

## **A Report of the Corsham Shadow Community Operations Board (COB)**

**To the Corsham Area Board. 26 July 2012**

### **Progress Update**

Following the approval of the Planning Application for the Springfield campus by Wiltshire Council's Strategic Planning Committee, enabling works have started on site to provide the necessary utilities in support of the new development.

This has meant the closure of the play area and the removal of some trees. Some of the play equipment is being relocated by Corsham Town Council and the Campus, once it is redeveloped, will have new children's play areas and a significant programme of new tree planting.

The utilities work has also effectively closed the existing Corsham School redgra games area and it is planned to replace this with a contemporary, more versatile, multi-sport artificial grass pitch (AGP) as an integral part of the development which, outside of school use, is destined to become an amenity available for the community as a whole.

### **Shadow Community Operations Board Activity**

The Community Operations Board (COB) has continued to meet weekly in order to progress the present planning phase. The phase is defined as RIBA Stage E, and looks in detail at the specification for individual spaces with the Campus as a whole. This includes refurbishment and new development within the existing Springfield Leisure Centre.

The COB's time has been split equally between their own meetings to establish a sound and sustainable basis for the development as a whole and with the Wiltshire Council appointed architects who have been holding regular 'client workshops' in response to the COB-specified requirements.

Wherever possible, the COB has sought external guidance from members of the community, officers of Wiltshire Council and specialists in a number of fields, in order that decisions are based on community experience, technical expertise and are consistent with the Council's transformation programme. These have included the Library and Youth Services, The Police, Corsham's Town and Youth Councils and many individuals and specialist groups who have particular interests in the new Campus.

The conclusion of RIBA Stage E, expected imminently, will allow Wiltshire Council to place the necessary contracts for the build and fit out of the new Campus.

## The Next Stages

The COB has been working to a very aggressive schedule, providing the necessary input to ensure that the development of the Campus can take place to the best timescale possible.

This has meant considerable commitment from every single member of the COB, far more than could ever have been anticipated when we set out on this journey over 18 months ago.

Over the next 18 months, the COB will want to work increasingly closely with users of the existing Leisure and Community facilities, as well as everyone with a potential interest in delivering services out of the Campus.

Critically, we shall be working closely with Wiltshire Council and others to begin the process of understanding the management regime.

In the interests of ensuring that the Campus is operationally successful from day one, there will be an increasingly detailed programme of communications to keep the whole community area informed about what they should expect and critically, when they should expect it. This will have to be achieved working in collaboration with Wiltshire Council's communications team.

The Shadow Community Operations Board does not have a budget, and any contribution made by its members is entirely voluntary. This voluntary contribution, including the development and maintenance of a website, is being made by people and organisations with a real belief that the Springfield Campus will become a valuable, and valued, focal point at the heart of the Corsham Community Area. We hope that this faith is shared by the community at large.

To date, timescales have had to be indicative. As a pilot we have had to pioneer processes and working relationships that are only emerging as the project unfolds and we have tried to indicate the principles of what we are working to rather than being able to give specific dates, e.g. that new Community facilities should be in use prior to the demolition of the existing Community Centre.

Once the process of building actually starts, notwithstanding the vagaries of the British weather, it should be possible to make increasingly accurate forecasts about what is going to happen when. In the meantime we would again like to thank the Area Board for its continued support.

Allan Bosley. Chair. Community Operations Board