

Seymour Leisure Centre and Marylebone Library
Online meeting – Tuesday 13th July 2021 – 1 to 2pm
Attendees, meeting summary and actions

Attendees:

Councillor Paul Swaddle OBE – Cabinet Member for Finance and Smart City (PS)

pswaddle@westminster.gov.uk

Councillor Tim Barnes – Cabinet Member for Young People and Learning (TB)

tbarnes@westminster.gov.uk

Councillor Melvyn Caplan – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for City Management (MC)

mcaplan@westminster.gov.uk

Councillor Ian Rowley – Marylebone High Street ward (IR)

Councillor Barbara Arzymanow – Bryanston and Dorset Square ward (BA)

Project Team

Claire Nangle – Head of Capital Programmes, Corporate Property (CN)

cnangle@westminster.gov.uk

Dominic Wilde – Senior Development Manager (DW) dwilde@westminster.gov.uk

Anabel Lopez – Head of Libraries Service Quality (AL) alopez@westminster.gov.uk

Anne Holdsworth – Communications and Engagement (AH) aholdsworth@westminster.gov.uk

Steven Morrice – Programme Manager (SM) smorrice@westminster.gov.uk

Make Architects

Katy Ghahremani (KG) KatyGhahremani@makearchitects.com

Amanda Sexton (AS) AmandaSexton@makearchitects.com

Hamza Shaikh (HS) hamzashaikh@makearchitects.com

Meeting Summary

On 13 July 2021, the council held an online update meeting where it updated on the Seymour Leisure Centre refurbishment project, explained next steps and time frames and invited residents to contribute their views. Approximately 70 local residents were in attendance.

The delivery of this project remains a priority for the council and as such is endorsed by three Cabinet Members:

- Councillor Paul Swaddle, Cabinet Member for Finance and Smart City
- Councillor Melvyn Caplan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for City Management
- Councillor Tim Barnes, Cabinet Member for Young People and Learning

History of meetings to date

March 2021:

- Confirmation of Council commitment
- Commitment to Marylebone library reprovision
- Commitment to swimming and other leisure provision including a sports hall and studios

May 2021:

- Exploration of options to enhance service provision
- Commitment to expedite the project given previous delays
- Planning application submitted for temporary gates to prevent anti-social behaviour

Key themes of Questions and Answers

Existing building / Building management

- One attendee noted an interest in more space for their martial arts group.
 - Cllr Swaddle responded by saying he wants all clubs currently using the building to be able to continue using it post refurbishment
- Has the roof been surveyed and when it will be fixed?
 - Cllr Caplan responded to say he is aware of the roof issues and that the council is looking at all essential repairs
- How much space is being lost for leisure centre uses with the library moving there?
 - Cllr Barnes said space is being added to the building so the total space available for gym, library and other uses together will be greater in the future than now
- Attendees asked for clarification on the "temporary gates" to be installed at the rear of Seymour Leisure Centre and if the gates open and close, they're still permanent
 - The gates will be solid, open and close and permanent for the time period that they are there. The planning application is temporary on the basis that the gates may only be in place for a few years until the refurbishment may make them redundant.
- What is happening inside the mansard roof space and are these spaces viable for use?
 - Cllr Caplan said we have looked into this. It's a question of balancing the cost against the benefit of potential uses. Overall, we think that there is enough space in the building currently to incorporate all uses without using the roof space.

Café

- A number of views were expressed on the new café space. Some attendees questioned the need to have a cafe as there are many already in the area. Another said a cafe is important for parents and carers who end up spending a lot of time in venues and cannot leave children unattended.
- An attendee also raised concerns that a café is not suitable for children and that a refreshment area would be better suited.
- Cllr Caplan confirmed that there might be a 'community space' with refreshments provided rather than a traditional café.

Pools

- A number of attendees including regular pool users noted that existing pool space is beautiful and expressed how well-appreciated it is.
- A number highlighted the importance of having a good swimming pool in this location accessible for everyone, especially noting its benefits for the younger generation.

