

Councillor Les Hamilton6 Nursery Close
Portslade
BN41 2SA**Date:** 3 March 2011**Our Ref:** LH/**Your Ref:**

Dear Cabinet

Re: Portslade Town Hall

I am totally opposed to the proposed sale of about 50% of the land at the Victoria Road site. I will consider each element in detail. Much is made of a "community hub." Portslade Town Hall and the offices a few yards away are already a community hub for Portslade. Reducing the space available by selling the council offices will clearly be detrimental to a community hub.

Portslade Town Hall

Portslade Town Hall has a large hall and four rooms suitable for community use, one being very small. There is a balcony to the hall, which is equipped with a reconstructed cinema organ. There is also a kitchen to the rear of the hall. There is a flat, occupied by the caretaker but in the process of being vacated. The building is currently subject to maintenance work.

There is no way that extra services can be placed in Portslade Town Hall without reducing community facilities. No way can the housing service AND a relocated bowls pavilion AND a police facility be incorporated in the building without detriment to the community facilities.

Last summer my mother had a 90th birthday party at Portslade Town Hall with 100 guests from far and wide. The car parks, with about 48 spaces, were nearly full. How can similar functions take place in future with no more than half a dozen parking spaces? Incidentally the hall is in a good state of decoration, and there is no need for £500k to be spent on the interior UNLESS most of it is to carry out adaptations, unnecessary if the council offices are retained.

Portslade Council Offices

Portslade council offices are the base for City Direct Portslade. There is a housing office and a cash office at which rents, council tax and other payments can be made. In the Forward Plan reference is made to relocating the housing service. No mention is made of the cash office. Is that being relocated? The offices are well used and must be retained.

"Practice" Bowling Green

The main Portslade Bowling Green is small. It cannot be played east-west as well as north-south. It only has four rinks, all of which are in use when Portslade Bowls Club

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matches are in progress. The “practice “green is needed for those club members who are not in the team and for members of the public who want to bowl. Reduction of two greens to one will clearly have an adverse effect on the club, could alienate members and make the club unviable.

Bowls Club Pavilion

This facility is alongside the green, where it has to be. At each match there will at least 32 people to seat for tea. Changing rooms for males and females are needed. These rooms need lockers where woods and other equipment and clothes are kept. A kitchen facility is essential. Mats, scoreboards and the trolleys used to gather up the woods all have to be kept in the pavilion. Spectators in cold weather sit in the pavilion to watch, and the bowlers retire to the pavilion when it is raining. The pavilion must be beside the green. If there is an attempt to relocate all of these necessities in the kitchen of the Town Hall it will use the whole kitchen. The kitchen is essential when events requiring catering are taking place. It is unreasonable to expect the bowlers, mostly over 60, to have to take all the equipment down to the green. Relocating the bowls pavilion in the Town Hall kitchen is impracticable and completely unacceptable.

Car Park

A Town Hall that has a hall that accommodates 100 people needs a good car park, especially on this road which has no bus service. There are currently about 48 spaces. The detail that I have been given is hopelessly inadequate, but it appears that there will be a maximum of six car parking spaces once the car park goes. There were over 30 cars in the car park this morning when Portslade Community Forum held an event there. Where will these vehicles park when the car park is sold? Bookings will be affected if parking is not available.

Public Conveniences

These are widely used and are the toilets that the bowls players have to use. Would they be expected to go right to the front of the Town Hall from the green when they needed to use the toilet? I’m sure I heard at Cabinet on Feb 17th that no toilets were to close. That is clearly not the case.

Remembrance Day

The procession of 200 or so people congregates at the Town Hall, a convenient location with a toilet, before marching to Easthill Park. That would not be possible if the sale takes place.

Caretaker flat

The flat is upstairs and not convenient for disabled access. Can we afford to lose a unit of accommodation?

I trust that all members of the Cabinet will be visiting the premises to find out for themselves how impractical these proposals are. Portslade residents take pride in the Victoria Road site, provided by Portslade UDC over 50 years ago, and are outraged by this proposal. I ask that consultation with the public takes place BEFORE the decision is made, and that the disposal is postponed for further consideration after May 5th.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Les Hamilton