



## **Palfrey & Pleck LNP**

### **Camden Street Sports Arena**

**30<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

**Portfolio: Councillor Louise Harrison, Leisure & Culture**

**Service Area:** Greenspace Services

#### **Summary of report**

Officers of Walsall Council to enter into dialogue with local residents in relation to the future of Camden Street sports arena.

#### **Recommendations**

That the Pleck & Palfrey LNP note & support the contents of this report

#### **Background and report detail**

Members will recall that at their 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006 meeting they requested that a report be provided in relation to the future of Camden Street sports arena and the Union of Muslim Organisations' request to take over the management of the arena.

In the late '90's Camden Street resident staff were withdrawn from the sports arena as a result of financial constraints and the maintenance of the site was brought into line with other green spaces which includes a fortnightly litter pick & twice yearly herbicidal treatment.

In 2001 a public consultation exercise was undertaken involving all residents who lived around the site.

75 letters were sent out to local residents requesting their views on the arena. 9 individual replies were made requesting that the area be replaced with private housing, one petition was received with 7 signatures requesting that the site be closed, one petition was received with 40 signatures requesting that the site be replaced with 'owned and managed residential houses', one letter was received requesting that the play area be removed and the area landscaped and one letter was received asking for private houses to be built but for the play area and landscaping to remain. Clearly, the significant majority indicated that the sports arena be replaced and that a residential development be considered.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2002 the Walsall District Committee resolved that Camden Street sports arena site be declared surplus to requirements.

At this time the Borough did not have a Greenspace Strategy and it was therefore not possible for Walsall Council to formally declare the site surplus to requirement.

On the 5th October 2006 Walsall Council's Greenspace Strategy was approved by the Neighbourhood Scrutiny & Performance Panel and will be submitted in November 2006 to Cabinet for formal approval and adoption. The Greenspace Strategy states that the Palfrey & Caldmore area is deficient in accessible open space provision and therefore the site should not be declared surplus to requirement. The Strategy further states that compared to other green space in the borough of Walsall Camden Street sports arena and play area is a high quality / low value site and therefore the site should be looked at from the perspective of maintaining the quality and undertaking further assessment on the value of the site with the aim of enhancing its present primary purpose or considering if it would be of a higher value if converted to another primary purpose.

It is therefore the intention of Greenspace Services to:

- Consult with the local community within a 400metre radius of the site in relation to the future of the arena.
- Provide an update report to the next meeting of the Palfrey & Pleck LNP.

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