

18 FEBRUARY 2021

**SERVICE DELIVERY EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD**

18 February 2021

- \* Councillor Angela Goodwin (Chairman)
- \* Councillor Ramsey Nagaty (Vice-Chairman)

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| * Councillor Paul Abbey   | * Councillor Bob McShee     |
| * Councillor Dennis Booth | * Councillor George Potter  |
| * Councillor Andrew Gomm  | * Councillor Jo Randall     |
| * Councillor Diana Jones  | * Councillor Pauline Searle |
| * Councillor Ann McShee   | * Councillor Fiona White    |

\* Present

Councillors Chris Blow, Julia McShane, John Redpath, Caroline Reeves, Tony Rooth and James Steel were also in attendance.

**SD 13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no apologies for absence or substitutions.

**SD 14 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests.

**SD 15 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Advisory Board held on 10 December 2020 were confirmed as a correct record, and would be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

**SD 16 PROPOSED MANDATE TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING SPECTRUM LEISURE CENTRE**

In his introduction to this agenda item, the Lead Councillor for Environment highlighted the high social value and benefits of the Spectrum Leisure Centre which had provided a wide range of leisure and recreational services to people residing within and beyond Guildford for many years prior to the Coronavirus pandemic. However, as the facility was ageing and maintenance costs were increasing, councillors were invited to consider a mandate in respect of a proposal to agree the strategy and funding for a Strategic Outline Business Case that would present the options for capital works to the leisure complex as part of the overall strategy for ongoing management of, and delivery of services through, the Spectrum.

The Strategy and Communications Manager gave a presentation which provided an introductory background to the Spectrum and the proposal. The presentation explained:

- The strategy behind pursuing the proposal.
- The four potential strategic options to deliver a solution for the Spectrum.
- Potential costs to proceed to the next stage to develop the Strategic Outline Business Case for capital works.
- Related considerations, resources, issues, assumptions and risks, and dependencies, constraints and opportunities.
- The explanation of the term 'Lifespan' in relation to buildings.

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- The outcome of the Corporate Management Team / Executive Critical Success Factor Workshop on 28 January 2021.
- The Council's internal stakeholders.

The following points arose from related questions, comments and discussion:

- In terms of timing, the present closure of the Spectrum owing to the Coronavirus pandemic offered an ideal opportunity to undertake condition surveys of the building without causing disruption to its clientele to inform the development of the strategy relating to its future management and service delivery. Although officers were confident in the structural integrity and safety of the building which would render it suitable for refurbishment to extend its life, all aspects would be explored as part of the proposed surveys as all components had a lifecycle. Whilst the present condition of the premises would not prevent its re-opening when circumstances allowed, the Spectrum had experienced heavy usage and its plant equipment was of varying quality with water ingress remaining an ongoing issue.
- Although a report had been commissioned in respect of the Spectrum in 2019, it had focused on roof and building fabric. The report now proposed would be more comprehensive and detailed involving contributions from experts in a range of specialist fields in order to obtain the best possible advice.
- There were some concerns around increasing costs associated with the condition surveys and work undertaken by external consultants.
- In terms of the strategic options to deliver a solution for the Spectrum, Option 3, the minimum required preventative works which would be unlikely to significantly reduce carbon emissions, and Option 4, increased refurbishment that sought to increase the current facilities' 'life span' and reduce carbon emissions, were favoured above Options 1 and 2.
- The list of internal stakeholders in the mandate reflected those who had been consulted in relation to this aspect of the proposal and not stakeholders in general on a wider basis although it was possible that the list would be expanded as the project progressed.
- Of the Council's assets, the Spectrum was responsible for a significant proportion of the total energy consumption and resulting carbon emissions. Whilst councillors identified tackling these as a key improvement area to reduce costs and minimise the impact on climate change, possibly involving a carbon emissions survey, they acknowledged the impracticalities associated with the retro-fitting of modern plant equipment and technologies to an existing ageing building as a solution. It was also felt that whilst minimising the impact of climate change emissions was a significant factor, service provision should be the prime driver of the Spectrum facility and mandate.
- Although a new building would be more energy efficient with reduced carbon emissions, the process of demolishing the existing building and constructing a replacement new build premises would involve considerable energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- It was important to retain and operate the Spectrum as it was a valued community asset which offered physical health, mental health and social benefits to users of its facilities and acted as a centre point drawing residents and visitors to the town boosting the local economy.
- It was expected that many people would be keen to return to enjoying the popular core classic Council leisure facilities following the pandemic. However, possible resulting changes in leisure customers' behaviours and demands and the need for some updating of facilities should be factored into future service design. Also, the opportunity should be taken to improve the overall ambiance of the Spectrum to enhance its attraction where possible.

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- Planting and landscaping of the Spectrum site could improve its aesthetics and act as an added attraction.
- Approximately £30,000 per annum was charged against the Spectrum towards the operation of the Park and Ride bus service serving the site.
- Although there was support for extending the existing management contract with Freedom Leisure, the possibility of returning the Spectrum to in-house management was suggested as a possible future option to increase efficiency and reduce energy consumption in reflection of the Council's past management of the facility.
- Whilst the Stoke Park Masterplan was a separate project from the Spectrum mandate, as Spectrum and its supporting services including the car park were located on Stoke Park, they would play a key part in the Masterplan and considerable crossover between the two projects was anticipated. Both projects would be affected by the contents of the Surrey Act.
- It was confirmed that although the Lido was a separate entity from the Spectrum and not part of this mandate, it was part of the Leisure Partnership Agreement (LPA) and operated by the same contractor, Freedom Leisure. The contract, which expired in October 2021, could be extended for two years subject to the viability of some related submissions which were to be assessed. The LPA could possibly be the subject of a mandate later in the year which would consider all operational options for managing the leisure facilities included in the Agreement.

The Vice-Chairman summarised the discussion and councillors agreed the following points in response to the mandate exercise:

- The EAB supports the mandate as presented to it and feels that it should be pursued as a means to identify the best and most economic options for the Spectrum's medium and longer term future, subject to any necessary restrictions on expenditure in respect of surveys and work undertaken by external consultants.
- Any reasonable measures that can be adopted to secure reductions in the Spectrum's energy consumption and carbon emissions rates should be pursued as part of the mandate, however, these should not take precedence over service delivery.
- The operation of the current Spectrum facility should continue for at least the next two years.
- The Spectrum is a valued community asset which offers physical health, mental health and social benefits to users of its facilities and these should be recognised as strong reasons to continue its future operation.
- Possible changes in the behaviours and demands of potential customers of Spectrum following the Coronavirus pandemic should be evaluated and factored into future service design and use to reflect emerging and dwindling leisure trends where possible, subject to viability.
- The longer term future possibility of returning the Spectrum to in-house management in reflection of the Council's past management of the facility which achieved high energy efficiency and low carbon emissions should be born in mind.

The Strategy and Communications Manager thanked councillors for the informative and useful discussion regarding the mandate, which would return to the EAB for further consideration at a later stage of the project.

#### **SD 17 EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN**

The Executive Forward Plan was noted.

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**SD 18 EAB WORK PROGRAMME**

The EAB was advised that its next meeting would take place on 1 April 2021 when the agenda would include an item concerning the mandate relating to public conveniences. Councillors were invited to submit any suggestions regarding future agenda items to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, which could be discussed at the next Work Programme meeting, taking place on 18 March 2021. Discussion with Directors assisted the work programming process.

The meeting finished at 8.30 pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Chairman