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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 18 March 2013  
**Subject:** Flitwick Community Football Facilities, Phase 1 in delivery of a new Flitwick Leisure Centre  
**Report of:** Cllr Spurr, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Services  
**Summary:** The report proposes to set out the arrangements for commencing Flitwick Community Football Centre, Phase 1 of delivering a new Flitwick Leisure Centre. To agree expenditure from the approved capital programme for Flitwick Community Football Facilities in 2013/14.

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**Advising Officer:** Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities  
**Contact Officer:** Jill Dickinson, Head of Leisure Services.  
**Public/Exempt:** Public report with an exempt appendix.  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** Yes  
**Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate)** To approve expenditure for the commencement of Phase 1 of £300k from the approved 2013/14 capital programme for Flitwick football facility for commencement in April 2013. This will support the timetable to deliver a new Leisure Centre, a short term strategic priority in the Leisure Facilities Strategy adopted by Executive on 8 January 2013.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

Capital investment to provide football facilities supports the following corporate priorities.

- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Great universal services – bins, leisure and libraries.

### **Financial:**

1. The capital programme 2013/14 – 2015/16, approved at Council on 21 February 2013 includes a provision for Leisure Strategy Implementation Flitwick Leisure centre Phase 1 - Football facilities.

2. An application for £300k will be made to the Football Foundation. The application will include a business plan for how the facility will be managed, with the aim of making the facility financially independent from Council revenue subsidy for operational costs. The grant will pay for additional development of a community room and kitchen facilities linked to the changing rooms to support this aim.
3. The capital programme also includes provision as a reserve scheme for Flitwick Leisure Centre. The overall approach to delivering a new Flitwick Leisure Centre, including a recommendation to approve an indicative timetable, procurement route, design brief and draft business plan will be considered by Executive on 14 May 2013.
4. The delivery of a new leisure centre has been a strategic priority for a number of years and was developed in 2009/10 until a review of the capital programme halted further development work. As a result, a site has been identified for Phase 1 and 2.
5. The estimated cost to deliver Phase 1 in 2013/14 includes the cost of the professional fees for this part of the project and will enable new pitches to be drained and seeded. Executive approval for this expenditure for the financial year 2013/14 will enable commencement of Phase 1 so that the pitches are sufficiently established to play on by August 2014 therefore enabling the leisure centre site to be available to start building the new leisure centre by the autumn of 2014 and being completed within the 2015/16 financial year.
6. This budget approval in 2013/14 will also enable work to be completed on the contract tender to build the changing pavilion and car park for the football project. The award of contract will be made once Executive has considered a recommendation to include Flitwick Leisure Centre in the main capital programme for 2014/15 and is approved by Council.

**Legal:**

7. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality. This is dealt with in detail in the Equalities section of Corporate Implications.
8. The Football Foundation grant conditions will stipulate that a long term lease be given to the local football club so that it has security of tenure to operate the facility. CBC will ensure appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place.
9. In 2005 the Council commissioned consultants to undertake an options appraisal to identify preferred sites. A review of the preferred sites in 2012 concluded to continue with the sites identified in 2005; for the leisure centre to be built on an adjacent site of the existing centre currently providing playing pitches, and for replacement pitches to be sited off Ampthill Road owned by CBC and currently vacant.
10. No specific legal arrangements are required regarding land issues for Phase 1.

