

Agenda Item 20.

TITLE	Implementing the Leisure Strategy
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 28 July 2022
WARD	Maiden Erlegh; Winnersh
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure - Ian Shenton

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Approval to progress proposed location of new 3G pitch in the Earley area, and S106 finance approval for physical activity enhancements at Forest School.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive approves the following:

- 1) Subject to planning, FF funding and endorsement by formal public consultation prior to planning application, the outcome of the option appraisal analysis, Maiden Erlegh School, is progressed as the proposed 3G pitch site.
- 2) Approval & release funds for use of S106 finance for physical activity enhancements at Forest School.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New 3G pitch site

Following the outcome of the Local Football Facility plan conducted by Football foundation, data showed that Wokingham has over 524 football teams and in need of an additional 3G pitches with growth being seen each year. This will address the shortfall in 3G provision and cater for the demand from affiliated football clubs and the community. A technical appraisal for sites within the Earley area has been conducted.

S106 Finance approval for physical activity enhancements at Forest School

S106 funding has been identified to be utilised within the Winnersh area, funding will be towards providing new facilities or improving existing facilities within Wokingham Borough.

Funding will be used for enhancements on the swimming pool, Sports Studio, and sports pitches.

It has also been agreed that following the enhancements, community use will be offered, targeting our BAME community for the Swimming Pool use, Women's only sessions and targeted swimming programmes for our vulnerable adults and children.

This will also apply for the studio gym space, again targeted for our vulnerable children and adults.

The school will manage and procure the works to be carried out. Our property team will be monitoring the works carried out.

BACKGROUND

New 3G pitch site

Following the outcome of the Football Foundation Local Football plan, it identified the need for additional 3G sites across the Borough and will address the shortfall in 3G provision. Implementation of these will help provision to cater effectively for the demand from affiliated football clubs alongside community requirements, across the Borough.

Data from the current the local football plan showed that Wokingham has over 524 football teams and in need of an additional 3G pitches with growth being seen each year; an addition of a new 3G pitch this will alleviate the need for players to travel outside of the Borough. The two local partner football clubs Whitenights and Laurel Park have between them estimated 33 teams who have a need training facilities Monday to Friday within their local area, there is a capacity issue as facilities such as Ryesh green, Arborfield and Goals are at full capacity, some teams are also having to travel outside the borough.

Weekend fixtures are at full capacity also, meaning that additional games cannot be played, therefore offering facilities will increase growth and development of the sport.

From the previous executive report approved (March 2021 – Implementing the leisure strategy) which within the strategy two of our seven priorities, Health and Wellbeing (general) and 'Maintain and extend accessibility to outdoor spaces' and the targets within that; increase playing Pitch strategy to meet future demand and to secure investment and Increase the number of clubs accessing and utilising outdoor spaces, Laurel Park was cited as proposed site.

After progressing with the Football Foundation it was noted that car parking, noise and light would cause a significant issue to residents and impact the nature reserve located next to the proposed site. Funding for the carpark (located by Rushey way) would have had to be sourced separately from that of the funds received from the Football Foundation.

S106 Finance approval for physical activity enhancements at Forest School

Following developments within the Winnersh area, S106 funding has been identified and the criteria for the funding allows much needed enhancements in the swimming pool, gym and sports pitches at Forest School, this will not only be beneficial for the students, but it will allow the facilities to be opened up for our BAME and vulnerable groups within the community. The use of both the studio and swimming pool will be used for community sessions each week.

BUSINESS CASE

New 3G pitch site

The need has been identified for additional 3G sites across the Borough and will address the shortfall in 3G provision for the 524 teams that require this facility and cater for the demand from affiliated football clubs and the community.

A previous site had been identified but further to this a technical appraisal has taken place to include the original option and five other proposed sites, each proposed site has been appraised in terms of its location including access, any existing facilities and if Football Foundation approved of which is needed to support any funding received. The findings are detailed below for each site:

