



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure
18 Commercial Road
St John's Campus
Barrhead
Glasgow
G78 1AJ

24th May 2018

Dear Sirs,

East Renfrewshire Council Leisure in Eastwood: Looking to the future.

We write with reference to the above consultation and trust that you take this letter as our joint submission to the consultation.

Firstly, allow us to express our gratitude to the council that this consultation is being undertaken. It has been the case for some time that the current leisure facilities at Eastwood Park, whilst adequate and used by many constituents, were in need of renovation. It is worth noting as well that the excellent facility at the Barrhead Foundry is a great asset, but more is required in terms of modern leisure provision on the Eastwood side of the authority.

We are not of the belief that continued maintenance of the current facility at Eastwood Park will be sufficient to meet the growing demand for leisure facilities. Option one in the consultation does not go far enough towards addressing the needs of the local community and we share the concern of the council that any major failure regarding the swimming pool and thus closing the centre would be most unsatisfactory and must be avoided. As Councillor Swift has commented, the council have spent £211,000 in the last 7 years on Eastwood leisure centre. Furthermore, the council are proposing to replace Neilston Leisure Centre but has spent almost 3 times as much on it over the same period (£608,000) to provide leisure facilities for just over 5,000 residents versus the 67,000 people served by Eastwood leisure Centre. We share the concern of our Conservative Council colleagues that the current leisure centre at Eastwood Park is no longer fit for purpose, despite having served the community well for a number of years.

However, we are not persuaded of the argument that an entirely new site is required to be sought. The infrastructure is there at Eastwood Park to cope with parking and public transport. As you will be aware, the council have recently spent a significant amount of money fully resurfacing the carpark and ensuring that the carriageways in Eastwood Park are fit for use. Furthermore, we are not persuaded that the current sites that the council have identified as potential areas for development are suitable. The park adjacent to Shawood Crescent is one area which we have already received

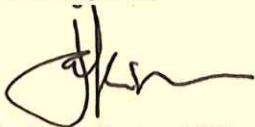
correspondence from concerned constituents about potential development. We do not believe that this site is big enough, nor has sufficient infrastructure, to cope with a project on the scale as is being proposed. We note that similarly, Woodfarm Pavilion Playing fields already hosts two football pitches and so we do not see how this could accommodate a full swimming pool, indoor games halls, a gym, a café, in addition to 200 car parking spaces and additional outdoor facilities.

One such site which perhaps is large enough is Broomburn Park, however we would urge against any development on the site in the strongest possible terms. The strength of local opinion on the subject is considerable, with some 96% of local residents surveyed by us last year opposing the idea. Furthermore, whilst conducting our parliamentary survey last autumn where some 1,200 households were consulted, 4 in every 5 local residents felt that development on Broomburn Park would have a "Very Negative" impact on the local area. We would urge the council to consider the will of local residents and ensure that Broomburn Park is not developed on as a result of this, or indeed any other, consultation.

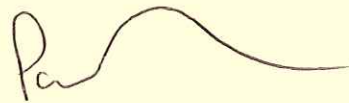
It is worth also considering the financial impact of relocating to an entirely new site. In the consultation, your estimations are that building on a new site will cost some £25-30 million, compared to £15 for redevelopment on the existing Eastwood Park site. Given the strain that local authority budgets are under we are of the belief that a more cost effective development on the existing site is preferable.

Finally, we would like to emphasise that we are committed to helping the council in any way that we can in ensuring that high quality leisure facilities are available to the people of East Renfrewshire however we want to ensure that the decision made is in the best interest of residents. Any refurbishment or new leisure facility will have to stand the test of time and as such we want to urge the council to consider each option carefully, and the implications it may have. Building on our green spaces is both unwanted and unhealthy and we would be strongly opposed to doing so. However, redevelopment on the existing site, with the current infrastructure, including the new football pitches at St Ninian's High School in partnership with Giffnock Soccer Centre, seems the most financially viable as well as being popular with local residents.

Kind Regards,



Jackson Carlaw MSP
Member for Eastwood



Paul Masterton MP
Member for East Renfrewshire