

MINUTES

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

10 OCTOBER 2018

Present:

Councillors: Armytage
Banks
Mrs Bassadone
Conway
England
Fethney
Imarni (Vice-Chairman)
Mahmood (Chairman)
Mills
Pringle

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor Harden (Community and regulatory Services)
Councillor Williams (Leader of the Council)

Officers:

Fiona Williamson	Assistant Director (Housing)
Linda Roberts	Assistant Director – People, Performance & Innovation
Matt Rawdon	Group Manager – People & Performance
Alex Care	Community Partnerships Team Leader
Tracey Vause	Strategic Housing Team Leader
Ben Russell	Dacorum Get Set Go Project Manager
Natasha Beresford	Strategic Housing Group Manager
Kayley Johnston	Member Support Officer (Minutes)
Jim Doyle	Elections Team Tearer

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

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MINUTES

The Chair advised that the meeting tonight is being audio recorded and asked that if anyone does not wish to be audio recorded they need to make it clear.

The Chair set out the rules on public participation that everyone has to notify their questions in advance and register to speak within the specified deadline. There have been 7 requests to speak have been received (1 of which was only received this evening but has been accepted as it had been submitted within deadline but the email had been misdirected). Each speaker will be allowed 2 minutes to make their presentation. The way we will conduct the meeting is that one speaker will speak, which will then be debated by Committee and responses provided by Portfolio

Holders and Officers. If a response cannot be given, a written response will be circulated following the meeting.

The minutes of the Housing and Community OSC meeting on 5th September 2018 were agreed by Members and signed by the Chair.

231 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillors Adeleke, P Hearn and W Wyatt-Lowe.

232 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Williams declared an interest in the sports and leisure facilities as his sons are members of Dacorum and Tring athletics club.

Councillor England declared an interest in the sports and leisure facilities as he is a former administrator on the “Leisure Facilities are Not for Profit” Facebook page.

Councillor Imarni also declared an interest in the sports and leisure facilities as she is a former board member of the DBC sports trust and a member of “Our Gym”.

233 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Matthew Bullard has sent an email to all councillors in regards to his concerns. He said the following in regards to item 9;

I can no longer bear the council making significant sport and leisure decisions that affect huge numbers of residents without being able to demonstrate that those decisions are following any kind of logical strategy...No matter the subject area, decent plan or strategy is crucial... I would urge councillors the importance of getting this document right; particularly given the current strength of feeling in the community about first sports leisure contracts and now the track. Once you have recognised the importance of this document, please ask yourself... “Will the health issues identified in the document be addressed by delivering this strategy?” No they won’t ...“Does it adequately explain what, when, who and how?” No. “Does its structure work?” No... “Does it mention relocating significant facilities such as the track?” No it doesn’t. “Does it set out how its delivery will be resourced and funded?” No. Most importantly, could Jo Public read it and understand what sport in decorum will be like in 2024. Plainly and simply, no.

The Chair thanked Matthew Bullard for his comments and opened for questions.

Cllr Harden offered clarification that it was not two attempts; the previous paper that came to scrutiny was an original draft which went out to consultation, Committee had consultation on as well, so this is a re-write from the original draft following on from the consultation period.

Councillor England thanked Matthew for the email he circulated earlier in the day. He said that Matthew deals with strategies in his day to day job and if the government have given him a job we need to listen to what he suggests.

Cllr England went on to pick out a few highlights from the report; it states that it is usual for a strategy to explain how the overarching aim will be achieved through breaking it down into a number of smaller objectives. It identifies three objectives which come late in the strategy, down in Section 4 and stated his view that none of them are specifically measurable or specific; in Matthew Bullard's words, would 'joe public' know what the delivery of these would look like. The Cllr reiterated his view that the objectives are meaningless.

Cllr England referred to Section 5 of the strategy and the four further commitments or objectives set out and expressed his view that they are no reference to the preceding three in the overarching aim and that these would also all fail the 'joe public test'.

Cllr England expressed his view that he regards Matthew as a credible aid to the committee and his view that he the committee should listen to him.

The Chairman stated that Matthew Bullard is here today as a resident of Dacorum.

Cllr England responded that he is aware that Matthew is here in a personal capacity.

Councillor Imarni thanked Matthew and reserved her comments until Committee has examined the other aspects of the strategy and bring them all together, stating that otherwise she believed there might be a significant amount of duplication and some level of confusion. She then assured Matt that she was not dismissing his views.

