

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET – 4 APRIL 2017  
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT & CULTURAL  
SERVICES)

**RELEASE OF CAPITAL FUNDING – KGV MULTI USE GAMES AREA**

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the release of agreed capital funding of £160,000 in respect of the Multi Use Games Area within the King George V Playing Fields in Welwyn Garden City and agreement to award contract.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the release of funding of £160,000 from the capital programme for 2017-18 in order to progress a solution to the future of this Multi Use Games Area as outlined in paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees to dispensation under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to enable a direct award of work to S and C Slatter Ltd for the reasons stated in section 8.1 of this report.

**3 Explanation**

- 3.1 A Multi Use Games Area, for the express purpose of playing football, was designed and constructed in the King George V Playing Field over 2010-11. After briefly opening to the public over 2011-12 it was closed due to noise and related nuisance reported by nearby residents in Beehive Lane, Welwyn Garden City. Different proposals have come forward over recent years to try and find uses for this facility, but none have proved to be acceptable to all parties.
- 3.2 Options have been discussed with local residents and with Councillors and Officers from the Borough Council and Finesse Leisure over recent months. This has led to the following feasible proposals coming forward for further consideration:
- 3.2.1 To remove all four artificial pitches which make up this games area, and to relocate and relay them at two other sport and leisure sites in the borough managed by Finesse Leisure and where these surfaces can be put to good public use.
- 3.2.2 To dismantle and remove all above ground structures relating to this games area including the metal safety fencing and the four floodlight towers, remove all exposed surfaces below the artificial pitches, and then topsoil and grass seed this area to return it to natural open park land.

**Implications**

**4 Legal Implication(s)**

- 4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of this report as it is a request for the release of capital funding only to progress with a solution for this facility.

## **5 Financial Implication(s)**

- 5.1 Approval to release this funding will result in capital expenditure of up to £160,000 in 2017-18. Costs for all proposed work has been requested from a specialist contractor who has been working on possible solutions with the Borough Council and with Finesse Leisure over 2016-17.

## **6 Risk Management Implication(s)**

- 6.1 A formal risk assessment has not been prepared in relation to this report as it is a request for the release of capital funding only.
- 6.2 All risks associated with the contracting of services to Finesse Leisure are monitored and reported as part of the council's risk register, and as part of client meetings between the Head of Policy and Culture and senior managers at Finesse Leisure.

## **7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)**

- 7.1 Finesse Leisure manages and operates seven different sport and leisure sites in the borough on behalf of the Borough Council. None of them are currently identified as presenting any security or terrorism implications for the borough.

## **8 Procurement Implication(s)**

- 8.1 Due to the specialist nature of the work to lift and remove artificial grass pitches in this games area, and to successfully relay them on other sites elsewhere in the borough, there is little competitive market for prospective contractors. Therefore it is proposed to commission this work to S ad C Slatter Limited with the technical experience of doing this in other games areas across the UK.
- 8.2 The contractor who has been working with the Borough Council and with Finesse Leisure over 2016-17 was the lead contractor when this games area was originally constructed. Therefore they fully understand both its design and the materials used in its construction, and possess the necessary skills and expertise to safely change or relocate such structures.
- 8.3 So dispensation will need to be given from the Council's Contract Procurement Rules to commit the required work directly to this contractor. A full procurement exercise is likely to be both timely and costly and may not, given the small market place for such specialist work, lead to the receipt of competitive tenders.
- 8.4 This contract is considered to be a works contract under the EU Procurement Directives, and the value of this work is considerably below the threshold where a procurement process needs to be undertaken (£4,104,394.00).

## **9 Climate Change Implication(s)**

- 9.1 There are no direct climate change implications arising from the content of this report as it is a request for the release of capital funding only.

9.2 However where approved projects seek to enhance the facilities managed and operated by Finesse Leisure, work will seek to limit or reduce the carbon footprint of any new equipment procured.

## **10 Link to Corporate Priorities**

10.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority to maintain a safe and healthy community, and specifically to the achievement of providing a wide variety of leisure covering arts, culture, fitness and sports.

## **11 Equality and Diversity**

11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried out in connection with the proposals in this report as it requests the release of approved capital funding only.

11.2 However ahead of works being commissioned to this games area an equalities screening exercise will be completed to identify all positive, neutral and negative impacts arising from this.

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**March 2017**