

CENTRE OF DISCUSSION

Rushmoor considers options for future of Farnborough Leisure Centre as part of civic quarter proposals

By THOMAS DEAN

Thomas.dean@trinitymirror.com

.Twitter: @tombendean

FARNBOROUGH Leisure Centre was a hot topic of debate among councillors as they met to discuss current leisure contracts and future plans for the site.

Questions have been raised about the impact of the Farnborough civic quarter proposals on the leisure centre and whether a new facility would be built as part of those plans.

At the Leisure and Youth Policy and Review panel meeting on Thursday March 19, it was announced that although no concrete decision had been made,

there are a few options available to Rushmoor Borough Council should they take the decision to rebuild the facility.

One would be to build on the current site, keeping the swimming pool and gym open while the rest of the centre is demolished to enable a new leisure centre to be built in its place.

If a new-build is the preference then there are two routes the borough council could take - the first being a design-and-build contract alongside a separate operate-and-maintain contract; the second being one combined contract covering design, build, operation and maintenance.

Rushmoor plans to consider both of these options over the coming months as the master-plan for the civic quarter is finalised. Pete Amies, the borough council's head of community and environmental services, said: "We were asked if there were to be a new leisure centre included as part of the Farnborough civic quarter proposals, where it would be sited. It was explained that no decision had been made but one option could be to build on the current site."

"This could be done by keeping the swimming pool and gym open while the rest of the centre is demolished to enable a new leisure centre to be built in its place"

"Once the new centre is opened, containing a new gym and swimming pool, the old swimming pool and gym would be demolished and a multi-storey car park built. There is an option to retain the leisure centre but if the preference is for a new-build there are generally two approaches. In the new-build options, the contractor would take on responsibility for maintaining the building. These and other options will be considered over the coming months."