

## REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
<b>Any especially affected Wards</b>	Mandatory/	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		<u>YES/NO</u>	
	Discretionary /	Need to be recommendations to Council		<u>YES/NO</u>	
	<u>Operational</u>	Is it a Key Decision		<u>YES/NO</u>	
Lead Member: E-mail: cllr.sam.sandell@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cllr Brian Long		
			Other Members consulted: Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds		
Lead Officer: Honor Howell E-mail: honor.howell@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial:01553 616550			Other Officers consulted: Neil Gromett Managing Director – AWN Tommy Goode – AWN Lorraine Gore – Chief Executive Debbie Gates – Executive Director		
Financial Implications <u>YES/NO</u>	Policy/ Personnel Implications <u>YES/NO</u>	Statutory Implications <u>YES/NO</u>	Equal Impact Assessment <u>YES/NO</u> If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications <u>YES/NO</u>	Environmental Considerations <u>YES/NO</u>

Date of meeting: 16 November 2021

### RIVER LANE 3G DEVELOPMENT

#### Summary

Sport England and the Football Association have identified insufficient artificial football pitches in west Norfolk, the only one being located at Lynnsport. The existing 3G pitch has 92% utilisation Monday to Thursday 5pm to 9pm, therefore is operating at near capacity. It is proposed to develop an additional 3G pitch on the River Lane playing fields to provide extra 3G football capacity in an area already designated for use as football pitches, enabling the local community to benefit from additional football facilities utilising the existing Dutton pavilion for changing facilities.

The River Lane playing fields are registered under Fields in Trust. Fields in Trust have indicated their approval for a 3G pitch, recognising the benefits it will bring to the local area and the health benefits that exercise can bring but a the formal Fields in Trust Request for Change process will need to be followed for formal confirmation. The playing fields area will still very much be open for community use.

An additional 3G pitch is estimated to cost £730k + VAT for the pitch, floodlights and fencing. The FA and the Football Foundation will support the project and pending a funding application the Football Foundation will contribute approximately 82% of the cost due to the area of deprivation in which the proposed site lies. To enable the project to go ahead, partnership funding from the borough council would be required at £263k. A return to the borough council is anticipated to be £35k per annum for 10 years.

#### Recommendation

That the borough council grant Alive West Norfolk a contribution of £263,000 to the overall cost of the new 3G pitch at River Lane playing fields subject to planning permission being received.

### **Reason for Decision**

There is a need for an additional 3G pitch to be developed at Lynnsport in order to meet demand of the affiliated game.

Additional local demand for 3G provision is being generated by the growth of the Women and Girls football with participation increasing within the traditional affiliated female game. Walking football is also seeing a rapid participation growth.

Football is also a strong tool to improve community cohesion and improve local issues such as anti-social behaviour. A new 3G pitch would enable recreational football programmes to be delivered which could improve community cohesion and social engagement.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 The existing 3G at Lynnsport attracts approximate 54,130 users per year with 33 specific football sessions, 13 football clubs, 2 football organisation and 3 football leagues. Lynnsport has a significant number of users of the multi-surface pitch but would prefer to use the 3G which is not possible due to it operating at near capacity, especially in the evenings. The 3G has utilisation of 40% at off-peak time and 75% at peak times (5-10pm Monday to Friday). This rises to 92% utilisation for Monday to Thursday 5-9pm.
- 1.2 Week-days, daytime use is predominantly by the local college sports department based at Lynnsport, Kings Lynn Town Football Club and the local schools. Utilisation is based on availability from 9am to 10pm.
- 1.3 In 2011 the borough council commissioned consultants to undertake a review of sports facility provision in the borough. At that time, the report produced stated that west Norfolk's provision for artificial pitches was amongst the worst in the region.
- 1.4 The report outlined the Football Association's (FA) standard of 1 3G pitch per 25,000 residents and that west Norfolk would require a further 5 pitches to meet the FA's standard. Given the population growth in the area during the last 10 years since the report was produced, it is almost certain that these figures are now understated.
- 1.5 In 2020 a further report King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Football Facilities Plan was published continuing to highlight the poor provision of 3G's for West Norfolk and identifying King's Lynn and specifically Lynnsport as priority projects for development given the local demand.

## **2. Healthy Communities**

- 2.1 'Helping to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities' is a corporate priority. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the health inequalities faced by communities in areas of deprivation and the project will help to address this.
- 2.2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in west Norfolk provides an indication to the deprivation levels of neighbourhoods based on income, education, employment, health, crime, housing and the living environment. King's Lynn has a number of wards which are within the top 10% of most deprived wards nationally. 15% of children in west Norfolk live in low-income families.
- 2.3 The Sport England Active Lives Survey measures overall engagement with Sport and Physical Activity. It measures the number of people aged 16 and over who take part in sport and physical activity. In the division where Lynnsport is situated 22% of adults are inactive (take less than 30 mins exercise a week) and 67% of adults are overweight or obese (source: *Norfolk Insight*)
- 2.4 Nationally, the government strategy 'Sporting Future – A New Strategy for an Active Nation' seeks to address the flat-lining of levels of sport participation and high levels of activity in this country. Through this, the government is redefining what success in sport means, with a new focus on five key outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In future, funding decisions will be made on the basis of the outcomes that sport and physical activity can deliver.
- 2.5 As we recover from the pandemic, it will be more important than ever to be more inclusive and relevant. Many people and communities feel excluded, often unconsciously. If this occurs at local, grassroots level our residents feel excluded and sport participants do not represent the diverse population, leading to social isolation.
- 2.6 Improving our sports facilities will act as an enabler to increase sports participation in one of the more deprived areas of our borough.
- 2.7 Local children will be able to access the 3G at discounted rates at off-peak times, school holidays and we will work with local schools and the College of West Anglia to target hard to reach groups in the North Lynn community and raise aspirations through workforce and skills development in sports coaching.

