

Please ask for:

Lisa Young

Direct dial:

(023) 9254 5651

Fax:

(023) 9254 5587

E-mail:

lisa.young@gosport.gov.uk

14 June 2011

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Economic Development Board
DATE: 22 June 2011
TIME: 6.00pm
PLACE: Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Lisa Young

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Mayor (Councillor Carter CR) (ex officio)
Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board
(Councillor Hook) (ex-officio)
Councillor Lane (Chairman)
Councillor Langdon (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Allen	Councillor Mrs Hook
Councillor Chegwyn	Councillor Kimber
Councillor Edgar	Councillor Ronayne
Councillor Mrs Forder	Councillor Mrs Searle

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

(To be read from the Chair if members of the public are present)

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the room immediately. Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

NOTE:

- i. Councillors are requested to note that, if any Councillor who is not a Member of the Board wishes to speak at the Board meeting, then the Borough Solicitor is required to receive not less than 24 hours prior notice in writing or electronically and such notice shall indicate the agenda item or items on which the member wishes to speak.
- ii. Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

AGENDA

RECOMMENDED
MINUTE
FORMAT

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. MINUTES MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB –BOARD 11 JANUARY 2011 AND THE MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD HELD ON 19 MAY 2011.
4. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Monday, 20 June 2011. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Monday, 20 June 2011).

6. PARTNERSHIP FOR URBAN SOUTH HAMPSHIRE (PUSH):
REVISION TO CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
To seek approval to revise the constitutional arrangements relating to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). These changes have already been considered by the PUSH Joint Committee and have been recommended for approval by the Constituent Authorities.

Part II
Contact
Officer:
Ian Lycett
Ext. 5201

7. ENTERPRISE AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT
To brief Members on the changes affecting the provision of Enterprise and Small Business Support in Gosport, and to seek approval for a programme of support for 2011/12.

Part II
Contact
Officer:

Economic Development Board
22 June 2011

Lynda Dine
Ext. 5231

8. **GOSPORT PROPOSITION**
To brief Members on the preparation and purpose of the document 'Gosport: An Opportunity 2011-2026, Business Growth and Community Regeneration' and seek approval for its use in accordance with the recommendations in the report.
9. **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT HOLBROOK – CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTORS**
Report to Follow
10. **ANY OTHER ITEMS**
-which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.
11. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**
To consider the following motion:

Part II
Contact
Officer:
Lynda Dine
Ext. 5231

Part II
Contact
Officer:
Linda
Edwards
Ext. 5401

That in relation to the following item the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

**PART B ITEM
FOLLOWING THE EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Item No.	Item	Paragraph no.3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act	
12.	PEPPERS, COMPASS POINT, WALPOLE PARK	Paragraph 3 The report contains financial data which is identified as sensitive material.	PART II Contact Officer Mark Pam Ext 5563

AGENDA ITEM NO 7

Board/Committee:	Economic Development Board
Date of Meeting:	22nd June 2011
Title:	Enterprise & Small Business Support
Author:	Head of Economic Prosperity, Tourism & Culture
Status:	For Decision

Purpose

To brief Members on the changes affecting the provision of Enterprise and Small Business Support in Gosport, and to seek approval for a programme of support for 2011/12.

Recommendation

That Members' approve the proposed programme of Enterprise and Small Business Support for 2011/12, as detailed at Section 3 of this report.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Over the last few years there have been a number of sources of public support for those looking to enter self-employment and grow a business. The most significant of these has been the Business Link service which has worked alongside other agencies to provide online, telephone and face-to-face advice. At its peak the Business Link service had three advisers working in Gosport and ran two regular business advice clinics.
- 1.2 At the same time the Council has funded a complementary advice service, provided by Enterprise First, which is tailored to meet customer needs. This compares with the more generic support provided by Business Link and has been funded by a Council grant of £3,500 per annum. Councillor Edgar represents the Council's interests as part of the governance structure for this organisation, which is funded by a mix of public-private partners and delivers services across Hampshire, Surrey and Kent. (Further information on the Enterprise First service is included at Appendix A to this report.)
- 1.3 Working with both these agencies, and with support from the private sector, Economic Prosperity staff have facilitated networking and training sessions particularly aimed at supporting start-up and small businesses.

