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**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Meeting  
**Subject:** Update on Bransbury Park Leisure Centre  
**Date of meeting:** 17 November 2023  
**Report by:** Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services  
**Wards affected:** Milton, Eastney & Craneswater

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**1. Requested by**

1.1. Cabinet Member for Culture Leisure and Economic Development

**2. Purpose**

2.1. To provide the Cabinet Member with update on the status of the Bransbury Park leisure centre project.

**3. Information Requested**

**3.1. Project status**

3.1.1 The project is fully resourced and is actively progressing towards a detailed design. Progression is continuing despite the effects of extremely high construction industry inflation.

3.1.2 It is clear, from information received from architects and specialist designers, that all comparable leisure centre construction schemes in the UK are facing similar inflationary challenges. Most are dealing with this in the same way as this project is doing – value engineering and reviewing the scope of the project.

**3.2. Value engineering**

3.2.1 The multi-disciplinary design team, in response to increasing costs, is targeting a specification that utilises off-the-shelf solutions instead of bespoke design. This will result in a more utilitarian final specification.

**3.3. Project scope**

3.3.1 The top-level scope of the project has remained unchanged since the start of the project:

- A main swimming pool and learner pool ('wet' leisure provision)
- A 'dry-side' health and fitness offer to support and complement the pools
- Additional accommodation to benefit the community (originally a community centre, now a GP surgery)

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- 3.3.2 Consultation with residents, the leisure operator BH Live, and Sport England has clearly described the composition of the 'wet' facilities – a main pool and a learner pool. The composition of the 'dry' facilities has been less well defined through consultation, other than the need for a gym to drive membership levels, supported by a latent demand study.
- 3.3.3 Since the start of the project the dry facility mix has included a small sports hall (2 or 3 courts). Advice from Sport England and BH Live is clear that a small hall is sub-optimal as it restricts the range of sports that can be played in it, and in most cases a 4-court hall is regarded as a minimum. Sport England defines halls with 2 courts or fewer as 'multi-purpose halls' rather than 'sports halls'. The Bransbury Park site cannot accommodate a 4-court hall.
- 3.3.4 It has become apparent, over the course of this project, that a 4-court sports hall at a school site in the centre of the city which is increasingly likely to soon become available to the community, where it previously had not been. This has allowed the project team to explore the possibility of removing the small sports hall which will significantly positively impact the financial viability of the project. Discussion with Badminton England has suggested that they would support the 4-court hall over the 2-court hall as beneficial to badminton clubs.
- 3.3.5 Consequently in order to allow time to revise designs to explore options without a sports hall the planning application, which was due to be submitted on 31 October, will now be submitted in early 2024 instead.
- 3.3.6 Officers are working towards a community use agreement (CUA) with the school to secure the facility for the community which, if confirmed, will provide a better overall solution for badminton provision in the city than the proposed two court sports hall would have been able to achieve.
- 3.3.7 Members will be updated again as soon as there is certainty on the new school provision.

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Signed by  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

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**Portsmouth**  
CITY COUNCIL

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>