

Minutes of Previous Meetings

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 6 JUNE 2019 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Paton (Chairman), Councillors Brown (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Bradley), Dr Davison, Mrs Ellis-Williams as substitute for Councillor McNulty) (until 12.27pm), Mrs Finlayson, Mrs McKerrell, Rodgeron (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Atkinson) and Tarbitt.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor J Mallinson - Leader
Councillor Mrs Mallinson – Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Ellis – Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder
Councillor Christian – Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder
Mr Roberts – Wates
Mr Denson – Pick Everard
Mr Reed – GT3 Architects
Mr Sime - Buro Happold
Mr Reekie - Buro Happold
Mr Rice – Greenwich Leisure Limited
Mr Horne – Greenwich Leisure Limited
Ms Almond – Greenwich Leisure Limited

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Financial Services Manager
Policy and Communications Manager
Policy and Performance Officer
Media and Communications Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

HWSP.33/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Atkinson, Mrs Bradley and McNulty and Councillor Nedved, the Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder.

HWSP.34/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

HWSP.35/19 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

HWSP.36/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – Noted that Council had, at its meeting on 29 April 2019, received and adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2019.

HWSP.37/19 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been the subject of call-in.

HWSP.38/19 THE SANDS CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Deputy Chief Executive introduced the Sands Centre Project team to the Panel and submitted an update on the progress made in developing the Sands Centre Redevelopment Project (CS.17/19).

The Deputy Chief Executive gave a presentation which reminded the Panel that the replacement of James Street Pools and the redevelopment of the Sands Centre site had been a long term aspiration for the Council. He detailed the background to the redevelopment including the approval of the Carlisle Sports Facilities Strategy 2013-23 and the impact of the 2015 flood event which had raised questions regarding the suitability of the site. The work for the Strategy included appraising different sites for the relocation of the Pools and it was agreed that the Sands Centre was still the best option for the facilities.

He highlighted the strong support from Sport England for the project who had awarded the project the maximum grant of £2m which would be finalised should the project be approved. A new contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) had commenced in December 2017 and it offered a business case for the development. The Deputy Chief Executive reminded the Panel that the redevelopment project was a key part of the health and wellbeing plan for the city and offered transformation opportunities working with key partners.

The report set out the detailed development proposals which included improvements to the existing events hall and the whole redevelopment had been a Dementia friendly design with increased and improved accessibility.

He explained that GLL had an extensive programme of health, wellbeing and entertainment activities which would continue throughout the build period and the Council's contract with GLL covered those service continuity issues. In addition, the NHS services would need to continue and grow. To ensure that the activities could continue there had been extensive exploration of alternative temporary accommodation from on site portacabins to the renovation of industrial units. It was determined that the former Newman School site was the best option to continue to provide health and fitness in the City Centre.

Mr Reed, GT3 Architects gave a detailed presentation on the design development. He reminded the Panel that the site was well connected in a key location which was well known within the City. He gave an overview of the project which was at the technical design. He detailed the constraints and the opportunities of the site and outlined the colour palette that had been selected based on the City's urban and rural landmarks. The design utilised materials to reflect the locality of the site and to respond to the challenges of the site. Brick had been chosen as the preferred material for the plinth material as it was robust and flood resilient. The colour and tone of the brick had been carefully chosen to fit the local vernacular with Flemish brick bond to provide a link to local brick work in the vicinity. Timber had been chosen for the upper elements of the Pool façade to blend with the rural context of the site and metal mesh would be used on the fitness box to draw attention to the entrance of the building.

Mr Reed explained that the 'street space' inside the building would provide the link between the new sports space and the existing events space and would be a public area accessible to all. He detailed the facilities which would be available including a 25m x 17m, 8 lane pool and a learner pool with a moveable floor, four court sports hall, 120 station fitness suite, spinning studio and two dance studios. The whole design included lots of glass to allow as much natural light as possible and to encourage users to use other facilities in the building.

The facilities on offer would include a changing places facility with unisex changing and toilets, pool lifting platform access, pool stair access, 2 lifts and buggy and wheelchair storage. There was spectator seating in the pool area for 150 people and the design was Sport England compliant and had been designed using the NHS Design Guidance.