These have been valued for the opportunities they present for like-minded businesses to meet in Gosport and establish mutually beneficial links, whilst also addressing identified training needs.

- 1.4 Collectively, these initiatives have provided a wide range of support and helped to foster business engagement and growth. This has been particularly important as the economy recovers from recession.

2.0 CHANGES IMPACTING ON BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE SUPPORT

- 2.1 Over the last twelve months the Business Link service has been scaled down, as cuts to public funding are implemented. Face-to-face advice is now only available for 'high-growth' companies, with the majority of support provided via the Business Link website or occasional workshops.
- 2.2 The decline in Business Link provision, coupled with an increasing number of people looking to start a new business as a result of redundancy, has seen a growth in demand for the services of Enterprise First. This ensures local residents continue to receive face-to-face advice and support during start-up and the early years of trading.
- 2.3 Whilst demand from businesses for networking, peer support and low-cost training sessions remains¹, competing pressures on staff time mean that a new approach to is required to ensure that the Council can provide cost effective and targeted services that meet the business needs of small and medium-sized businesses in Gosport.

3.0 PROPOSED ENTERPRISE & SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT 2011/12

- 3.1 In the light of the above, and recognising the role that this support provides in addressing the Council's priorities of job creation and business growth, the following programme of Enterprise & Small Business support is proposed for 2011/12.
- 3.2 In addition to the continuation of the Enterprise First service, the proposals incorporate a joint initiative (working with the Libraries Service and utilising funding from Hampshire Action Team) to extend and improve the resources available for businesses within the Discovery Centre.
- 3.3 The proposals also take advantage of an opportunity to work in partnership with Eastleigh Borough Council and utilise the expertise and support available through their Southern Entrepreneurs programme. This programme, which has its origins in a European Social Fund project, provides networking, peer support and training. Initially being made

¹ Gosport Employer Skills Research (March 2010) and Gosport Business Survey (December 2010)

available to other District Councils in south Hampshire, this programme would replace and enhance the business support services currently facilitated by the Council's Economic Prosperity team. It would not, however, replace the team's engagement and communication mechanisms such as the Business Forum, website, visits and newsletter. (Further information on the Southern Entrepreneurs programme is attached to this report at Appendix A.)

Provider	Provision
Enterprise First	1hr face-to-face advice sessions 2 hr Business seminar/advice session (Ask the Expert at Business & Employment Fair)
Southern Entrepreneurs	8 Workshops (organisation, tutors, staffing) 5 Networking Events Membership and peer-to-peer support
Libraries Service	Online and hard copy resources: New online and hard copy resources, including business databases, templates and toolkits, books and periodicals Joint HCC/GBC DL colour leaflet promoting all resources, services and information points for start-up and growing businesses

- 3.4 The total cost of providing the above service for one year is £6,500 (excluding the cost of the HAT-funded libraries provision). This includes a grant of £3,500 to Enterprise First and a payment of £3,000 to Southern Entrepreneurs. Both arrangements will be subject to a Service Level Agreement and utilise funds allocated for enterprise and business support in the Economic Initiatives budget.
- 3.5 Anticipated outcomes from the Council-funded elements of this proposal for 2011/12 include:
- 50 x 1:1 advice sessions
 - 130 self-employed or small business managers trained
 - 140 individuals benefiting from networking opportunities
 - 45 Gosport businesses benefiting from peer-to-peer support
- 3.6 There is flexibility in the number of face-to-face sessions that can be provided by Enterprise First, with anticipated outcomes based on trends over the last twelve months. Similarly, there is flexibility over the numbers that can be accommodated at agreed networking and training events

provided by Southern Entrepreneurs. If there is demand for additional events to be organised, then these would incur an additional cost.

- 3.7 The availability of online and hard copy resources in the Discovery Centre, together with the production and distribution of a promotional leaflet will benefit new or repeat users. An Enterprise zone will be piloted in the Discovery Centre to coincide with the launch of the new resources and all provision will be promoted via the Council's website, key locations and at the Business & Employment fair being planned for the autumn.