Steve Day said the below on item 9;

My name is Steve Day. I am speaking tonight as the founder of the (Facebook group) "Leisure Facilities are Not for Profit", although for transparency I am a trustee of Dacorum Sport Trust, although I am not speaking in that capacity tonight. I would like to say that I feel that the cart has been put before the horse and I would like to be able to respond to the things that you good people are going to say, but nevertheless I will carry on.

With regard the track; don't do it, the public have spoken.

Steve Day said the below on item 8;

With regard the strategy; no grant giving body is going to give you money based on that. It is not fit for purpose, get the experts to do it.

And here comes the question; clearly there is a huge gap between the community and the council looking at the track relocation and the sports strategy, plus previous sport issues. I've witnessed that the council refuses to respond to reasonable requests for information, from both public and Councillors, uses freedom of information and GDPR to delay and avoid answering legitimate questions, uses commercial and confidentiality without proper reference to public interest, doesn't give councillors the full story, doesn't have the industry experience to develop or manage a sports strategy, moves responsibility around when they're challenged, doesn't provide balanced reports preventing councillors from making proper decisions, and defames individuals and doesn't give the right to reply. But the thing that gets me is the icing of the cake; we put in a petition with 8,872 people and it was rejected because of a technicality so in my view this Committee is there to do the checks and balances, and to ensure that these things don't happen, so I urge this committee to debate this and take it to full council. This will ensure that the people who voted for them see the officers and cabinet are being held to account. I asked to respond to the debate later but I was denied that opportunity so I guess that's my time up. Thank you.

The Chairman thanked Steve Day for his comments and for keeping to time. The Chairman stated that there were no specific question in the presentation, rather comments about the people doing the report. He therefore asked the speaker to return to his seat and confirmed that the Committee will debate the item after the officers have presented their paper.

Cllr Imarni referred to the December and January meetings and pointed out that anyone who was at those meetings would realise that this committee did quite robust scrutiny of the Sports Strategy. Cllr Imarni expressed her view that it is wrong to say this particular committee is not scrutinising properly; the committee was here until 1am on 10th January debating issues around proposed changes in the sports leisure tender and similarly a couple of months ago when the strategy came up originally, a number of committee members were quite vocal about the inadequacies and hence as a committee, it was asked for it to be revised; that is why the strategy is being reviewed here tonight.

Mandi Tattershall asked the below question on item 8;

Following the debacle surrounding the leisure contract, it seems to me that public assets and money are again being misused, this time under the guise of having to build houses and pocketing the difference. This is clearly a flawed proposal that takes money out of sports services and leaves the facilities in a worst case scenario. If it proceeds, I and many of the people who replied to the consultation will be appalled that, yet again, the cabinet has ignored massive public participation and opposition. Can I ask the scrutiny committee to get a clear and resounding no to the track proposal and put in place stringent mechanisms to avoid the cabinet putting money way ahead of the community who elected them? Thank you.

The Chairman thanked Mandi and confirmed that the item will be discussed after Officers have presented the report.

Claire Hobson asked the below question on item 9;

I did debate long and hard about whether I would actually bother turning up because I really don't think that the Cabinet and the Council, I take Councillor Imarni's comments, I include those and take them into account, but she is the minority I think of Councillors that have demonstrated that they are listening to citizens, but I do feel very strongly about this so I did come. I have come here in the capacity of someone who has been involved in grassroots cricket for over ten years as a coach, player, parent and umpire. My comment on the strategy is following on from the others I think, we've lost the best bit of the first version, which were the pictures, I think that's a real shame and I would just follow with everybody else, it's a very flimsy document, its very motherhood and apple pie, there's no real substance, and definitely no evidence. It is not clear what evidence the council has used in drafting it in terms of the reasons why things need to change and why things are a priority and others aren't, again it comes with no sort of business case with money attached to it. So my

question on the strategy is, what's been involvement of local clubs, so cricket is one example, but many others including Dacorum and Tring Athletics Club?

This is a real missed opportunity to co-create a document with local sports clubs and local residents. I think it would be fantastic if you would put this version back in the bin and open up an open debate where you design something and actually consult on it to actually do some serious co-creation, I think you would win back a lot of trust from citizens.

Claire Hobson asked the below question on item 8;

This is this is linked to the strategy, I know it's not the same agenda item, but what has been the view of Dacorum and Tring Athletics Club on the removal of the track, be very interesting to know that?

The Chairman thanked Claire for her presentation and for keeping to time and advised that the committee would come back to the questions later in the meeting when Officers have presented their report.