A Flood Risk Assessment had been carried out for the site and was included as part of the planning application. The Assessment had informed the overall design of the building levels and materials chosen. The flood defence strategy for the building was a water entry strategy, water would be allowed to enter the building rather than actively being kept out. The material used in the building would be resilient and could be cleaned to ensure the centre could re open quickly. The pool and associated changing areas had been raised to 450mm to ensure the pool areas were at minimal risk of flooding. The only area which would need to be replaced in a flood event was the sports hall as modern sports hall floors used timber sprung floors which could not be cleaned and put back into use.

Mr Reed finished his presentation by outlining the consequential improvements which would be required to the existing events hall.

Mr Roberts introduced Wates and assured the Panel that the company was robust with good financial backing which looked to create sustainable business. Mr Roberts reported that Wates were 100% committed to leaving a positive legacy in the community and would provide a range of Employment Skills opportunities locally.

Wates had a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to drive social value in the local area. One of the measures was that 75% of local spend would be within a 40-mile radius. This was the goal, but it may prove difficult to find the required skills and supply chain in a small radius as Carlisle and Cumbria was unique in the way it was spread out. The Council's Client Side Project Manager had suggested a 100m radius and it was possible that this may be required.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that the distance had been monitored moving through the project and there was concern that limiting the area may impact the project. The 100m radius took in the Borderlands area which was important to the City. It was important to retain the local element not to the detriment of delivering the project.

The Panel urged Wates to use local businesses within the 40m radius where possible.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder suggested that Wates consider using wood from the Borderlands area for the project as the area had sustainable forestry.

The Deputy Chief Executive summarised the engagement process and the project programme which was due to be completed in August 2021.

The Financial Services Manager gave an overview of the capital cost, business case and funding proposals which had an overall capital cost of £25,499,754 which would comprise of £20,500,000 external borrowing, £2,000,000 Sport England Grant, £273,000 GLL Reserve and £2,276,754 Asset Disposal receipts.

In considering the report and presentations Members raised the following comments and questions:

- The design included many windows, had any privacy measures been included in the design?

Mr Reed confirmed that all of the windows were fitted with blinds to provide privacy and prevent glare from the sun when required.

- Would there be any hydro pool provision?

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that discussion had taken place with the occupational therapists at the hospital and a Cerebral Palsy charity who both wanted a hydro pool to be included, however, due to lack of space and affordability a hydro pool had not been included in the design.

- A Member asked for more detail on the design of the Changing Places Facility.

Mr Reed clarified that the Changing Places Facility would include single, double and family cubicles along with four group rooms for schools and would have unisex toilets. The space could be split into two so one side could be closed for cleaning and maintenance and there would still be changing facilities open.

- Should the building flood there would still be some work required to re-open the centre, would it have been possible to raise all of the facilities to avoid the need to replace the sports hall floor?

Mr Reed responded that should there be a flood event the Sands Centre would flood and this had been designed this way to avoid displacing the flood water to another location. If the new building had been raised it would have presented issues with the existing building.

Mr Denson, Pick Everard added that a flood specialist had been part of the design team and consultation had been carried out with the Environment Agency. In addition, the flood defences that were in place would be improved in 2020. He reminded the Panel that a minimal amount of water entered the building in 2015 through the ramp access.

A Member asked if the climate change emergency and the increase in flood events and severe flood events had been taken into account in the design.

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that the design team had worked extensively with the Environment Agency to take into consideration the effects of climate change and to satisfy planning requirements. He assured Members that the design team had taken every step possible to protect the building should a flood event happen.

- What would the impact of the reduction of trees and plants be to the site?

Mr Reed assured the Panel that the design would maximise the existing trees and landscape. There would be two trees removed from the car park but further trees and planting would occur so there would be minimal impact to the area.

- A Member supported the inclusion of windows in the design, however the appendix in the report had suggested that some of the proposed windows be omitted, she asked for clarity on the matter.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the appendix had been Wates' tender submission which had considered the level of affordability. This was part of the process to reach the final design but there had been no compromise on the primary facilities in the building or the windows in the design.

Mr Reed confirmed that Wates had looked at the original design and affordability and put together a schedule of options, some of which were taken on board and changed, and some were not.

- What was the lifespan of the building and would it be easily maintained? Had future maintenance costs been included?

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Panel that landlord responsibility costs had been built into each year of the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Asset Management Plan and the Capital Budget.

Mr Reed added that every element of the design had an individual life span matrix which ranged from 20 years to 50 years.

- Had a larger, competition size pool been considered for the site?