4.0 Resource Implications

- 4.1 The total cost of providing the Council elements of above service for one year is £6,500. This includes a grant of £3,500 to Enterprise First and a payment of £3,000 to Southern Entrepreneurs. Both arrangements will be subject to a Service Level Agreement and utilise funds allocated for this purpose in the 2011/12 Economic Initiatives budget.
- 4.2 This partnership approach to delivering Enterprise and Small Business support will free up staff time within the Economic Prosperity, Tourism & Culture team and enable other key priorities, including employment, skills and business investment to benefit.

5.0 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 There is evidence of the need and benefit of Enterprise and Small Business support in Gosport. Investment in the Business Link service has diminished and this has significantly reduced the level and nature of support available in the Borough.
- 5.2 Provision will be clearly branded as a Gosport Borough Council service, helping to ensure awareness of the Council's continuing commitment to delivering start-up and small business support.
- 5.3 The proposals will be subject to Service Level Agreements and quarterly monitoring will allow for regular review and evaluation during 2011/12.
- 5.4 Opportunities to attract partnership and private sector funding to support future service delivery will continue to be sought, including through existing partnership arrangements with PUSH, Hampshire County Council and the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership.

Financial Services Comments:	None for the purposes of this Report
Legal Services Comments:	None for the purposes of this Report
Service Improvement Plan	Contributes to EPT&C/027 & 048

Implications:	
Corporate Plan:	Contributes to Prosperity: Maximising employment opportunities; Attracting investment to Gosport's economy; Improving social inclusion
Risk Assessment:	See Paragraph 5.0 of this report
Background Papers:	N/a
Appendices/Enclosures:	Appendix A: Overview of Partner Provision
Report Author/Lead Officer:	Lynda Dine

OVERVIEW OF PARTNER PROVISION

Enterprise First

Established in 1981, Enterprise First is a member of the National Federation of Enterprise Agencies. A not-for-profit company, supported by sponsorship from the public and private sectors, the organisation covers the areas of Hampshire, Surrey and Kent.

Enterprise First offers free or low cost support to those looking to start-up or grow a new business. A particular strength of their delivery is the confidential and independent advice provided by a team of experienced and accredited business advisers, who work with local authorities and other partners to deliver this support in local communities.

Other services, include a workshop programme which includes a free introductory workshop on starting a business (funded by Barclays Bank). A programme of specialist workshops on specific business needs, ie book-keeping is also available at a fee of £35; payable by the individual or business.

Gosport Borough Council has provided a grant of £3,500 to Enterprise First for a number of years. This has ensured that intensive one-to-one support is available, tailored to the needs of individuals and small businesses. The training programme tends to be delivered at locations outside the Borough and participation in these opportunities from Gosport businesses is minimal.

Southern Entrepreneurs

Southern Entrepreneurs offers a bespoke support service to small enterprises to help them grow and prosper. The service, run by Eastleigh Borough Council since 2004, has almost 700 member businesses and has grown by 216% over the last 3 years. This growth has come about mainly through word of mouth and reputation – no direct advertising has ever taken place. It has a strong reputation as a service which delivers what businesses want at a time, place and cost right for them.

The focus of Southern Entrepreneurs provision is networking, training and peer-to-peer support. Membership of the Southern Entrepreneurs network is free to businesses, as is participation in peer-to-peer support and networking events.

A partnership arrangement with Southern Entrepreneurs will see the service marketed widely within Gosport and ensure that a programme of networking and training events are delivered in the Borough.

Training is arranged based on the needs of members and a charge of £35 levied. Twice yearly approaches are made to members to assess their needs and priorities. Training can also be tailored to the economic climate and agendas of participating local authorities.

Peer-to-peer support between members, including exchange of skills and business, is highly valued by participants. An example of this would be an accountant preparing end of year accounts for a website designer who, instead of paying for the service, designs the accountant a website.

An email service is also provided, notifying clients of opportunities, news and potential business from other clients. There is also a website that provides access to information, links to useful sites and the chance to advertise business opportunities. Southern Entrepreneurs' partners are also provided with a dedicated page on the website for use in promoting their support and further provision for businesses.