Sylvia Fitzwilliam asked the following of item 8;

I'm here on behalf of Dacorum and Tring Athletics club. In 1988 the minutes of the meeting between Dacorum Borough Council and Dacorum and Tring Athletics club regarding the planning of Jarman field track, it was noted that the Council's aim was to convey the pre-hold to a national, charitable body that would ensure that its market value was set as nil, and that it would continue for all time to be available for the public use as an athletic track. The land had been given to the Council by Alderman Jarman specifically for that purpose.

I have three questions:

- 1) Why is there a need to move the track?*
- 2) Has the council considered consulting England Athletics (our governing body) for their best practice for track ployout?*
- 3) Have Dacorum schools been approached on the whole issue? Because Dacorum Athletic Club and Dacorum schools are the major users of the track.*

Dacorum Athletics club has 500 members and growing. The Cupid Green site is completely unsuitable for parking, I know parking is a big issue everywhere and it is a big issue here. Parking is the main problem, but also the track layout as it has been proposed is not suitable because it doesn't take account of the actual events that

take place and the number of events that take place and the number of people involved, so I think consultation with the athletic club and schools is necessary.

The Chairman thanked Sylvia for her presentation and adhering to the time limit and asking clear and concise questions, advising that the item will be discussed later in the meeting.

The Chairman then moved the meeting to debate of Item 9 of the agenda – Sports Strategy Update, Physical Activity & Sports Strategy Update, please see minute OS/131/18.

Denise said about item 8;

The most important thing here is the loss of a well-used local park. I use the park 3 times a day to walk my dog and it is the only green space to serve Cupid Green, Woodhall Farm, Hunters Oak, Swallow Fields and the new estate next to Hunters Oak, and when St Albans build all the hundreds of extra houses Cupid Green playing fields will be their nearest green space too. This park is too small to become the athletics track.

You can see from the plans that it has been shoehorned into the site. Some of the houses bordering the park will be cheek-by-jowl with the track. There is insufficient parking the road into the park is too narrow to take coaches and will put more pressure onto the local area on event days. The surrounding estates don't have the extra capacity for extra parking. Many football games are played in the park, which will be lost if the track is squeezed onto the site. Leave the track where it is. The athletics club don't want to move there, they have a perfect set up where it is, they have hundreds of parking spaces and plenty of facilities surrounding it.

Also, the local council have not notified residents at all. I've only found out through social media. The many people I have spoken to are very upset about losing this lovely little park there are other much larger green spaces which would be much more suitable where parking and amenities could be built. On event days the noise and light pollution will be heard by a huge number of people in a surrounding residential area. Leave this park alone.

The Chairman thanked Denise.

Howard Russell asked the below questions on item 8;

Do the council agree that it will be devastating for the Cupid Green residents in the happy, quiet land that will be lost if this track is relocated there?

Faced with an overwhelming rejection of this proposal, will the council ignore this response and progress with the project anyway? And if they do, will they return the field back as they found it if the athletics club move to a more amenable Council in St Albans. Does the committee agree that if the vote is made by the residents now then this project will be cancelled? If the main reason for relocating the track is to make way for another development, what is this other development and what is the main benefit perceived by the council that justifies the relocation? Does the council agree that the net benefit for sport and youngsters would be negative if the track was relocated because schools in the immediate vicinity of the existing track are more appropriate for the club? You would be depriving Bennett's End of their existing facility and taking away football from Cupid Green. If the project is approved to progress after this meeting, do the residents still have the opportunity to protest against the development and is there a requirement for the council to include such protest in their decision making? How will the council gain or lose in actual financial terms if the track is relocated- or if it is not? We may ask for this under freedom of information.

Why does the council plan to directly contact residents after the solution to progress the project when the ability of the residents to object would be seriously compromised and the project already decided?

Why did the council not inform the residents by unsolicited direct mail, or lamp post notices, rather than obscure solicited online methods? Given the precedence already set by other recent consultations and the ease at which they could have respectively treated the residents. Can you also confirm that the council received 60 additional letters accepted by, Councillor Bhinder, were included in this count?

The Chairman thanked the speaker and moved the meeting to debate of Item 8 of the agenda – Sports Strategy Update – Relocation of the Athletics Track, please see minute 237.

Item 6 speakers

Sandy Palmer addressed the Chair and advised that she did ask to speak on this item but the request was rejected as it was submitted late. The Chair agreed to allow 1 minute.

Sandy Palmer said the following in regards to Item 6;

It's noted from the reports that target set for DENS will be revised downward to ensure that they are more realistic. It's acknowledged that DENS deal with some very vulnerable people, but this service is operating in a failing system on which it relies. Mental health services, drug and alcohol services and, of course, access to social housing, have all been squeezed under the austerity agenda. The cuts in all of these budgets, in particular Public Health, are impacting on DENS' ability to support their clients in turning their life around. I ask of this committee to protest and make our residents aware of the impact of this system failure on services and on our homeless and DENS in particular as the subject of tonight's meeting.

