



COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

LINLITHGOW 3RD GENERATION SYNTHETIC PITCH PROJECT

REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council Executive approval for the submission of a £300,000 Cashback for Communities funding application, to the Scottish Government, for a full-size 3rd generation synthetic turf pitch at Linlithgow Leisure Centre.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council Executive:

- 1) Approves submission of the Cashback for Communities funding application, for £300,000, enclosed as appendix1 to this report;
- 2) Approves the allocation of £200,000 within the Open Space Capital programme towards the cost of this project: and
- 3) Instructs the Head of Finance and Estates to progress discussion with West Lothian Leisure to agree suitable terms to include the proposed synthetic pitch within the West Lothian Leisure lease.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	West Lothian Outdoor Sports Facility Strategy, Scottish Rugby Union and Scottish FA Facility Strategies.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Proposed increase in participation numbers.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	SOA 4: We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities. SOA 7: We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	£200,000 allocation within the Open Space capital programme, as set out in section D.3 of this report.
VII Consideration at PDSP	N/A
VIII Other consultations	Scottish Football Association, Scottish Rugby Union, local sports clubs, West Lothian Leisure.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

An opportunity has arisen for West Lothian Council to apply to the 'Cashback for Communities' scheme, administered via the Scottish Government, sportscotland, Scottish Football Association (SFA) and the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) for £300,000 towards a full-size, fenced and floodlit 3rd Generation synthetic turf pitch which will accommodate football training, matches and full-contact rugby.

Initial discussions with the SFA and SRU lead to the recommendation that Linlithgow is the preferred locality to receive a submission to this fund due to the strength of the football and rugby clubs in the town and the number of active participants the clubs support. Linlithgow Rose Community Football Club, Linlithgow Thistle Amateur Football Club and Linlithgow Rugby Football Club all hold West Lothian Council and relevant Governing Body club accreditation and the three clubs have a cumulative membership of 1,400 people.

At present, there is no 3rd Generation Turf facility within Linlithgow, this restricts training and competitive opportunities for local people, particularly young people. As detailed in the West Lothian Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy, Linlithgow also operates with a deficit of two full-size natural grass pitches.

This investment would help to address these shortfalls in facility provision and provide a much needed resource for a community with a growing and active population of sports club members.

D.2 Facility Operation

Given the expertise in leisure management and facility operation provided by West Lothian Leisure and the existing support facilities present on site, it is recommended that West Lothian Leisure manages the proposed facility. Further discussion will be progressed between West Lothian Leisure, West Lothian Council, the partner clubs and the relevant governing bodies over access and pricing arrangements to ensure the local partner clubs, and their members, receive the benefits of the capital investment as detailed in the funding application.

An amendment to the West Lothian Leisure lease would be required to include the site of the proposed project. The Head of Finance and Estates would progress discussions with West Lothian Leisure and their legal representatives over this, once the location of the project site is known.

D.3 Funding

The total budget requirement for this project is estimated to be £650,000, as detailed on page 8 of appendix 1.

The following funding summary details the known funding sources for the project:

- West Lothian Council - £200,000;
- Cashback for Communities fund - £300,000;
- Scottish Football Partnership - £50,000;
- **Total - £550,000.**

Further discussion is being progressed with the Scottish FA and sportscotland over the projected funding deficit and sources to address that. In addition, West Lothian Leisure has advised that an allocation to the project will be considered with a paper to be presented to the West Lothian Leisure Board for consideration on 24 April 2014.

The £200,000 West Lothian Council capital funding would be sourced from an existing, approved project in the Open Space Capital programme (the Doomsdale Park Project). This project aimed to deliver a full-size natural grass pitch on the Doomsdale Park site. Feasibility studies identify that ground conditions and topography at this site are unsuitable. An alternative site for the proposed pitch at the neighbouring Listloaning Park has also been the subject of a feasibility study. This option is also estimated to be unaffordable within the £200,000 budget allocation and the revenue consequence of investing in a pitch on a known flood plain does not represent value for money. It is concluded that a £200,000 investment to achieve a £650,000 synthetic turf facility, which provides significantly more hours of use represents better value for money for West Lothian Council and a better facility for local people.

E. CONCLUSION

An opportunity has arisen for West Lothian Council to apply to the 'Cashback for Communities' scheme, administered via the Scottish Government, sportscotland, Scottish Football Association (SFA) and the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) for £300,000 towards a full-size, fenced and floodlit 3rd Generation synthetic turf pitch which will accommodate football training, matches and full-contact rugby.

It is proposed that West Lothian Council allocates £200,000 to this project from the existing Doomsdale Park project to achieve much better value for money for West Lothian Council and the local community.

There will be no revenue consequence for this project assuming Council Executive agrees that West Lothian Leisure should operate the facility under an amendment to the existing West Lothian Leisure Lease

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: One

Appendix 1 – Draft 'Cashback for Communities' application form.

Contact Person: Keir Stevenson – Sport and Outdoor Education Coordinator;

Tel – 01506 282775; E-mail – Keir.Stevenson@westlothian.gov.uk.

Steve Field
Head of Area Services

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