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AGENDA ITEM NO 8

Board/Committee:	Economic Development Board
Date of Meeting:	22nd June 2011
Title:	Gosport Proposition
Author:	Head of Economic Prosperity, Tourism & Culture
Status:	For Decision

Purpose

To brief Members on the preparation and purpose of the document 'Gosport: An Opportunity 2011-2026, Business Growth and Community Regeneration' and seek approval for its use in accordance with the recommendations below.

Recommendations

1. That Members' approve the document 'Gosport: An Opportunity 2011-2026, Business Growth and Community Regeneration' and the economic vision contained within it;
2. That Members' approve the document's use as a mechanism for the continued engagement and lobbying of partners in furthering the development of the Gosport economy;
3. That Members' agree that the document form an integral part of a new Economic Strategy for the Borough and endorse the use of the 'Open for Business' strapline.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At a meeting of the Policy & Organisation Board on 15 September 2010, Members' approved the Council's response and support for the PUSH¹ sub-regional Economic Development Strategy. This document and the actions recommended within, now provide the framework for the newly-formed Solent Local Enterprise Partnership and associated economic initiatives. As a committed member of these sub-regional partnerships, the Council ensures that Gosport contributes to, and benefits from, joint working on economic initiatives with other local authorities and partners in south Hampshire.

¹ Partnership for Urban South Hampshire

- 1.2 Whilst sub-regional strategy is important for Gosport, there is value in Gosport having its own plan for the local economy. A robust economic strategy for Gosport is essential to engage partners and ensure that Gosport can effectively influence sub-regional and national policy and investment decisions. A Gosport Economic Strategy should reflect sub-regional priorities and build on associated collaborative initiatives, such as the joint Inward Investment service, but also capture the opportunities and issues which are particular to Gosport.

2.0 Strategy Research and Evidence Base

- 2.1 A number of pieces of research and work have been undertaken to date, both to inform a new Economic Strategy and the preparation of the Gosport Local Development Framework (LDF). This includes the Economic Impact Assessment of the Defence Economy, the Employment and Commuting Study, Hotel Demand and Business surveys, and Skills Research. This joint approach is intended to ensure that planning and economic policy frameworks are aligned.
- 2.2 A number of planning policy documents have now been produced utilising this research, to identify issues and opportunities, establish a baseline, propose guidelines for the development of key sites, and draft policies for employment and skills.
- 2.3 To accompany this policy framework, and ensure that a coordinated and strategic approach is taken to delivering a shared economic vision and strategy for Gosport, a number of informal consultations were undertaken with key public and private sector partners from across the sub-region during 2009/10.
- 2.4 With the support of and participation of PUSH and Hampshire County Council, the consultations were facilitated by consultants DTZ Piedad and took the form of workshops and telephone interviews. The aim of the consultations was to identify the unique advantages and opportunities that Gosport offered to investors and businesses, and which might form the basis of a shared vision.
- 2.5 Following the consultations, DTZ were then charged with drawing all the elements of consultation, research and planning policy together. This document intentionally takes a positive and proactive approach to future economic development in Gosport.

3.0 The Gosport Proposition

- 3.1 A copy of the Gosport Proposition document, called 'Gosport: An Opportunity 2011-2026, Business Growth and Community Regeneration' is attached to this report at Appendix A.
- 3.2 The document sets out an economic vision and integrated delivery framework for the Borough, based on the advantages and opportunities that set Gosport apart. It encompasses key development sites, priority sectors and cross-cutting issues relating to infrastructure, skills and image.
- 3.3 The aims and outcomes are detailed in the document and make clear that working in partnership and adherence to the principle that 'the whole is greater than the sum of the parts' are essential pre-requisites for success.
- 3.4 In recommending the Gosport Proposition to Members, it is proposed that it be approved as a policy document for early use in maintaining the engagement of consultees, influencing partners and conveying a shared economic vision for the Borough.
- 3.5 It is also recommended that the document and in particular, the outcomes, approach and actions contained within it, form an integral part of a new Economic Strategy for the Borough, to come before the Board later this year. It is further proposed that these and other related publications carry the strapline 'Open for Business' to help reinforce the proactive and positive approach being taken to furthering the development of the Borough's economy.

