exercise had been undertaken to demonstrate that current activities (currently offered in the badminton, table tennis and part tube facilities) could take place in the new leisure centre and that there was additional capacity to enable other sports to be played.

We consider, therefore, that the initial 'activity feasibility' of 3x2 courts has already taken place and we have continued to build on this configuration as the basis of the concept design.

We cannot continue to explore variations of a design concept otherwise we will never make a decision and deliver a new leisure centre. We are satisfied that the 3x2 configuration is absolutely the right layout for the centre.

We also offered to meet with you on 16 June to discuss and explain to you why we had discounted your 6x1 proposal. However BJUG asked to postpone this until further meetings with local clubs take place. I still hope we are able to meet soon to provide detailed explanation.

A2. As we have informed BJUG, we have been actively evaluating your proposal and have been engaged in lengthy email dialogue on this matter. We still consider the 3x2 configuration the most appropriate optimum configuration for flexibility and for providing the most efficient use of space.

We have also undertaken a calculation which suggests that your bespoke 6x1 design would add at least another circa £600k to the budget which we cannot afford.

We also consider that your 6x1 proposal does not enable the sports hall to be future proofed if an extension were to be required in the future. Whereas the 3x2 option is designed to accommodate this and could provide an additional 2 courts which will meet community standard play.

Mrs Kornycky asked a supplementary question as to why the Council would not 'tap into' the expertise offered by BJUG.

Councillor Chowen replied that the dialogue with BJUG was continuing but, as previously stated, their 6x1 proposal was not considered a suitable solution.

(2) Mr Kornicky asked the following questions:

Despite pleas from some Council Members to look again at the indoor athletics provision, there appears to have been no objective assessment as to why the Tube cannot be retained until relocation of the outdoor track. Neither apparently is there any joint initiative with the Athletics National Governing Body to seek a co-funded solution.

Realising that some track-side facilities are an essential requirement (e.g. toilets, storage, shelter) the Joint User Group identified a solution for retention of at least the last 30 metres of the existing Tube. This had the added benefit of also providing some limited indoor athletics facilities as well as a safe place for indoor archery.

We have now been advised that 'if feasible it will be purely a storage & toilet facility'.

Q1. Please explain why you apparently prefer any such retained space be used for storage of equipment such as lawnmowers, leaf-blowers, strimmers etc. rather than for the beneficial sporting activity for which it was originally designed & built?

Q2. If you won't provide a shed (or equivalent) for the ground maintenance equipment, the athletes will then have significant peak-time demand on the sports hall. Please explain why you think this is a sensible approach?

Councillor Jonathan Chowen, the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture replied as follows:

A1. Our recent structural engineering investigations into this proposal have concluded that keeping part of the tube facility is viable and remains a cost effective option for storage requirements. The brief has always been to solely provide storage and toilets facilities close to the track as defined as 'essential' by users. It has not been our intension to recreate and re-provide an internal athletics facility. We have been consistent and transparent about our intention not to provide this.

Mr Chairman and Councillors may I remind you of the journey we have been on over the last four years. In 2012 we agreed to provide a new leisure centre with a three court sports hall, two studios and 30 gym stations. Since then we have revisited our current and future demands for sport in the locality and have agreed to provide a six court sports hall, three studios, a spin cycle studio, indoor climbing wall, party room, treatment rooms and an 80 station gym.

A2. As we have discussed with the local athletics club, if they require access to facilities in the new leisure centre these can be booked as and when they require them alongside the needs of other hirers.

Mr Kornycky asked a supplementary question as to why the Council was persisting in this approach.

Councillor Chowen replied that the Council was continuing to work with the athletics club and that they had an all-weather track which, by definition, could be used in all weathers.

CO/15 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS UNDER RULE 10.2**

No questions had been received.

CO/16 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

The following minutes were received:

Standards Committee – 8th June 2016

Licensing Committee – 9th June 2016

Personnel Committee – 15th June 2016

Councillor Tim Lloyd, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, moved the recommendation contained in Minute No. PC/7.

Pay Policy Statement 2016/17

RESOLVED

That the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 be approved for publication.

REASON

To comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 to approve a published pay policy annually.

CO/17 **MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th May and 6th June 2016 were received.

CO/18 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent matters to be considered.

The meeting closed at 6.32 pm having commenced at 6.00 pm

CHAIRMAN