

Minutes

**Petition Hearing - Cabinet Member for Finance,
Property and Business Services
Monday, 11 June 2018
Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge**



	<p>Members Present: Councillors Jonathan Bianco (Chairman)</p> <p>Officers Present: Michael Naughton, Manager, Capital Programme and Planned Works Paul Richards, Head of Green Spaces, Sport and Culture Neil Fraser – Democratic Services Officer</p>
1.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</p> <p>None.</p>
2.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN PUBLIC.</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items on the agenda were marked as Part I, and would therefore be considered in public.</p>
3.	<p>PETITION TO THE COUNCIL - REQUEST FOR THE RETENTION AND UPGRADE OF YIEWSLEY RECREATION GROUND HUT</p> <p>Councillor Jan Sweeting attended the meeting.</p> <p>Before addressing the Cabinet Member, the petitioner requested that the petition be read out in full. The petitioner was advised that they could read out the petition as part of their five minute submission to the Cabinet Member, should they wish. [This has been attached as Appendix 1]</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's constitution, the lead petitioner addressed the meeting in support of the petition and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current bowls ground was part of the historic, social and recreational infrastructure of Yiewsley and West Drayton.• London Plan Policy 3.19 on Sports Facilities explicitly stated that “proposals which would result in a loss of social infrastructure in areas of defined need...without realistic proposals for re-provision should be resisted.” The policy could not be served by depriving one community of existing facilities and transferring them to another.• Improving sporting use at Yiewsley Recreation Ground was equally valid, but not examined within the officer’s report.

- More facilities were needed in the South of the Borough. Sport England in 2007 provided a report to Hillingdon Council which stated that Yiewsley and West Drayton would be underserved, even with the old pool in operation. The Council subsequently decided to demolish the pool, with a replacement located within West Drayton, an area with poor transportation and inferior catchment demographics.
- It would be difficult for older people to travel further to use facilities that were once local to them. This was a violation of the Equalities Act, and it was requested that the Council conduct an Equalities Act review on this decision.
- The officer's report referenced other clubs and local groups who had registered their interest in the site, though details of who these parties were and why their interest had been dismissed was not included in the report.
- The proposed action to remove the hut was listed as a small item in the Cabinet Forward Plan, out of public view. The Council's decision to remove the hut was then confirmed in writing to the petitioner. This was in contravention to the legally required process, and supporting documentation within the London plan, that required Councils to provide proper notice to Yiewsley residents and engage all relevant stakeholders. Consultation with residents, to ask that they wanted, had not taken place.
- The mention of a £3.3m budget for leisure facilities was a red herring meant to distract people from a loss of facilities, and was a 'bait and switch' tactic premised on overturning recreation covenants for new Council developments that were widely opposed by local residents.
- Clarity of all proposals was required under any public interest test.
- There were concerns that replacement or renewal of the bowls club would not take place in a transparent or timely, manner , if ever.
- The Council's current planning application was for provision of facilities at Sipson Recreation Ground and was not legitimately drafted for the removal of facilities in Yiewsley. The application made no mention of any impact on Yiewsley, and only referenced the Heathrow Villages Ward.
- The application had not complied with statutory notification or consultation requirements, and was therefore invalid.
- The financial implications in the officer's report were misleading, as the referenced S106 contributions had a 7-year limit, though the Council had the first instalment of £65k in hand for over 6 years. This amount only expired in July 2019.
- There was no mandate for the S106 allocation, and so the allocation could be made available for the refurbishment of the bowls hut, in situ at Yiewsley.
- Given the urgency of the decision process as published in the Cabinet Forward Plan, the petition had collected 395 signatures in just a few days, after the Council failed to action the proposed e-petition for over a week. Previous petitions regarding Yiewsley Recreation Ground had collected over 7k

signatures.

Councillor Sweeting addressed the Cabinet Member, and highlighted the following:

- West Drayton required improvements to infrastructure.
- No local consultation on the proposals had been undertaken.
- The Council had underinvested in Yiewsley and West Drayton.
- The area was neglected, and was in need of more facilities.
- The bowls club should remain in Yiewsley, for the benefit of Yiewsley residents.

A number of residents addressed the Cabinet Member, and highlighted the following:

- The recreation ground was intensively used by local residents, particularly those with children, and should be maintained.
- There were concerns for the safety of young people due to a lack of available facilities.
- Any building work at the site would disrupt use of the grounds.
- The site was used for meetings and general community use.
- It was an unlikely coincidence that the bowls club closed in 2015, at the same time that the Council acquired the library property.

The Cabinet Member responded to the points raised, and highlighted:

- Yiewsley and West Drayton wards had been invested in, including road resurfacing and the creation of a skate park next to the Yiewsley Recreation Ground site.
- There was no intention to change the park, which would remain available for local resident use.
- The bowls club had been vacant since 2015, when the club folded due to lack of membership. The purchase of the library was undertaken because it came on the market for sale, and did not relate to closure the bowls club.
- The facilities at Yiewsley Recreation Ground were now redundant, and would require a considerable amount of money to refurbish to the appropriate standard.
- Membership at nearby bowls clubs was set out. Cowley Bowls Club had 22 members, with a capacity of 60, and Fassnidge Bowls club had 30 members, with 13 social members, up to a capacity of 63. There was therefore capacity at nearby clubs for additional members to join.
- If the decision was made to move forward with the proposal, it was very likely

	<p>that the existing library would be replaced by a new library on or very close to the existing library location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football clubs were growing, and were beneficial in encouraging residents to remain fit and healthy. • It was not always necessary or beneficial to consult residents ahead of every Council proposal, as this would slow the process considerably. • The Cabinet Member was comfortable that the necessary requirements on planning, consultation and public notice had been adhered to, and directed residents to the Council's complaints procedure, if concerns remained. <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>Meeting with petitioners, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted the petition received, and 2. Supported the decision to relocate the former Yiewsley Bowls Club building to Sipson Recreation Ground for use as a changing room and associated facilities for use by West Drayton Explorers Football Club.
4.	<p>APPENDIX 1</p> <p>Title: Yiewsley Bowls Hut</p> <p>Statement:</p> <p>We the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to retain and upgrade the bowls hut for use by Yiewsley residents and community groups</p> <p>Justification:</p> <p>Yiewsley Bowls hut has been a feature of the recreation ground since 1929 when the first bowls club was formed. There are community groups, including a youth football group in Yiewsley who want to make use of this facility. There is also a group forming for a multicultural, all-age, all-welcome bowls club in a new innovative and inclusive form that will grow interfaith and cross-generational communal activity in Yiewsley.</p> <p>Yiewsley residents ask that their proportion of the £500k budget for bowls in the borough 2018/19 announced in the budget be administered in improvements and upgrade of the hut. Yiewsley is in need of facilities and activities for all ages. Bowls or Boules can be played by any age safely. It is a gentle sport. The hut would be also</p>

used by a youth football club that currently have to travel to other wards to practice. The proposal to take away a facility for another ward (Sipson) is insulting to them and Yiewsley.

There are large amounts of money coming into the area from Community Infrastructure Levy which is intended to be spent on local facilities. The residents of Yiewsley and Sipson deserve this money being invested in facilities in both areas not robbing Peter to pay Paul. There is no financial reason to do that. Sports England would agree that there is a lack of facilities in Yiewsley, specifically having had the swimming pool taken away eight years ago with no replacement in that time.

The Bowling Green and hut is a Yiewsley facility, needed, wanted and with residents ready to use. There is potential to have youth bowls in association with the Young People's Academy in Falling Lane, Rabbs Farm school and St Matthew's school. If the council is true to the tagline putting residents first then please do.