

Minutes of the meeting of the **DOVER LEISURE CENTRE PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Thursday, 7 June 2018 at 4.45 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor T J Bartlett

Councillors: M D Conolly  
M R Eddy  
Mr P Ward

Also present: Mr T Crafer (Places for People)  
Mr T Goodhand (Places for People)  
Mr R Thompson (Hadron Consulting)  
Mr S Warriner (Places for People)

Officers: Director of Environment and Corporate Assets  
Principal Infrastructure and Delivery Officer  
Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES

It was noted that Councillors P M Beresford, N J Collor and P Walker had sent apologies for absence.

2 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor M R Eddy had been appointed as a substitute member for Councillor P Walker.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES

The notes of the meeting of the Group held on 8 March 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 HANDOVER AND MOBILISATION OF DOVER LEISURE CENTRE

Mr Steve Warriner reported that the handover had been straightforward and successful, and that the new contract manager (Mr Tony Crafer) had been in place since mid-April. Staff had responded well to the changes, and there had been excellent feedback from customers since the handover on cleanliness, service, etc.

Mr Tony Crafer advised that major cleaning and maintenance had been undertaken since the handover, including pump replacement, redecoration, a deep clean of facilities and the introduction of new health and safety policies and procedures. New managers had been added to the existing team and more would be added when the new centre opened. A programme of staff training was in place, including the training of all lifeguards in Pool Safety Operating Procedures. It was anticipated that the ongoing discussions with clubs on bookings, future prices, etc would be finished by August. Positive engagement with clubs was continuing, including with Vista Twisters.

Mr Tom Goodhand explained that partnership boards in other districts were usually attended by around three members of the company's management team, one or two officers and a couple of Members. Given that there was also usually a customer forum, customers would not normally be members of the board. It was preferred to keep the board and forum separate, not least for reasons of confidentiality. Whilst meetings of the board would be relatively high level, the management team would report back to the board on key issues raised at the customer forum. The Principal Infrastructure and Delivery Officer (PIDO) advised that further work would be done to determine how the customer forums would work, with the aim of giving Members reassurance that customers would have a meaningful input.

Councillor M R Eddy agreed that the distinction between the board and the forum should be maintained since one was more strategic/policy focused and the other customer facing. In response to Councillor Eddy, the PIDO advised that Officers would probably be ready to report to Council on facilities, pricing, etc in October. The Director of Environment and Corporate Assets added that the report should include an update on construction and the transfer.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6 CONSTRUCTION

Mr Richard Thompson reported that construction was progressing well.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

7 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Mr Thompson advised that most aspects of the design had now been finalised, including signage, reception and gym layout.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

8 PLANNING

The PIDO advised Members that there had been a lot of progress in relation to planning conditions. Drainage conditions had now been approved and the archaeological watching brief had been reduced. One of the main conditions outstanding related to off-site works at the Tesco roundabout. Work had not yet started on the bus ticketing scheme but Stagecoach was well aware of it.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

9 COMMUNICATIONS

The PIDO advised that the Council's Funding and Communication Manager was liaising with People for Places and BAM Ltd on publicity, and press releases had been issued. The Council's Keep Me Posted facility would also be used to publicise progress. Discussions had been held with the Leader of the Council on the form the opening ceremony might take. Given the lack of a famous local sporting star (and the cost of hiring a celebrity), it was likely that a number of local people with a story to tell would be involved in the ceremony.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

10 ACCESS ROAD

The PIDO advised that an application had been made for a brown tourism sign. A meeting had also been held with Kent County Council (KCC) about adopting the road which would be subject to a number of criteria being met. A revised specification had been drawn up which had slightly increased the cost. However, this was to the Council's benefit in the longer term as KCC would be responsible for maintaining the road once adopted. This was also the case with street lighting.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The PIDO advised that the September meeting might not go ahead as there was unlikely to be much to report on. Councillor Eddy suggested that the September meeting might still be worthwhile as discussions could be held on what would be presented to Council in October. Mr Thompson suggested that a visit to the site in September would be useful, regardless of whether the meeting went ahead.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

12 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.

13 CLIENT PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Thompson presented a client progress report prepared by BAM Ltd. Drainage had been a key issue but had now been resolved. The appointment of a clerk of works had proved to be money well spent, and had indicated that there were no issues of concern. There was every confidence that the projected completion date would be met. The PIDO added that there were contractual obligations relating to when Places for People could access the new building, so it was important to monitor progress.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

14 RISKS

Mr Thompson advised that the cost of the new access road would be more in the region of £180,000. The PIDO reported that a draft travel plan had been submitted with the planning application. A more detailed plan, including the bus ticketing scheme, would be drawn up. Such a scheme was preferable to introducing a new bus service which was likely to be withdrawn once Section 106 monies had come to an end. In any case, there were two existing bus services, one of which stopped at Tesco. It was clarified that the proposed cycle path would be more of a footpath. This proposal would entail significant works and require a planning application. The scheme would be revisited once the available budget was known.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

15 PROJECT COSTS

Mr Thompson advised that the budget was in a healthy position. A refund for foul drainage works would be sought since these would be around £65,000 less than originally predicted. The contingency budget was being used for improvements rather than addressing problems which was a good position to be in. The amount of contingency budget remaining would be clarified at the next meeting. In response to Councillor Eddy, the PIDO clarified that a considerable sum of the Sport England funding had already been drawn down. Further funds would be drawn down as and when required, subject to compliance and monitoring requirements.

RESOLVED: (a) That a contingency budget update be provided at the next meeting.

(b) That the update be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.03 pm.