Criteria	Option 1 - Maiden Erlegh School	Option 2 - Laurel Park	Option 3 - Chalfont Park
Location Access	Pros <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Site with existing facilities and road access. ➤ Walkable for local residents. ➤ No loss of grass pitches. ➤ Can be utilised by school, enhancing their facilities. Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Construction will need to be during school holidays. 	Pros <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Site with existing facilities and road access. ➤ Walkable for local residents. Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional parking will be required and to be funded. ➤ Loss of grass pitches. ➤ Limited day time use. ➤ Nature reserve located next to site. ➤ Flood lighting to be added. ➤ Road safety issues off Marefield road. 	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Close proximity to housing. ➤ Insufficient parking. ➤ Loss of grass pitches.
	Option 4 - Lower Early Events Field	Option 5 – Field next to Sindlesham Mill	Option 6 - Meredith Way
	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Close proximity to housing. ➤ Insufficient parking. 	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Forms part of the Loddon Valley South Berkshire Biodiversity Opportunity Area. ➤ Pylons on site. ➤ Flood risk. ➤ Traffic impact on already congested road. 	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Currently private owned land. ➤ Major traffic impact as existing onto roundabout. ➤ Flood risk.
Existing facilities	Option 1 - Maiden Erlegh School	Option 2 - Laurel Park	Option 3 - Chalfont Park
	Pros <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established 9 aside pitch/lighting. ➤ Changing rooms and toilets. ➤ Sufficient Parking. 	Pros <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established sports field. ➤ Changing rooms and toilets. ➤ Some Parking available. 	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No existing facilities on site.
	Option 4 - Lower Early Events Field	Option 5 – Field next to Sindlesham Mill	Option 6 - Meredith Way
	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No changing or toilet facilities. ➤ Insufficient power supply. 	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No existing facilities on site. 	Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No existing facilities on site.
Football Foundation approved	Option 1 - Maiden Erlegh School	Option 2 - Laurel Park	Option 3 - Chalfont Park
	Yes	Yes	No
	Option 4 - Lower Early Events Field	Option 5 – Field next to Sindlesham Mill	Option 6 - Meredith Way
	No	No	No

Taking all options into consideration, the appraisal analysis criteria identify that Maiden Erlegh School would be the most suitable location based on the existing facilities, access to the site and opening up usage for the school.

Next Steps including timeline for implementation

- Public Consultation – September 2022
- Planning application submitted – Mid October 2022
- Football Foundation Bid submitted – January 2023
- Decision from Football Foundation on bid – April 2023
- Build Process – July/August 2023
- Open site – September 2023

The cost of the 3G pitch with associated works is around £800k with a contribution of £300k from WBC and the remainder from the Football Foundation of around £500k.

3G Pitch	YEAR 1 (6 months due to start Sept 23)	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
INCOME	£28k	£57k	£58k
EXPENDITURE			
Maintenance	£4k	£8k	£8k
Utility Cost	£3k	£6k	£6k
Staffing	£3k	£5k	£5k
Loan Repayment	Due to start in year 2	£26k	£26k

Any additional profit from the hiring of the 3G pitch will be paid into the sinking fund contribution.

S106 Finance approval for physical activity enhancements at Forest School.

Funding will be used for enhancements on the swimming pool, Sports Studio, and sports pitches.

The funding criteria will allow much needed enhancements within the Forest School, enhancing the pool floor, refurbishment of the gym with the installation of air con and gym equipment and sports equipment for sporting pitches.

Community use has been negotiated with the school with BAME swimming sessions and community use for vulnerable adults and children in the area in the swimming pool, gym and sports pitches beneficial to the local community.

The funding has been split into the identified areas as:

- £133k –Gym enhancements
- £74k – Swimming pool enhancements
- £1k – Sporting equipment for sporting pitches

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Year (Year 1) 2023/24	£300k £500k Football Foundation grant Income £28k Expenditure £10k Surplus:£18k	Yes	Capital Football foundation grant Revenue (Loan repayments commence April 24)
Next Financial Year (Year 2) 2024/25	Income £57k Expenditure: £19k loan £26k Surplus:£12k	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3) 2025/26	Income £58k Expenditure: £19k Loan £26k Surplus:£13k	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information

This is a project that attracts funding from the Football Foundation, subject to a contribution from Wokingham Borough Council. Given the enhancement generated and the level of grant it attracts, it is a sound business case to proceed at this time on works.

There is a provisional allocation already agreed from the 'Capital Contingency' budget within the agreed programme so there will be no impact on the overall capital programme.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

3G pitch consultation will take place prior to Planning permission and Planning will consult as part of the planning process.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Equalities assessment will be carried out for both developments.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

A 3G pitch will allow teams to no longer travel outside the borough to access a 3G pitch, enhancements within Forest School will allow local groups to access facilities within their local area rather than further afield of outside of the Borough.

List of Background Papers

N/A

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