
Meeting: Executive
Date: 18 March 2013
Subject: Astral Park Community Football Facility
Report of: Cllr Brian Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services

Summary: To set out the proposal for a £1.3m capital project to develop a community pavilion (changing facilities, kitchen, servery, toilets, office, community room) and car park at Astral Park, Leighton Linlade (led by Linlade Town Council); funded by £1.1m Section 106 contributions, included within the Council's Capital Programme and a £200,000 contribution from the Town Council.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Adrian Lear Facilities and Project Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Leighton Buzzard South, Linlade, Leighton Buzzard North
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The development of sports and community facilities will support the delivery of the following key Council priorities:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Great universal services – leisure.

Financial:

1. The total cost of the scheme is £1.3m, of which £1.1m is in the Council's Capital Programme, funded through Section 106 payments from developers held by this Council; Linlade Town Council (LLTC) is contributing £0.2m. As the total project cost is above the £0.5m threshold set out in the Council's Financial Code of Governance it requires Executive approval to proceed.

2. A substantial amount of Section 106 funds for Astral Park are to be paid from the residential development of Grovebury Farm (Sites 17a and b to the west side of Billington Road) are not yet commenced and no money is held for them. However, there are sufficient funds from other Section 106s to 'frontload' almost the full amount of the £1.1m. Thus monies held for Sites 15a, 15b-d, Vimy Road and the remainder from RAF Stanbridge can account for about £950,000. The remainder £150,000 should be available as the first instalments from the development of Site 17a that is anticipated to commence by summer 2013, well in time for the project spend in financial year 2013-14.
3. As a contingency, there would be alternative funding available from the other sites in the locality. When the full funding from Grovebury Farm Sites 17a and b become available this will 'backfill' the Section 106 'frontloading' projects, such as the Countryside Services money to be used for Pratts Quarry lake area, which is unlikely to now come forward until 2016.
4. The project is led and managed by LLTC and is being supported by CBC Leisure Services. LLTC is making its own project management arrangements and will award and manage the building contract. An initial payment has been released so that the LLTC could appoint a team of specialists to design the requirements for the facility and submit a planning application through the Section 106 release process. It is proposed that subsequent payments will be released to LLTC against monthly draw-down requests provided by their appointed Quantity Surveyors.
5. LLTC is considering its options for the future management and maintenance of the facility which will not involve any revenue contribution from CBC.

Legal:

6. The site proposed for the community pavilion and car park is owned by LLTC and the management and day to day operation of the facility will be their responsibility. The development of the pavilion will also enable pitches on adjacent land owned by CBC to come into use. The legal ownership arrangements for this adjacent site need to be concluded by CBC, by either entering into a long term lease with LLTC or by agreeing to transfer the site to the ownership of LLTC. LLTC will manage the operation and maintenance of this site as part of the whole development of football at Astral Park.

Risk Management:

7. The following risks have been identified, which are considered in more detail below:
 - failure to deliver the Council's priorities; and
 - financial risks, including scheme slippage, accuracy of costing and use of Section 106 funds.

8. The business case undertaken by Ploszajski Lynch Consulting on behalf of LLTC clearly identifies through market analysis a clear need for additional youth football pitches in the area but recognised that some adult teams have been lost due to the long wait for facilities, also that it was the Town Council's intention to move adult football to Astral Park from other, less suitable sites. The development of Astral Park improves existing provision of junior pitches and provides appropriate access and facilities so that pitches adjacent to the site can be brought into use for adult/youth football, therefore providing further opportunities for adults and children to participate in physical activity, which will meet the objectives of both CBC and LLTC.
9. Financial risks – LLTC has appointed an experienced consultant team to assist them to deliver the project. The team is made up of a lead consultant, who is responsible for the work of the whole team and provides the Architects, Structural Engineers, Mechanical Engineers, Quantity Surveyors services required. The team is experienced in the leisure field and has the expertise required to deliver the project successfully and within the budget. The building works contract is about to be tendered and once bids are received, value engineering will be undertaken as appropriate to ensure that the building will be provided within the available budget. This process will be led by the Quantity Surveyors and is similar to that followed by CBC at the tendering stage for Creasey Park.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

10. None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

11. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
12. The development of this facility will enhance customer experience and promote equality of opportunity, and make sport and physical activity a regular part of life for all.

Community Safety:

13. Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act the Council has a statutory duty to do all that is reasonable to prevent crime and disorder with its areas. The proposed facility and the activities that it will enable will provide positive opportunities, particularly to young people, who may otherwise engage in activities that may be considered anti-social.

Sustainability:

14. The proposals seek to extend and improve facilities and increase the number of people in Central Bedfordshire who can access and participate in sport and physical activity through a network of good quality accessible and readily available public sport and recreation facilities, reducing the need for customers to travel to other local authority areas to participate in these activities.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

15. This project forms part of the 2012/13 Capital Programme previously considered by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and approved by Council in February 2012.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is asked to approve:

1. **the release of £ 1.1m from the capital programme, on a phased basis to LLTC as set out in the report.**

Reason for Recommendation: To enable the project to be delivered by the Town Council through the use of the Section 106 funds.

Executive Summary

16. A significant amount of development has taken place in the South of Leighton Linlade over recent years, which has generated a considerable amount of Section 106 funding to develop the infrastructure in the surrounding area.
17. Astral Park is a local site for junior football. This project, led and managed by LLTC will meet the local communities' aspirations for the development of the site so that it can be improved through the provision of car parking and community facilities. The development of the site further enables access and provides facilities for an adjacent site to be opened up for adult football.
18. LLTC has appointed a project management team to manage the whole project from design through to build. Leisure Services is supporting LLTC in the process.
19. Executive is asked to support the project and approve the release of Section 106 funds secured so that the award of tender can be approved by LLTC on 22 April 2013.
20. The planning application was submitted in January and will be determined within 8 weeks by the end of March 2013. The build contract has been advertised and bidders invited to tender and the contract to build the facility will be awarded at a meeting of LLTC Leisure and Community Committee on 22 April 2013. It is anticipated that the contractor will start on site in June for a contract period of 26 weeks. LLTC estimate that the facility will be open in December 2013.
21. Executive is asked to support the project and approve the release of Section 106 funds secured so that the award of tender can be approved by LLTC on 22 April 2013.

Appendices: None

Background Papers: None