Mandi Tattershall asked the following in regards to Item 6;

I've also read the reports of the Elms Continual Improvement review September 2018 and I noted there was a significant increase in the 18-25 year olds; I think it went from about 2% to about 25%. This cohort is involved in low-level drug use, which quite often leads to eviction on the grounds of ASB. My question is, what are your plans for dealing with this young cohort other than eviction, as surely this is just sending these young people back into the streets and through the revolving door?

The Chairman thanked the speakers and confirmed the questions will be considered after the officers have presented their report.

The Chairman moved the meeting to Item 6 of Item 8 of the agenda – Elms Contract Performance Report, please see minute OS/128/18.

234 **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

None

235 **ELMS CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REPORT**

N Beresford briefly covered the contents of the report. She explained that there are no major non-conformities. She stated that they work closely with DENS. The contract and Elms management provide 44 units of vital accommodation of homeless clients within the district.

She stated that a consultation exercise is due to be undertaken with DENs residents within the next few months. In regards to the further recommendations made as part of the audit undertaken, one of the questions raised was in relation to the revision downwards of the targets set. One of these targets will be reviewed in the near future, that being the percentage of satisfactory move-on. The target is considered

overly ambitious- it has been decided that the rate is unachievable. The further recommendations as covered by audit will be built into the final year of performance review to comprise of full options appraisal of performance of the contract by a project team spreading across a number of services from the Council, which will form the basis of a robust tender document for re-tender for next phase of contract.

N Beresford went on to address the speakers question; commenting that she hoped the above covered the question relating to revision of targets.

She continued that in relation to the second point raised by Mandi's question; the council have noted the significant increase in 18-25 year olds being admitted into DENS and also into our own council housing through the Housing register, noting there are also higher numbers of care leavers coming into the system. They have identified many causes, including those that Mandi mentioned and confirmed that mental health is a specific are of concern to the Council. She mentioned an active Homeless Forum that meets on a quarterly basis; the next meeting being 31st October. These issues are actively discussed as part of the forum in conjunction with local services; community mental health team, hospital discharge board locally to improve outcomes for that client route and others across the district. The council has considered adopting the "housing first" project as a specific project to provide targeted elements of support and housing for a client group such as this, that are experiencing mental health and dual diagnosis issues (e.g. drug abuse and mental health). The report will be presented to the Homeless Forum in the New Year, with the focus being on how best to approach that target group.

N Beresford also referred to work that is taking place across Hertfordshire; we are working in collaboration with the 9 other districts across Hertfordshire as there are a range of issues that are prevalent across all Boroughs and a rise in homelessness in this client group is most definitely increasing. Also working closely with Police and an ex-offenders rehabilitation programme that is being led by the Police with the support of Local Authority districts and additional organisations. Working to improve outcomes for range of client groups. Part of that is working closely with Hertfordshire County Council to improve the success rate "moving on" of young people coming out of care; we have a dedicated in-house Tenancy Sustainment Team, they have a range of officers with diverse skills.

Councillor Fethney referred to the local mental health teams and agreed their work is terrific, but referred to the use of national statistics and how that might be of use in looking at this; specifically from Public Health.

N Beresford responded that the Council is working with a number of key agencies, confirming there has been engagement with Public Health.

Councillor Bassadone commented that this was a very interesting report which provided a lot of information and facts that perhaps had not been seen or thought about before.

Councillor England referred to the preparation for the re-tender and asked; will you weight the previous year's performance as well as the actual tender process, will both elements for a part of moving forward?

N Beresford responded that the intention is to review what the demands are for that service; it is a growing demand. The building runs a waiting list at all times. DENS have delivered the contract positively; there has been no major non-conformities, however there are a number of aspirations internally to achieve going forward, including street outreach.

Councillor Imarni complimented Natasha's work and mentioned that the committee appreciated the way DENS project is run by her team.

The Chairman offered some feedback on the report; requesting a report 'good neighbours' ie they do not have an issue with the neighbours with the hostel being there, just a statement to say that we look after our neighbours and any concerns are addressed.

236 DIRECT OFFER LIST UPDATE

N Beresford advised that the direct offer process is one of the ways that we look to allocate properties to a range of specific households. It is hoped that the report will give greater insight into that. This works closely alongside choice based lettings process and is managed manually by officers and requires a significant amount of

officer input in relation to management of this process. She added that hopefully you will see that it is a robust process that covers all areas. She opened to questions.

