

I am making this statement as Chair of Lansdown Crescent Association. We would ask that you decide NOT to proceed with the preferred bidder for the Approach Golf Course/High Common.

Our Ward Councillors, Lucy Hodge and Mark Elliott both members of your Party are very hardworking and respected by many in our Community. Simply put, we trust their judgement. If they tell us that the Council's preferred bidder for the High Common/Approach should not proceed then we feel that you should trust their judgement too.

They like many of the residents surrounding the High Common/Approach Golf Course understand that many people including Lansdown Crescent members and myself use this space daily, many have done so for decades. There is a harmonious coexistence of golfers some from clubs, some simply for pitch and putt, walkers, dog walkers, alpine walkers, and children using it in the summer and the winter months. Any divergence from this existing use is a "change of use" and should involve careful public consultation.

This is not an unloved, under used, unviable golf course to be signed away for up to 20 years without careful consideration. This is a beautiful space which is much loved, it is full of trees which are protected under TPOs, it is traversed with many public footpaths and is in the heart of a World heritage setting.

Decisions regarding its future should be made carefully and wisely, any decision to approve the bidder tonight would be opaque, done without local consultation and potentially without understanding the impacts on public access or protected trees. I use the term "potentially" because we have not been permitted to see the details of the tender.

With regard to the tender. You may have been told that there is time for consultation after tonight's decision. But this would not be meaningful "real" consultation it would not materially affect the Bidder's tender as set out in Council papers (Cabinet meeting Agenda : BNES Decision on award of a contract to a new operator for the Approach Golf Course site following a procurement process)

*1.3 Once a bidder is appointed they will engage with the local community on their proposals before contracts are signed to consider refinements to their tender. THE TENDER WILL HOWEVER HAVE TO REMAIN SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR TO THAT SUBMITTED AND EVALUATED.*

I therefore ask that you listen to our Ward Councillors, your colleagues in Lansdown Ward. Pause, maintain the High Common in the current way of low level maintenance until Covid restrictions lift and economic conditions become clearer. Do not rush into a decision which cannot be undone.