RIPON CIVIC SOCIETY

c/o The Workhouse Museum
Allhallowgate
Ripon, HG4 1LE
info@riponcivicsociety.org.uk
www.riponcivicsociety.org.uk

Sale of Ripon Spa Baths - update

Ripon Civic Society was surprised to learn in February that Harrogate Borough Council is in the throes of selling the Spa Baths and understood the concern expressed at the time by Ripon City Council.

More than three months have elapsed. Representatives of RCS and RCC have visited the Baths.

What is important is that the Ripon Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges the eventual disposal of the Baths if and when they should become redundant. The Baths are a principal part of the Spa Quarter set out in the Plan which is an important and accessible location for Ripon's health service facilities. The Plan sets out how the Baths site could facilitate enlarged and enhanced health facilities for the city in coordination with the hospital and adjacent general practices. Ripon is a growing city with upwards of two thousand new homes being built.

The Society has wanted to find out whether there is any prospect of health service interest in the Baths and has contacted the NHS North Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We understand that the NYCCG and all Ripon GP practices are, in principle, in favour of having a new Ripon integrated health centre, subject to additional scoping work. Owing to its central location and the potential for integration with Ripon Community Hospital service the Spa Baths could be a suitable site. However, the work to review health care provision in Ripon is in its early stages and sufficient time is needed for the development of any future proposals.

Harrogate Borough Council needs to provide evidence that there is no eventual and realistic prospect that the Baths are suited to facilitate health provision. Clearly it cannot justify this.

The Society contends that disposal of the Baths at this moment is premature and the sale should be suspended for HBC to actively seek engagement with the CCG, Ripon GPs and Harrogate and District Foundation Trust with regards future potential use for the health service.

CH
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