
LONGFIELD SCHOOL – SPORTS PROJECT

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Cyndi Hughes,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director - Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Members' agreement to release the capital funds in relation to the Longfield School – Sports Project allocated from the DfE.

Summary

2. Longfield School were successful in securing a grant allocation from the DCSF as it was then, through the Youth Sports Trust to develop sporting facilities on their site, in 2009. The allocation was the largest given to any one Sports College.
3. The grant was initially allocated towards the provision of a Tented Sports Facility however when the opportunity arose through BSF to maximise the funding, the decision was taken to develop a 3rd Generation Synthetic Turf Pitch (STP), to complement the sporting facilities which would be developed as part of the new development.
4. Members will be aware that the BSF programme for Darlington is currently stopped. As this is the case, the school is anxious to commence work, before August 31st 2010 on the STP project, at which point the funding would revert back to the Department for Education if not financially committed.
5. Under the Contract Procedure Rules Cabinet has the responsibility for deciding whether a procurement is strategic or non-strategic, based on previously agreed criteria. The procurement of the 3rd Generation Synthetic Turf Pitch is assessed as non-strategic (see **Appendix 1**),

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Members: -
 - (a) agree to formally release the capital funding of £530,000;
 - (b) approve the assessment of the contract as non-strategic;

- (c) delegate the contract award decision for this contract to the Director of Children's Services.

Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-
 - (a) Detailed planning to target need has been undertaken which ensures effective use of investment.
 - (b) The project is key to Longfield School delivering its Sports Diploma specialism and of being a regional centre for school sport.
 - (c) In light of the recent cancellation of the Authority's BSF programme it is imperative to the school that this project is retained and that further direct grant is not lost.
 - (d) This grant is for the purposes of improving sports facilities in the school to aid in the schools delivery of its sports diploma. It is not available for alternative use.
 - (e) The DfE Grant is being used as support funding towards a grant of £110,000 from the Football Foundation to support the project. The Football Foundation grant is dependent on having support funding secured.
 - (f) The contracts designated non-strategic are of a lower value and lower significance in respect of the impact on residents and public safety.

Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the production of this report.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	<p>It is anticipated that by providing such a facility, out of school hours, for community use that the community will gain a sense of ownership.</p> <p>It is also hoped that the facility will enable young people of the area whom would perhaps prefer to engage in anti social behaviour an avenue to focus their attentions.</p>
Health and Well Being	The improvement of sporting facilities in the area will have a positive impact on sports participation levels of not only pupils but the wider local community
Sustainability	This is not a specific Sustainability project however suppliers will be from our region where possible
Diversity	This project will add to the diversity of sports available to the people of Darlington
Wards Affected	Harrowgate Hill
Groups Affected	Children and young people from the school and Primary schools and the wider local community as a whole
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	This is a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The facility will allow the school to further develop their status as an exemplar sports College in the region
Efficiency	The facility will support extensive community use and provide the School will an income generation opportunity

