

Lionel Road Liaison Group

Notes of 6 October 2008 meeting

06 October 2008

Attendees:

- Steve Lancashire (SL), chair
- Brian Burgess (BB)
- Peter Murphy (PM)
- Sanjay Sharma (SS)
- Dave Hughes (DH)
- Peter Ladhams (PL)
- Donald Kerr (DK)
- Tim Lockett (TL)
- Phil Marchant (PM)
- Bela Cunha (BC)
- Patricia Wright (PW)
- Matthew Rockel (MR)
- Andrew Doe, notes

Welcome and apologies:

SL: Welcomed all present to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Matt Harmer, Mike Simson (Patricia Wright instead) Eileen Henderson, Steve Edwards and Chris Gammon.

Transport presentation:

BB: Made a presentation on the community benefits of the scheme (it was noted this presentation will, as with previous presentations, be available on the Brentford Community Stadium website.) It included sections on health and wellbeing, the example of Bromley by Bow Healthy Living Centre, community engagement and participation, what a community stadium is likely to include, the regeneration benefits of a community stadium, leisure facilities, the podium and hub entrance, and how the community stadium can be a beacon for other similar projects.

Discussion:

MR: Comments that the example of Bromley-by-Bow quite different in that it evolved from a small church hall to become a larger project in the community.

BB: The church has many innovations which we can learn from. It has an innovative lay-out, is used five days a week as a nursery, and has a variety of other community uses. These are the kinds of things that the Brentford Community Stadium will be looking to emulate. On non-matchdays, which are most days, the only football club staff present are office staff, teaching staff and groundspeople, meaning that on most days there will be a lot more going on in the community stadium than football.

MR: How many people would non-matchday uses attract? The building design will be important. It has to be compatible for football and non-football uses.

TL: States that the organisation he works for issues grants, and that most grant applications that he comes across are regarding young people, housing and the elderly. Says that putting too much emphasis on health provision might be out of balance with other things that people want and need. For example, there is a real shortage of facilities for young people in the Brentford area and that there is also a shortage of youth workers. On housing, he is aware of people living in very poor conditions and that this needs to be addressed. There needs to be more emphasis on involving the elderly who have different requirements than a day at the football.

BB: The design is taking different sports into account and different types of fans. Facilities for young people will be an important part of the proposals. The idea of encouraging more youth workers is an excellent one. We want to encourage, through the design, spaces that can be used for a range of uses.

BC: The idea of a youth club in the evening is a good one. Suggests that the project team consider a bowling alley as well.

PW: There are a variety of communities in Brentford and the surrounding area that need to be taken into account. It is not just youth clubs that need to be considered, but other clubs and evening classes as well. Wants the community stadium to be about regeneration, to help facilitate an improvement in the retail offering in the local area, and to link with other organisations such as the Watermans Centre and the Kew Bridge Steam Museum.

DH: The scheme is being designed with flexibility in mind. We don't want to design spaces for a single use. We also want to encourage people to design the spaces in such a way that they find out about other facilities and clubs that they might be interested in - for example if someone visited the community stadium for swimming they might also notice that there are evening classes that they could attend. We want the building to be an enabler.

PW: States that it is important for the community stadium to encourage locally generated income, not just from retail use. It will also be important to make the entrance friendly, as she believes football stadiums can be daunting and uninviting buildings.

DK: Believes that the stadium will be a community stadium for the whole community, not a stadium that is creating tailored facilities for specific uses. If the uses are separated too much then the stadium would not function as a true community stadium. The stadium needs to provide spaces that can be used for many uses.

TL: Agreed with previous point. There is tremendous scope with this community stadium to incorporate a range of uses. Incorporating a youth club would be a positive step. It would be good if you were able to be more specific about what community facilities will be included, and if you could commit to uses such as a youth club or evening classes.

MR: Believes that the importance of the buildings' physical aspects should not be underestimated. Successful buildings are flexible, and allow for uses to change over time. There needs to be a series of spaces that can be used for many things. St Paul's church, venue for this meeting, is a good example of such a building.

PW: Would it be possible for other people to use the pitch?

BB: There are a couple of weeks between the end of the football season and the beginning of the next season that the pitch is used for fun days and for 5-a-side competitions, but the grass needs to be protected at other times of the year.

DK: The Learning Zone uses the pitch for its classes in an indirect way – for example by using the pitch measurements for figures in mathematics questions.

BB: Sooner rather than later it would be good to set up an early version of a Brentford Community Stadium user group to pick up on the useful ideas and points made.

TL: There is a need to develop the communications tools, such as the leaflets, so that they are accessible to all ages, including those under 10.

Notes of 8th September meeting:

BC: Draws attention to the omission of a question she asked regarding matchday policing, and specifically whether the club would be responsible for paying for matchday policing, and whether stewards would be used rather than police?

BB: Brentford FC don't have to pay for policing at the moment, but there may be a pressure to pay for the stewarding of matches in the future.

The remainder of the 8th September notes were agreed.

Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

Communications:

DH: Displayed a board of the Brentford Community Stadium hoarding design and invited comments. He pointed out the main feature is a huge website address, given that things are likely to change in the coming months. Those present felt it a good idea.

SL: Had distributed a report and draft distribution list. He drew the group's attention to the website, saying that it is regularly updated and that it would be good if members of the group could start spreading the news about the website through word of mouth. In the meantime efforts to distribute the brochure will continue. Some present have already offered to help with the distribution and more brochures have been brought to give to other group members this evening. BC has volunteered to look after distribution to the libraries.

TL: Suggests that presenting to school assemblies would be a good idea, and a good opportunity to distribute brochures as well.

SL: Agrees with TL's point, saying that written materials distributed in tandem with a verbal presentation are more effective.

PW: If you are visiting schools, include Strand on the Green School. Also consider the following: Wellesley Road Practice, and local shops such as those on Stile Hall Parade and Brentford High Street. Asks whether it is possible to refresh the newsletter so that people get the next part of the story, or information on how the football club is performing.

MR: Suggests that the links to the Community Stadium website from associated websites are made more obvious.

TL: Consider advertising in local papers. He believes that the steady drip, drip of news is key.

BC: Mentions that she was interviewed for an article in next week's Hounslow Chronicle, and was quoted as saying that Brentford Football Club is the area's "best kept secret".

DH: Is there a hit-count on the community stadium website?

SL: We will speak to Sprunt to assess whether getting a hit count figure is possible. Also emphasises that the communications programme is ongoing and requests that people email Four Communications with any further suggestions.

Any other business:

No further items were raised.

Date of next meeting:

Topic, as agreed at earlier meeting is to be Financial Viability. The date is Monday 10th November, between the times of 7pm and 9pm. Venue to be arranged.