

REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2020



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
South Ribble Playing pitch Hub	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure)	Director of Neighbourhoods and Development

Is this report a <b>KEY DECISION</b> (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the <b>Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan</b> ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council? This should only be in exceptional circumstances.	No
Is this report confidential?	Yes
	(please insert here the schedule which you are relying on)

## PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report brings forward to Cabinet the Playing Pitch Hub project. The report will outline the scope, location, cost and timeframe for the project and seek permission to develop the project to the point of achieving full planning permission and tendering the project. The report will also seek approval to submit an application to the Football Foundation in January or April 2021 for funding towards the overall cost of the project. The timing of the football foundation bid is dependant on a planning issue we may have with Great Crested Newts

## PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That Cabinet approves the development of the Playing Pitch Hub project to be located at Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre in line with the budget allocated within the Council's Capital programme.
3. Cabinet approves the submission of a Football Foundation bid for the Playing Pitch Hub project in January or April 2021 with the objective of obtaining partnership funding for the project.

4. That Cabinet authorises Officers to carry out an appropriate procurement exercise to seek a suitable Contractor to carry out the work of building the new Playing Pitch Hub.
5. That Officers will bring back to Cabinet the final business plan for the Playing Pitch Hub project along with final costings and site plan of the proposed Playing Pitch Hub pitches.
6. Cabinet requests that Officers bring back the Sports Playing Pitch Hub project to a further Cabinet to award the construction contract in line with the procurement rules of the Authority.

## REASONS FOR THE DECISION

7. In 2019 the findings of a refreshed Playing Pitch Strategy were adopted as part of the Council's overall planning framework. The Playing Pitch Strategy outlines a strategic approach to ensuring the future provision of outdoor playing pitches meets local community needs against a background of projected housing growth. The Playing Pitch Strategy has identified a shortfall of two full size 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation (3G) football pitches in the Borough. This report is about developing a project to provide those two 3G pitches, along with the refurbishment of Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre and building the necessary ancillary facilities to support the project and seek the appropriate decisions to take the project forward.

## CORPORATE OUTCOMES

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence, Investment and Financial Sustainability	x
Health, Wellbeing and Safety	x
Place, Homes and Environment	x

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

Our People and Communities	x
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## BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

9. In 2018 South Ribble Borough Council commissioned a formal Playing Fields and Open Space Strategy with consultants Knight Kavanagh & Page. The work involved a comprehensive assessment of the range, quality and status of all playing pitches within the South Ribble area. It involved extensive consultation with local schools, sports clubs and the Council carried out by the Consultants to assess the current state of sports pitches in the Borough. The report also assessed future demand for playing pitches in the Borough against projected housing and population growth.

- 10.** The refreshed Playing Fields and Open Space Strategy was formally adopted as part of South Ribble's Council's Planning Policy during 2019.
- 11.** As part of the Playing Pitch Strategy, assessment work was also undertaken on assessing future demand for artificial grass pitches i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> generation pitches or commonly known as 3G pitches. The assessment carried out identified that there is a shortfall of two full size 3G football pitches in the Borough.
- 12.** Over the past 12 months we have been working with the Lancashire Football Association (LFA) on how we could develop a new Playing Pitch Hub in the Borough which would have 2 full size 3G pitches located at the same site. This forms part of a developing Football Facilities Plan for the Borough, which is currently on hold due to the Covid crisis. Ultimately the Football Facilities Plan will not only promote the new 3G pitches but will also recommend an investment plan for Borough's grass pitches and management.
- 13.** Initial work was undertaken to explore the idea of combining a new Sports Playing Field Hub with a new Headquarters for the Lancashire Football Association (LFA) to move to, as they were looking to move from their current site at Thurston Road, Leyland. Valuation work was completed on their current site to see if financially it would be a move they could make.
- 14.** Work was then undertaken by Knight Kavanagh & Page Consultants on a site at Lodge Lane. However, on analysis it showed the cost of relocating the LFA and purchasing the required land was prohibitively expensive.
- 15.** The LFA have now decided to stay in their current premises for the time being but have been fully supportive of the Council continuing to explore how it could develop a new Playing Pitch Hub facility.
- 16.** Following a consideration of several sites where we would have had to purchase the land for the Hub, making the scheme very expensive, thought was given as to whether we could fit the new Playing Pitch Hub into an existing Leisure Centre site notably Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre. Following a survey of the site it was realised we could fit 2 new 3G pitches alongside the play area on land historically used as football pitches adjacent to the M6 Motorway.
- 17.** Following identification of the site we have worked in partnership with the Planning department of the Council, the Lancashire Football Association (LFA) and latterly the Football Foundation to develop the project. Both the LFA and the Football foundation fully support the concept of a new Playing Pitch Hub and see it a key project for the area. This could result in the Football Foundation being able to support the project financially subject to a successful funding application and the Council following a clear process laid down by the Football Association.
- 18.** To that end, Steve Wells Associates have been appointed as approved consultants by the Football Foundation to develop the project to a point of achieving full planning permission. This includes the preparation of a full business plan for the project. They have also been appointed to prepare and submit a full

Football Foundation bid for a minimum of £950,000 support funding for the project.

