

CABINET - 4 June 2008

PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 9 June 2008

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM – 18 June 2008

HENRY BEAUFORT SCHOOL – COMMUNITY SYNTHETIC TURF PITCH

REPORT OF HEAD OF CULTURAL SERVICES

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB1247 - Outdoor Sports Centre – Bar End – 10 July 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report outlines a proposal to construct a new synthetic turf pitch at Henry Beaufort School in Winchester. The pitch would be for shared school and community use, and would provide a range of benefits to local people, particularly young people. There is proven demand and need for such a facility. Moreover, the project would reinforce Winchester's commitment to engaging local people in physical activity in the run-up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In addition to funding identified by the School, external bids are being submitted which will require 50% in local match funding if they are to be successful. The report therefore seeks approval from Cabinet for a capital contribution to the project of up to £130,000 from the Open Space Sport Fund for Winchester Town.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That subject to the matter not being called in by Principal Scrutiny Committee and to support for the project from the Winchester Town Forum, Cabinet recommends to Council:
 - a) that a supplementary capital estimate of up to £130,000 in 2008/09 be approved, subject to the Football Foundation and SITA Trust (Landfill Tax Credit Scheme) Enhancing Communities Programme confirming grants totalling £332,000 towards the project;
 - b) that the sport element of the Open Space Fund for the Winchester Town Wards be used to fund the £130,000 contribution in full, and that any temporary shortfall in the fund be met from the Major Investment Reserve and refunded at the earliest opportunity from relevant developers' contributions as received.

- 2 That subject to Council approval of recommendation 1 (a) and (b) above:
- (a) The Head of Cultural Services be authorised to advise Henry Beaufort School to proceed with the detailed design and implementation of the project, and
 - (b) That the Head of Cultural Services and the Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport be authorised to enter into a management agreement with the Governors of Henry Beaufort School to secure community use of the new facility.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

1.1 At its meeting on 13 April 2006 Cabinet approved the draft Winchester and District Sports and Physical Activity Strategy 2006-2012 (CAB 1229 refers).

1.2 A major priority in this strategy is the improvement of access to high quality sport and recreation facilities by establishing multi-sports environments. This in turn will enable young people and adults to increase their levels of physical activity by being able to participate in sport and recreation pursuits more regularly and nearer to where they live. The benefits of regular physical activity are well documented, but would in particular reinforce other local efforts to reduce levels of obesity.

1.3 The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will raise the profile of sport across the country and will heighten the demand for sporting activities and facilities. It is hoped that the Winchester District will benefit from London's successful bid to host the Games, and the Corporate Strategy already includes an objective of "making full use of the opportunities presented by the 2012 Games, Paralympic Games and The Cultural Olympiad as a catalyst to increase participation in sporting and cultural activities".

1.4 The Government has set a national target to increase adult sport and physical activity levels by 1% each year. Increasing opportunities for sport by offering accessible high quality facilities will help to achieve this at a local level.

1.5 Multi-sports environments can offer benefits over single sports environments and are now the only way of securing significant external funding for facilities. These benefits include shared facility maintenance and marketing costs, integrated management structures and joint priorities for investment as well as a shared volunteer base and co-ordinated school links.

2 Background

2.1 Henry Beaufort School is situated on the northern edge of Winchester, in the ward of Littleton and Harestock and serves a catchment area of 35,000 people in the north of Winchester and outlying villages. There are limited outdoor floodlit training facilities in the Winchester area and none in the northern area of the city or adjacent wards. The existing floodlit all weather facilities are full to capacity. The two main synthetic turf pitches in Winchester are at Kings' School, where the

- pitches are sand based and primarily used for hockey, and River Park Leisure Centre, which is a half sized sand pitch.
- 2.2 There is a significant demand for a new synthetic turf pitch, primarily for football. The need for an all weather pitch in this area is identified in the recently completed Built Facilities Study commissioned by Winchester City Council.
 - 2.3 In 2006 the School carried out a survey of pupils, parents and the local community which showed a strong support for the development of sports facilities at the School both for pupil and community use.
 - 2.4 In Weeke there is an identified social need for activities to be made available for young people and this pitch would enable the school to work with the local youth agencies to set up appropriate partnership programmes.
 - 2.5 An all-weather floodlit pitch would provide a quality surface to enhance the school curriculum, extend opportunities for extra-curricular activities and serve a wider area of the community which has a recognised shortage of facilities.

3 Benefits to the Community

- 3.1 The proposed synthetic turf pitch will benefit a number of key community groups. There is potential to accommodate some or all of the following:
 - a) four local youth football clubs with teams aged 7 to 16 years, including girls' football clubs, with around fifteen teams which need facilities where they can train throughout the year in all weathers;
 - b) local primary schools, which would have use of the pitch during school hours;
 - c) two adult community teams in the area, with the potential for the development of a new adult league;
 - d) Police Community Support Officers and other voluntary organisations who could use the facility as a base for social inclusion activities for young people;
 - e) Southampton Football Club's 'SaintsAbility' project which is looking for a base to provide opportunity for disabled players in the Winchester area
 - f) Hampshire Football Association which is seeking a 'hub' venue for training volunteer football coaches.
- 3.2 The pitch will provide new access to sport for over 350 local young people each week through school, extra-curricular and community use.
- 3.3 The school will use the synthetic turf pitch for curriculum based PE during term time up to the end of the school day at 2.40pm. From then until 4pm it will be used to offer a range of curriculum extension activities and after school clubs. This will enable the school to develop a regular and varied programme of activities which can continue throughout the year irrespective of weather conditions. The school will also have use of the pitch until 5pm on some Mondays and Thursdays to host inter-school football tournaments and other collaborative activities with local schools which will be able to take place outside daylight hours.

