



## THE HARROW HILL TRUST

Caring for the heritage of the Hill and its future

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Via email to: [planning.applications@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:planning.applications@harrow.gov.uk)

cc Ward councillors

**RE: PL/2562/25 John Lyon School**

**25 November 2025**

Dear Kimry Schlacter

We were notified by email on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November with an expiry date of 27<sup>th</sup> November. This is unacceptable as it severely limits our ability to assess the application.

The previous sports centre manager, Jackie Ware, told the Council meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013 that 19 sports clubs had been impacted by the closure of the sports centre and that over 1,000 children per week had been using the facility to learn to swim. (see appendix).

Please can Councillors note that there was a petition with **1,300 signatures** raised at the time against the closure. (ref HHT minutes 11/7/2013). **As such we do not believe that this matter should be a delegated decision.**

What is clearly required is a **Community Use Agreement**.

The new definition includes holiday camps. Of course Harrow School runs holiday camps to the detriment of local residents, unlike Eton School. This change does nothing to ensure that the Council's local plan objectives, disregarded by John Lyon for 12 years and ungraciously blamed on the council, can be implemented. It is well documented that there is a deficiency of sporting facilities (including swimming pools) in the south of the Borough.

The minutes of the HHT meeting of 11 July 2013 show clearly that the parking issues at the time of closure did not cease when sports centre closure occurred. The parking pressures were during the day and were caused by the older students in the sixth form (160 -180 pupils) being able to drive or learning to drive and the teachers.

"Parking problems had not eased since the closure of the Sports Centre as the issue was with pupils

and teachers' unsocial parking during the day, not evening use of the Sports Centre." 11/7/2103

The traffic management plan, an existing requirement, should be reviewed to ensure that it covers any changes in use.

Whilst this application is a tiny step in the right direction it is clearly woefully inadequate to address the needs of the Borough and could potentially be trivialised even more when actually implemented, just like the new 30 minute per week for general swimming for residents. How is that going to help the health of local residents?

Planned use of the sports facility outside of school hours can readily accommodate many users and provide a real community benefit in line with the many policies mentioned in the application. A proper Communities Use Agreement should be put in place.

Yours sincerely

*Paul Catherall*

**Paul Catherall**

Chair, Harrow Hill Trust Planning Committee

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## Agenda item

### Reference from Special Cabinet held on 6 June 2013 - Petition in relation to John Lyon Sports Centre

- Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Tuesday 23 July 2013 7.30 pm (Item 421.)

**Minutes:**

Members received a reference from Cabinet in relation to a petition which sought to stop the closure of the John Lyon Sports Centre to use by the swim school, external members and users.

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration, the Director of Planning and Peter Barnes, the Secretary of Borough of Harrow Swimming Club, to the meeting. The Committee agreed that whilst there was no provision in the Council's Constitution to allow members of the public to speak at the meeting that they would agree to allow the representatives of the petitioners to speak and ask questions.

The Chair invited Peter Barnes to state the concerns of the petitioners. Mr Barnes advised that notice had been served in June that the facilities would no longer be available to the swimming club. He had been advised that there had never been planning permission for residents' use of the facility. The purpose of the petition was to ask the Council to look into the matter.

The Director of Planning outlined the chronology of the John Lyon Sports Centre in terms of the site history and a legal agreement dating back to 1995 which restricted the use of the site. The legal agreement included the stipulation that the sports hall and swimming pool were not to be used outside the school's normal hours or for any purpose other than permitted recreational use. The Section 106 agreement defined the permitted recreational use but that this was restricted to pupils, parents, teachers and others permitted by the Council. There was scope for the applicant to seek the Council's permission for other individuals to use the facility but to date he was unaware of any request to add others to the list of permitted users.

The Director of Planning reported that on 2 November 2012 a complaint about car parking had been received by the Planning Authority. The Planning Authority had investigated the complaint and written to the bursar of Old Lyonians School. A response had subsequently been received on 2 February 2013 which had highlighted the number of hours the school was open. The Planning Authority had written to the school again on 19 March 2013 indicating that there appeared to have been a breach of the legal agreement. At a meeting between the Chair of Governors, the head teacher and the Planning Department on 16 April 2013 it was accepted that there was a breach and the Planning Authority had sought clarification as to how this would be resolved. The Planning Authority had consistently reserved its position on formal enforcement preferring instead to engage with and seek resolution of breach voluntarily. Following the meeting in April, the school had subsequently written to the Planning Authority indicating that they were going to close the facility with effect 30 June.

In terms of the questions submitted by the lead petitioner, the Director of Planning advised that the role of the Planning Authority was to manage the planning process with sensitivity but mindful of its statutory nature. The Planning Authority was prepared to discuss the issues raised with the school but he could not pre-determine any change to the Section 106 agreement. Equally, the Planning Authority could not insist upon the school applying for a change to the agreement.

Peter Barnes expressed his gratitude for the detailed answer provided but stated that many of the sports clubs used the facility out of school hours and did not create traffic. The school had, over the years, transformed itself and now had a sixth form and therefore students with cars. The petition was to highlight that the disruption at prime times was caused by sources other than the sports clubs who were being incorrectly blamed for the parking problems / issues. It was felt that there may be a different agenda behind the school not permitting use by the sports clubs and it was difficult to understand why the school had not applied for a modification to the agreement.

Jackie Ware, the former manager of the John Lyon Sports Centre, advised the Committee that the swim club was successful in its own right with 1,000 children a week being taught to swim. Nineteen sports clubs had been affected by the closure.

A Member stated that the Borough of Harrow Swimming Club's use of the facility was surely be beneficial to John Lyon School and he sought clarification as to what officers could do resolve this issue. The Director advised that the Planning Authority could not compromise itself. There had, however, been discussion with Leisure Services and some time had been brokered for the swimming club's use of the Leisure Centre.

**RESOLVED:** That, the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Community Health and Wellbeing and Portfolio Holder for Community