

## Public Open Meeting: Radcliffe on Trent Pool Closure

7pm Grange Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014

### Minutes of Meeting

#### In Attendance

<b>Radcliffe on Trent Parish Council</b> Cllr David Smith – Chairman Cllr Roger Upton – Vice Chairman Jacki Grice – Parish Clerk	<b>Rushcliffe Borough Council</b> Cllr Eddie Fearon Cllr Neil Clarke MBE
<b>Nottinghamshire County Council</b> Cllr Kay Cutts MBE	<b>South Nottinghamshire Academy</b> Andrew George – Principal Dan Philpotts – Head of Academy Deborah Giles – Chair of Governors
<b>Radcliffe on Trent Swimming Pool Association</b> Ian Torr – Trustee Peter Clarke – Management Committee	<b>Community</b> Approx. 100 residents including some members of the Radcliffe on Trent Parish Council and the Save Radcliffe Pool Group

#### Welcome

1. The Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed all to the meeting and advised that it was an open public meeting and not a formal Parish Council meeting. Residents were introduced to representatives of relevant bodies present and the agenda for the meeting.

#### South Nottinghamshire Academy

2. An overview was provided of the complex process of the proposed new school build. The school has been working with the Department for Education since October 2013 on the viability of the different layouts considered and the potential impacts each option would bring.
3. The Government funded 'Priority Schools Building Programme' (which superseded the 'Building Schools for the Future Programme') remit is to prioritise buildings which are in disrepair with new basic but fit for purpose buildings. The previous programme funded bespoke designed schools, but this is no longer available under the current Government.  
8 schools in the East Midlands have planned new builds and the contract is currently out to European tender handled by the DfE.  
The approved contractor will then work with SNA on firm plans expected to be in place by summer 2014 for a September build start which will take approximately 18 months.
4. The two storey scheme chosen means the pool will have to be demolished. Three potential build options were considered and the complexities of the site already means that the project is ½ million pounds over budget. Alternative schemes explored which kept the pool in place highlighted the following issues:
  - ½ million pound penalty included in the funding for the artificial pitch from the Football Foundation. This penalty would have to be incurred from the build budget if the new build is sited on the pitches.
  - If the school was located where the artificial pitch is, this would be in too close proximity to the A52.
  - Existing classroom blocks would be lost to make room for the new build, meaning temporary classrooms would be required. This additional cost would again have to be incurred from funds intended for the new build which is already modest as there is a need for a lot of space to be multi use.
  - The funding bid is based on accommodating 750 pupils and there are specific financial entitlements within funding costs available.

- Access, site security and safeguarding issues
5. The Governors ratified the difficult decision by the SNA and the DfE for the two storey Option C+ which will ensure that the educational needs of the pupils is not compromised as it is the only suitable scheme within budgetary constraints ensuring that the Academy can still operate during the build process.
  6. The historical relationship between the school and ROTPSA was advised. Noting that the pool was built by public subscription and in 1973 a lease agreement was formed with the County Council and ROTSPA and this agreement expired in 2011. The school became an Academy Trust but the relationship continues via informal contractual arrangements. The School has always financially supported the running of pool and overall running costs currently stand at around £50-£60k per annum.

### **Radcliffe on Trent Swimming Pool Association**

7. The organisation advised that they did apply for a lease extension in 2011 but it was deferred at that time. Current income levels from swim sessions and other income sources is approx. £24k per annum. Current levels of usage per week =
  - 66 adults
  - 16 juniors
  - 24 under 5's
  - 200 (private session swims)
  - Plus school use ( 5 hours a week)
8. ROTSPA is a group of volunteers and does not feel it has the management expertise or resources to run this or any other pool on a viable commercial basis. Since advised of the schools plans in Dec 2013 income is already compromised as pre-bookings for later dates cannot be taken with confidence. It is clear that significant capital maintenance to extend the service life of the pool if it were to remain would be in excess of £120k.

### **Save Radcliffe Pool Group**

9. The group currently has 8 members and was formed on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2013 upon hearing about the proposed pool closure. The group feels that the pool is an essential asset to the community as Radcliffe on Trent is in such close proximity to the River Trent.
 

Aims and Objectives of the Group

  - Explore community support (800 residents have signed a petition so far)
  - Raise Awareness
  - Seek SNA to re-consider the pool closure
  - Seek an alternative
10. The Group very much supports the new school build and has listened to the difficulties expressed by SNA but noted the potential housing growth in the village, which if it goes ahead would mean that more facilities are needed. The results of the Community Plan is also expected to highlight a growing demand for more leisure and recreational facilities. The view of the group is to save existing facilities, not to lose them.

### **Question & Answer Session**

11. Residents were invited to speak and ask questions, the following issues were highlighted:
12. **Swimming on the school curriculum** – *The school has no plans to change the swimming model even though it is not compulsory. There is a budget of £9k for each of the next two years for health and well-being activities. Pupils would be transported to neighbouring facilities.*
13. **Safeguarding Issues** – *The new site layout is intended to provide for community use and access in a designated area, making better use of the site, there is currently no opportunity for daytime access.*
14. **Availability of Land** – *Other options within the village need exploring.*

15. **Olympic Legacy** – *The scheme doesn't fit with the provision of community sport for all.*
16. **Pressurised timeline** – *DfE is keen to push the build start in a rapid timeline due to Government pressures. The process started in October 2013 but due to all the complexities of the site and all the alternatives explored the final decision took until December 2013. There are concerns that any further delays may impact on the availability of the new build funding.*
17. **Rushcliffe Leisure Facilities - West Bridgford Academy** – *No information available on their business model. Rushcliffe Pool – To be demolished for a new pool at the Arena, this was a strategic decision taken by RBC some time ago. There are currently 6 Public Swimming Pools in Rushcliffe and it was noted that the recommended ratio is actually only 2.*
18. **Bingham Road Playing Fields Lease** – *The School continues to work with ROTSA, there have been no decisions taken on this area of land.*
19. **Compensation for Loss of Facility** – *In essence a legal matter*
20. **Funding - Section 106 Funds from New Housing Developments** – *long term consideration, all depends if/when houses are built.*  
**-Local Authority Funding** – *Unlikely due to budgetary constraints already in place, there are already viability issues with existing Leisure Centres in the Borough.*

### **Moving Forward**

21. The practicalities of keeping the existing pool is an obvious issue.  
Matters to consider:
  - Compensation from SNA by way of land for community use made available within new build scheme (would it accommodate a new pool? Confirmation of available land yet to be determined?)
  - Is there any other areas of available land in the village?
  - Capital funding and running costs? Length of time to bid and receive funding?
  - Who would fund? Sport England is oversubscribed and Rushcliffe already exceeds the Swimming Pool ratio?
  - Steering Group to be set up to look into feasibility and exploration of all options?
  - Analyse results of the Community Plan, public demand for pool and or other leisure facilities?
  - Public referendum, public subscriptions?
  - What would be the capital cost of a replacement pool?
22. ROTSPA were thanked for all their hard work operating the pool on a voluntary basis for the past 40 years.
23. All present were asked to leave their contact details with the Parish Clerk if they wished to be part of a Working Group to look into the feasibility, funding streams and investigations of alternatives for a pool/leisure facilities in the village. The Parish Clerk would contact those interested in due course to set up an initial meeting.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.**