The chairman stated that he finds the report to be good and he understands the purpose of it. His question was, what are the checks and balances to make sure that, when people come through it in an audit, there is no issue of somebody falsely becoming homeless or somebody favouring somebody?

N Beresford responded that in relation to the report you can see that there a range of household types that are managed via direct offer and each offer of accommodation is made in priority order of those applicants who are added to the direct offer list. She explained that she works closely with departments such as Property and Place and Occupational Health in order to identify candidates most in need. She then assured the committee that all allocations of properties are signed and counter-signed by relevant management staff. In the case of special requirements for households, these are found to the best of the team's abilities and, in cases, allocations with special requirements are signed by the director of housing.

The chairman considered this to be re-assuring.

Councillor England asked, what does EPD mean? N Beresford confirmed Elderly Persons Dwelling.

Councillor England then referred to point 3; the applicants who have got lost on the list. Asking; is this because they didn't contact us? Can we assume that no one has been left badly in the lurch?

N Beresford explained that some households will wait significantly longer than others, which can particularly affect those waiting for adapted accommodation. She explained that much of the council's accommodation does not lend itself well to being adapted and unfortunately there are a range of households who have very specific needs. Alongside that, there are also some households with specific adapted need but who can also only live within a village location; this does mean that some households have significant waits.

N Beresford reassured the Councillor that the service are working very hard to meet those needs clarified that none of those people on the list are on it because they have been forgotten.

The committee agreed that the service are doing a very good job.

237 **SPORTS STRATEGY UPDATE - RELOCATION OF THE ATHLETICS TRACK**

Councillor Harden referred to consultation and commented that there appears to be a slight misapprehension that this is a done planning application and clarified this is not; so this was not a targeted consultation but a Borough wide one, adding that the Council carries out consultation on various issues. In this case it is a consultation on the relocation of the athletics track to the identified site. There is no planning application, if this was to go through as a Council decision it would still have to go through the planning process and all the criteria that applies.

M Rawdon introduced the report, intended to inform members of the feedback from the recent athletics track consultation. It was made known that the survey was advertised in Digital Digest to a consultation panel of over 1,000 people, through a press release and through our social media channels. There was a return of 548 responses. Of this, 55.3% stated that they did not support the re-location; 44.7% stated that they would.

M Rawdon suggested that it was noted that some of those who stated that they would support it would only do so once further consultation had taken place.

M Rawdon went on to advise that of those who responded, 59.3% stated that they had previously used the track at Jarmans Park. Of this figure, 63.9% said they were unlikely to use it if moved to Cupid Green. 22.3% said they were likely to use it; the remainder were unsure. Almost 17% stated that they would prefer to see the current track invested in and refurbished. The open comments in the literal section of the survey can be found in appendix 1, where samples of both positive of negative comments can be found.

Councillor England commented that committee have “heard powerfully” from the speakers and the public again. His view is the message of this consultation is a resounding ‘don’t do this’.

The project was compared to the change of ownership of the local Sportspace; in that neither had a “lack of strategy”. The issue of transparency arose once again in reference to Councillor Pringle’s former point. The Councillor disagreed that feedback was nearly 50/50 but instead suggested it was 7:1 against and referenced 129 people having specifically said in consultation that they wanted to keep the track at Jarmans.

Councillor England proposed to move a motion that this proposal be discontinued and that a feasibility study be carried out for making the best use of Jarman Park.

Councillor Fethney offered his view that the motion should move to vote.

The Chairman advised that he would like to hear comments from the rest of the committee before moving to vote.

Councillor Pringle added that she would like to re-iterate on the importance of different types of activity for the community. She referred to the importance of informal exercise, many people use instead of formal exercise. She acknowledged the importance of Cupid Green in providing the community with informal exercise such as dog walking and football is just as important as a formal sports running track.

Councillor Imarni asked the Chairman to reiterate, before the vote, why this report is here and the scope of this committee in terms of their voting on this particular subject.

The Chairman, following consultation with J Doyle, confirmed the report front sheet sets out the recommendation of the report; that Members consider the response from the consultation. The Chairman clarified that it is not the role of this committee to make decisions, but to scrutinise and make recommendations/variations to reports. This committee can not to dictate whether a decision gets voted down or not; that decision making authority falls to Cabinet and Full Council.

The Chairman proceeded to read aloud an email received from Councillor Wyatt-Lowe, which went as follows;

Commendable idea to do it using in-house resources. The responses are practically 7:1 against, so I would suggest that the idea is totally dropped. I can see the response of the Dacorum Athletic Club needs to be followed in detail. Item 4, the suggestion of 64% of responders who had previously used the track would not do so if it were moved, seemed compelling; but perhaps this would be compared with other studies where this sort of question has been asked. The responders would have interest in maintaining the status quo, and therefore may not be truthful about their intention.