4.0 Resource Implications

- 4.1 The cost of consultancy work undertaken by DTZ on behalf of the Council has been met by external funding awarded under the former Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme.
- 4.2 Implementation of the vision and actions identified in the report will be subject to separate Board reports, budgeting and Member approval as they come forward.

5.0 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 It is essential that the Council works with partners and sets out a clear, shared, economic vision and plan for the Borough. Without this the Council will be limited in its ability to effectively influence all levels of policy and investment, and the risk of ad hoc and potentially conflicting developments will increase.
- 5.2 The consultations undertaken to date, both for this piece of work and the various research and planning documents that underpin it, help to ensure

that the vision and priorities set out are shared and supported by key partners. As an integral part of a new Economic Strategy, there will also be further opportunities for consultation and contributions to the opportunities and approach set out in the document.

- 5.3 As the development sites and initiatives proposed in the document come forward, each will be the subject of their own report and associated risk assessment at that time.

Financial Services Comments:	None for the purposes of this report
Legal Services Comments:	None for the purposes of this report
Service Improvement Plan Implications:	Contributes to EPTC/027, 040 & 041
Corporate Plan:	Contributes to Places (Enhancing Gosport's Unique Character & Heritage; Regenerating the Town Centre & Waterfront); People (Improving Leisure Opportunities & Facilities); Prosperity (Attracting investment to Gosport's economy; Maximising local employment opportunities)
Risk Assessment:	See Paragraph 5.0 of this report
Background Papers:	Report to P&O on PUSH Draft Economic Development Strategy dated 15.9.2010
Appendices/Enclosures:	Appendix A: Business Growth and Community Regeneration: An Opportunity 2011-2026 dated May 2011
Report Author/Lead Officer:	Lynda Dine

AGENDA ITEM NO 6

Board/Committee:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Date of Meeting:	22 JUNE 2011
Title:	PARTNERSHIP FOR URBAN SOUTH HAMPSHIRE (PUSH): REVISION TO CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
Author:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

- To seek approval to revise the constitutional arrangements relating to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). These changes have already been considered by the PUSH Joint Committee and have been recommended for approval by the Constituent Authorities.

Recommendations

That the revised constitutional arrangements relating to PUSH be approved.

1.0 Report

- 1.1 The current Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) arrangements commenced in November 2007 with the confirmation of the Joint Committee as the decision-making body. The PUSH joint agreement introducing this and other constitutional arrangements was completed on the 15th August 2008 after it had been signed by all the participating authorities.
- 1.2 The organisational structure of PUSH has developed further over time in the light of experience in operating the partnership and evolving needs. PUSH governance arrangements were approved by the Joint Committee on 18th November 2008 and revised financial protocols have improved the governance of budget and financial management and transactions.
- 1.3 It is now appropriate to review and revise the constitutional arrangements for a number of reasons:
 - a. Isle of Wight Council has joined PUSH;
 - b. New Forest District Council has left PUSH;
 - c. the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has been created and the governance arrangements for the LEP and the inter-relationship between the LEP and PUSH need to be taken into account.

1.4 The PUSH Joint Committee also recommended that the right of veto to Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton (which would have been extended to the Isle of Wight) should be removed.

1.5 The PUSH Joint Committee, constituted of all the leaders of all the local authority partners, endorsed and supported the arrangements set out in this report leading to the proposed constitutional changes. However, the constitution of PUSH requires that each of the individual local authorities gives its approval to any changes in the constitution before they can be given effect to.

2.0 Financial Implications

2.1 The current financial model contained in the PUSH joint agreement which sets out the contributions to be made by each of the partner local authorities has been amended following the various changes to membership, to keep the agreed level of contributions for 2011/12 unchanged.

