

'CALL-IN' REQUEST FORM

This form should be used by any Councillors wishing to call-in

1. any decision taken by the Executive, or an Executive decision taken by an officer with delegated authority, for reconsideration prior to implementation;
2. any matter to be considered to be outside the Policy and Budget Framework.

Please return your form to Democratic Services. Continue on separate sheet if necessary.

1. Call-In of a decision made by the Executive

Decision Minute No: Executive – 20 March 2019 Agenda Item 6
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Decision Title: Consideration of detailed business case for the development of a new community stadium for Workington

Please indicate the grounds for calling in the decision for review

The decision to progress proposals with the exception of referring that the Council acts as guarantor to the next meeting of Council is perverse, as it permits further expenditure to be entered into and demolition works to commence without any certainty that the Council will agree to act as guarantor, and thus that a developer/financier will come forward.

The report states that the proposal is not predicated on hosting three Rugby League World Cup ties in 2021, but the cost-benefit analysis justifying investment seems to include benefits associated with that hosting. The evidences cited are therefore wrongly stated.

The proposal relies on predictions regarding an increased and sustained performance of both sports clubs resulting in increased attendances and hence gate receipts. It does not use status quo data i.e. an indication of revenues generated if the clubs maintain current levels of performance and gate receipts. Increased performance is a hope, not a probable outcome.

The proposals rest in part on three cited comparator studies. Of these the York facility was still under construction when visited so can provide no evidence of sustainability, while the report itself states that the Warrington facility is less comparable to the proposed community stadium (4.13), leaving only the Leigh Sports Village as a directly meaningful comparator. Hence invalid comparisons have been used to justify the proposal.

No sustainability appraisal has been carried out on the Leigh and Warrington stadia to understand their viability in the context of local demographics, demand for sporting venues, transport opportunities and constraints, and then applied to the Allerdale

and West Cumbria contexts to evaluate whether the proposed stadium could ever be viable without continuing public subsidies.

What written evidence do you believe needs to be considered or reconsidered?

Cost-benefit analyses should be re-run relying not on aspirational performances but rather on data describing the current situation. Anticipated benefits of hosting the RLWC should be excluded to align with the statement that sustainability is not predicated on hosting.

There should be a sustainability appraisal of the financial performance and sub-regional contexts of the two comparator projects in Leigh and Warrington, which should then be compared to the realistic local contexts of the proposed stadium.

Oral evidence - are there stakeholders or interested parties you feel have not been consulted in reaching the decision, views that have not been given sufficient weight, or other witnesses that you feel should be heard. Why?

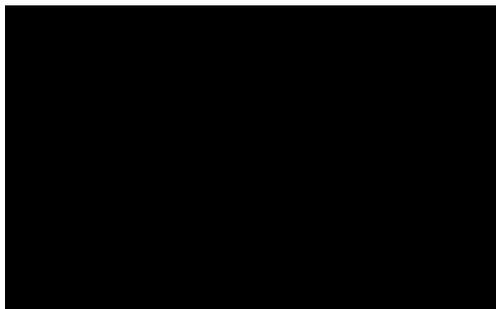
The primary objective of the proposed development is to provide a shared stadium for the two sports clubs – the other proposed tenants provide income streams to effectively subsidise the sports clubs. It would be useful and relevant to hear the case and concerns of the two clubs directly. Would cheaper/less complex options be more attractive? Have any been considered and if so, why were they rejected?

Evidence should also be sought from the proposed commercial tenants i.e. Sellafield and NHS. We need to know why they would wish/be prepared to cross-subsidise the sports clubs and thereby in effect increase the cost of their tenancies beyond competitive market alternatives. At what level of cross-subsidy would they feel obliged to terminate or renegotiate their tenancies?

Are there risks or repercussions to the decision which you feel have not been taken into account?

Local elections will take place on 2nd May. There is a high probability that control of the Council will change. The current drive to push this proposal forward beyond a 'fail-safe' before the elections take place is unnecessary for the sustainable delivery of the proposed project and attracts risks that could be mitigated if the determination was reserved to the new Council.

Cllr Bill Finlay



3rd April 2019