Councillor Imarni commented that in 2.1 of the conclusions states that there are “challenges and issues identified within the response to this consultation exercise, which the council would need address if the decision was approved to re-locate the athletics track”. She asked that, considering that comment, why was the incomplete strategy being proposed?

Councillor England clarified the motion he is proposing is that the committee recommend that this proposal be discontinued and a feasibility study be carried out on the Jarman Park.

Councillor Pringle suggested her recommendation is that the time and money that would otherwise be spent looking at development at Cupid Green be spent looking how Jarman Park can be developed for the benefit of the community.

Councillor Fethney agreed with Councillor Pringle’s recommendation and added his view that this consultation is flawed.

Councillor Imarni expressed that she does not feel the quality and detail that have been included in any of the sports related reports have not been adequate, and expressed her feeling that it demonstrates;

- A lack of depth in the report
- A lack of correspondence with local sports groups and residents
- No explanation as to the necessity of the moving of the track
- Cupid Green being a poor choice for a new track
- The funding plans being unspecific

- A neglect of the people's will
- No addition of subjects discussed in June's meeting
- As a consequence of these things, there is a general consensus that the report is not ready to be presented to the cabinet.

Councillor Banks expressed her view that the report is good and that there is no issue with the information gathered, adding that the survey accurately reflects the lack of desire among the public for a new track and so the survey has given us the evidence that we need.

Councillor Imarni requested it be noted that she does not want to play party politics with these issues; many member of the committee have given a great deal of time at great personal cost in order to represent constituents and it has had nothing to do with which party each councillor represents.

The Chairman confirmed that this item is already on the Cabinet agenda, it will be considered by them. What can be done by this committee is make a recommendation.

[An audio malfunction occurred and the meeting was disrupted for a few minutes whilst a loud noise omitted from the speakers]

The Chairman restarted the meeting and confirmed the following recommendations to Cabinet;

- 1) That the Cabinet reviews the report and re-looks at all of the consultation responses.
- 2) That they review the financial case and community benefits of relocating the track.
- 3) That they review the suitability of the site.
- 4) That they consider the interpretation of the consultation, finding the accurate statistics and to consider these statistics in reaching their decisions.
- 5) That in due course, the covenant is looked at

Councillor Williams stated that this has been purely a consultation on the re-location of the athletics track to Cupid Green, a first stage consultation to gauge appetite for such a move. He responded to two of the queries that have come up, confirming that there is no covenant on the existing Jarmans Athletics Track site, it is a separate title to the Leisure World site which had a covenant on from the Jarmans family, further confirming that it was not part of the rubbish site and soil checks have revealed it has no underlying contaminations issues.

Councillor Williams went on to advise that, whilst he would not ordinarily do this, he felt it would be appropriate for the benefit of this committee and certainly for the residents here tonight with comments, that he and Councillor Harden have reviewed the consultation and will be making comment to Cabinet next week; it was intentional asking the report to come to this committee with no recommendation because it was the intention for this committee to debate this item without the benefit of any pre-conceived recommendations. He confirmed that when this goes to Cabinet, their recommendation to Cabinet is that the Council does not pursue the relocation of the athletics track.

Councillor Williams reiterated that this was an exercise in judging the appetite for a relocation to Cupid Green; there is a very clear and concise message that is not something the public supports, we recognise that and the project will not proceed.

[There was a short break in the meeting while the public gallery attendees for Items 8 & 9 left the Chamber].

The Chairman thanked Councillor Williams and confirmed that the meeting would move on to agenda item 6 and invite forward the speakers for this item (see item 233 – Public Participation).

238 **SPORTS STRATEGY UPDATE - PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORT STRATEGY UPDATE**

Cllr Harden referred to his earlier comments in response to one of the questions, Members have already seen a draft version of this that came to committee a few months back. Comments were taken on from public consultation and committee to

re-write the draft, which is what is before committee tonight. Cllr Harden handed over to officers to present.

L Roberts introduced herself as Assistant Director People, Performance and Innovation, having recently joined the organisation. Stating that she joined with a lot of experience of developing strategies across services. One of the things that we looked at following feedback given at the previous scrutiny, was how we could make this more focused. Expressing her belief that the way the document is produced does deliver on that. The objectives that are in there are pitched at a high level of strategy, where more detailed smart objectives would form part of an action plan. Adding that the strategy was benchmarked against a number of other sports strategies. The level of detail will be developed as we go through as the process here is to develop the overall strategy and then take forward detailed action plans.

