

TITLE	Emmbrook School 3G Pitch
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 30 November 2017
WARD	Emmbrook
DIRECTOR	Graham Ebers, Director of Corporate Services
LEAD MEMBER	Norman Jorgensen, Executive Member for Environment, Sports, Environmental Health, Leisure and Libraries

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Council's current leisure provision provides residents alike with access to affordable leisure activities which support the health and wellbeing agenda across the borough. They also provide the location of physical activity curriculum activities for some of the Borough's schools and academies.

There will be an added benefit for the current pupils at the school where they can access the 3G pitch during daytime, which will also include lunchtime and after school activity, they will no longer have to travel to use other 3G pitches and will be able to play matches at home. In the evenings the pitch will be open to members of the public, and our local football clubs in the local area.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1) release £375k from S106 funds, as the amount for the 50% match funding required by the Football Foundation;
- 2) note that the release of the money will be subject to receipt of the contribution of £375K from the Football Foundation and subject to planning permission.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

After an initial meeting with the Football Foundation and the Berks and Bucks Football Association, it was suggested that another 3G pitch was required in the Wokingham Town Centre area of the borough. The data came from the current Playing Pitch Strategy but the data given shows that Wokingham has over 490 football teams and in need of an additional 3G pitch. This data is currently being used and confirmed by the Berks and Bucks Football Association.

Emmbrook School is a vital partner within the bid, and is very keen for the 3G to be developed on the school site. Having had several meetings with the Head and Governors of the school they are all very positive for the new pitch to go ahead. This will help towards increasing the school PE sessions, provide a high quality pitch that can be used for matches, training, lunchtime and after school sessions.

If planning is granted the school will have a new 11 aside 3G pitch (also available for 5 v 5, 7 v 7 and 9 v 9) so adaptable for other age groups. There will be a service level

agreement in place from the Football Foundation and the Leisure Operator giving the school sole use during day time and afterschool usage. The community groups could also use this facility in the evenings and weekend use.

The 3G pitch will be managed and operated by the new leisure operator. Within the terms and conditions of the Football Foundation bid, WBC has to set aside a sinking fund of £25k per year, this will be included as part of the leisure contract. The leisure operator will have to pay WBC £25k each year as part of this funding requirement, therefore in ten years when the pitch will require resurfacing the council will not have to find any capital to resurface the pitch. Overall a sustainable project.

As part of the football foundation bid, WBC will have to write a football development plan which will include two main football clubs in the area: Wokingham and Emmbrook FC and Ashridge Park, alongside Reading FC for the Kicks project. The council will have to show an element of social inclusion within the project, this will hopefully help reduce anti-social behaviour.

Timescales

If agreed by executive to release the S106, timescales are below

- Apply to Football Foundation for 50% match funding – Deadline April 2018
- Planning Permission – January 2018
- If successful – Start on Site May 2018
- Pitch ready for use September 2018

Background

Wokingham Borough Council has commissioned a Playing Pitch Strategy, which will highlight the supply and demand for all our pitches across the borough. During a meeting with the Berks and Bucks Football Association, it was suggested that Wokingham has a number of Football teams (in the region of around 480) and that we did not have sufficient 3G pitches.

It was suggested that the Football Foundation would be very interested in funding another 3G pitch in Wokingham to elevate the demand for winter training and matches at weekends. After an initial meeting with the Football Foundation, it was highlighted to them that Emmbrook School was looking for a 3G pitch for daytime curriculum usage, and then open to community use in the evenings.

After an initial meeting with the Football Foundations consultants, they visited the area in question. Although this area is in falls within the flood plain, they were happy to proceed with the project, as in their experiences they have developed other sites with the same issues.

At present Emmbrook School is struggling with their PE curriculum as they do not have any 3G pitches, and their current provision is below average as the pitches are constantly flooding or waterlogged. As part of this the school have to have most of their home matches away; this involves travel and cost to the school.

Analysis of Issues

The main issue that may arise will be the potential for fluvial flooding in the area on the grass pitches/3G area, although this has not happened in the past six years. Officers are currently working with the WBC Flood Risk Manager to ensure that the pitches will not increase flood risk. This is likely to involve creating flood compensation close to the 3G pitches as well as a suitable drainage system for the pitches, in order to ensure that the flood plain remains the same and that the pitches are able to adequately drain to the Emm Brook. Officers believe that the proposal for 3G pitches presents an opportunity for flood betterment in the area.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£750k (£350k S106)	£375k from Football Foundation (match funding)	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	0	0	

Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0	0	
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Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None

Cross-Council Implications
<p>Priorities for leisure have been set out in the 21st Century Leisure Strategy and this paper follows the principles contained therein in addition to following the philosophy of maximising income contained in the 21st Century council programmes. There are implications for property services as the freeholds of the centres but no maintenance responsibilities, which will be clear in the final contract with providers</p> <p>Creating a more attractive sports offer at Emmbrook School may make it a more attractive school and increase the numbers indicating the school as their first choice. Furthermore, by creating links with not only the existing Emmbrook Primary School, but the new Matthewsgreen Primary School as well, the development has the potential to integrate communities in the existing development areas and the new North Wokingham SDL area.</p>

List of Background Papers
WBC 21 st Century Leisure Strategy 2017

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