

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 38

Subject: King Alfred Leisure Centre Regeneration Project

Date of meeting: 25 September 2025

Report of: Director of Governance and Law

Contact Officer: Name: John Peel
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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Action Required of Cabinet:

- 1.1 That the Minutes Extract of the Place Overview & Scrutiny meeting held on 22 September 2025 be noted.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

3.00pm 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

HOVE TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair) Cattell, Loughran, Fowler, Mackey, Winder, Fishleigh, Sykes and Lyons

PART ONE

33 THE KING ALFRED LEISURE CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECT

- 33.1 Cllr Robins introduced the King Alfred Leisure Centre Regeneration Project. Key points included: Alliance Leisure were appointed as the delivery partner and giving the council access to the UK Leisure Framework which offers the best range of leisure-oriented consultants and contractors; the designs attached are the concept designs up to RIBA stage 2; the financial implications suggest a higher capital receipt for the part of the site to be disposed of for a residential-led development site and the figures reflect updated revenue estimates from the new facility which are also higher. However, the total capital cost has increased partly due to inflation in the construction sector, partly due to a much greater contingency allowance, and partly due to an enhanced specification that will deliver a larger and better equipped facility than the one proposed to Cabinet in July 2024; overall, the annual revenue costs to the council are significantly reduced. They are asking Cabinet for approval to proceed to the next stage.
- 33.2 Mark Healy presented to the committee, the headline points being that increased project costs are now £65m which includes almost £10m for inflation and contingency, the size of the fitness suite has been increased; there will be a family entertainment zone (e.g. soft play) and leisure water. The scope of the project has also been expanded to include a new regenerated public realm with a plaza and underground car park. The site conditions are challenging due to elevation level changes. They have had 2 independent assessments for the land valuation and revenue projections. They are adhering to the commitment to keep the old King Alfred centre open while the new facility is built and will be demolishing the site between the two areas. The current car park will not be available while the new facility is being built, which will be a revenue loss to the council.
- 33.3 Cllr Cattell asked why the existing building could not be used for the new facility and why they are not including a 50m pool. Mark Healy explained that structural engineers concluded that refurbishment of the existing building wasn't cost effective: the building wasn't purpose built or designed, the sports halls built over the swimming pool are the wrong size and shape,

there is a poor use of space which adds to running costs. The new design takes in modern standards and expectations of the users. Sustainability is also a key theme. In relation to the 50m pool, the majority of swimmers want smaller pools which was the steer from users and from leisure experts and governing bodies including Swim England and Sport England.

- 33.4 Cllr Loughran asked about financial modelling and the ticketing system, whether there will be different charges for residents and non-residents. She also asked about the cycle parking as it is a bit small. James Hengeveld said they will liaise with the new leisure operator about ticketing. The underground car park is bigger than the building itself and includes specific secure cycle parking
- 33.5 Cllr Lyons asked for a specific breakdown of the increase in costs considering money is tight, and how many property units will be in the residential build. Cllr Taylor said that if we want a vibrant city we need to invest. There are a few key large projects going on in the city that do have high costs such as Madeira Terraces in the east and the King Alfred in the west, that are vital for the services, infrastructure and facilities that the city needs. The increased cost is due to the changed scope of the project, contingency and inflation.
- 33.6 Cllr Sykes asked questions about the cost change, the total floor area and grant money from Homes England. Sam Smith said that they are not agreeing the price at this point and it will be brought back to Cabinet before entering into consultation and that Homes England have made it clear they are happy to fund the scheme.
- 33.7 Cllr Fishleigh asked about the costs as the budget is not looking good and they should tighten their belts and finish projects that have already been started such as Black Rock. If costs have increased by 30% they should go back to the drawing board. She also said that Peacehaven doesn't have a swimming pool and it seems the investment is going west. Cllr Robins said the next project in the Sports Facilities Investment Plan is looking to the east to provide something similar.
- 33.8 Cllr Fowler asked about disabled access and whether there will be diving boards and table tennis. Mark Healy said that they are engaging with disabled groups in the design and the team have best practice in accessibility. The sports hall is a 6 court hall, larger than the 5 court hall in the current facility, and can accommodate table tennis easily. The hall design will also take account of the needs of other activities with more challenging requirements like roller hockey and roller derby.
- 33.9 Mary Davies from the Older Peoples' Council asked whether they would be consulted on the EIA and disability access points. Sam Smith said he would be very happy to.
- 33.10 Cllr Evans spoke on behalf of a resident who was asking about badminton and table tennis and whether sharing the same space in the sports hall would cause issues. Mark Healy said the sports hall will be multiple use but how it is managed is down to the operator. The future operator may look to

sometimes schedule table tennis on one side of the hall and badminton on the other, and the size and shape of the hall enables that to be done safely and efficiently

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee RESOLVED to note the report.