L Roberts introduced the report and explained how the strategy was revised. She was happy to take questions on the report. Linda also included that the current strategy is purely a proposal. She stated that the purpose of the scrutiny is to receive comments on that; it is then due to go to cabinet for further review.

L Roberts also set out the governance and performance monitoring plans. The report does not set out budget as this will form part of the budget process for 2019/20 once the detailed action plan has been devised.

L Roberts invited questions.

The Chairman asked for clarification on the feedback required.

L Roberts advised, for clarity, that this is the proposed strategy which is here at scrutiny to receive comments it is then due to go to Cabinet for further review. When reach detail about what we do and how we do it, they will be in action plans as opposed to being detailed in the strategy.

Cllr England asked; how is it possible for the public to understand what the strategy of the Council is for sports and activity when there is no scoping to this, no clear financial plan.

L Roberts responded that the strategy is there to determine the outcomes that the Council is seeking to achieve. The budget is not yet set to develop specific action plans, that is the cycle. The strategy is there at the moment to show what we want the outcomes to achieve. She also assured that there has been consultation with local clubs and national bodies in the creation of the strategy. The specifics cannot be discussed until they have acquired formal approval to proceed with this strategy.

Cllr Imarni referred to the meeting in June where this was discussed, which was before L Roberts having joined the organisation, suggesting that L Roberts go over the minutes of the meeting as there were very specific things that the committee requested.

Cllr Imarni then raised the points requested to be included as unable to identify them in the current strategy;

- Specific direction of the strategy, the priorities for spending with any moneys that came in, a figure of exactly how much that would be and what percentage of additional engagement in sport we would get, adding that there is a little bit about that but nothing to say this is the pot of money we have and this is the priority for spending.
- Sports England and the FA funding as being key sums of money to be attracted into the Borough; committee specifically stated there was nothing in the draft that was seen in June that would show enabling access to this. Cllr Imarni stated that she is not able to find this information in the new strategy that is being presented tonight.
- Target groups in the original draft strategy, it was questioned that these did not reflect the makeup of Dacorum, were expecting to get something back that had more around that.

Cllr Imarni advised that her background is strategy, for the last 20 years, expressing her understanding that there are some levels of detail that are not appropriate for a starting point strategy. Cllr Imarni still challenged that this strategy, without disrespect for officers that have worked on it, but it is not robust enough to be able to sign off that committee know exactly what priorities are and what will be done etc.

Cllr Harden reminded Members that he organised the Dacorum Get Set Go budget, so prior to any strategy existing, what we had was a Sports Policy in place. The Council contributed £45k into a pot that we then went and gave a presentation to Sport England that released a further £300k. We delivered a project over 3 years, 27 different activities, which helped 3,000 residents get involved with sport. The idea of putting together a strategy to encourage Members to see where funding from that strategy is coming from and then being able to take that to National bodies is something that I am very keen on doing again.

Councillor Fethney observed that one thing he could not see in any of the documents is proposed outcome. He explained that, before any judgement is made, the members must be able to see the proposed outcome. He asked, "Do we know what our outcomes are?"

L Roberts referred to Section 6 of the strategy titled Outcomes.

Cllr England supported the made by Cllr Imarni, referring to the minutes of the June meeting, which he explained show that it was the assessment of his, and others, that there was no substance, no budget and no ownership. Since that meeting, he has acknowledged that the issue of ownership has been addressed with a forward to the document from Cllr Harden, although Cllr England stated he believes this should be a forward from Cllr Collins because the responsibility for the leisure contract, which is going to be the main vehicle by which any development happens in Borough will be through that contract. Cllr England added his view that the ownership point was the least important issue to address.

Cllr England reiterated that what is wants is substance to the report. He referred to the 1st draft, which was 2,500 words and a number of nice pictures, making 12 pages. Further observing this revised report is only 5 ½ pages and he is not happy with it.

He then discussed the two points that were not addressed in the current strategy, being the lack of substance or specifics on budget. He called the document random and unstructured. He claimed he found no direct reference to feedback from residents quoted in the strategy.

Cllr England expressed his dissatisfaction that feedback from consultation has not been added into the document, explaining that officers had given him assurance this would happen. Cllr England referred to pages of consultation responses from residents he has seen that he would have expected to have seen in the strategy.

Cllr England expressed that the only figures in the report are those that say there will be 2,000 more physically active Dacorum residents and a 3% increase in membership number, commented that on the face of it that sounds quite good, but pointed out that the population of the Borough has grown by 1% a year and is likely to increase, therefore it is his interpretation that the objective can be achieved just by building homes and more people coming to live here.

