

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards	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: Cllr Sam Sandell E-mail: cllr.sam.sandell@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cllr Brian Long		
			Other Members consulted: Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds		
Lead Officer: Lorraine Gore BCKLWN E-mail: Lorraine.Gore@west-norfolk.gov.uk Tommy Goode AWN Tommy.Goode@alivewestnorfolk.co.uk			Other Officers consulted: Neil Gromett Managing Director – AWN 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. Alive West Norfolk (AWN) are regularly having to turn down booking requests from local clubs and organisations who are unable to access a 3G pitch.

It is proposed to develop an additional 3G pitch on the River Lane playing fields to provide extra capacity in an area already designated for use as football pitches. The Local Football Facilities Plan produced by the FA highlighted this development as the top priority for West Norfolk. This would enable the local community to benefit from additional football facilities utilising the existing Dutton pavilion for changing.

The Football Foundation funding covers development of a 3G pitch with floodlights and fencing only. If the pitch is not located at River Lane there would be an addition cost of c.250-300k for the development of changing rooms. The Football Foundation also prefer developments to be located with leisure operators who have the expertise to maintain and programme the venues for the whole community. River Lane currently has 4 grass football pitches which are underutilised due to regular water logging and it is very rare that 2 pitches are used at the same time despite the 4 available.

The River Lane playing fields are registered under Fields in Trust. Fields in Trust have confirmed that artificial pitches do not require their consent unless they take up the majority of the space. As this development is approximately 20% of the area no formal application is required.

River Lane and the Dutton Pavilion are subject to anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Lynnsport receive a number of nuisance calls related to drug use and anti-social behaviour in the area. This development would support the community in making the River Lane playing pitches a vibrant and active place for residents to undertake recreational physical activity and formal sport. Work is currently underway with the NHS, Freebridge and Greenpark Academy School to improve sport and physical activity opportunities for residents in North Lynn and the new 3G pitch will incorporate some of this programme as well as discounted off peak rates for local residents. The programme and facility development would breathe life into an underused green space which is specifically designated for sport and activity.

Recommendation

As detailed in the report Cabinet are recommended to:

1. Approve the development of a 3G pitch at River Lane playing pitches, subject to planning permission
2. Approve funding for the 3G pitch as set out in section 4 of the report.

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, Alive Kings Lynn Football in the Community 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. Downham Market was also identified as a potential venue but not as high a priority as Lynnsport. Work has begun on a project in Downham in partnership with Downham Market Academy as a future development.

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

An additional 3G pitch is estimated to cost £730k (plus 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 of £250k if required. There are currently 2 options for this funding:

Option 1: Borough Council Funding – The council would borrow the money and with anticipated interest would contribute c. £263k. A return to the borough council is anticipated to be £35k per annum for 10 years.

Option 2: Community Infrastructure Levy – An application has been made to this fund and the outcome will be decided by cabinet in November 2021. If successful, the full £250k will be awarded with no further contribution from the council required.

4.1.3 A sinking fund contribution of £25,000 per year will provide for replacement of 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:

YEAR	INCOME £
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

AREA	COST £
Floodlights	5,480
Pitch Maintenance	7,700
Equipment/Service	1,700
Staffing	1,040
Sinking Fund	25,000
TOTAL	40,920

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 confirmed their approval to the building of the 3G pitch in this location.

- 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 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 confirmed a 3G development would be an acceptable project as it complies with the fields use for recreational activity.
- 7.2 The development of a 3G pitch at River Lane playing pitches will be subject to planning permission which will include the required public consultation.

8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(Pre screening report template attached)

9 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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 8th 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>				
Question	Answer				
<p>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 according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</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)	✓			

