

11. WATSON PARK, NORTH STREET, ARMADALE

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services advising of alternative proposals for the development of the sports facilities at Watson Park, North Street, Armadale.

The report recalled that the council's General Services Capital Investment Strategy 2018/19 to 2027/28 was approved at a meeting of the full West Lothian Council on 13 February 2018. Included in that strategy was an approved budget of £947,000 for the provision of a new sports changing pavilion and drainage improvement works to the existing grass pitch at Watson Park, North Street, Armadale.

Armadale Community Football Club (ACFC) currently had a membership in excess of 400, making it the largest football club in West Lothian. The club was a registered youth group through the council's accreditation scheme and it was also registered with the football governing bodies.

The project to deliver a new changing pavilion and improvements to the existing grass pitch at Watson Park was developed following a period of community consultation and it was progressed on the basis that ACFC would be the principal end user. ACFC were a key participant in the community consultation and they initially agreed that they would lease the new pavilion from the council and be responsible for its associated day-to-day management and running costs.

ACFC had now presented an alternative proposal that it considered would better serve the needs of its members and Armadale's wider sporting community. The club also confirmed that it was no longer willing to enter into a lease of the proposed new pavilion if it was merely intended to service the existing 11-a-side grass pitch. The amended proposal by ACFC was detailed in the report.

The Head of Finance and Property Services explained that in order to confirm support or otherwise for the amended project it was proposed that council officers undertake a brief period of public consultation during January and February 2019. A report on the consultation findings along with any recommended amendments to the council's approved capital project would be submitted to Council Executive on 26 March 2019.

In conclusion the report advised it was in the council's best interest that cognisance be taken of alternative proposal submitted by ACFC and that officers consult with the wider Armadale community on the merits of those proposals.

The report recommended that Council Executive:

1. Note the representations made by ACFC relating to an approved capital investment project planned at Watson Park, North Street, Armadale.
2. Agree that officers should undertake a community consultation on

proposals submitted by ACFC for the provision of a new synthetic 3G sports pitch and modular changing facilities at Watson Park, North Street, Armadale.

3. Agree that officers should report the results of that community consultation to the Council Executive on 26 March 2019, along with any recommended alterations to the approved capital projects.

#### Decision

To approve the terms of the report.