

CABINET

THURSDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 2020

At 6.15 pm

in the

ONLINE ACCESS, RBWM YOUTUBE

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART I

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Maidenhead United Football Club – Request for Relocation

Comments from Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Part I) – 24/11/20:

Barbara Richardson, Managing Director of RBWM Property Company Ltd, explained that the report was being brought to the Panel at their request and that they were able to provide any comments or questions before it was considered by Cabinet on Thursday 26th November 2020. The report originally went to Cabinet in December 2019, where the request for Maidenhead United Football Club (MUFC) to relocate was approved subject to a valuation of the proposed new site. The S123 report had now been completed and the report was coming to Cabinet this week, with the recommendation to approve the lease of the land for a set value. MUFC would need to seek planning for the stadium through the usual planning process. The recommendation included a 999 lease so that if MUFC ever ceased to exist, then the land would come back to RBWM for £1.

Councillor L Jones commented on the report summary saying that the football club ‘had worked hard to engage with local stakeholders’ but questioned if that was the responsibility of RBWM rather than MUFC, to hold a public consultation on the proposals. She also expressed a concern that should the plans go ahead, there would be a lot of sports clubs in one place, with Maidenhead Athletic Club and Maidenhead Rugby Club already at the site in Braywick.

Barbara Richardson explained that MUFC undertook an initial assessment of consultation with stakeholders like Sportsable. They also engaged with Maidenhead Athletics Club as the running track was an issue but it was agreed that a new running track would be created which the athletics club would be able to use. The rugby club had also been in discussions with MUFC but were less supportive of the proposals at this stage, as the plans would impact on their use of the area. Barbara Richardson said that there would be an engagement process as part of the planning application. Transport was also an important consideration, the new location would be easier to access being just outside Maidenhead Town Centre, whereas the current stadium in York Road was harder to access. The new site was also still relatively close to Maidenhead Train Station, providing good access for fans arriving by train.

Councillor L Jones said that RBWM had a social responsibility to ensure that stakeholders had been consulted and it was disappointing that no consultation had taken place with those that would be affected. She explained that she was not against the proposals in the report but felt like it was an omission by RBWM to not hold the consultation before now.

Barbara Richardson said that the consultation would be done separately to the planning process but this had not yet started yet.

Councillor Sharpe noted that the decision on the relocation had been taken last year and wondered whether the same decision would have been made now in the ‘Covid world’. He raised caution with the plans and felt that RBWM needed to be careful with this and questioned if it was the right thing to do in the current financial situation. Councillor Sharpe believed that MUFC were getting a good deal on the land.

Barbara Richardson informed Councillor Sharpe that the cost of the new stadium was entirely covered by MUFC and no funding was coming from RBWM. MUFC were purchasing the land at market value, based on the S123 valuation report.

Councillor L Jones commented on the recommendations in the report going to Cabinet and asked for reassurance that the consultation would be done before the lease was agreed. Barbara Richardson said that should the report be approved by Cabinet, the Heads of Terms would then be drawn up and the consultation process would start. The process would be subject to planning permission being agreed.