

DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, CAMPUSES, AREA BOARDS AND BROADBAND - CLLR JOHN THOMSON

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REFERENCE: CCABB-01-15

REPORT ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WOOLMORE FARM DEVELOPMENT

Purpose of Report

To seek authority to award the contracts for the Woolmore Farm development in Melksham

Consultation

In 2011 an initial consultation on the Melksham Community Campus project was carried out. This consultation, undertaken by Melksham Community Area Partnership (MCAP) was to receive feedback on the concept of a campus facility. A total of 3,200 paper copies were distributed and an online survey was produced. A total of 1,023 survey responses, 14 letters and 33 emails were received, along with responses from Melksham Town Council, Melksham without Parish Council and Melksham CAP.

A further consultation went to 12,500 households as well as 3 open days and evenings, 10 local group meetings and a young person's consultation. Results were presented to the area board on 29th March 2011.

The area board appointed a Community Operations Board (COB) to enable a community-led approach to developing campus proposals.

The area board put forward proposals to the cabinet for a split site campus; Woolmore Farm and Melksham House. Woolmore Farm would provide facilities for the town's football and rugby clubs and Melksham House would provide other services and facilities including leisure, library, community pace, café and health.

Work to deliver the campus at Melksham House requires the football club to vacate its current site adjacent to the house.

The football and rugby clubs have been involved in the design of Woolmore Farm to ensure that the facilities directly reflect their needs. A business case was approved by the Football Foundation and a grant of £600,000 was awarded to support the future sustainability of the club (Appendix A).

Both clubs have agreed to move to the new site and Terms of Agreement are in draft. A letter of intent is expected shortly.

Options Considered

The council considered relocating the rugby club to Dunch Lane. However, this area was reclassified by the Environment Agency as functional flood plain, consequently it was decided that the site did not present a viable option. Other sites were considered, and discounted on the basis that economies of scale would be delivered in a single building accommodating both football and rugby clubs at Woolmore Farm.

If Woolmore Farm does not proceed there would be an impact on the development of the campus at Melksham House. The current leisure centre is not fit for purpose and not sustainable. Doing nothing and not proceeding with Woolmore Fram would impact on the rates of participation in sport in the area. This option has therefore been discounted.

Reason for Decision

In order to deliver Melksham Community Campus, vacant possession from both clubs will be required at the end of the 2015/16 season. Awarding the contract now will ensure that the Woolmore Farm facilities are available for the 2016/17 rugby and football seasons.

Approving the proposal will deliver improved sports facilities for the Melksham Community Area. The clubs will continue to be run by local representatives and the business plan forecasts an increased number of players and participation.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DECISION MADE</u></p> <p>I approve the award of the contract for the Woolmore Farm Football and Rugby development.</p> <p>This decision was published on 1 June 2015 and will come into force on 9 June 2015.</p>
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The following supporting documents are attached:

- Report
- Melksham_Delegated_Decision_AppendixA
- Melksham_Delegated_Decision_AppendixB
- Melksham_Delegated_Decision_AppendixC

Date: 1 June 2015

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Cllr John Thomson
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for
Communities, Campuses, Area Boards and
Broadband