- One attendee recommended the council consider a pool with adjustable pool depth to allow water polo as well as normal swimming uses. They noted there are not many pools that offer adequate depth for this sport.
 - Cllr Caplan responded to say this is something the council will consider.

Library

- A number of residents felt strongly about the library being a community space for supported learning, IT skills and a reading.
- Attendees agreed that an IT space is essential for local residents, especially those who don't have IT at home or need help with using it.
 - Cllr Barnes responded to say the council is looking at all requirements and appreciates everyone's needs and ideas.
- Is there any plan to house the original Marylebone library?
- Has it always been the intention to move the library to Seymour Leisure Centre?
 - Cllr Barnes clarified it has not always been, but that this has been the plan for some time and since other options have been considered and rejected as unsuitable. A new library at Church Street is also being developed along with the new homes.

Architects

- Will Make Architects will be taking the project forward.
 - Claire Nangle (Head of Capital Programmes) said we are procuring architects now and hope that Make will submit a tender. However, the process is open to all architects who are on the Council's 'Dynamic Purchasing System'

Sports courts

- A few questions were asked about the badminton and squash courts moving and how this may affect the space for other groups using the basement.
 - This is a level of detail that we don't have currently. The overall aim of the project is to increase flexible space for local groups to use.

Club and groups

- Marylebone Mums & Dads requested a space that can be used for hire at a reasonable price. Also asked what the plans are for an interim soft play space.
 - Cllr Caplan responded to say this is being looked into.
- An attendee who is a member of Serpentine Running Club and local resident asked for details of how to put forward requirements and aspirations through the informal consultation.
 - Further informal engagement will be held over the summer ahead of pre-planning consultation. In the meantime, you can submit feedback online at westminster.gov.uk/Seymour.

Clubs and groups during refurbishment

- The martial arts club is currently open every day all day and an attendee from the club asked if, post refurbishment, the club will still have the same facilities.
 - Cllr Caplan responded to say he fully understood their needs and the council will be having direct conversations with all existing clubs. He also asked them to use the website to record their feedback.
- A few attendees asked about the use of the basement space.
 - Cllr Barnes said there are no specific plans for groups yet, but anyone making use of the space at present will be welcome to look at the options to book in future.

The project

- How long will the building be closed for?
 - Planning process in December 2021. Cllr Caplan said the Council will do the rebuilding in stages, so that not everything is closed at the same time.
- The Council should think about residents' needs as well as those of schools.
- Are there any working groups residents can join?
 - Cllr Barnes reaffirmed that this meeting, and the wider consultation are part of our local engagement.
- A few people said that the Council should consider the overall ambience, currently the plans sound frenetic and hopes the sound insulation will be adequate with quiet zones introduced.

Gym

- Weights / machines gym are very popular with men and women and well used and want to know where it is within the plans.

Actions from the meeting

1. Meeting summary (this document), PDF of the slides, to be circulated to meeting attendees and posted on the dedicated webpage.
2. Date of next meeting to be arranged after the summer
 - a. In the meantime, ask stakeholders for their preferred time slot – AM/PM/Eve
 - b. 'Hold the date/time' in diaries – agenda to follow
3. Attendees to promote the next update meeting to membership, once date is secured, to secure as many participants as possible

Additional Information

Programme timeline & next steps

DATE	MILESTONE
June	Make Architects finalise options
June-July	Tender main consultants including Architect
Mid-July	Public Meeting
August	Opportunity to feedback on early ideas - online consultation
August-December	Detailed design progresses
August – December	Ongoing community consultation and engagement
December	Formal planning process commences

Ways of working together:

Regularity of meetings to be arranged quarterly - next meeting planned after the summer online informal consultation from August 2021.

Confirmed time slot with options of morning/afternoon, early evening.

Attendees to cast vote [here](#).

Useful links

For project update: [Seymour Leisure Centre Project | Westminster City Council](#)

To sign up for updates: [Westminster City Council \(list-manage.com\)](#)

End of notes.