

Statement: PS11.18

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Statement submitted by: Christopher Elson

I am writing to oppose the proposal to close Kingsdown Leisure Centre. The current premises were built in the early 1970s to replace pre-existing sports facilities. It was considered necessary then to provide leisure facilities in the area. Since that time the population of the local area and Bristol in general has increased and is predicted to continue to do so. In addition we are in the midst of an obesity crisis in Bristol as in the rest of the UK. Both of these factors are strong arguments for the provision of leisure facilities for the general public.

It is a normal function of Local Authorities to provide leisure facilities for their residents. Local towns such as Yate (population 30,369), Keynsham (population 18,860), Portishead (population 25,000) and Thornbury (population 13,651) all provide such facilities. Yet if Kingsdown were to be closed, about one quarter of Bristol's population would not have any such facilities in their areas. There are no such facilities in Bedminster, Southville, Ashton Gate, the Harbourside, Cliftonwood, Clifton, Redland, Cotham, Westbury Park, Stoke Bishop, Sneyd Park or Westbury on Trym. Why should Bristol residents be treated so shabbily in comparison to residents in nearby towns?

If Councillors vote to close down Kingsdown it will have very long term consequences as I believe these facilities will never be replaced due to the lack of suitable sites to build.

Kingsdown Leisure Centre is a community asset and surveys have shown that the public's opinion is that it should continue to provide facilities for sport and leisure activities.

I have benefited from using its facilities since it first opened.

I appeal to the Councillors to think of the long term quality of life for Bristol residents.