

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF LEISURE TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY PANEL  
HELD ON MONDAY, 18 MAY 2009  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.30 - 8.10 PM**

**Members Present:** Mrs R Gadsby (Chairman), D Wixley (Vice-Chairman), D Dodeja, G Pritchard, H Ulkun and J M Whitehouse

**Other members present:**

**Apologies for Absence:** A Boyce, S Murray and B Rolfe

**Officers Present** J Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene), A Clear (Performance and Quality Manager) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)

**15. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

Noted that there were no substitute members for this meeting.

**16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors D Wixley declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest by virtue of being the respective Town Council's representative currently in discussions with Epping College.

**17. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes from 23 September 2008 were noted and agreed as a correct record.

**18. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel noted the Terms of Reference.

**19. FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SPORTS HALL AT WALTHAM ABBEY SWIMMING POOL**

The Panel received an updated tabled report on the Feasibility study on the construction of a new sports hall at the site of the Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool. This report updated some of the figures in Stace's report. The new report stated that a new hall was feasible, showed it could be built but would need planning permission. It gave the approximate construction costs. Stace, the Council's consultants, had discussed this with the Council's Planning Directorate. The total estimated cost for taking the project up to attaining a successful formal planning application would be about £41,000. Normally, expenditure of that level would require compliance with contract standing orders, obtaining at least three quotations from relevant companies. However, given Stace's work to date in advising the Council, it seemed sensible to allow them to take the project forward to the pre-planning application stage and set aside contract standing orders accordingly. If planning consent was

granted, the final stage of the project would be subject to a full tendering exercise in accordance with contract standing orders.

There was also a need for a new electrical sub-station which could cost anywhere from £20,000 to £100,000, so they had budgeted for the worse case scenario. The Stace report gave an indicative figure of £1.721 million for the total project cost. The report to Cabinet in December 2008 identified revenue savings of £202,500 per annum, from 2010/11 onwards, arising from the decision to cease the joint use agreement with King Harold School. The Panel noted the timescale that the project would follow. Any decision made by them would go to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in June 2009 for their consideration and endorsement; the Cabinet would consider it in July 2009 and it would then go to Council in September 2009; with a planning application submitted in November 2009; tenders for consultancy/project management issued in February 2010; contractor to be appointed in June 2010 and contract completed by May 2011.

King Harold School could opt to keep Waltham Abbey Sports Centre open and under their management during the time the joint use agreement with the Council had come to an end and the opening of the new sports hall.

Councillor Ulkun queried the £41,000 cost for working up the project to its pre-planning stage. This amounted to about 23% of the total budget and seemed a little high for a simple project like this. He was told that they would also be doing other things such as a highways report etc. but officers would endeavour to negotiate on this cost.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse commented on the complicated design of the circulation system. He was assured that it was all to do with the need to have a dry changing room installed.

Councillor Whitehouse also queried the fact that sustainability action had been precluded from the cost plan, he thought it was important that it was thought through at this stage of the proceedings. He was told that Stace was not asked to add it on to the costings at this stage.

Councillor asked if the proposed hall was the same size as the existing hall. He was told it was slightly smaller.

Councillor Whitehouse was hoping that the Panel would have more certainty about the government refurbishment plans for the school. He was told that the school had not yet shared any information about this with the council.

Councillor Pritchard commented that Waltham Abbey Sport Centre had a gym and a Martial Arts room; would there be a loss of these facilities in the new hall? There is a dance studio at the Swimming Pool that could take some of the activities and others could go into the sports hall. The swimming pool also had a weight training area so there would be no real loss.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) The receipt and content of the feasibility study of the construction of a new sports hall at the site of the Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool be noted.
- (2) That the Panel recommends to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet that proposals be further developed to enable:

- (a) a planning pre-application submission to be made; and
  - (b) that subject to the satisfactory completion of the pre-application a full planning application be made.
- (3) That the proposal be progressed to the pre-planning application stage at an estimated cost of £41,000 and that contract standing orders be set aside to enable the appointment of Stace to undertake this work.
- (4) That capital provision in the sum of £1.721 million be sought for the construction of the new sports hall.
- (5) That the indicative time frame for the project be noted and that consideration be given to the time period between cessation of the Joint use Agreement with the Governors of King Harold School in January 2010 and the earliest likely date of opening of any new facility in the Summer of 2011.