- 3.4 The pitch will be open for community use between 4.15pm and 9.15 pm on weekdays (with automatic switch off of floodlights by 9.30pm); 9am to 4pm on Saturdays and 10am to 4pm on Sundays and throughout the school holiday periods. Specific time allocations will be given to all groups to ensure an even spread of usage and this will also develop links between the school and a wide range of community users.

4 Project Management

- 4.1 The management of the construction element of the project will be undertaken by Hampshire County Council in consultation with the school and other funding organisations. Hampshire County Council has extensive experience in managing synthetic turf pitch developments. It is hoped that the pitch will be completed by April 2009.
- 4.2 A Project Development Committee will be established at the pre-construction stage and will include the school Head Teacher and Business Development Manager, a member of the Governing Body of Henry Beaufort School (who is also a member of the Community Management Committee), the Hampshire County Council Architect and representatives from Hampshire Football Association and Winchester City Council.
- 4.3 Full planning permission has already been awarded by the County Council for the new facilities.

5 Facility Management

- 5.1 Henry Beaufort School has a long established community and site team with extensive experience in managing out of hours community programmes.
- 5.2 Following construction, the facility will be managed by the Community and Business Development Committee of the School's Governing Body. The chairperson of this Committee will be a member of the School's Governing Body and the School's senior management representative will be the Business Development Manager. This Committee will have a membership of six governors and will also co-opt non-governor members from Winchester City Council, Harestock and Littleton Parish Council and a representative of Community Football.
- 5.3 During school hours the use of the facility will be determined and timetabled by the PE department. Community use of the pitch will be managed by the School's Community Office, which in turn reports to the Business Development Manager who takes overall responsibility for community use of the School.
- 5.4 A User Group will be established to allow all school and community users of the pitch to be included in the management of the facility. The Community Office Manager will also liaise with users and potential users to manage lettings and events. The Community Office Manager will ensure that all sections of the community are able to access the facility in line with the Football Development Plan for the facility and Community Users programme.

- 5.5 The Community and Business Development Committee will ensure that there are regular reviews of all aspects of the management and use of the pitch. Each year the review and evaluation report will give an overview of how the facility is benefiting the school and the community. This Committee will also monitor the financial aspects of the facility and an annual report will be produced each year to include a monitoring report on income and expenditure and school and community usage.
- 5.6. The management arrangements for the Community Synthetic Turf Pitch will be secured through a legal agreement between the City Council and Henry Beaufort School. It is suggested that agreement to the details of this be delegated to the Head of Cultural Services and the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport.

6 Resource Implications

Proposed funding arrangements

- 6.1 Estimates have been prepared for the project. Details are given in Exempt Appendix 2. These costs are not based on tenders and should therefore not be considered definitive at this stage. A decision as to whether to proceed with the project will only be taken once firm costings have been received. However, the figures are believed to be realistic for the purpose of funding considerations.
- 6.2 The contribution from the school is in the form of land with a cash allocation of £145,000. The school is also finalising bids to both the Football Foundation and the SITA Trust (Landfill Tax Credit Scheme) Enhancing Communities Programme. The remainder of the funding will be met by parish councils and the Hampshire Playing Fields Association. A full breakdown can be found at Exempt Appendix 2.
- 6.3 The contribution requested from the City Council is currently identified as £120,000 although this figure is subject to confirmation as indicated in paragraph 6.1 above. The amount reflects the need to provide 50% match funding to support the bid to the Football Foundation for over £312,000. However, in order to make provision for any budget increase arising from the detailed tender process and contingency, Members are being asked to authorise up to £130,000.

7.0 Use of the Open Space Fund

- 7.1 Members will be aware that the Council operates an Open Space Funding System, under which contributions are taken from developers of residential development. The Fund is intended to ensure that sufficient sports and children's play facilities are available to meet the needs of the population of the District. The System operates by requiring housing developers to pay a contribution into a ring-fenced Open Space Fund where sufficient play/sports facilities cannot be provided within the development site. Contributions from developments are pooled with other contributions collected in the area, and are reserved for use in the area of the development (ie the local parish or Winchester Town), where they are used to enhancing existing provision (either by providing new facilities, or