2.2 Future membership calculations will be dealt with as part of the ongoing annual budget process.

3.0 Risk Assessment

3.1 The proposed revisions to the PUSH Constitution contain no risks to this Council.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 PUSH remain a significant sub-regional body. The relationship between PUSH and the Solent LEP is evolving. Membership of PUSH remains imperative if Gosport is to continue to pursue the regeneration of the Borough

Financial Services comments:	None
Legal Services comments:	Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report: PUSH is constituted under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000. The joint arrangements entered into, which include the terms of reference for the Joint Committee as well as the Overview and Scrutiny Joint Committee will require amendment and a revised legal agreement is being prepared by the Director of Corporate Services of Southampton City Council on behalf of PUSH.
Service Improvement Plan implications:	Meets with objective of responding to the impacts of climate change
Corporate Plan Implications:	There are none
Risk Assessment:	See Section 3 of the Report
Background papers:	Nil
Appendices/Enclosures:	Nil
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Chief Executive

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9

Board/Committee:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Date of Meeting:	22 June 2011
Title:	DISPOSAL OF LAND AT HOLBROOK - CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS
Author:	BOROUGH SOLICITOR
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To report on the receipt of objections to the intended disposal of land consisting of open space at Holbrook in connection with the Gosport Leisure Park Development.

Recommendation

That Members consider the objections received and reject them and proceed with the disposal of the land at Holbrook.

1 Background

- 1.1 On 17 May 2011 Policy and Organisation Board appointed a preferred bidder for the redevelopment of the Holbrook site and agreed to the disposal of land at Holbrook subject to the statutory procedure set out in Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972. This requires the Council to advertise its intention to dispose of land consisting or forming part of an open space for 2 consecutive weeks in a local newspaper circulating in the area.
- 1.2 The Section also requires the Council to consider any objections to the proposal that may be made to the Council.
- 1.3 The advertisements appeared in the Portsmouth News on 20 and 27 May 2011 and the closing date for objections was 10 June 2011. Two letters of objection have been received from one local resident. A copy of the letters of objection, with personal details redacted (as the report will be published on the Council's website) is annexed to this report as Appendix 1.

2 Report

- 2.1 The objections contained in the letters received may be summarised as follows:-
 1. There is no other open space available locally for exercise

and games and from the plans it seems there is little or no grass left.

2. It is a wholly unsuitable place for a hotel.
3. No objection to the replacement of the Leisure Centre if it can be demonstrated that there is a need and this is challenged. The objector believes there is a need for replacement of plant in connection with the existing facilities
4. The objector challenges the need for a pub /restaurant and Hotel as there are adequate facilities in the locality of the Leisure Centre
5. The development proposal will result in a substantial reduction in the sports facilities available to residents of Gosport and in particular those of Holbrook. The existing facilities are well used and needed and were presented as an alternative to the application for a Town/Village Green for the land known as the triangle between Tichborne Way and oakdene Woods made to Hampshire County Council to which GBC objected and which was refused by HCC in April 2011.
6. The development will lead to an unjustified proliferation of car parking spaces more substantial in number than at present so that grass and the open nature of the area will be replaced with tarmac and metalled surfaces.
7. The proposal if granted conflicts with Policy R/OS4 from the Local Plan and it would be unreasonable for the development to proceed on Open Space Land.

2.2 The land at Holbrook currently provides the following recreational facilities:-

Indoor leisure centre with a 25 metre x 6 lane pool and Teacher pool, Fitness Suite (30 stations), 3 Squash Courts, Health Suite;
2 grass football pitches (senior);
Childrens outdoor play area.

2.3 The land also contains 123 car parking spaces and an access road serving the Leisure centre and the Ice Rink. The remainder of the land is laid to grass with trees and landscaping in some areas.

2.4 The Leisure Centre has been extended on a number of occasions and the need to replace it has been a corporate priority for a number of years. The option to refurbish and or replace plant has been considered by the Council. The Council have throughout the process been advised by specialists in the Leisure sector and they have reviewed the current provision at Holbrook, the leisure provision in the area and the current requirements of users for example the

changing interest in 11 a side football with a corresponding interest in small sided games and the increase in users of fitness equipment. The option to refurbish and or replace plant would only extend the life of the building and facilities for a short period of time and would not take account of the changes in user's needs and requirements and therefore was not considered to be a reasonable response.