## **PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)**

**19.** The proposed scope of the Sports Playing Pitch to be located at Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre is as follows:

- The Development of two full size 3<sup>rd</sup> generation (3G) pitches alongside each other adjacent to Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre
- The refurbishment of existing facilities within Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre to serve the new 3G pitches
- To improve the current Gym facility within the existing Leisure Centre
- The refurbishment of the outside and inside toilets facilities within the existing Leisure centre
- Creation of a new ancillary building to supply, changing facilities, toilets, first aid, café and a social area to serve the two pitches
- The improvement to the reception area of the existing Leisure Centre
- The refurbishment of the existing café area to serve the new Playing Pitch Hub, but also to serve the existing Leisure Centre, the existing play area on the site and Withy Grove Park
- The improvement and enhancement of the public realm around the Leisure Centre to serve the new 3G pitches, the café area and to also improve access to the play area and Withy Grove Park
- To improve and extend the current carpark at the existing Leisure Centre installing new electrical charging points as required
- To improve the mechanical and electrical services within the existing Leisure Centre to serve the new Playing Pitch Hub
- To provide the necessary storage facility within the existing Leisure Centre to serve the 2 new 3G pitches

**20.** The initial estimated total capital cost of the above project is around £3m to £3.2m. This is subject to a formal tendering exercise which will be undertaken to select a suitable contractor to carry out the construction works. This cost will include an amount set aside as a sinking fund which equates to £25k per year as a capital contribution which will be required as part of an agreement to be established with the Football Foundation as part of any grant received. From a revenue point of view a full business plan is being prepared but looking at similar Football Foundation hub facilities around the country the new facility should at the very least achieve a break-even revenue position going forward.

**21.** The Football Foundation bid to be submitted in January 2021 will be for a minimum amount of £950,000 This will go towards the total cost of the scheme.

**22.** The procurement of the final construction part of the project will follow procurement rules as laid down by the Council.

**23.** The rationale for the project is to meet the shortfall of 3G pitches in the Borough as identified by the Playing Pitch Strategy. However, on a wider level, the project

will realise an ambition identified within the Council's Corporate Plan and take forward key priorities identified around Health and Wellbeing and tackling Health inequalities in the Borough. Working with the Football Foundation the new 3G pitches will be programmed to encourage greater access to sport and physical activity focusing on women, young people, people from low income households and people from different ethnically diverse backgrounds. The project will also refurbish the dry side of Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre, reducing the back log of repairs and maintenance at the centre and improving facilities and services for Leisure Centre, play area and Withy Grove Park users alike. Finally, the project will also deliver on a key part of the Council's emerging Leisure Facilities Strategy which is being brought to Cabinet in October 2020.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

24. Cabinet could consider a do-nothing option or to do the project without doing a funding application to the Football Foundation. The do-nothing option would not realise a recommendation of the formally adopted Playing Fields Strategy and one of the projects identified in the Corporate Plan. The do-nothing option would also fail to deliver on a key plank of the Council's newly emerging Leisure Facilities Strategy. To not do a Football Foundation application would miss out on the opportunity of bringing external funding into the Borough.

## **AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

25. The project will take on board the Council's Air Quality Plan and look to enhance air quality where possible e.g. installation of new electrical charging points at Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre carpark

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

26. Through developing the project, a risk has been identified that could affect the time-scale of the scheme. In terms of the pitch alignment there could be a need to move a pond. Through initial surveys it has been ascertained that the pond may contain Great Crested Newts which are highly protected under Planning Law. As mitigation work is now taking place with Planning and Ecologists as to assess the best way forward. The worst-case scenario is that the scheme will be delayed or phased as required. The portfolio holder has been kept updated on progress and the mitigation required.

27. A comprehensive risk register will form part of the Business Plan for the project

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT**

28. A full Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be carried out as part of the project.

## **COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

29. The current capital budget for this project is £4.3m which includes the cost of Steve Wells Associates. As outlined in the report it is forecast that this budget will eventually be adjusted downwards following a formal tender process.
30. The funding for this project has not yet been finalised. The report highlights a minimum £950k bid to Football Foundation. The Council will look to fund the project as to minimise the impact it has on ongoing revenue budgets. This will include considering S106 and/or CIL contributions to part-fund the project.

## COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

31. There are various legal implications to note. Firstly, a procurement exercise in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules will be carried out. A report will be brought back to Cabinet to make the final decision on contract award. Subsequently formal contracts will be entered into.
32. Secondly planning permission for the works in question will be required. This of course will be for a decision of Planning Committee.
33. Thirdly any grant monies obtained via the Football Foundation will be subject to terms and conditions.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The Council's Playing Field and Open Space Strategy

### APPENDICES (or There are no appendices to this report)

Appendix 1 Bamber Bridge – Proposed Site Plan – Option 4 (This could change as part of the planning process)

Appendix 2 Bamber Bridge – Proposed Floor Plan – Option 4 (This could change as part of the planning process)

Appendix 3 Bamber Bridge – High Level Cost Plan

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