**Risk Management:**

11. The following risks have been identified, which are considered in more detail below:
  - Failure to deliver the Council's priorities
  - Reputational risks
  - Risk to customer satisfaction
  - Financial risks, including slippage, failure to achieve income targets, accuracy of costing and accurate assessment of demand.
12. The provision of football facilities is Phase 1 of providing a new Leisure Centre in Flitwick, identified as a short term priority (within the next 2 years) in the Leisure Facilities Strategy adopted by Executive on 8 January 2013. The development of the Leisure Strategy comprising four separate chapters is itself a high level target in 'Delivering Your Priorities' the Council's Medium Term Operational Plan.
13. Delivering the project in 2 key phases enables budget expenditure to be controlled and tied to key Executive decisions relating to stages of development of the overall priority to provide a new leisure centre.
14. Phase 1 replaces pitches the new leisure centre will be built on, comprising replacement pitches, a pavilion for changing rooms and community facilities and a car park. Phase 2 is a new leisure centre.
15. Delivering Phase 1 directly affects the timing to deliver Phase 2, because planning conditions require for playing pitches and the associated facilities to be re provided before building work on the new leisure centre can start. The replacement facilities need to be at least equivalent in terms of quantity, quality and management arrangements to meet Sport England's playing fields policy used for assessing proposals as a statutory consultee. Phase 1 therefore includes changing rooms and car park that are currently provided for at Flitwick Leisure Centre.
16. A detailed business case has been developed for Phase 1.
17. The project is supported by the Football Association as a strategically significant site for the development of local community football in the area, to be managed in partnership with a local football club, Flitwick Eagles with the aim of delivering a scheme at nil revenue cost for the authority. A bid to the Football Foundation will be made. If unsuccessful, the scheme will be reduced in size to accommodate the budget available.
18. The extent of archaeological investigation is not known at present and will be subject to further discussion as part of the planning application process.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

19. Not Applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

20. 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. The improvements to the leisure facilities aim to enhance customer experience and promote equality of opportunity, and make sport and physical activity a regular part of life for all.

**Public Health:**

21. Leisure services are a key community health resource. Capital investment in leisure facilities will ensure there is a sustainable and high quality sport and physical activity infrastructure for local communities to engage in regular physical activity to help generate long term improvements in overall levels of health and wellbeing and thereby reducing the costs to society for the NHS and social care. The Football Foundation grant conditions will include delivery on a number of key performance indicators that will measure and monitor the effect of the new facilities against the targets agreed by the Football Association including increases in physical activity in targeted groups which aim to reduce health inequalities.

**Community Safety:**

22. 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 within its areas. Leisure facilities and the activities that they offer provide positive opportunities, particularly to young people, who may otherwise engage in activities that may be criminal or anti-social.

**Sustainability:**

23. The proposals seek to extend and improve facilities and increase the number of people in Central Bedfordshire that 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.

**Procurement:**

24. Procurement of contractors to build the facility will be in two parts; a contract for grounds (pitch) preparation for which budget approval to procure and implement is sought within this report, and, a contract for the pavilion and car park which will be procured but not awarded until after Executive have approved a budget for Flitwick Leisure Centre.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

25. The Leisure Facilities Strategy and the Leisure Capital programme to support the implementation of the strategy was considered and approved by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January and February 2013 respectively.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **The Executive is asked to:**

- 1. agree expenditure of £300k from the approved 2013/14 capital programme for Flitwick Football to undertake pitch preparation work as the first part of Phase 1 of delivering a new Flitwick Leisure Centre.**
- 2. delegate to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services and Executive Member for Corporate Resources;**
  - a) the award of the contract for pitch development in 2013/14, and**
  - b) the award of contract for the pavilion and car park, if Council approves inclusion of a budget for construction of a new Flitwick Leisure Centre in the capital programme for 2014/15 and 2015/16.**

*Reason for Recommendations: So that priorities for investment in the approved capital programme for Flitwick Football in 2013/14 can commence.*

## **Executive Summary**

27. As set out in the Corporate Implications of this report, the project supports the delivery of the Leisure Facility Strategy adopted by Executive on 8 January 2013.
28. This scheme is Phase 1 in the delivery of a new Flitwick Leisure Centre, a short term priority in the Leisure Facility Strategy and is supported by the Football Association as a strategic priority.
29. Phase 1 will be delivered in stages. In order to support a timetable in accordance with the Leisure Facility Strategy the next key dates include;
30. Executive 14 May 2013: To consider the overall approach to the delivery of Flitwick Leisure Centre including draft timetable, project budget, procurement route, draft business plan and design brief. Approve budget for professional fees for developing the Leisure Centre.
31. Mid Year 2013/14: As part of the review of the Medium Term Plan/budget report and capital programme for 2014/15 consider including Flitwick Leisure Centre in the main capital programme.
32. By the end of 2013/14, and once Flitwick Leisure centre is approved in the main capital programme, approve budget expenditure for building the pavilion and car park to complete Phase 1.
33. By September 2014. To award Flitwick Leisure Centre building contract with the aim of opening the new centre by March 2016.

**Appendices:**

Exempt Appendix 1

**Background Papers:**

Detailed business case

Site Options appraisal.