## **3 Options Considered**

- 3.1 The Norfolk FA are actively engaged with the borough council supporting the development of a second 3G pitch in King's Lynn. Lynnsport is the FA's preferred site. Norfolk FA are confident that delivery of a new 3G pitch will increase levels of physical activity,

improve the levels of mental health and wellbeing as well as improving community cohesion in this area. Norfolk FA will actively support a funding application from the council to Football Foundation to support the financing of the proposed development.

### **3 Policy Implications**

3.1 There are no policy implications. The proposal will meet the corporate priority 'Help to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities'.

### **4 Financial Implications**

#### **4.1 Cost of the scheme**

4.1.1 For 2020-21 the council had a favourable variance on maintenance spend of c.£218k for Alive West Norfolk. A portion of this saving could be used towards the cost of the new 3G pitch. The pitch will be a council asset.

4.1.2 The development of a 3G pitch at Lynnsport will cost £730 + VAT and £30k in professional fees. £100k from 2020-21 underspend and unsupported borrowing of £150k over 10 years will cost £13k in interest. Total project cost is £909k.

4.1.3 AWN have requested the borough council provide partnership funding towards the cost of the new pitch of £263k. This will be repaid over 10 years at £35k per annum. This will repay the initial outlay as well as providing a sinking fund of approximately £200k to replace the surface at the end of the life expectancy which is estimated to be 10-12 years.

#### **4.2 Estimated Income**

4.2.1 The estimated income from the new 3G is detailed below:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>INCOME</b>
Year1	£75,000
Year2	£80,000
Year3	£85,000

4.2.2 There is likely to be approximately a £10k pa reduction in use on the multi-use pitch with football bookings potentially transferring to the new 3G.

#### **4.2.3 Estimated annual running costs assuming LED lighting**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>COST</b>
Floodlights	£5,480
Pitch Maintenance	£7,700
Equipment/Service	£1,700
Staffing	£1,040
Sinking Fund	£25k

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£40,920</b>
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## **5 Personnel Implications**

- 5.1 The operation of the new 3G will be absorbed into existing duties by staff at Lynnsport. A cost for staffing has been included in the financial assessment.
- 5.2 The Alive Football Department will move to be based at the Dutton Pavilion providing a stronger presence in the area to help reduce anti-social behaviour and help with a more active programme for River Lane sports fields.

## **6 Environmental Considerations**

- 6.1 The proposed location of the new 3G pitch is on playing fields designated for use as football pitches near the Dutton Pavilion, accessed via River Lane. The playing fields are registered with Fields In Trust who have indicated their approval to the building of the 3G pitch in this location although their formal process for change must be followed with council consent.
- 6.2 In mitigation, in another area of Lynnsport, approximately 3.8 hectares of wasteland has been turned into green space for use by the local communities as part of the housing developments along Greenpark Avenue which more than covers the 3G development of approximately 0.8 hectares. All other activities such as walking, dog walking, recreational use of fields will be able to go ahead as normal.
- 6.3 The River Lane sports pitches regularly flood in winter months due to poor drainage and water board gates causing adjacent rivers/dykes to disperse onto the fields making the pitches unplayable. In recent years most football provision has now moved to Kings Way with only one youth football team and some league fixtures now played. The development an all weather 3G pitch would provide reliability to the playing surface on offer and attract teams and clubs back to the facility making River Lane an active place for recreation.
- 6.4 Due to the decline in use of River Lane we have seen higher levels of anti-social behaviour with c.£30k in vandalism of the Dutton Pavilion on 2020-21 and regular nuisance complaints and needles/drug use. Better utilisation by the community and greater presence of staff would help deter this behaviour and support people in taking up a more active way of life.

## **7 Statutory Considerations**

- 7.1 River Lane Sports Pitches are currently protected from develop under a Deed of Dedication with Fields in Trust. The Development Manager at Fields in Trust has indicated a 3G development would be an acceptable project as it complies with the fields use for recreational activity but with council consent, we need to go through their formal process to request the development.

## **8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

(Pre screening report template attached)

## **9 Risk Management Implications**

- 9.1 River Lane is protected from development via a Deed of Dedication with Fields in Trust. With council consent a formal Request for Development process will need to be followed with Fields in Trust.
- 9.2 The Football Foundation will appoint Robinson Low Francis for professional duties in surveying the site and construction who are experts in the field of 3G developments.
- 9.3 Alive West Norfolk have worked closely with Norfolk FA, the Football Foundation, The College of West Anglia and local user groups such as Kings Lynn Town Football Club to identify the need for the facility and likely uptake on completion.

## **10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted**

- 10.1 None

## **11 Background Papers**

- 11.1 Project Initiation Document Alive Lynnsport River Lane 3G Development version 5 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- 11.2 3G Feasibility Report September 2020
- 11.3 King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Football Facility Plan March 2020
- 11.5 King's Lynn and West Norfolk Sports Facilities Strategy 2011
- 11.6 King's Lynn and West Norfolk Strategy for Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Facilities 2002

**Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment**

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn & West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	3G Pitch Development at River Lane Lynnsport				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	New				
<p>Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened.</p> <p>Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations</p>	<p>New 3G Playing Pitch Development on River Lane Sports Pitches at Lynnsport. River Lane is protected under Fields in Trust for recreational use.</p>				
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>				
<p><b>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups <b>according to their different protected characteristic</b>, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</b></p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age	✓			
	Disability	✓			
	Gender	✓			
	Gender Re-assignment	✓			
	Marriage/civil partnership	✓			
	Pregnancy & maternity			✓	
	Race	✓			
	Religion or belief	✓			
	Sexual orientation	✓			
	Other (eg low income)	✓			





