

The Pow Beck Valley Stadium – Project Review Report.

COPELAND Borough Council has published a report looking at the lessons from the Pow Beck Valley Stadium project.

This report sets out the results of a review commissioned by the Council to see what lessons could be learnt from the project and the Council's response to the review.

The Pow Beck Valley project aimed to create a new sports village with a new stadium as the first part of a wider development that was a potentially transformative regeneration project.

Copeland Borough Council was one of the partners involved in taking the project forward for the benefit of Copeland's communities.

The aim was to build the new stadium on the freehold site owned by Whitehaven Amateurs Football Club with preferred access to the site being over land owned by Whitehaven Miners' Welfare.

The project was stopped in March 2012 as a result of a unanimous decision by the partners involved in the project. The funding available for the project had reduced as a result of the change in national regeneration policy. It also proved not to be possible to reach a reasonable agreement on the land that was needed to access a new stadium.

Paul Walker Chief Executive says: "All the partners were passionate about wanting to make this project successful for the benefit of people who live in Copeland, and whilst it is regrettable that the project couldn't progress, the decision by us all to stop the project was the right one, we could do no more."

“There are always lessons that can be learnt from projects like this, whether or not they are successful. We therefore decided to commission a review to ensure the lessons from our experience in this project were embedded in the Council’s future work on major projects.

“Like many large scale projects, Pow Beck Valley was incredibly complex and there were a number of significant changes during the lifetime of the project. This presented challenges for the Council and its partners.

“It is important for any organisation to continually seek to improve the way it works. The Council is already applying the lessons it has learnt from this project, as well as wider learning from the review.”

The Council has revised its project management framework to strengthen its tools and guidance; and implemented a new change programme ‘Delivering Differently’, with clear terms of reference and a board with senior officers and member involvement.

The Council, in comparison to 2008, now operates with significantly reduced funding and has a much clearer and articulated approach to its role, and how it works with partners. While the Council continues to create and promote the growth framework for the borough, it is unlikely it will perform a similar role again in projects of this scale.

A full copy of the report can be found here: www.copeland.gov.uk/attachments/pow-beck-valley-stadium-project-review-report.