

## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 7 December 2011

### Agenda item 3 – Public Questions

#### A. Questions from Nigel Gibson on agenda item 5 (Leisure Fees and Charges)

1. Paragraph 1.2 of the accompanying report states that there has been just under £4m of investment into the leisure centres and a corresponding 100,000 more people attending leisure centres each year. Can you please clarify whether you actually mean visits to the centres, or people, and if you do mean people please provide the total visits (assuming each person visited at least once)?

**Response:**

100,000 more visits.

2. Paragraph 1.2 of the accompanying report states that there has been just under £4m of investment into the leisure centres and a corresponding 100,000 more people (or visits, depending on the answer to the previous question). Can you please provide a breakdown of investment by leisure centre by year, and the corresponding increase (or decrease) in attendance (people or visits, depending on the answer to the previous question) by year?

**Response (to question 2):**

<b>Investment in leisure facilities</b>	<b>2009/10 (Apr to Mar)</b>	<b>2010/11 (Apr to Mar)</b>	<b>2011/12 (Apr to Dec)</b>
<b>Barton Leisure Centre</b>	£91,000	£634,000	£130,000
<b>Blackbird Leys leisure Centre</b>	£118,000	£542,000	£200
<b>Blackbird Leys Pool</b>	£3,000	£56,000	Nil
<b>Ferry Leisure Centre</b>	£89,000	£735,000	Nil
<b>Hinksey Outdoor Pool</b>	£53,000	£87,000	£126,000
<b>Oxford Ice Rink</b>	£41,000	£845,000	£25,000
<b>Temple Cowley Pool</b>	£14,000	£84,000	£2,000

Rounded to the nearest £1,000 / £100. The remaining investment costs are committed

<b>Increase (decrease) in visits to leisure facilities</b>	<b>2009/10 (Apr to Mar)</b>	<b>2010/11 (Apr to Mar)</b>	<b>2011/12 (Apr to Oct)</b>
<b>Barton Leisure Centre</b>	4,800	10,000	15,300
<b>Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre</b>	44,600	50,500	(13,700)
<b>Blackbird Leys Pool</b>	(6,000)	(9,600)	(2,900)
<b>Ferry Leisure Centre</b>	(9,700)	33,200	71,600
<b>Hinksey Outdoor Pool</b>	980	(5,000)	(200)
<b>Oxford Ice Rink</b>	(28,100)	(4,000)	3,300
<b>Temple Cowley Pool</b>	33,100	30,300	(33,200)

Rounded to the nearest 100 visits

3. In Paragraph 1.4 of the accompanying report, the case is stated for moving the annual increase in admission charges from April to January. Can you please explain how not increasing the charge until April 2012 would place a 'financial strain', since the previous increase was brought in 3 months early in January 2011?

**Response:**

It would lead to a 15 month period with no price increases over a time when costs have increased.

4. In Paragraph 2.3 the increase in charges is related to the Retail Price Index. Can you please explain why you do not use the price index that is now recognized as standard within the public sector, the Consumer Price Index, as surely that would provide better value for users?

**Response:**

The Retail Price Index was the chosen indices when the contract was implemented.

5. With reference to Paragraph 2.6, can you please explain and provide more detail around the "benchmarking data" and "level of Council investment into leisure assets" and how this provides "very good" value for money?

**Response:**

Fees and charges proposals were benchmarked against leisure providers in neighbouring districts, other Fusion Lifestyle leisure management contracts, and against the Councils Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) nearest neighbour groups (i.e. Cambridge, Guildford, Watford, Winchester, Wycombe, etc).

Leisure investment has assisted in the overall reduction in subsidy per visitor, reducing the cost of service to the local taxpayer. Additionally the quality of provision has significantly improved and a wider leisure offer is now available to users.

6. With reference to Paragraph 4.1, can you please list precisely the opportunities to reduce carbon impact that Fusion Lifestyle has explored in partnership with the Council?

**Response:**

Voltage optimisers; Lagging and insulation for hot water piping, as well as valve and flange covers; Waste management; Biomass boilers; General programme of

energy management enhancements to building management systems; Lighting; Repair or replacement of circulation pumps; Repair and replacement of building management equipment; Installation of photovoltaic panels on leisure facility roofs; Combined heat and power (CHP Unit); Heat recovery systems; Uplift lighting; Environmental awareness delivered to staff; Automated Meter Reading devices; Light Emitting Diodes (LED); Carbon Champion representation and engagement; Collaboration in achieving the energy reduction verification kitemark; Advanced monitoring and targeting approaches to eliminate energy wastage; Usage of waste heat to offset energy usage for other processes.

