



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
CULTURE COMMITTEE
ADDENDUM**

4.00PM, THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2015

**CONFERENCE ROOM 2, JUBILEE LIBRARY, JUBILEE STREET,
BRIGHTON**

ADDENDUM

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DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Deputations received:

(b) Users of Preston Park Cycle Track (Anthony Rogers) - The Cycle Track Refurbishment Project

Representation from users of Preston Park Cycle Track

Users of Preston Park Cycle Track hope that the City Council will make a clear, timely and achievable action plan for restoration of the Track and its arena for the next and future seasons.

History and heritage

Preston Park cycle arena was built in 1887 making it the oldest existing cycle track in the UK and the second oldest in the world.

Environment and sustainability

*A well run city - Keeping the city, safe, clean, moving and connected*¹

The national boom in cycling over the past decade has played its part at Preston Park. Through coaching and other activity, both children and adults become better, safer and more confident cyclists. As a result cycling becomes increasingly adopted as a mode of transport in favour of dirtier, polluting modes. This is a vital trend, which should be strongly supported to help remedy the challenges posed by climate change to our local and global environments. Similarly increased cycle use helps address the impact of air pollution on the health of our citizens; notably it is the vulnerable who suffer most acutely from air pollution, and cycling plays its part in resolving this.²

Economy, employment and welfare

*A vibrant economy - Promoting a world-class economy with a local workforce to match.*¹

British Cycling has supplied indicative income opportunities to the Parks and Gardens department to indicate how a longer term and sustainable income can be generated by existing and increased activity at the track. The Strategic Partnership³ state a vision for the city that is "Brighton & Hove is a City of Opportunity. It is a city where opportunities are provided for our residents to improve their lives, for our children to excel and a place for business to thrive. It is a place that provides these opportunities in a sustainable and inclusive way that reduces inequality and protects the environment." This is a vision to which investment at the Cycle Track can clearly give support.

Health

*A good life - Ensuring a city for all ages, inclusive of everyone and protecting the most vulnerable.*¹

The cost of mental ill health to the economy in England for adults is £105 billion with the young being increasingly effected adding to this burden. Poor physical health is a major risk factor for poor mental health and in the City local prevalence of mental illness is higher than the average for England. The estimated cost to city related to overweight and obesity was estimated at £85 million for 2015. The role of sport, and in particular cycling, in encouraging resilience to combat mental ill health in young people has been recognised by the health

1 City Council Directorate Plan, 2 Brighton & Hove Local Plan, 3 Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership 'Vision for the City,'

service.⁴ Strategies to reduce the burden centre around delivering regular, sustainable programmes for children and adults to increase their physical activity levels. This includes Bike It, and exercise-referral schemes; however these have not yet been linked to the availability of a flat, safe and accessible cycle track which can offer huge benefits to people of all ages if targeted to their health needs.

Sport, and culture

The media reports on the failure of the Olympic legacy. Yet it is clear that this does not apply to cycling, though the fear is that it may become the case if the Track is not reinstated. Nationally competitive, leisure and utilitarian cycling have shown massive increases in numbers involved⁵. Indeed the mass participation events, Sky Rides, and the promotion of women's cycling through the Breeze programme, have both won national awards and been held up as Gold Standard in the past year due to their successes. The opportunity to use the Track, for schools and other cycle groups, to enhance skills and enjoyment of cycling is one area of opportunity that can offer benefits to the economy, environment and health of the city.

Open letter sent by:

Anthony Rogers – Brighton Excelsior Member
Kim Fortescue-Talwar – Chair of Preston Park Youth Cycle Club
Alan Newman – Chair of Brighton Mitre Cycle Club
Alison Lewes – Breeze Champion for Sussex
Mike Porteous - Head Coach Brighton Tri Club

⁴ B&H Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, ⁵ Sport England, ⁵ Sport England

Expansion from above, supporting data and related information

Supporting data to demonstrate the usage and value of the track has been collected and reported to the Council through the National Governing Body, British Cycling. A sample is below.

Brighton Mitre Cycle Club: 177 paying members with a 70% increase in membership in the preceding 2 years with a higher percentage of female members. Formal club activities were focused around Preston Park Cycle Track until the ban on racing and training.

Preston Park Youth Cycle Club: has seen a continued growth throughout the years, and has an active British Cycling membership of 204 paying youth members, with 104 members currently taking part in regular coached activities throughout the main season from March-October. Riders come from the Brighton and Hove area, as well as surrounding areas within both East and West Sussex.

Brighton Excelsior Cycle Club and VC Jubilee youth branch: with 60 adult and 60 youth members most of whom are users of the Track.

Brighton Tri Club: in only their second year, but membership has increased manifold during this time reflecting national trends.

Velo Vixens: Less than a year old but Velo Vixens have provided 131 women with skills development and fitness improvement, as well as an opportunity to socialise with other women with a shared passion for cycling despite sometimes squalid conditions at the Track.

Brighton Breeze: In January and February 2015, weekly Breeze (women only) cycle coaching sessions at the track had 93 women participating. They were predominantly Brighton & Hove residents, though some participants travelled from Portsmouth, London, and Newhaven as there is no similar facility or provision of free coaching for at least 100 miles.

Some of this activity has happened during the tracks restrictions on cycle activity but cannot be considered sustainable if no improvements are made.

Expansion on Preston Park Cycle Track

Community

Preston Park Cycle Track is a spiritual focus for all Sussex Cycle Clubs and more recently the venue for a variety of new cycle groups both sporting and non-sporting. It is the place “where my children learned to ride their bikes.” It is the place about where elderly citizens stop you to tell you with nostalgia and pride, how they used to race at the track when they were young. It is not surprising, therefore, that its general decay and subsequent closure to training and racing has not only had a markedly negative impact on local sports clubs but also for a wider community.

History and heritage

Preston Park cycle arena was built in 1887, as an original feature of Brighton’s flagship park, making it the oldest existing cycle track in the UK and the second oldest in the world. Outside of the war years, it is believed that this past season is the only one where cycle racing has not been able to take place. Additionally of note is that it is the only velodrome in Sussex, Surrey and Kent.

Economy, employment and welfare

A vibrant economy - Promoting a world-class economy with a local workforce to match. The costed value of activity from just one cycle club gives some insight into what might be achieved. When calculating volunteers' coaching time in monetary terms, British Cycling suggest a figure of £10/hour. Therefore the total amount for coaching this season at Preston Park Youth Cycle Club, including all velodrome and other Saturday coaching activities is estimated at £8,400-£10,500.

Health

A good life - Ensuring a city for all ages, inclusive of everyone and protecting the most vulnerable.

In the light of these facts we include an unsolicited quote from a young woman on one of the women's cycling projects at Preston Park, Breeze (lives East Brighton).

"Without the Breeze sessions at the cycle track I would never have got out on my bike. I suffer from anxiety, which prevents me trying new things for fear of what might happen. The weekly sessions through January and February 2015 built my skills, increased my fitness, and got me riding on the A23 cycle path with 17 other women - something I thought I would never do. I now ride around Brighton's roads and cycle paths on my own and whilst I still have to manage my anxiety on new routes, I push myself way beyond my previous boundaries"