

Minutes of the meeting of the **DOVER LEISURE CENTRE PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Thursday, 11 January 2018 at 4.45 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor T J Bartlett

Councillors: P M Beresford  
N J Collor  
M D Conolly  
P Walker

Also Present: Councillor M J Ovenden

Officers: Mr Richard Thompson (Hadron Consulting)  
Mr Tom Goodhand (Places for People)  
Mr Steve Warriner (Places for People)  
Principal Infrastructure and Delivery Officer  
Principal Leisure Officer  
Democratic Services Officer

32 APOLOGIES

It was noted that there were no apologies for absence.

33 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that no substitute members had been appointed.

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.

35 MINUTES

The notes of the meeting of the Group held on 12 October 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 INTRODUCTION TO PLACES FOR PEOPLE

Members received a presentation from Places for People Leisure (PFP). Mr Tom Goodhand, the Operations Director, advised that the company worked with a number of local authorities, running over a hundred standalone leisure facilities. He and Mr Steve Warriner, the Area Manager, had been involved in 20 leisure centre contract handovers. The company was proud of its Quest accreditation, its reputation for cleanliness, staff welfare and training, and for having the largest apprenticeship scheme in the leisure industry.

Councillor T J Bartlett stressed that the cleanliness of the new facility was fundamental for the Council. Councillor P Walker welcomed the fact that PFP was a business and not a charitable trust. He also commended the provision of free swimming for the under-8s. The Principal Leisure Officer (PLP) clarified that the contract with PFP gave the Council greater control over how the building was managed and the service delivered compared to the existing lease arrangements.

For example, there was a performance monitoring system within the contract which provided for penalty payments should the contractor fail to rectify performance failures. Mr Goodhand emphasised the company's commitment to giving staff the right tools, time and training to maintain high standards of cleanliness.

RESOLVED: To note the presentation.

37 HANDOVER OF DOVER LEISURE CENTRE

Mr Steve Warriner, the Area Manager, advised that existing leisure centre staff would be transferred over to PFP in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006. Staff consultation had commenced on 7 December. A dedicated mobilisation handover manager had already been appointed, and other employees from Camberley would be drafted in to support the handover. New posts would also be created and these staff would be brought in early. The primary focus during the run-up to the handover would be contacting clubs to look at bookings beyond 1 April 2018.

The PLO reported that there had been numerous meetings held with PFP and Your Leisure to facilitate a smooth handover. It was noted in particular that Your Leisure had been very cooperative. For example, they had allowed PFP to install its own IT system before the handover to enable any teething problems to be addressed before 1 April. Members were advised that information needed to be disseminated to customers regarding arrangements/changes from 1 April; PFP and Your Leisure intended to issue a joint statement later in the month.

In response to Councillor M D Conolly, Mr Warriner advised that PFP had lots of previous experience and systems in place to ensure a successful handover. Mr Goodhand clarified that there would be a gap of a few days between the closure of the existing centre and the opening of the new facility to provide, for example, staff training. However, closures would be kept to a minimum. He also advised that staff from other centres would be brought in to assist in the first few days/weeks after opening.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

38 MOBILISATION OF DOVER DISTRICT LEISURE CENTRE

Mr Thompson anticipated that the new building would be handed over by BAM on 21 January 2019, following which it would need to be fitted out. The projected opening date of 1 February was not therefore likely to be achieved. Mr Warriner recognised that dates might change and flexibility would be needed. Mr Thompson added that there were several programme milestones which, when achieved, would give a good indication of the opening date. Updates on progress would be given to the Group.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

39 CONSTRUCTION AND PROGRAMME

Mr Thompson advised Members that piling had been completed the day before. Whilst this was slightly behind schedule, it was on track for the steel frame which would be arriving on 15 January. The Glulam timber beams which would support the roof structure above the main pool would be arriving at the port imminently.

Councillor Walker welcomed the works which would be a tangible sign of the new building.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

40 COMMUNICATIONS

The PLO advised that the Council's website had been updated and a newsletter issued in November. Discussions had been held with the Whitfield Aspen School over the name of the new road which would probably be finalised by mid-March.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

41 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Mr Thompson advised that Hadron Consulting and PFP had been liaising over the design of the new building since September and a number of changes had been proposed as a consequence, including the addition of a drowning protection measure for the swimming-pool. Sport England had been involved in discussions and were content with the changes. PFP had also requested that tweaks be made to the retail area.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

42 PLANNING

Mr Thompson advised that there were several planning conditions outstanding. Significantly, Southern Water had agreed that the new leisure centre could be connected to the existing sewer without any additional measures being necessary. This was due to the fact that, following modelling work, Southern Water had satisfied themselves that there was minimal risk of insufficient sewerage capacity between the time of the leisure centre opening and the completion of the planned upgrade works. The £45,000 fee paid for the design of these measures would be refunded with interest. The PIDO added that the scheme for the discharge of surface water had now been approved by Southern Water. The archaeological watching brief had also been completed. Members were advised that the bus incentive scheme would be considered in more detail in May.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

43 SPORT ENGLAND

The PLO reported that Officers were in regular contact with Sport England who had advised that Dover's project was more advanced than others elsewhere in the country. The first payment of the £1.5 million award was due to be drawn down shortly.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

44 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was proposed that the next meeting should be held on 8 March. There would be a visit to the construction site beforehand at 3.45pm. Councillor Trevor Bartlett suggested the subsequent meeting should be held in June.

RESOLVED: That the next meeting date be noted.

45 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that the items involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

46 CLIENT PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Thompson referred Members to the monthly report received from BAM. This indicated that the piling, water infrastructure and erection of the frame were on track, as advised to Members earlier. The Clip 'n' Climb structure had been approved and was now being fabricated. BAM had engaged well with the community and a number of local apprentices were working on the site.

Members were advised that 40% of the trade packages had been procured from companies based in Kent. The building was being constructed to a high standard of sustainability, and there was every confidence that it would achieve a very good Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) rating.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

47 RISKS

Mr Thompson advised that the risk relating to foul water drainage capacity had virtually disappeared. Changes had been made to the external render as a result of insurance requirements. The new render could not be applied in wet weather and this increased the potential risk of delays. Work on the design of the access road would be completed by the end of the month. Tiling, particularly for the swimming-pool, had proved difficult to procure due to its specialist nature and therefore remained a risk. BAM had been hitting its key targets and was communicating well.

The PLO advised that a report would be going to Cabinet on 15 January in relation to the surrender of the lease on the existing centre. Officers explained that the addition of a proposed cycle path connecting the leisure centre to Melbourne Avenue would be reviewed when there was more certainty on budget expenditure. Officers had been working with Kent County Council's Public Rights Of Way (PROW) team which was looking at an alternative cycle route. If it happened, the cycle path would be constructed in the spring after the new centre had opened.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

48 PROJECT COSTS

Mr Thompson advised Members of increases and reductions in project costs, including an extra £60,000 to upgrade the render, £56,000 to upgrade lockers/cubicles and £27,000 for additional groundworks. The only remaining undefined costs were those for the Tesco roundabout upgrade, the cycle path and the access road. The PIDO advised that KCC had estimated a sum of £10,000 to upgrade the Tesco roundabout. Although this was probably an under estimation,

the cost was unlikely to be significantly higher. In any case, it would be covered by the Council's contingency budget. An update on this would be given in March.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.31 pm.