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| To: | Council |
| Date: | 17 October 2018 |
| Title of Report: | Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision – as submitted by the speakers and with verbal responses from Board Members |

**Introduction**

Addresses made by members of the public to the Council, and questions put to the Board members or Leader, registered by the deadline in the Constitution, are below. Any written responses available are also below.

The text reproduces that sent in the speakers and is not to be taken as statements by or on behalf of the Council and represents the views of the speakers.

This report is republished after the Council meeting as part of the minutes pack. This list the full text of speeches delivered as submitted, written responses, and summaries of further verbal responses.

**Address taken in Part 1 of the agenda**

[1.](#_Toc525831705) [Address by Judith Harley – Temple Cowley Pool](#_Toc525831706)

Lord Mayor, Councillors

I wish to address you today about Agenda item 5, **Draft Local Plan 2036**, where you are recommended to approve all proposed documents for public consultation. **I am asking you to show a beneficial influence and request the following amendments to the proposed documents before submitting them for further public consultation**.

In July 2017 I addressed Full Council on the public consultation of the Draft Local Plan. I asked Councillors to listen to what local communities in Temple Cowley and further afield wanted – and needed – which is a swimming pool in Temple Cowley to serve the needs of the ever-increasing local population. **Arguments about the new swimming pool in Blackbird Leys have been fully explored and exhausted; this does not serve our needs**. We need a swimming pool, more leisure facilities, and more community spaces in Temple Cowley, and had hoped that the Oxford Local Plan 2036 would be a means of achieving this.

**In July 2017 I asked the Council to support Temple Cowley residents in their proposal to re-designate the site of the Marsh Road City Council Depot for leisure** – specifically for a new swimming pool and associated community facilities – instead of its current designation for housing. We appreciate that there is a chronic housing shortage in Oxford, but housing consideration should not override all other considerations. With increasing housing development all around us, including on the former Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre site, we need increasing leisure facilities in Temple Cowley. **The Marsh Depot, conveniently sited next to Cowley Marsh Park, and on land originally belonging to Cowley Marsh Park, would be an ideal leisure site to complement the Park itself. This is your one opportunity to positively influence this**.

One of our local City Councillors, Councillor Saj Malik, told residents in 2016 that he expected to see a new swimming pool on the Marsh Depot site within 10 years. Our previous Local MP, Andrew Smith, concurred with this on BBC radio, and told me in person that the Marsh Depot would make a good swimming pool site. **Clearly, we have the backing of our local councillor and our former MP for this scheme.**

During last year’s public consultation for the Draft Local Plan I, and several other Temple Cowley residents, submitted three specific requests, all to preserve and enhance our leisure and community facilities. These were:

1. **Allocate the site of the City Council Depot in Marsh Road for community use and leisure, specifically to include a new swimming pool, to replace Temple Cowley Pools, when the Depot leaves.**
2. **Designate Cowley Marsh Park as a park, under policy SR5, to give proper protection.**
3. **Retain the William Morris Sports Field as a sports field, protected as open space by Policy SR2 as it is at present.**

None of these have been included in the proposed documents before you. Last year’s consultation leaflet stated: “We have listened to what local communities, businesses and other organisations told us and are now considering a range of options." **From the current Proposals it is clear that there is complete disregarded for our local community’s suggestions for the Local Plan**. This makes a complete mockery of any consultation. I am disappointed, but not surprised, by this. **You might be listening, and not agree with our suggestions, but these are what we want, and we disagree with the current proposals**.

**The Local Plan 2036 is a significant policy document for the future, and it is future generations who will benefit most from our suggestions**. Obesity in children has reached record levels and is rising; everyone is being encouraged to take more exercise. More local leisure facilities, as we have suggested, would encourage exercise, combat obesity and poor health, and reduce NHS costs. **This is a vital, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to provide integrated sports, leisure, and community facilities on the Cowley Marsh Park / Marsh Depot site**, and an opportunity to encourage everyone to take healthy, sporting activity. **The land on which the Depot stands was once part of the Park. It should be returned to the Park for community use when the Depot leaves; once lost to housing it will never be regained**.

I repeat - housing consideration should not override all other considerations. **I am asking you to be bold and support local residents in their three proposals for Local Plan 2036, especially designating the Marsh Road City Council Depot site for a new swimming pool and leisure facilities, instead of its current designation for housing**. Please show a beneficial influence; **will you ask officers to make the necessary amendments to the proposed documents before submitting them for further public consultation**?

**Thank you.**

**Verbal response at the Council meeting from Councillor Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Transport Services**

In the early part of the address it says that arguments about the new swimming pool in Blackbird Leys have been fully explored and exhausted. Well indeed they have and critically the evidence demonstrated that the new pool in the Leys provided a sufficiency of pools and so the numbers that were needed. The Local Plan is driven by and backed by evidence. There is not evidence to support the proposed change. This site has been allocated for housing in the current Local Plan – the sites and housing plan – and so it would be a significant change to take a housing site and allocate it for a leisure use. It would be a radical change, not backed by evidence, to do it in the absence of any supporting evidence looking to demonstrate a need. There is not a demonstrated need. That is indeed the argument that has been exhausted and this is just another attempt to re-open it.

**Verbal response at the Council meeting from Councillor Malik, Ward Member for Cowley Marsh**

I just want to clarify a couple of things. The public speaker referred to a statement that I made during a “local election”. It was not part of my campaign it was a conversation which took place when myself and Andrew Smith MP were visiting Cowley Marsh. I mentioned to two or three people probably that this could happen. My job is to provide the best for the residents of Cowley Marsh which I will try to do again and again. I would agree that obesity is going up but, Cowley Marsh, apart from losing the swimming facility, has outdoor gym facilities at Marsh Park, half a million spent by the Council on the Spire Academy gym where people can go and exercise. So saying that we have completely taken everything off I do not agree. I will do the best that I can for my ward.