7. With reference to Paragraph 4.1, can you please explain why, despite the assertion on your website to the contrary, you have not provided rigid pool covers at Temple Cowley Leisure Centre, since they will provide a payback of under 12 months in terms of energy savings, and the centre will remain open until at least early 2013?

**Response:**

The analysis for mechanical pool covers was for a longer payback than the remaining life of the facility.

8. With reference to Paragraph 4.1 can you please what the partnership has done to continue to encourage access by public transport or none (sic) vehicular methods to reduce the carbon impact?

**Response:** Barton and Ferry have had increased and improved bike racks installed and public transport is promoted.

9. With reference to Paragraph 2.4, can you please tell me how many corporate memberships of the City Leisure Centres are currently held, what their value is, and how much you propose to increase each of them by as part of this Agenda Item?

**Response:**

This information has been requested from Fusion Lifestyle.

10. Paragraph 1.2 talks about the annual savings of £660,000 and the £4m of investment. Can you please confirm that this investment is part of the £5.5m capital investment contractual obligation the Council has to Fusion?

**Response:**

By making the saving the Council has freed up monies to improve its facilities.

11. Further to the above question, can you please confirm that when the projected operational savings from the Fusion contract of £7m are considered with the contractual obligation of £5.5m investment, that the overall saving over ten years is only approximately £150,000 per year?

**Response:**

The 660k is the revenue savings. The investment is capitalised as it enhances the value of the buildings which remain in the ownership of the Council.

12. What proportion of the admission charges are paid back to the Council?

**Response:**

Answer is given in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

13. What is the value of the admission charge repayment to the Council from Fusion in each year of the contract to date, and what is the projected repayment value for the current financial year (assuming you vote to increase charges in January 2012) and the next financial year ie 2012/13?

**Response:**

This is also answered in paragraph 6.1.

B. Question from Mark Pitt on agenda item 21 (Planning Monitoring)

Will the CEB accept that:-

As:

The latest SHLAA Update report referred to in the Housing Monitoring Report April 2010 – March 2011 (In Agenda) concludes that housing targets, even without windfalls, will be met, and possible large windfall sites have not yet been assessed via the DPD process:

And:

The Oxford City Green Spaces Final Report (Update 2007) identified the North East suburbs surrounding Ruskin as having the lowest green space provision in the city:

“In general, accessibility to City level formal sites is good, except an area in North Marston and Headington Villages and including Barton and Sandhills and Risinghurst Urban Villages. Access to Informal sites is good in the west and east of the City but poor in Marston, Headington, Blackbird Leys and Littlemore Urban Villages.”

And:

The lack of gardens at Barton

Further:

That Barton's per capita green space provision will be reduced even further by the loss of the Barton AAP area, and the attendant increase in population

And:

The change in the Barton AAP area was presented after the Core Strategy was voted by the Full Council

That there is no "Clear and Convincing" justification under PPS5 to destroy part of designated conservation asset at Ruskin Fields, and it should be brought into use as a green space for all to use and should be excluded from the Barton AAP?

**Response:**

Thank you for your question. This comment is comparable to quite a number that the City Council received in response to the public consultation it held into the Barton Area Action Plan preferred options document in the summer. It also received counter comments that consider some land at Ruskin should be allocated for housing.

The Council is to consider the next version of the Barton AAP at its meeting of Full Council on 19th December. One of the things that Members will be deciding at that meeting is whether or not this land should be identified for development.

The Committee papers will be in the public arena on the Council's website from 12th December onwards. This will indicate what officers are recommending to Members.

C. Question from Audrey Mullender on agenda item 21 (Planning Monitoring)

The Housing Strategy states that a strategic objective is to provide more affordable housing. Can the committee please comment on how the strategy in terms of delivering affordable housing is able to influence the Core Strategy that takes the lead in delivering housing in Oxford, to ensure that benefits and constraints of schemes, such as The Ruskin Fields proposal currently being considered within the Barton AAP and Site

and Housing DPD, are considered fully and appropriately in terms of the affordable housing provision offered.

**Response:**

The Adopted Core Strategy includes a policy that requires all qualifying housing development to provide 50% affordable housing. One role of the Housing Strategy is to provide support to the Core Strategy, for example by providing greater clarification in relation to the nature of the affordable housing that will be sought on qualifying sites at the planning application stage.

Therefore if and once potential housing schemes are allocated such as through the Barton AAP or Sites and Housing DPD then the Housing Strategy comes into play not visa versa.

The Council is to consider the next versions of the Barton AAP and the Sites and Housing DPD at its meeting of Full Council on 19th December. One of the things that Members will be deciding at that meeting is whether or not this land at Ruskin should be identified for development.

The Committee papers will be in the public arena on the Council's website from 12th December onwards. This will indicate what officers are recommending to Members.

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