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the pool size had been seriously considered but following advice from the swimming national governing body and the affordability of a larger pool the decision was taken to have the proposed size.

- How would the former Newman School be renovated for use?

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the former Newman School building had an existing sports hall which was operational and being used by Carlisle College. The Council would have Head of Terms with the Diocese of Lancaster and GLL and work with Carlisle College. There would also be some renovation to the ground floor of a two story block next to the sports hall with a five year lease.

Work was already being undertaken on how the building could be used at the end of the project period should it be approved. One option was that Carlisle College could utilise the space for health and wellbeing courses. He assured the Panel that the Council would look to maximise the benefit of the renovation for the longer period.

- Were other sites considered for the temporary facilities?

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that extensive work had been carried out in considering alternative sites. The original consideration had been to install temporary portacabins on site but these would be bespoke as they required double height and reinforced flooring. They would also be quite fragile and therefore deemed unsuitable and expensive. GLL had considered other sites such as Morton School, however this would require a new build and would be outside of the City making it an expensive option with limited accessibility.

The conversion of the Sheepmount had been a strong option but it was limited in space and would not offer the required accessibility especially in the winter months. Available units such as the empty Staples and Maplin units had been considered but they would be expensive to renovate and would have a lease rent.

As a result the former Newman School building had been the best option for location and the most affordable. The renovation would be as resilient as a temporary accommodation could be.

- A Member commented that the plans looked excellent but questioned the need for a 120 station fitness suite.

Mr Rice, GLL clarified that the proposed fitness suite was part of GLL's financial model and was key to membership growth. The fitness suite would be a shared space with NHS and there would be private space to encourage less confident users.

Mr Horne, GLL informed the Panel that he had been part of the team which had built a new gym in Allerdale. The gym had a 100 station fitness suite and membership had increased from 1800 to 4400 in six months. As a result, the 100 station gym was not big enough and peak times had queues to use equipment.

Ms Almond, GLL added that her focus was to engage those who were inactive and she tried to bring in new membership, she also interacted with the NHS to engage those who were in recovery or had additional fitness requirements.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder had visited the Allerdale gym which was providing a tremendous benefit to the area. She felt that the proposed redevelopment would help to promote Carlisle as a healthy city and engage those who did not usually visit gyms. The work to engage GPs and the NHS would help prevent future issues and promote an active lifestyle.

- How would those who could not afford gym membership be encouraged to use the sports facilities?

Ms Almond agreed that those who needed the facilities could not always afford them and as a result GLL offered concessionary prices and free and affordable classes for those in programmes or as part of schemes. Part of her role had been to support programmes for those with low incomes and find ways for the facilities to be flexible.

Mr Rice added that GLL offered a junior pricing model, an older persons pricing model and a pay and play pricing model. Some of the accessible classes began at 50p. There was not currently a family pricing model, however work was being undertaken to investigate what other providers offered and what GLL could offer.

- How did GLL engage with areas furthest away from the City?

Ms Almond explained that GLL had an existing outreach programme which primarily dealt with schools but was being expanded to reach a wider audience.

The Panel asked for a copy of the GLL Outreach programme to be circulated to Members.

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Panel that the Director of Economic Development, two planning officers and himself had met with Stagecoach to discuss options to amend a bus route to take in the Sands Centre. Stagecoach were happy to consider proposals and were undertaking some survey work and consultation with GLL. They suggested that some joint ticketing be introduced to offer better value, and this would be considered further.

- It was noted that the climbing wall had been removed from the centre and the loss of the 'pay and play' squash facility was a concern.

Mr Rice reminded the Panel that the Sands Centre had four squash courts originally but there had been a decline in usage. The courts were reduced to two and following further decline in usage this had been reduced to one. Despite there being only one court the usage remained low and therefore the court was used for other activities. The addition of the two dance studios was to allow for some flexible space which could be used for activities and as additional break out conference space which was a facility that was not currently on offer.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that the squash courts had not been raised as a significant concern during the consultation period and there had been relevantly low demand for the courts. The demand for other activities far outweighed that for the courts or the climbing wall. The Council had worked closely with Eden Rock to look for other facilities and to relocate the new section of the wall. Eden Rock had been keen to take the facility and had discussed setting up a social enterprise to do so as it was estimated that it would cost £120,000 to remove and store the wall. Should the project be approved further work would be undertaken to move the climbing wall facilities.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder reminded the Panel that the climbing wall had been rejected from the plans by the previous administration due to the lack of use.

