

Overview & Scrutiny Task Group Meeting Notes



nsq8.2M5

Review topic	Time & Date of Meeting
New Leisure Centre	5.00 p.m. on Monday 10 August 2020

Attendance	Venue
<p>Members: Cllr Baker (Chair) Cllr Grange Cllr Ray Cllr Robertson Cllr Silvester-Hall</p> <p>An Apology for absence was received from Cllr E Little (Cabinet Member)</p> <p>Officers: Ben Percival John Smith Sarah Sleigh Mark Hooper</p>	Virtual

Areas Discussed
<p>Declarations of Interests – Cllr Baker declared a personal interest as her husband used the cardio rehabilitation facility. Cllr Grange declared personal interests as (i) a member of Friary Grange Leisure Centre and (ii) as she had an association with the Friends of Friary Grange. Cllr Ray declared a personal interest as he had an association with the Friends of Friary Grange.</p> <p>Stakeholders</p> <p>Further consideration was given to the stakeholder group and it was noted that the retirement village, care homes, GP surgeries (due to the GP referral scheme) and schools had been identified for inclusion.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that some groups would want to be more involved than others, however it was important to ensure the stakeholder group was as wide as possible. The Group noted that information would be shared with stakeholders in the future through a variety of methods.</p>

Leisure Centre Tours

Centres that had been identified for potential visits included:

- centres in Stafford and Stone,
- two centres completed by Walsall in 2016
- a centre in Hinckley that was a more expensive build, developed in parkland where appearance was an important and sensitive issue.

Consideration was given to physical tours now facilities were reopening.

The group discussed the purpose of the tour and whether a visit was appropriate at the current time. Concerns were raised over shared transport arrangements and the environmental impact if everyone travelled separately. Reference was also made to current Covid rates at some of the locations including the recent spike in Stone and it was questioned whether a visit involving several households would be responsible.

While it may be appropriate to organise a site visit in the medium term it was suggested that for the time being a virtual tour be arranged with commentary focusing on relevant issues including cost, design choices, value engineering options and flexible layouts.

Agreed: That the possibility of physical tours be considered in the future, however in the short term a virtual tour of the Walsall facilities (and Hinckley if possible) be arranged with commentary on issues that needed to be taken into consideration.

Budget and Site Options

It was confirmed that the Cabinet had set the budget for a replacement facility at £5 million based on Sport England models that included the provision of a swimming facility.

Therefore, the objective was to build a facility for £5 million bringing in additional funds, if possible, to provide an enhanced facility. Max Associates had been appointed to assist given their position as market specialists in new provision and leisure contract management. The challenge was to deliver a turn-key facility within a five year timescale.

The Group noted that the following models existed for building leisure facilities:

- build and go out to operators
- build with a partner (builder operator) who contributes to the development with a view to constructing a facility that is viable for them to operate.

The Group was advised that 8 potential sites had been identified, details of which were given at the meeting.

A strategic viability analysis would be undertaken (taking into consideration design challenges, access, opportunity costs etc.) and it was envisaged that the process would result in a shortlist of two options complete with design drawings. A draft of the analysis was expected by mid to late September for review by officers.

Key issues highlighted by the group included the importance of access and the distribution of potential competition.

Members noted that site viability and planning consent work would be undertaken as part of a separate process.

It was advised that the needs and requirements of stakeholders would inform the employer's requirements. The procurement process would seek to enable the market to provide a facility that met these requirements. Firming up the specification would take place over the Autumn.

There was recognition that while it would not be a straightforward sequential process a timeline for key decision points would be helpful. The Chairman confirmed that this was being prepared.

Agreed: That a draft timeline be circulated to Members of the Group.

Lichfield Strategic Outcomes Planning Model Report

It was reported that a Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Model and Strategic Options Appraisal and been undertaken to develop a clear approach determined by local priorities and outcomes. The report had been shared with Sport England who were satisfied with it.

The need to work closely with Sport England from the outset was emphasised and it was noted that the work undertaken would help tap into the Sport England grant system.

During consideration of the report Members made the following observations:

- The analysis commenced pre-Covid and there appeared to be some omissions in respect of age and obesity which had been identified as key risk factors
- With regard to the stakeholder workshop themes there did not appear to be anything specifically about health inequalities in North Lichfield and the importance of access to public facilities for Wards in this part of the city.
- A map of available facilities (public and private) including facilities used by residents that were outside the District would be useful (it was advised that an assessment of needs and opportunities would address this).
- People who used the centre had not been explicitly identified in focus groups – talking to this audience would be important as they were likely to transfer to the new centre
- Women formed an important group since they used the facilities more and childcare had been identified as an important consideration.
- When obtaining the views of young people it would be helpful to engage people 'hanging out at the centre' as well as those taking part in the forum.
- Local Transportation 'packages' had been looked at for 'South Lichfield and the City Centre' and Burntwood. It was assumed north Lichfield would be included in the future.
- Car parking and coach access were highlighted as important factors.
- Consideration needed to be given to specific needs (e.g. climbing walls), the types of activities that were covered locally (including by competitors) and activities where there was unmet demand.
- It was important to be cognisant of the business case going forward, including the need to future proof the facility.

The Group was advised that an assessment of need and opportunities (ANOG) had been undertaken and would be shared with the Group and that this would address some of the issues raised.

With regard to access, it was noted that the site analysis would include access to public transport and a travel plan would be submitted as part of detailed planning application.

The Group was advised that market engagement would take place as part of the procurement process and would provide further insight into the market. This would help determine what could be provided in addition to the core requirements with a view to making best use of the space available and bringing further resources to the project.

AGREED:

(1) That the draft ANOG be circulated to Members of the Group.

(2) That the next meeting of the Task Group be arranged, to commence at 5.30 p.m., in early September.

Outcomes

A virtual tour be arranged of facilities in Walsall (and Hinckley if possible) with commentary on issues that needed to be taken into consideration.

A draft project timeline be circulated to Members of the Group

The draft ANOG be circulated to Members of the Group

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Further Work Required/Next Steps:
Virtual tours Make further additions to the stakeholder list as appropriate. Consider the ANOG and Draft project timeline