

**LEISURE (PFI) BOARD held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 1 AUGUST 2002 at 10.00 am**

Present: Councillor R J Copping– Chairman.
Councillors R A E Clifford and A R Row.

Officers in attendance: Mrs E Forbes, Mrs L Bunting, F Chandley,
Ms K Chapman, J B Dickson and Mrs S McLagan.

Also present later in the meeting: Paul Buckland – Devonshires.

PFI 187 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure (PFI) Board held on 9 July 2002 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PFI 188 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute PFI 184 – TUPE List

The Project Manager reported that a joint meeting had been held involving the Council, Leisure Connection and DC Leisure where various issues had been discussed. Further meetings had been scheduled over the following months. All sides were fully committed to a smooth handover. Leisure Connection were to hold presentations to all staff at the Leisure Centre on 9 and 10 September. Individual appointments for staff would also be made to help allay any doubts that they may have with the takeover.

PFI 189 SENIOR OFFICER LEISURE BOARD

The Project Manager stated that meetings of the Senior Officer Leisure Board were now only held as and when considered necessary for any major issues which required discussion. There was nothing to report.

PFI 190 UPDATE ON PROGRESS

(i) General Progress

Work had now commenced at the Helena Romanes School with the building being marked out and four site huts erected. A meeting had taken place between the Development Control Manager and Pellikaan regarding boundaries and a car park layout had been prepared. Pellikaan had also had talks with the owner of a neighbouring property concerning landscaping.

(ii) Great Crested Newts

The great crested newts had now been moved to another part of the site.

(iii) Turf Cutting Ceremony

It was hoped that the turf cutting ceremony would take place before the end of August. Pellikaan wished to have a number of their executives present at

the ceremony and a representative from the school would also be invited.

PFI 191 CONSULTANCY COSTS

A report had been prepared by the Project Manager outlining the cost of consultancy advice which had been required to enable Contractual and Financial Close to occur.

The report was discussed at length. Members expressed concern at the escalation of these costs, particularly the legal costs incurred by Devonshires. Whilst they acknowledged that, at several critical points in the process, they had confirmed their commitment to the scheme and the will to overcome the many obstacles, they sought confirmation that it had been necessary for Devonshires to carry out the additional work and that the costs had been properly incurred.

Officers confirmed that, whilst legal costs had substantially exceeded estimates, the time and work detailed in the relevant invoices had been expended and was necessary in order to conclude the necessary documentation.

Mr Paul Buckland from Devonshires was then invited to attend the meeting to explain the basis of his firm's charges. Members raised various points which Mr Buckland duly answered. The Chairman thanked Mr Buckland who then left the meeting.

After further discussion, it was accepted that, although the costs were substantially in excess of the amount originally anticipated they were justified by the considerable amount of work which had arisen because of the unexpected complexity of the scheme which was necessary to bring it to Contractual and Financial Close.

RECOMMENDED that the Resources Committee be asked to approve the additional legal consultancy costs of £166,028.48 to be funded from Capital Receipts.

PFI 192 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF LEISURE (PFI) BOARD

The Senior Legal Officer circulated copies of the revised terms of reference of the Leisure (PFI) Board.

RECOMMENDED that the revised terms of reference be presented to the Full Council meeting to be held on 22 October 2002 for approval.

PFI 193 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Project Manager said that she would prepare a fixed programme of meetings for the rest of the Council year.

The meeting ended at 11.35 pm