

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Decision Made: 3 April 2020

Leisure Centre Co-Vid 19

Decision Made

That the council participates in a collaborative agreement between itself, Maidstone Leisure Trust, Serco Leisure Ltd and three Primary Care Networks at Maidstone South, Maidstone Central and ABC to provide Covid-19 treatment facilities (a "hot site") at the Maidstone Leisure Centre site and which conform to the requirements put in place by the Clinical Commissioning Group.

That the council gives permission for the Maidstone Leisure Trust to not deliver its regular contracted services during this time so that it can instead support the Covid-19 healthcare response.

That the council gives permission for Maidstone Leisure Trust to use the leisure centre car park for the establishment of a temporary, outdoor treatment site.

That the council gives permission for Maidstone Leisure Trust to use the leisure centre building for clinical staff ancillary facilities and health care administration.

These decisions are for a temporary period of time and will only be in effect during the Covid-19 pandemic period. The council expects the Maidstone Leisure Trust to continue with its regular contracted services when the Covid-19 pandemic period ceases.

Reasons for Decision

This decision has been taken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- It enables Maidstone Borough Council to support its local NHS partners during a time of great need
- It enables Maidstone Borough Council to support residents and communities at a time of great need
- It creates increased access to medical treatment for local residents and protects GP surgeries for use by patients not affected by COVID-19
- It makes best use of Maidstone Borough Council assets at a time when their regular use is restricted by the Covid-19 regulations.

The “hot site” has required variation to the Council’s current contractual agreements with Maidstone Leisure Trust and requires planning consent. With respect to the former a letter of intent was put in place contemporaneously with the facility in the Leisure Centre car park being constructed and actions put in hand for a formal variation to the council’s contract with the Maidstone Leisure Trust. It was not practicable to secure planning consent in advance of the facility being implemented given the urgent need to set it up. The Head of Planning and Development was consulted during consideration of the proposed “hot site” and legal advice was taken including Counsel’s opinion. The Clinical Commissioning Group will submit a retrospective application to the council.

Subsequent to this Permitted Development provisions were changed and planning consent is no longer required.

Details of alternative options, if any, considered and rejected

Using Maidstone Leisure Centre in this way on a temporary basis is at the discretion of the council. The council could opt not to use its assets and resources in this way, but that would be to the severe detriment of Maidstone residents, whose lives would be greatly impacted if this decision were not taken.

The running costs associated with the temporary change of use are all paid by the three primary care networks. Consideration will be given to the use of S106 funding for the capital cost of establishing the “hot site”.

Details of the Committee

This decision is not derived from a committee decision. The authority for the decision resides with the Chief Executive who is authorised to take any action necessary in connection with any civil emergency or disaster including response, recovery and business continuity as may be required from time to time.

The Leader of the Council was consulted concerning the need to establish hot sites; the Chair and Vice-Chairman of Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee were also advised, and all Group Leaders have been informed of the actions taken.