

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

CABINET - 5 DECEMBER 2002

CAPITAL PROGRAMME – FOOTBALL PITCH IMPROVEMENTS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report requests Members to reallocate £172,000 of Capital Funding previously approved to support an application to the Football Foundation for football pitch improvements. However, this application was unsuccessful and Members are now requested to approve that £172,000 be used to support similar applications to Sport England and New Wallasey also for football pitch improvements. Sport England require confirmation of matched funding by 12 December 2002.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 In May 2001 an application was made to the Football Foundation to improve 28 football pitches on 10 sites. The scheme included for pitch drainage and improved surface levels to current playing field standards at a total cost of £859,000 with a matched funding contribution of £172,000 (20%) from the Authority.

2.2 Unfortunately we were recently informed by the Football Foundation that our application had been unsuccessful mainly because of the changes in the funding criteria since the initiative started. Discussions are being held with the Football Foundation to find a possible way forward.

2.3 Of the sites included in the original application, one of the sites Central Park (3 pitches) is now to be progressed with grant funding from New Wallasey Regeneration who are contributing £48,000. The same share of matched funding of £12,000 is required from the original capital allocation of £172,000.

3.0 SPORT ENGLAND FUNDING APPLICATION

3.1 Based upon a ranked list of most deprived districts, Wirral was given a provisional funding allocation by Sport England of £136,000 (recently increased to £160,000) for playing pitch improvements as part of the New Opportunities Fund Playing Fields and Community Green Spaces Initiative.

3.2 Currently we are in the third and final stage of the application process for this funding which is to improve pitches in the most deprived Wards on playing fields with open public access.

3.3 Four sites have been identified with Sport England that meet their criteria which are as follows:-

1. Ryecroft Playing Field, Seacombe (2 football pitches)
2. Victoria Park, Tranmere (2 football pitches and cricket outfield)
3. Mayfields, Bromborough (2 football pitches)
4. New Ferry Park, Bromborough (1 football pitch)

- 3.4 The proposed pitch improvements at Victoria Park are linked to a scheme to provide a new sports pavilion within the park, which was approved at Cabinet on 26 June 2002. The proposed pavilion is subject to a separate application to Sport England recently submitted.
- 3.5 The total cost of the schemes is £380,000 of which Sport England will contribute £160,000 and New Wallasey £48,000.
- 3.6 Sport England require confirmation of matched funding by 12 December 2002 and that schemes will be implemented at the end of the playing season in 2003.
- 3.7 Alternative sources of matched funding have been explored including Neighbourhood Renewal, but this initiative does not meet with the necessary funding criteria or does not meet Sport England's timetable for implementation.

4.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 £172,000 has previously been approved and included in the Capital Programme as funding for playing pitch improvements.
- 4.2 £12,000 will be used to match New Wallasey's contribution of £48,000 for pitch improvements at Central Park, Wallasey.
- 4.3 £160,000 is requested to match fund Sport England's contribution of £160,000 for the sites listed in 3.3 above.
- 4.4 Schemes will be supervised by existing professional and technical staff within the Department of Education and Cultural Services.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The facilities provided will be available for use by all sections of the community and in particular the target groups identified by Sport England including women and girls, black and ethnic minorities, young people, people on low incomes and people with disabilities.

6.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The schemes are intended to improve recreational facilities within the communities which they serve.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are none arising from this report

9.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from this report

10.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Victoria Park is in Tranmere Ward
- Ryecroft Playing Field is in Seacombe Ward
- New Ferry Park is in Bromborough Ward
- Mayfields is in Bromborough Ward
- Central Park is in Seacombe Ward

11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 There are no background papers

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1 That Cabinet agree to reallocate £172,000 of the existing capital allocation for playing pitch improvements to match fund applications to Sport England and New Wallasey.

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