

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: NORTH BRAUNSTONE
CITY WIDE

CABINET

5th MARCH 2001

REPLACEMENT LEISURE FACILITY – PROGRESS REPORT

Report of the Director of Arts and Leisure

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to update members on the current position with the replacement Leisure facility at Hinckley Road Braunstone on the Wycliffe site.

2. Summary

There has been a long and complicated history particularly regarding site identification and detailed consultation issues. However, this project is now progressing from a conceptual position, closer to an actual scheme firming up some details and highlighting certain key issues for Members' consideration.

Following the decision taken by the former Arts and Leisure Committee in January 2000 to locate the facility on the Wycliffe site, work was undertaken in the following areas in order to submit a Stage 1 Lottery bid:

- i) production of a City-wide Swimming Strategy;
- ii) production of a Transport Assessment (TA);
- iii) Community Consultation.

The timescale for this project has been extended due to a number of factors. These can be identified as:

- closure of St Margaret's Baths causing hostility towards the Council by the Swimming community;
- the circumstances regarding consultation with all stakeholders in the community whilst the issue of Wycliffe School closure was finalised and the position around Community Education was clarified. Legal advice provided concerning statutory processes was not intended to delay or prevent progress but was to secure the integrity of the statutory consultation process regarding school closure proposals. In addition when consultation did commence it was undermined by the ongoing reaction to the school's closure;

- the requirement to appoint external consultants to complete the TA as the work could not be completed internally.

The significant progress which has been achieved so far to date and the outstanding issues which require to be resolved to ensure Stage 1 Lottery submission is made by the end of March are detailed in the attached report on page 4.

It should be noted that Members are not being asked to approve the full scheme at this stage.

Following the outline planning consent submission, the design competition brief will be launched April 2001. Design entries will be received in a further 6 weeks and architects appointed by decision of Elected Members following consultation with funders, other stakeholders and local people.

Subject to a successful Lottery award construction should commence early 2002 following completion of the demolition of Wycliffe Community College buildings projected for November 2001. There is always an element of risk with such schemes and dependent upon the scheme and no unforeseen delays in either funding partnership arrangements, demolition, planning and political approval processes, Lottery approval or construction, it is anticipated it should be completed by Autumn 2003.

Although Members are being asked to approve demolition ahead of any Lottery support or formal announcement by Sport England, the Director of Environment and Development has advised that there is no material risk to making the decision at this stage because if the Lottery application was unsuccessful, the site would still need to be cleared in order to promote developer confidence during disposal.

3. **Recommendations**

Members are recommended to:

- i) approve the timetable and the demolition of Wycliffe proposed to take place between July and November 2001 including use of the existing provision in the Capital Programme 2001/2002 to meet the demolition costs;
- ii) approve and authorise expenditure of £130,000 to be used from the provision within the Capital Programme 2001/2002 for project management support and consider the most effective use of this sum to fund in-house management and source external assistance where appropriate in consultation with the Cabinet Lead;
- iii) approve that the capital receipts from the sale of St Margaret's Baths and Granby Halls Leisure Centre sites are ring fenced for the replacement project;
- iv) note Capital Programme funding implications in the report and note that these and Revenue Budget funding implications for the City Council will be firmed up when the project details are finalised;
- v) agree a commitment to exploring any shortfall on the overall funding package with other partners;

- vi) agree the current indicative project timetable as detailed in the main body of the report (as at February 2001);
- vii) call for further reports to the Cabinet for consideration at appropriate key stages throughout the project process as indicated in Appendix 2.

4. Financial and Legal Implications

At this stage it is proposed to reserve detailed legal implications until more particulars of the scheme are known and the terms and conditions proposed in respect of the various transactions involved.

The ability of the Council to prescribe local labour is restricted although we may be able to encourage the use of local labour.

There is £1 million earmarked in the Capital Programme 2001/2002 which will be used to cover recommendations i) and ii).

