

## Formal Council Questions and Responses

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### 1 **Question to the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure : 2021/2 Leisure Facility**

#### **Councillor J. Wakins asked:**

Given the beautiful Sports facility on the Caerleon Campus site together with the space to develop the facility further with the addition of a swimming pool etc and also the availability of sports pitches on the site why did NCC not take up the opportunity to negotiate a purchase of the facility with a view to developing it at a lower cost than that which will be incurred in the current proposal?

Would this not have been a better use of public money?

#### **Councillor Harvey responded:**

The retention of the Sports Hall as part of any wider redevelopment of the Caerleon site has always been encouraged, but the facility was privately owned. The previous owners, the University of South Wales were clear that they would not retain this part of the site and would not operate it themselves. Whilst Council officers participated in initial discussions with USW regarding the future of the sports facility, the University's own report confirmed that the centre was operating at a loss and would require an annual subsidy. As you quite rightly point out, this is public money – even with further investment, income was not expected to cover the operating costs and as such a financially sound business case for acquiring the site could not be made. The consultation proposals for the city centre will deliver sustainable, state of the art leisure facilities, in a location accessible to all communities in Newport, whilst also enabling significant Welsh Government investment in brand new further education facilities in the city centre.