

RESPONSE TO ENQUIRIES CLAIMING THE WOOTTON BASSETT CAMPUS WILL NOT HAVE ANY SWIMMING POOL PROVISION

The Area Board has established a Shadow Community Operations Board (Shadow COB) for the purpose of consulting with the public and helping to bring forward proposals for two community campuses – one in Cricklade and one in Wootton Bassett.

Details about the Wootton Bassett Shadow COB can be found here, including details about members. Notes of Shadow COB meetings will also be posted here as well. Updates on the consultation process and any proposals brought forward will also be reported at full meetings of the Area Board.

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/communitycampuses/woottonbassettcommunitycampus.htm>

All individuals, clubs and societies can submit their views, opinions (or even detailed proposals for consideration) about the campus either in writing or via e-mail to Wiltshire Council at: campusconsultation@wiltshire.gov.uk and all such submissions will be taken into account by the Shadow COB.

The Shadow COB is just about to launch the first stage of its consultation and the survey form will be made available on the above webpage within a few days and also circulated in hard copy by the Shadow COB as well. The results of that initial survey are expected to be reported to the Area Board on 6 July and there will then be a second consultation period during July and August. A more detailed outline proposal (or choice of possible proposals) is then expected to be submitted by the Shadow COB for consideration by the Area Board in September 2011 and, subject to approval, detailed design work will then commence - though some scoping work might be expected to take place in the interim. The indicative work programme envisages a detailed planning application being secured by February 2012 with building commencing in spring 2012 and an approximate completion date of October 2012.

Until the consultation is completed, however, it is not possible to say exactly what facilities will be located on the campus or where the campus will be located. The campus could be located on the existing Lime Kiln site or potentially elsewhere. For those reasons it would not be appropriate for me, as Chairman of the Area Board, to provide detailed answers on these matters though I can provide some general indications. Thus, a number of Wiltshire Council provided services could, and are likely, to be co-located on the campus and WB Town Council has also expressed an interest in co-locating a modern community hall provision on the campus and provided the Shadow COB with an indication of its likely requirements in that respect. Other public service providers, such as, for example, NHS Wiltshire, might also wish to provide or operate services from the proposed campus.

Regarding the important question of swimming pool provision no-one, either elected members or officers, in Wiltshire Council has ever indicated that there would be no future pool provision in Wootton Bassett and I have said so very clearly at several public meetings of the Area Board.

The outcome of the strategic review of indoor leisure service provision conducted by Wiltshire Council last year indicated a continuing requirement for a swimming pool in Wootton Bassett. While the fire incident has resulted in a necessary temporary closure of pool facilities nothing has happened to alter that identified strategic need. It would, however, be financially imprudent of the Council to expend financial resources on repairs to the Lime Kiln building until the detailed outcome of the consultation process on the campus is known. Subject to the detailed outcome of the consultation process to identify future community needs now being conducted by the Shadow COB; it is, therefore, unlikely that the Area Board would sanction recommending the adoption of any campus proposal that did not include pool provision. Securing a campus provision for Wootton Bassett, therefore, provides a potential opportunity to improve and/or increase pool provision as part of the campus. Final approval, however, will be subject to a business case being agreed by Wiltshire Cabinet.

As the consultation process gets underway this should become clearer to all and I would encourage all interested individuals, societies and clubs to engage in that process and you may freely circulate this letter further should you so wish.