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. Longfield School is a Sports College: this designation requires the School to develop and maintain good links with local sports clubs as well as to promote access to its facilities by the local community for active recreation. Longfield already has good links with its partner schools, with local sports clubs and community users of its facilities.
9. Longfield's school buildings and facilities have developed incrementally over the years and were due for re-development through the BSF programme. However, on 5 July 2010, the DfE notified the local authority that its BSF programme had been 'stopped'.
10. Design work has been progressed on the creation of a synthetic turf pitch and the school now wish to continue with that project. The funding attracted for the construction of a tented sports hall is insufficient to create an STP. The school has approached the Football Foundation and is confident that the Foundation will grant an additional £110k which would allow the school to complete the STP at a cost of £640k.
11. The Council could not commit to the release of funds if the release was insufficient to meet the needs of the contract. In the unlikely event that the Football Foundation funding is not forthcoming, the £80k difference between the cost of the contract and the £530k already secured, would be made up from diploma development funding, already received by the Council.
12. The primary purpose of the STP project is not only to assist in the delivery of curricular PE and school sport, but to better accommodate community access, particularly during the evenings, weekends and holidays when the synthetic pitch will be made available for managed community use.
13. The School uses a range of out-dated and ill-suited spaces to deliver what is otherwise a comprehensive and innovative PE curriculum. However, its success as a Sports College has yet to impact on whole school attainment, which, in part, has been hampered by the limitations of its current facilities.
14. While Longfield's potential as a centre for school and community sport is also frustrated by the paucity of its sports facilities, local community sports clubs use the School's grass playing pitches to capacity. This intense use of natural turf grass pitches by local clubs is sometimes to the detriment of School PE and sport.
15. The School lacks a full sized floodlit synthetic turf pitch (STP) which should be part of the mix of sports facilities provided on any Sports College site but which has always been beyond the scope of any planned improvements at Longfield.
16. Floodlighting the all-weather surface would not only extend the school day and allow greater community use during the darker winter evenings, it would take pressure off the natural grass pitches, keeping them in good heart for matchplay.
17. Community lettings would generate sufficient income not only to cover the running costs of this facility, but sufficient surplus for a 'sinking fund' to be invested for the future

replacement of the playing carpet.

18. The nearest similar floodlit full-sized synthetic turf pitches are at Eastbourne Sports Complex, which is just short of 2 miles to the south-east of Longfield; and at Hummersknott School, which is around 3 miles to the south-west of Longfield. Eastbourne is a sand based pitch while Hummersknott has a 3G rubber crumb pitch.
19. There are floodlit 3G pitches at Shildon Sunnydale Leisure Centre which is nearly 7 miles from Longfield, and at Conyers School in Yarm which is 9 miles away.
20. Other floodlit synthetic surfaces within 10 miles of Longfield are either too great a travel distance from the School and its catchment, or have public transport connections that are too intermittent and inconvenient to have any real impact on local community club demands for floodlit training. In addition, the majority of these existing full sized floodlit synthetic turf pitches are already fully booked on a regular basis.
21. The planning context for an STP development at Longfield is supported by the Borough Council's Sport & Physical Activity Facilities Strategy as well as through its detailed Playing Pitch Strategy undertaken using PPG17 methodology. Both these policy documents were adopted by the authority in 2009.
22. This development has the support of the Borough Council's Leisure and Sports Development staff as well as the Regional Office of Sport England. Officers from the County FA and the Football Foundation who have both encouraged the School to make an application for funding towards this facility.
23. A formal planning application for a full-sized fenced and floodlit synthetic turf pitch along with temporary access and car parking was submitted by the School on 30 June 2010.
24. Estimated Project Costs

	Item	Estimate £
1.	Project Development	22,000
2.	Contract preliminaries	20,600
3.	Synthetic Turf Pitch: including earthworks, drainage, pitch construction, fencing, floodlighting, and perimeter paving.	439,114
4.	Grass Playing Pitch works: including levelling, drainage, cultivation, seeding (on spoil disposal area) and completion.	25,953
5.	Parking and access arrangements.	18,338
6.	STP Playing and Maintenance Equipment.	15,470
7.	Contingencies (5%).	25,975
8.	Professional fees.	42,950
	Total (ex VAT)	610,400

25. Under the Contract Procedure Rules an annual Procurement Plan is produced listing details of all existing and new contracts that are above £75,000 and which require a tender process.

The Contract Procedure Rules state that if a contract has not been included on the Annual Procurement Plan a separate report must be taken to Cabinet to determine if it is deemed strategic or non-strategic.

26. Originally the intention was to build a new sports hall at Longfield, the procurement was submitted to Cabinet on the Annual Plan and assessed as strategic. However the intention is now to procure a 3rd Generation Synthetic Pitch at a much lower value, this change requires that the procurement be re-assessed against the criteria (see **Appendix 1**). The outcome of this assessment is that the procurement is deemed to be non-strategic

Outcome of Consultation

27. No consultations were required in the preparation of this report.