

**MEMBER QUESTION TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING,
COMMUNITIES AND SPORT at People Scrutiny Committee - 1 June 2017**

Question from Councillor Musgrave and response.

Given the apparently rising costs of the St Sidwell's project, is the administration still proceeding with the proposal to outsource the operation of the leisure facility?

Response by Councillor Phil Bialyk, Portfolio Holder Health and Wellbeing, Communities and Sport

The Leisure Centre Programme Board has made the decision to proceed with the procurement of a leisure operator to manage the new facility, this decision was taken during 2014 and reported to full Council. This is in line with the procedure adopted to deal with the Councils existing leisure facilities.

A similar question to this was raised at the recent Extraordinary Council meeting held in March, and I must apologise to everyone that if, in responding members did not follow my reply.

The Leisure Centre Programme Board has not changed or is not proposing to change this decision.

Members were invited to attend a presentation by Council officers, on just "How" we were intending to procure the contract. The contract we believe will deliver benefits to the Council, the workers within the new contract and the citizens of Exeter.

The contract will include the provision of workers' rights and for a Trade Union to be recognised. Users will benefit from a sensible pricing structure and groups using the facilities will form part of the consultation process. Governance and control of the contract together with accountability will form part of the arrangements.

A soft market exercise has taken place and results show great interest from the major players in the market. This will bring benefits to the operation and will offer the chance to re-visit the existing contract, which comes to an end in 2020.

We must be, as a City aspirational, and we intend to bring forward plans to improve our existing leisure facilities, a report is in the process of being produced and will be brought to Scrutiny at the appropriate time.

Members will be invited to a "members briefing" at which key elements of the Operational contract will be discussed and opinions sought prior to the tender going out. This will be an opportunity for all members to be involved.

I have always stated that we intend to consult and invite opinions on these matters, and this I believe we are doing.

I welcome this opportunity and hopefully others to explain the case for improving our facilities and achieving our aim of making the City the most active in the South West.