- 2.5 As the Council wished to continue to provide indoor leisure facilities then the redevelopment of the land was the only reasonable option and given its financial position an element of enabling development on the site was required.
- 2.6 The Council has been involved in a number of studies which have demonstrated the need for more hotel beds in the Borough for the business and visitor market. Hotels require food and beverage facilities and in the case of the budget hotel market (the need for this type of hotel accommodation was highlighted in studies) these are provided in separate facilities.
- 2.7 On 17 May 2011 the Council accepted a bid for the redevelopment of the land at Holbrook and appointed DC Leisure management Limited as preferred bidder. A planning application has now been submitted.
- 2.8 The redevelopment of the land at Holbrook involves the demolition of the existing leisure centre and will provide the following recreation facilities:-
Indoor leisure centre with 25 metre x 6 lane pool and Teacher pool, Fitness Suite (60-100 stations), Health Suite, 2 studio/function/meeting rooms, Sports Hall (4 courts), Children's soft play area;
8 five a side and 1 seven a side All Weather Synthetic Turf Pitches with floodlights;
2 grass mini soccer pitches;
Children's outdoor play area.
- 2.9 The proposal also includes:-
64 Bed Hotel;
Pub/Restaurant;
267 car parking spaces;
Coach drop-off and parking spaces
Access road;
Improved pedestrian access through the site;
Landscaping
- 2.10 The Hotel and Pub/Restaurant will be located on the front of the site on an area currently used for access and car parking and a narrow strip of grass. The area currently occupied by the Leisure centre will be used for access and car parking. The existing access from Forest Way is to be moved to the West which will facilitate easier access to the existing Children's play facility which is also to be physically

improved. The landscaping on the land will be enhanced and provide areas for the public to walk and sit.

- 2.11 Whilst the disposal of the land involves a lease to the Leisure Operator of the recreational facilities to enable them to manage the facilities, with the Council still being the owner, this does mean that the substantial part of the land at Holbrook will still be used by the Council for open space purposes. The other disposal is to enable the Hotel and Pub/Restaurant to be built but these areas are currently predominantly used for car parking rather than open spaces used for recreation.
- 2.12 There will be a reduction in the amount of land used for open space but this proposal provides a quantitative and qualitative improvement to the recreation and open space provision on the land.

3 Objections

With regards to the objections:-

1. There are a number of other areas of open space in the locality and as set out above a substantial part of the land at Holbrook is being retained as open space in any event.
2. As set out above there is evidence of a need for additional hotel beds in the Borough and any hotel includes the provision of food and beverage facilities such as the proposed pub/restaurant.
3. As set out above the Council had regard to the use by the public of the Leisure Centre when it considered the need to replace the Leisure centre and have concluded that refurbishment and or replacement of plant is not a reasonable response.
4. See 2. above
5. There will be a reduction in the area of land used for open space at Holbrook but the proposal does not reduce the sporting facilities available to residents rather it will provide modern sporting facilities which better meets the needs of residents now rather than the needs of residents when the centre was built over 30 years ago. The Children's play area is to be improved as will the remaining open areas which residents will be able to continue to enjoy. With regard to the assertion in respect of the Town/Village Green application the Council's written objection did not make any reference to this land nor did HCC's response. The Inspectors report similarly does not make any reference to this land.

6. As set out above current areas of car parking and a small strip of grass will be used for car parking and the site of the hotel and pub/restaurant. It is accepted that there will be a reduction in the total area of open land but what remains which is substantial will be improved visually and functionally.
7. Whilst this is a matter which will be considered by the Regulatory Board the Council's Local Plan policies recognise that Recreation and Leisure sites may need to be redeveloped and seek to ensure that any redevelopment enhances the current provision. As set out above this proposal does enhance the current facilities.