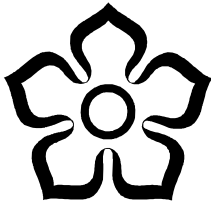
Current projections are that the Capital costs of the Leisure scheme will be in the region of £11 million. This will be funded through a variety of sources, including the City Council, Sports Lottery and other partners.

Consultants have been engaged to assist in maximising funding from other sources.

The nature of the Adult Education facilities on the site, as indicated by the Secretary of State when agreeing the closure of the College, will be dependent upon final decisions by the Education Department and will require funding.

5. Report Author

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Members have received a detailed review regarding this scheme in February 2001 to consider and resolve the many complex issues arising from the planning and development stage in order to develop a clear strategy and timescale for the formal project delivery stage. Details of the main facility components are set out in Appendix 1 but will be subject to “fine tuning” particularly from discussion with Sport England and Sports Lottery.

The major project milestones are detailed in Appendix 2. These are based on the current indicative timescale as at February 2001.

It should be emphasised that “indicative” is a phrase used to suggest the potential dates or targets for projects when they are in the planning stages – and this is why the term is used in this way for the purposes of this report – as key decisions for example, such as final specification and funding have yet to be made.

Confirmation of specification and Capital and Revenue funding, combined with commencement of Stage 2 of the Lottery award process signifies the transition into the project delivery stage. This will enable dates and other decisions to be confirmed and fed into the critical path for the project.

It is anticipated that this detail will be available by the Summer once Stage 2 commences.

There has been good progress to date including:

- City-wide and detailed local consultation;
- the Statement of Intent has been submitted to Sport England;
- an outline planning application has been submitted;
- the Transport Assessment has been received and is ready for final consultation;

- a City-wide Swimming Strategy has been completed and has received widespread support;
- demolition arrangements have been made including local consultation;
- interim provision arrangements have been made for Community Education Services;
- a Planning for Real exercise with local residents including the BCA has been completed.

There is still some work to be completed as advised by Sport England for a strong Stage 1 application such as:

- an initial brief in response to the needs locally, regionally and nationally of the number of identified sports to be included in the new facility in consultation with the relevant National Governing Bodies;
- an initial site specific Sports Development Plan including Sports Specific Plans;
- activate a run of the Facilities Planning Model (note this is a Sport England model which scopes the number and type of facilities within a given area set against nationally agreed levels of provision);
- initial staffing, programme, income and expenditure figures.

Ongoing community consultation is vital and underpins the whole project. Work that is scheduled for completion by the end of March includes:

- consultation with local residents on their priorities for services to be included in the new leisure facility following the recent Planning for Real exercise;
- formal consultation on the Transport Assessment;
- a design competition with significant involvement in the development of the brief and consultation on the final approval of architects with local people.

Although not yet at project delivery stage, given the nature of the site and community issues there has still been significant preparatory work completed.

The statement of intent was submitted to Sport England on 21st December 2000 with regular meetings established to ensure a strong Stage 1 submission by the end of March 2001 and hopefully a positive result for Stage 2 in the summer.

It is important to clarify the two stage system on Sports Lottery applications.

Stage 1: This is perhaps the most important stage because if the application is approved the indicative capital contribution is awarded and ring fenced.

Stage 2: This is where the detail of the scheme is worked up and subject to the usual checks and references, the capital is released.

Outline planning has been submitted and advice has been received that minor work to update the sequential test is required. It should be noted that there isn't a city centre location in Council ownership which is capable of accommodating this project.

The Transport Assessment has been completed and although a small amount of work is required on emissions, the final piece of work will be in consultation with the community once the scheme has progressed into Stage 2.

The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) has confirmed its formal support to the scheme and will be naming it in their National Strategy as having the status for County Championships and Regional District Galas including National Short Course Championships. It will also have a similar status for diving, synchronised swimming and water polo.

Both the ASA and Sport England support the City's Swimming Strategy.

Interim arrangements for the provision of Community Education are in hand and further details will be provided by the Director of Education.

Whilst it must be acknowledged there is a sense of frustration at the length of time this particular project is taking to come to fruition, progress is good in comparison to similar schemes.