L Roberts confirmed that she would re-visit the minutes of the June meeting.

Councillor Pringle commented on the “overwhelming message” she perceived from the speakers of the meeting; that being disappointment at the “general lack of accountability and consultation with them (the public)”. She questioned whether there was a recognition of this dissatisfaction from the public.

Councillor Bassadone remarked on three “key issues” on page 39, specifically the last paragraph about how DBC will achieve the vision and measure success of the outcomes, which it states will be developed in more detail in subsequent supporting annual action plans. Asking; how long is that going to take? She then asked where these plans will go and who will see them.

M Rawdon responded that it is covered in the report in that the plan is to come back to scrutiny on a 6 month basis to provide an update on the action plan and any progress.

The Chairman referred to the view of everybody, including the public, and clarified that the purpose of the report is to seek feedback from the committee on the strategy and that the recommendation of the report that Members note the report and provide feedback on the strategy and asked Councillor Harden to clarify that this is not the final draft?

Councillor Harden responded that the report is due to go to Cabinet next week and so it has come to committee today to hear Members feedback on what they would like to be included on that, to be reported to Cabinet.

Councillor reiterated her earlier point, that the minutes of the June meeting which contains a list of things that were specifically requested that are not in this document, therefore she does not believe it should have come back tonight and she challenged that for that reason, it should not be going to Cabinet.

Councillor England proposed to move a motion that the report does not go to cabinet and that it is rejected and returned for a “complete re-write”.

The Chairman requested a seconder for Councillor England’s motion. Both Councillor Pringle and Councillor Fethney seconded. The chairman then opened the motion for discussion with the committee before it could be voted on. He encouraged councillors to pass any comments that they had.

Councillor Imarni emphasised on her earlier points that the strategy has not moved forward from June and as such she does not believe the document is ready to move forward to Cabinet.

A vote on the motion to prevent the document going to cabinet was passed. 5 councillors voted in favour. 5 voted against.

The Chairman announced that the final decision would then fall upon him. Before making his casting vote, he clarified that committee has discussed the strategy and its development and that the main issues with the strategy raised were that more work needs to be done and the budget needs to be set.

The Chairman expressed his view, as a Councillor, that we have been on this policy for quite some time and it is important that it does move forward, but with the proviso that the officers look at the meeting minutes of the June meeting before we review it again in 6 months’ time.

The chairman exercised his right to a casting vote and recommended that the report go to the cabinet and that the committee review its developments 6 months later.

Councillor England addressed the Chair and challenged the principal of a casting vote when it is irredeemable matter and that the safest course of action is to send the report back to be written properly before it goes to Cabinet.

The Chairman consulted with J Doyle and clarified that a casting vote is appropriate and that will come with a recommendation that the minutes of the June meeting are considered alongside the strategy going to Cabinet next week and are appended to the report.

The Chairman confirmed his casting vote that the strategy goes to Cabinet.

[Unrest from the public gallery]

Councillor Williams addressed the Chairman, confirming that according to the constitution he has exercised his right to have the casting vote and decide the matter will go to Cabinet next week. In view of the comments of the committee and the concerns about the lack of reference to the action points of the June meeting, Councillor Williams gave his assurance to committee that he would ask officers to look at those issues ahead of the Cabinet meeting so that they can have an understanding of what is expected to be missing and an assurance that the issues the committee are not content with are reflected in the Cabinet's recommendation.

Councillor Williams added that the budget cannot be in the strategy because such is the nature of financing that we do not know what our budget will be in 2 years' time. The purpose of having the strategy is to have policies and aspirations in place.

Councillor Pringle asked that it be noted in the minutes that there is "complete public dissent" to this decision in this room and reiterated the question she raised earlier, which is it recognised that there is considerable public disquiet about the entire methodology of decision making on this Council and asked for comments on how this could be avoided in the future.

It was raised as a the point of order, the Chairman voted in the initial vote and then placed a casting vote, which would appear the Chairman has had two votes. The question was asked, is it not the case that the Chairman does not vote until there is a need for a vote to be decided and then he places his casting vote.

The Chairman confirmed that the casting vote was placed in accordance with the rules.

[Shouting out and unrest from the public gallery]

The Chairman advised the agenda would be moved on to the next agenda item, Item 8.

[There was a period of disruption and slow clapping from the public gallery causing a delay proceedings]

The Chairman moved back to the speakers on Item 8 (see item OS/126/18 – Public Participation).

The Meeting ended at 9.50 pm