4 Risk Assessment

- 4.1 The Council is obliged under the relevant Legislation to consider any objections received to its advertisements. It must do this in a reasonable manner so as not to risk any possible action for judicial review of its decision.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Whilst this proposal involves the disposal of open space land the substantial part of the land at Holbrook will remain in open space use. The area being redeveloped and therefore retained as open space will be enhanced and the new sporting facilities will extend the range of sporting facilities available for residents. It is considered that open space needs are more than adequately met by this proposal and therefore the objections should be rejected and the Council should now proceed with the disposals of land at Holbrook

Financial Services comments:	None for the purposes of this report
Legal Services comments:	Included within the report
Service Improvement Plan implications:	
Corporate Plan:	Contributes to People – improving Leisure opportunities and facilities.
Risk Assessment:	See Paragraph 3.1 of the Report
Background papers:	None
Appendices/Enclosures:	
Appendix 'A'	Redacted copy letters of objection.
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Linda Edwards

By Hand

27. 05. 2011

Dear Ms Edwards,

I wish to make it known that I object to the sale of land at Holbrook on the grounds that there is no other open space available locally for exercise and games and it seems there is little or no grass left from the look of the plans.

Subsequent councils have eaten away at the once extensive public and green areas of Gosport until there is almost nothing left. Having objected to the loss of land taken for the BRT access route it was argued by the council we had the expense of Holbrookz field instead. So, if we are not to have the field surely we should have our small meadows returned.

I further object on the grounds that this is a wholly unsuitable place for an hotel and wonder if this is an all-party decision popular with the public or is it just being forced upon the town taking still more emphasis from the town centre

Yours

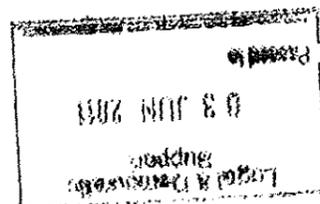
Ms. Linda Edwards,
Borough Solicitor,
Gosport Borough Council,
Town Hall,
Gosport PO12 1EB

Dear Ms. Edwards,

Re. Gosport Borough Council's exercise of powers pursuant to Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of their freehold interest in an area of land in and around the Holbrook Leisure Centre, Gosport described in your Public Notice dated 20th May 2011 inserted in "the News".

Following my earlier letter, I enclose detailed Reasons of Objection. I should be glad if you would acknowledge receipt of the enclosed by return and in due course let me know the procedure you intend to adopt relative to my Objection.

Yours sincerely,



Reasons for Objection to Gosport Borough Council exercising powers pursuant to Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of their freehold interest in an area of land in and around the Holbrook Leisure Centre, Gosport as further described in a public notice of the Borough Solicitor dated 20th May 2011 inserted in the "News".

1. The Respondent does not object to the replacement of the Leisure Centre, if it can be demonstrated that there is a need, but she challenges that there is such a need. It is believed that there is a need for the replacement of plant in connection with the existing facilities for the filtration and the cleaning, purification and replacement of water for the pool, but not otherwise. If the position is otherwise, Gosport Borough Council is put ^{to proof of} the need for the replacement of the Leisure Centre.

2. The Respondent challenges the need for a Pub-Restaurant and Hotel, when there are adequate facilities in the locality of the Leisure Centre and puts Gosport Borough Council to the need. It is believed by the Respondent that there are adequate facilities, in so far as there is a need, at the Manor Hotel, Brewers Lane, Gosport, which has twelve bedrooms, a function room or rooms and the facilities of a Pub-restaurant. There are other restaurant facilities proximate to the Leisure Centre, which can be used by any visitors to the Leisure Centre. The bedrooms at the Manor Hotel are believed to be seldom full and it is within walking distance of the Leisure Centre.

3. The development proposed will result in a substantial reduction in the sports facilities ^{provided by the grass area} available to the residents of Gosport and in particular those of Holbrook. The existing facilities are well used and needed and were presented as an alternative to the application for a Town/Village Green for the land known as the triangle between Tichborne Way and Oakdene Woods to which Gosport Borough Council objected and which was refused by the Regulatory Committee of Hampshire County Council on 11th April 2011.

4. The development will lead to an unjustified proliferation of car parking spaces more substantial in number than at present, so that grass and the open nature of the area will be replaced with tarmac and have a metalled surface.

5. In the circumstances the proposals, if granted, conflict with Policy R/OS4 of Gosport Borough Council and it would be unreasonable for the development to proceed on Open Space land.