

Appendix 2

Response to a Council Question by Councillor Graves, Council Cabinet Member for Leisure and Direct Services

All existing users have been contacted and invited to meet management to discuss their needs and possible alternative venues. Letters have been sent to 11 schools and 30 clubs. Posters have been displayed to make casual users aware of the proposals. The consultation is ongoing. By preparing for a planned closure, we hope to be able to find alternate venues for most if not all of the current users. Mr Mayor if you would allow me I would like to outline in detail the progress so far in terms of the hard work sports centre management staff have achieved.

No one has yet mentioned the employees. All staff have been made aware of the closure and the Environmental Personnel and Principal Sports Centre Manager will be meeting all staff and Union Representatives on a 1-2-1 basis on the 12 and 13 July to discuss relocation, redeployment, etc. Some staff will be met after these dates due to their holidays, other work / personal commitments.

Out of a total of 18 coaching courses only one can not be relocated to another Centre.

The activity is 'GAP' Gymnastics. The reason for this is the time / space required to set up / dismantle the activity is not available.

'GAP' Gymnastics is a transition session between pre-school gymnastics and general gymnastics. I am reliably informed that this session may not be running in September anyway due to lack of numbers, however these children will get priority booking for Gymnastics at other sports centre's when they re-enrol.

The two indoor football leagues can not as yet be accommodated indoors although there is space outdoors. We will be meeting with the referee and the Centre Manager to discuss the options for relocation of the League. I am confident that a solution will be found before the centre closes.

An analysis of schools, clubs and organisations and available space in other sport centre's has now been completed.

Meeting has taken place with the Education Officer – PE and School Sport, Head teachers, Lancaster Sports Centre Manager and the Principal Sports Centre Manager to look at the relocation of Schools and the teaching support that is provided by staff at the Centre.

All Special Schools can be relocated, negotiations are still taking place but considering the short time work has commenced good progress has been made.

Primary Schools Football – the organiser is looking for an alternative venue in the North of the City but space is available at Moorways.

Schools - Special Needs Club - this can not be resolved until September when the schools return and their requirements are known. However, the session can be accommodated at Shaftesbury Sports Centre.

Littleover Community School would only require a space for Judo from September, this could be provided at Queens. They would not require any other facilities as they now have their own.

Da Vinci School do not require any facilities from September 2006 as they also have their own.

Private Schools - we are discussing options with the Private Schools that use Lancaster Sports Centre. Some though can not confirm what their requirements are until September.

Meetings will be taking place with the Youth Service, Education Officer – PE and School Sport, Sport Development Officers, Lancaster Sports Centre Manager and Principal Sports Centre Manager to look at the relocation of Pupil Referral Unit, Youth Service, Positive Activities for Young People and the 'teaching' support that is provided by staff at the Centre.

Adult Learning Group – we have yet to make contact with this group

Mental Health Group – we are currently having difficulties with this group as the options may not be suitable for them due to motivation, location and personal issues. More time is needed to resolve this.

Most Clubs have now been contacted to discuss relocation options.

Football

In general we are struggling to accommodate the programme of Indoor Football offered at Lancaster Sports Centre during peak time, although we are still looking at alternatives. I am concerned not to displace regular casual users who play badminton and table tennis, sports that cannot be played outside.

There is extensive provision outdoors for football at most sports centres and across the City. However, I have asked officers to look a little wider to accommodate these people.

Off Peak Time football can be accommodated indoors without any displacement of our current casual customers.

I will stress however that we are still discussing options with many of the Clubs as they want to see the venues offered before confirming.

Badminton

The two Badminton Clubs can be accommodated at Moorways Sports Centre, although the annual programme of events for the Sunday Club is proving a little more different, this is not affecting regular weekly play

Table Tennis

The Table Tennis Club can be accommodated at Moorways Sports Centre.

Moving onto ORGANISATIONS

Drama Academy

The Drama Academy can be accommodated at Queens Leisure Centre

Dwarf Athletics Association

The Dwarf Athletics can be accommodated at Moorways Sports Centre

LEAGUES

Ladies Hockey

This is a County wide League comprising teams from outside the City. The League can not be accommodated within City Council provision. We are working with sports centre managers in neighbouring authorities in Derbyshire to provide space. At present we are still looking for an indoor venue for the League

Volleyball League

Again this is a County wide League comprising teams from outside the City. The League can not be accommodated within City Council provision. We are working with sports centre managers in neighbouring authorities in Derbyshire to provide space. We have found accommodation at Rutland Sports Park, Erewash

MARTIAL ARTS

There are Five Martial Arts Groups that use Lancaster Sports Centre.

Currently we have a solution for four of the Clubs at Queens Leisure Centre and includes conversion of one of the Squash Courts at Queens Leisure Centre to a matted Martial Arts area.

We are unable to fully accommodate one Club (Tae Kwondo) due to the numbers involved. Moorways can accommodate them but the club feels it is not suitable due to it being on the opposite side of the city. We will be talking to Littleover Community School and Woodlands Secondary School to see if they can accommodate the Club.

CASUAL ACTIVITIES

Ladies Gym

There is no provision for a Ladies Only Gym within the City, however we do have a programme of Ladies Only Gym Sessions at the following Sports Centre's

Queens Leisure Centre

Monday 11.00 – 12.00

Wednesday 11.00 – 12.00

Thursday 11.00 – 12.00

Shaftesbury Sports Centre

Friday 10.00 – 1.00

Sunday 4.00 – 6.00

Springwood Leisure Centre offers a Ladies Activity Morning on a Tuesday and Shaftesbury is currently looking to increase the number of Ladies Only Gym sessions it runs.

Mixed / Free Weights Gym

There is no provision for Free Weights within City Council Gyms however options could include Champions Gym (opposite Radio Derby). This Gym will be closing within the next four weeks and relocating to Agard Street the owner is hoping for a seamless transition.

I can also report that Sport and Leisure have set up a 'working group' to oversee the planned closure and relocation of Activities. A meeting has been arranged with Gateway and we are meeting the Director of Derwent New Deal to discuss options around relocation of some activities that would benefit both Gateway and Lancaster Sports Centre.

As you can see we have acted swiftly to achieve this level of contact. The work is not yet complete but I am confident a higher level of solution will be had well before the closure takes place.