- A Member asked for more detail on the catering facilities.

Mr Reed explained that the street area would have a café space, an increase in bars and an area which could be used for events. In addition the outside space would be retained.

- How much had been spent on the project to date?

The Financial Services Manager confirmed that approximately £1.2m had been spent on the design to date and this was part of the overall scheme cost.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder asked Members to consider the project based on it being the right decision for Carlisle not on the money that had already been spent.

- What contingency was in place in case costs rose during the project?

The Deputy Chief Executive explained that Wates had been clear about the costs and had raised issues in advance of going to tender so everything could be included. The Council did have contingency funds as well.

- The Panel asked for reassurance that local businesses would be encouraged to tender for work and would receive notification of the work they could tender for.

Mr Roberts assured Members that they had held an open day for local businesses in August and would holding a further one as well as engaging with local businesses should approval be given for the project.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Panel thanked Mr Roberts,(Wates), Mr Denson (Pick Everard, Mr Reed (GT3 Architects), Mr Sime, Mr Reekie (Buro Happold), Mr Rice, Mr Horne, Ms Almond (Greenwich Leisure Limited) for their attendance and valuable input into the meeting:

2) That report CS.17/19 and additional presentations on the Sands Centre Redevelopment Project be welcomed;

3) That the Executive consider the comments and concerns raised by the Panel as detailed above when making their recommendation to Council;

4) That the Panel supports the proposals and recommends to the Executive that the project be moved forward;

5) That an update report on the project, including Key Performance Indicators, be submitted to the Panel in six months time should the project be approved.

6) That a copy of the GLL Outreach Programme be circulated to the Panel.

Councillor Ellis-Williams left the meeting.

HWSP.39/19 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018/19

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted the 2018/19 end of year performance against the current Service Standards and a summary of the Carlisle Plan 2015-18 actions as defined in the 'plan on a page'. Performance against the Panel's 2018/19 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were also included. (PC.06/19)

The report included a dashboard of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Panel along with a summary of exceptions. Section 3 of the report gave an update against the actions in the Carlisle Plan for actions within the remit of the Panel. He highlighted three exceptions as detailed in the report.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments questions:

- What work was being undertaken to increase the percentage of household waste being sent to recycling?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that there had been a reduction in garden waste due to a warm summer, in addition the cost of recylates had gone down and there was a trend to move away from plastics towards other types of packaging.

A Member commented that some people did not recycle as they did not believe that it was going to recycling and suggested that more information about the process be sent out.

The Media and Communications Officer informed that Panel that a webpage had been established to address this issue and it would be promoted further.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder agreed that some people did think recycling was not being dealt with correctly and a new campaign to encourage recycling and educate people was about to be launched. He commented that the target the Council used was a national target which he felt may not be the most suitable for the Council. As a result he would look at the target and work with relevant officers to ensure the correct information was being provided.

The Portfolio Holder added that although the statistics for recycling were useful they did not show the full picture due to household waste sites and the waste treatment plant not being included in the figures.

- A Member highlighted an issue in her ward where green recycling bags were not put out as there was a concern that they would be blown onto a very busy main road. She asked that consideration be given to the use of recycling bins.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder stated that there had been a recent rationalisation of the recycling collection and new vehicles had been introduced. He took on board the comments and stated that there needed to be some consideration for the most efficient way to store and collect recycling.

RESOLVED – That the performance of the City Council had been scrutinised with a view to seeking continuous improvement in how the Council delivered its priorities (PC.06/19).

HWSP.40/19 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Policy and Communications Manager presented report OS.15/19 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

The report detailed the most recent Notice of Executive Key Decisions, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, which had been published on 17 May 2019. Both items included in the Notice had been included on the Panel's agenda.

The report included a table of the progress on resolutions from previous meetings of the Panel, all of which had been completed.

The current Work Programme had been appended to the report and Members asked that the following items be added:

- Sands Centre (if approved on 25 June 2019)
- Climate Change

The Policy and Communications Manager highlighted the proposed Joint Inquiry Day to consider highways issues, road safety, connectivity, health and safety, walking and cycling and Members agreed to retain the item in the work programme.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report and Work Programme (OS.015/19) be noted.

2) That the following items be added to the Panel's work programme for 2019/20:

- Sands Centre (if approved on 25 June 2019)
- Climate Change

(The meeting ended at 12.53pm).