- improving existing ones). In the Winchester Town area contributions may be used in any part of the town area irrespective of the part of the town in which development takes place.
- 7.2 Whilst Henry Beaufort School is located in Littleton and Harestock Parish, the facility will serve the whole of Winchester Town and an allocation from the Winchester Town Sport Fund is therefore considered appropriate in this case. As can be seen from Exempt Appendix 2 however, the Parish Council has already committed to a contribution of £10,000 in recognition of its role as host parish.
- 7.3 In July 2006, Cabinet approved a contribution of £1,010,000 (£1m capital contribution, and £10,000 towards fees and design work) towards the costs of providing the new stadium and hockey pitch at Bar End, Winchester (CAB1247 refers). This project is currently under construction, and all of the Council's contribution has been paid. As set out in CAB1247, the contribution to the stadium project was partly paid from the Open Space Fund, and partly from the Council's General Fund, the latter to be reimbursed as further open space contributions were received. The current situation is that as at 31 March 2008, there is an outstanding amount of £77,649 to be "repaid" from future open space contributions to the General Fund pursuant to the Bar End project. There are no further commitments against the sport element of the Fund for the Winchester Town area.
- 7.4 Based on previous years' inflow and the likely number of housing completions in the City Council's own projections, it is anticipated that sport contributions are likely to be not less than £120,000 per annum. (The average annual sport contributions for the Winchester Town Wards over the past five years is higher than this at £134,000). Assuming the synthetic turf pitch project proceeds as planned, the bulk of expenditure would occur in 2008/09.
- 7.5 It is proposed that any temporary shortfall in the Open Spaces Sport Fund for the Winchester Town Wards that may occur if payments are made in advance of the receipt of sufficient developer contributions be funded from the Major Investment Reserve and repaid as and when the contributions are received. Responsibility for managing this repayment process would lie with the Open Space Project Officer.
- 7.6 There is no legal impediment to the process. The Council has, in the past, saved up contributions towards the Winchester Sports Stadium project. Paragraph B23 of Circular 5/05 (which provides guidance on the use of planning infrastructure contributions) makes it clear that where a local authority provides infrastructure before all the relevant developments have come forward, later developments may still be required to contribute towards the costs. Contributions can quite properly be taken towards a project that has been part funded in advance by the Council provided it otherwise meets the criteria for contributions to be sought.
- 7.7 The Open Space Strategy, which is updated annually, reviews the extent of play and sport provision in the District and (by consultation with parish councils and the Winchester Town Forum) identifies opportunities where any identified shortfall can be addressed, either by the provision of new facilities or the

improvement of existing ones. Although this project is not specifically identified in the current Strategy, the Strategy does allow for the Council to evaluate and assess opportunities which arise during the year.

8 Revenue implications

- 8.1 Henry Beaufort School will be responsible for the revenue running costs and ongoing maintenance of the proposed facilities. An application for a start up grant will be submitted to the Football Foundation and income generated from bookings will cover the revenue costs of this facility. There are no revenue implications for Winchester City Council for this project.

9 Risk Management

- 9.1 It is necessary to draw Members' attention to the risk which arises from such an arrangement. The implementation of the Government's proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is likely to mean that the Council can no longer seek offsite open space contributions once it has been put in place. The effective date is by no means certain, and indeed it is possible that it will not be introduced at all. Early implementation of CIL might mean that the Council would no longer be able to collect open space contributions, and therefore it might not be possible to recoup the investment by the Council. A further risk is the possibility that housing development does not proceed at the expected rate, resulting in lower annual contributions and therefore a longer period to recoup the investment before CIL is implemented. This risk may be reduced by the likelihood of significant income from potential major developments in the town over the next two years.
- 9.2 However, against this risk should be set the benefits of the project. The establishment of multi sports environments is specifically mentioned as an objective in the Winchester District Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. If there were no open space funding available, it would be perfectly reasonable for the Council to consider a contribution from its own resources to such a project. Provided Members consider the proposition on this basis, the risk attached to the reimbursement of funds relates more to the opportunity cost than the project itself. If the Council were to find that it had used up to £130,000 of its own money then this would be funding not available for other purposes. There would also be a cost to the Council of loss of interest which is estimated to be £7,000 per annum.
- 9.3 This is a fairly low risk project in construction terms. However, if the project costs should increase over and above the tender figures during the construction period, it may be necessary for the overspend to be shared between Winchester City Council and Henry Beaufort School. In these circumstances there would be a further report to Cabinet. To maintain flexibility, however, approval for expenditure of up to £130,000 is being sought from Members, providing contingency of £10,000 over current budget estimates.

10 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

This project will contribute to the Safe and Strong Communities priority of the corporate strategy by 'supporting the promotion of healthy lifestyles'. As

indicated in paragraph 1.3 it would also support the intention to 'make full use of the opportunities presented by the 2012 games...as a catalyst to increase participation in sporting and cultural activities'.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Henry Beaufort School Community Synthetic Turf Pitch files in Cultural Services

Built Facilities Study –

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/EnvironmentAndPlanning/Planning/LandscapeAndCountrySide/OpenSpaceDevelopment/OpenSpaceSportsAndRecreationStudy/>

Circular 5/05 -

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/circularplanningobligations>

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Site Plan

Exempt Appendix 2 – Funding and Expenditure Summary