

Chichester District Council

Cabinet

6 February 2024

Public Questions and Answers Sheet

Question from Richard Plowman:

Has the plan for an ice-rink in Priory Park next Christmas been properly thought through? Am I correct the proposed ice rink's size will be halved from 566m² in 2018 to 300m² in 2024. To comply with safety standards the number of skaters per session will therefore also be reduced from 180 to 100. The competitive rinks at Bognor and Winchester are 600m². The 2018 figure of 19,072 skaters for a 566m² rink has been used to calculate ticket sales in the IPPD and realistically the income should now be halved. The estimated loss could therefore be £170,000, not £5,000. It was obvious from 2018 that a quart won't fit into a pint pot. The answer appears to be a pint-sized affair in Priory Park. Do you believe it will therefore achieve the outcome of the IPPD of a 'fun, ambitious festive event for the district residents and visitors', boosting car-park revenues and helping the local economy? Perhaps it might be best to delay the ice rink for a year, do a proper assessment and put it on a better site with hard standing?

Answer from Cllr Jess Brown- Fuller:

Thank you Richard for your question regarding the ice rink and I am sorry if this was not clear from my previous answer. We are currently preparing to go out to procurement for the proposed ice-skating rink. Within this we will consider different options, sizes and capacities. A further analysis will be completed once the tenders are received and evaluated. To be clear, the proposal does not specify what size the rink should be.

We do not anticipate a loss of £170,000. It is worth noting that an ice rink 300m² has a capacity of 100 and we would have therefore only needed to achieve an occupancy level of just over 60% to achieve the same attendance figure as the previous rink.

By starting this process now, we have the opportunity to interrogate the proposals that come back and also ensure the issues and concerns brought to us are mitigated as best as possible. I hope this clarifies the situation and I welcome your continued scrutiny on the project.

Question from Simon Oakley:

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 contains provision for councils to charge a second home premium of up to 100%, from the financial year 2025-26 onwards. At paragraph 7.2 of the report for Agenda Item 8 (Council Tax Second Home Premium, [Agenda Item: \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk)), it states that "This increase in the taxbase equates to an additional income for Chichester District Council (based on a current average band D charge of £2,130.28) of £580,000.". Could you advise as to what additional income (based on the same criteria used to estimate the

additional income for CDC) this proposed premium would provide for the other Precepting Authorities?

Answer from Cllr David Betts:

Thank you for your question.

As set out in paragraph 7.2 of the report in Agenda Item 8, based on the current average band D charge for 2023-24 of £2,130.28 the estimated increase in taxbase for 2025-2026 equates to an additional income for Chichester District Council of £580,000. As the billing authority we only retain a proportion of the Council Tax charge raised, and therefore a Second Home Premium will also raise additional income for all precepting authorities. West Sussex County Council are estimated to receive an additional income of £5.3million with Sussex Police authority receiving an additional income of £780,000.

It is not possible to provide a full breakdown of each parish at this point but that detail will, of course, be provided to each parish in due course as part of the annual taxbase setting process.

Question from The Reverend Canon Bruce Ruddock (read by John Coldstream):

While welcoming the fact that the public conveniences in Priory Park are being treated as a priority among the four scheduled for refurbishment, the Priory Park Society is disappointed that the work was not completed in January. Indeed, at the time of submitting this question members understand that there is still no firm commencement date. What is the timescale?

The Park Tavern is renowned for its warm hospitality, but its facilities are for customers only: it is emphatically not a public convenience. So, given that this is a matter of genuine urgency, what provision is the Council to make for users of the Park, among them children and families involved in the Sunday Park Run; families using the Park for recreation - not least in the playground; weekend footballers; wedding guests and others using the Guildhall; and customers of Fenwick's Café?

Answer from Cllr Harsha Desai:

Thank you for your question.

A procurement exercise was undertaken in Autumn 2023 for the refurbishment of the public conveniences in Priory Park, Market Road in Chichester, East Beach Selsey and Bosham Lane. At the December Cabinet, approval was given for the appointment of the contractor and recommended to Council that approval be given for the additional budget required and a programme of works was shared with the stakeholders.

Following a pre-commencement meeting that took place in early January prior to entering the contract. The contractor withdrew their tender from the procurement process and formally gave notice on 18 January 2024.

Since then, officers have been liaising with the second place tenderer in accordance with our procurement regulations to ascertain if they have the resources available to deliver the project and to revise the programme of works. This work is due to be concluded shortly and will require approval of Cabinet to appoint the contractor. As soon as this is completed a revised programme of works will be shared with all stakeholders. Along with any temporary public conveniences proposals.