Data supplied by the Royal Institute of British Architects and the ASA shows that such schemes tend to take in the region of 2 – 3 years from the appointment of design consultants to commencement on site with a construction period of up to 2 years.

It is important to note that should the need arise for a contingency site the results of previous site investigations are still relevant.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1. Financial Implications

It is felt that the scheme is likely to cost (including demolition of the existing buildings but excluding any Community Education provision) in the region of £11 million.

Members are aware that there is already a provision of £1 million earmarked in the current capital programme which will be used to cover the costs of demolition and project management. It has always been acknowledged that the receipts from the sale of the St Margaret's and Granby Halls sites would be ring fenced to contribute to this project.

It should be noted that the scheme is likely to require a further commitment of up to £3 million from the City Council in addition to the £1 million already included in the current capital programme. The likely revenue position will be reported to Members if the scheme progresses on to Stage 2 of the Lottery process.

It should be noted that any shortfall on the overall funding package will need to be explored with other funding partners.

At this stage there is no indication of financial provision required by Education given that discussions continue concerning the nature and level of provision for Community Education both on the site and in the area. It is anticipated that final

decisions can be made without compromising the project's major milestone timetable which must be by the end of March deadline for Stage 1 submission.

2. **Legal Implications**

Detailed legal implications will be included in future reports as more particulars of the Scheme are known and the terms and conditions proposed in respect of the various transactions involved.

3. **Other Implications**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	PARAGRAPH REFERENCES WITHIN SUPPORTING PAPERS
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable & Environmental	No	
Crime & Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	

4. **Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

St Margaret's Baths/Granby Halls Leisure Centre, potential sites, Arts and Leisure Committee 8th February 1999.

5. **Consultations**

Consultations on this report have included Education, Chief Financial Officer, Legal Services, Property Services, Communications Unit and Directors' Board.

KEY COMPONENTS FOR REVISED SCHEME

- An eight lane, 25 metre main swimming pool
- A 25 metre x 12 metre diving and warm up pool with moveable pool bottom
- Swimming spectator accommodation for up to 500
- A one and a half court size Sports Hall capable to taking up to six badminton courts and a range of other sports and activities
- Sports Hall spectator accommodation for up to 1,000 people
- Bar Café and catering facilities
- Sports science testing facilities

Clarification of a firm brief by the end of March and the elimination of uncertainty over optional facilities will be essential in order to achieve the current indicative timetable.

The following further elements which could be included are currently subject to a local consultation exercise which requires to be completed within this timescale:

- Community facilities providing a range of local community activities/events etc
- Fitness Suite
- Squash
- Creche
- Lecture Rooms
- Function Rooms
- Floodlit Artificial Training Pitches
- Increases to dryside specification to take “street sports”
- Smaller retail outlets

**MAJOR PROJECT MILESTONES
BASED ON THE CURRENT INDICATIVE TIMESCALE
AT FEBRUARY 2001**

Statement of Intent to Sport England	-	submitted 21.12.00
Outline Planning Submission	-	submitted 12.01.01
Decision on Indicative Funding streams Members	-	decision required by Elected end March 2001 following report to Cabinet
Decision on project and design brief Members	-	decision required by Elected end March 2001 following report to Cabinet
Stage 1 Lottery application	-	target submission date end of March 2001 – subject to final decision by Cabinet
Design Competition launch	-	early April 2001
Decision on detail capital	-	report to Cabinet and decision from Elected Members required by June 2001
Stage 1 decision, Stage 2 commences	-	decision from Sport England/Sports Lottery July/August 2001. Further decision by Cabinet on details
Appointment of Architects	-	involving community and subject to formal tendering process. Final decision by Elected Members July 2001 and subject to Stage 1 approval

Planning phase now completed. Project delivery stage now commences

Detailed Planning Consent	-	October 2001
Demolition of Wycliffe	-	starts 19 th July completed by 11 th November 2001
Commence construction	-	early 2002
Operational	-	Autumn 2003

NOTE: In addition to the above, should there be any unforeseen delays during the life of the project these will be immediately reported to Cabinet