

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

CABINET

DATE: 20 MARCH 2006
REPORT OF: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
LEAD OFFICER: DEVELOPMENT MANAGER PFI & PPP

Agenda Item No.

26

SUBJECT: TWICKENHAM CHALLENGE

WARDS: TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE

KEY DECISION?: YES

IF YES, IN FORWARD PLAN?: YES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide information on public feedback on the Twickenham Challenge proposals. In the light of that, Cabinet consider whether it wishes to extend the consultation period and, if so, to decide whether to provide guidance on further consultation to occur in advance of the full appraisal report on the Twickenham Challenge proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Cabinet note the public feedback received to date in response to the Twickenham Challenge proposals (section 3.6).

2.2 Note that responses to the consultation are still being received (section 3.6).

2.3 Provide advice and guidance on whether to extend the consultation period and if so, further consultation measures (if any) that may occur in advance of the full appraisal report on the proposals.

3. DETAILS

3.1 The Twickenham Challenge was launched in February 2003 – advertising for expressions of interest from local community organisations wishing to propose facilities on part of the former Twickenham pool site. During 2003, Cabinet agreed to provide funding to assist the participants with business planning, developing feasibility designs and capital costings. The process was delayed due to the need to devote significant Council resources to the public inquiry into the Jubilee Gardens scheme.

- 3.2 3 proposals have now been submitted from the following organisations:
- Richmond Duke of Edinburgh's Award Forum – Duke of Edinburgh's Award Centre & various mixed uses
 - Busen Anglo Japanese Club – martial arts and community health & fitness facility
 - Environment Trust for Richmond upon Thames – Twickenham River Centre
- 3.3 The original intention was that the appraisal of the Twickenham Challenge proposals would take place during summer of 2005. However, the submission of one proposal was delayed. This was received in January 2006. The proposals were initially made public during the week of January 30th.
- 3.4 The proposals have been accessible through the following channels:
- Council's website
 - All borough lending libraries
 - All Council offices (meaning public reception areas) within the borough.
- The Council's website and local press articles advised of the consultation.
- 3.5 The period identified for public responses was approximately one month – with a deadline of March 3rd. Written responses or e-mails were invited from interested parties.
- 3.6 At the date of drafting this report, more than 250 letters and e-mails have been received – and since these are still forthcoming, it is reasonable to assume that more may follow. Responses have been received from all districts in the borough and there is a wide spread of age ranges represented in the responses. The responses include submissions on behalf of groups or organisations and individuals.
- 3.7 This is a very encouraging response indeed and it only goes to confirm the high levels of community interest.
- 3.8 Whilst the original intention was that this meeting would receive the appraisal report on the proposals, in the light of the public responses received (and the possibility that more will follow), it is considered proper to allow Members to consider:
- Whether the consultation period should be extended
 - If so, to provide advice and guidance on any further consultation measures (if members consider this necessary).
- 3.9 The reasons which generally support this approach are:
- Given the volume of responses received, it may take some time to provide detailed analysis of the responses – and, given the public interest in this topic, it would be more prudent to undertake this analysis in the appropriate detail
 - Whilst the responses are very encouraging, having been provided with this opportunity to do so, Members may wish to consider whether they wish to provide guidance on any further consultation in advance of the full appraisal report on the Twickenham Challenge proposals.
- 3.7 Given the interest and the possibility that more public feedback will be submitted, it is also considered prudent that the Twickenham Challenge does not become an election issue – this is considered unlikely to be in the best interests of the process nor the individual participants.
- 3.8 Therefore, an implication of this report is that the Twickenham Challenge appraisal report would be an early agenda item for Cabinet in the next administration. That report will provide a detailed appraisal of the proposals and analysis of public feedback received.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 This report deals with responses received during recent public consultation. Participants in the Twickenham Challenge were notified of this report in advance of its publication. The substance of the report is whether members wish to extend the period for consultation and, if so, to provide guidance on any further public consultation in advance of the Twickenham Challenge appraisal report.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Any financial implications are dependent on decisions taken by Members and additional budget provision may be required.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Twickenham Challenge is designed to further the regeneration of the former Twickenham Pool Site. It features leisure proposals submitted by a range of organisations and widespread public consultation on the proposals.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The principles identified in this report are considered to minimise 2 risks:
- Time allowance for detailed analysis of public responses to the Twickenham Challenge
 - Reduced scope for Twickenham Challenge to become an election issue – which would be considered neither to be in the interests of the process or the individual participants.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT/CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 If Members resolve to extend the consultation period, this would be in line with the Council's Constitution and legal obligations to seek the views of the public as part of its considerations.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This will be the last Cabinet meeting before the election period begins on 24 March. It would not be appropriate for a decision on a significant policy matter to be publicised by the authority during the election period. Accordingly, if the Cabinet wishes to extend the consultation timetable, it would seem sensible for the matter to be referred for consideration after the local elections on 4 May have taken place.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 Cabinet, 10 December 2002, 25 February 2003, 29 April 2003, 22 July 2003, November 11 2003, 22 June 2004, 20 July 2004.

11. CONTACTS

Gillian Norton. Chief Executive
020 8891 7908, g.norton@richmond.gov.uk

Tom McKeivitt. Development Manager PFI & PPP
020 8891 7970, t.mckeivitt@richmond.gov.uk