

# Chichester District Council

Cabinet

9 January 2024

## Public Questions and Answers Sheet

### Question from Bruce Ruddock:

Given the fact that the previous ice rink on Priory Park in 2018 was, for a number of reasons, seriously problematic and left deep wounds in the memory of the community around the park, has sufficient consideration been given to other possible locations, closer to car parks, further away from residential properties and where the environment is less sensitive to damage?

### Answer from Cllr Jess Brown-Fuller:

Firstly I would like to thank Rev Cannon Bruce Ruddock for his question and for engaging with the Council around the topic of an ice skating rink in Chichester in December 2024. I would encourage you to stay and listen to the discussion that we will no doubt have on this item on Agenda item 8, Corporate Plan and Initial Project Proposals for 2024-25.

For clarity, the IPPD being brought forward today is for Cabinet to approve the procurement process to begin. The outcome of the tender process would then be brought back to Cabinet for consideration, when costings would be clearer.

For historical context, an ice rink was held in Priory Park in 2018 which saw over 19,000 skaters take to the ice an addition to many spectators who would have attended without skating. When comparing car parking tickets sold for the period the previous December, parking increased by just under 5,000 users and retailers reported on a decent sales period over the Christmas period, although no reliable conversion data is available.

At the time, a number of sites, in and around the city centre were considered for the location of an ice rink. Many of these sites are host to alternative activities, such as winter sports pitches, provision of public car parking, markets, which made a number not viable. Priory Park, by elimination, is the preferred location due to the close proximity of the site to the city centre, encouraging footfall to the event and into the city.

A number of lessons were learned from the previous ice skating event that would be considered as part of the planning for any future event. One of the issues was the lead in timescale for the previous event, which was very short following market testing. Discussing proposals for the event at an early stage would allow more time for pre-planning advice and a longer lead in time for set-up and marketing for the event. It also means there is more time to actively involve the local community and engage in conversation about how to mitigate the impact for the period the rink is in place.

There was not an existing license template specifically for this type of event, therefore resources were required to draft a license. This is now in place.

The planning officers consider that should a future planning application be made, that a lower marquee should be explored with the applicant and if a fence is required then a lower, more attractive enclosure should be provided to allow views in and out of the attraction because the close boarded temporary fence resulted in a very hard and urban edge to the development.

Greater consideration should be given to the design of the noise mitigation measures so these are less visually dominant. It was requested that if a similar event was to take place in the future it would be preferable if a 3 phase electrical connection was made available, which the events space in Priory Park now has.

Considering the number of attendees in 2018, CDC received complaints from 9 members of the public, who collectively made 40 complaints. There were no reported incidents in connection with the sale of alcohol/regulated entertainment reported to the Licensing Team throughout the duration of the 2018 event.

In terms of protecting the natural environment, the grass of the park is not particularly sensitive as a habitat but precautions will be in place to protect routeways from damage in wet weather and any requirements for reinstatement will be allowed for within the project. The potential for impacts on surrounding habitats will also be considered as part of the preparation of documents for the planning application, including bat surveys.

I hope this answers your question and would be happy to take a supplementary.