



**Report to: Income Generation Committee, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**Report of: Corporate Director – Finance and Resources**

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**Subject: FOOTBALL FACILITIES AT PERDISWELL**

**1. Recommendation**

**1.1 That the Sub-Committee notes updated cost models for Futsal and pitch developments at Perdiswell and agree to receive a further report on the creation of new five-a-side pitches adjacent to Perdiswell Leisure Centre.**

**2. Background**

- 2.1 At its meeting of 10 July 2018 the Income Generation Sub-Committee considered a report into a number of potential sports developments including tennis provision, hockey and football, particularly in respect of five-a-side football pitches and pitches suitable for all-weather use. The Sub-Committee agreed to provide £25,000 to fund a feasibility study into the potential development of a Futsal facility and an All-Weather Pitch (AWP).
- 2.2 A range of assessments were undertaken and reports prepared for Committee in winter 2019/20 which were deferred due to focus on other developments. At the same time, the Football Foundation published its priorities for football development in Worcester and included an identified need for additional small-sided playing pitches and AWP provision. The Local Football Foundation Plan (LFFP) was presented to, and approved by, the Communities Committee in January 2020.
- 2.3 The assessments included a proposed business case for each facility and new changing room facilities at Perdiswell Leisure Centre. The financial information which supported these proposals is now out of date and it is necessary to undertake revisions in the light of cost increases that have been experienced on other capital works as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic and supply chain issues.
- 2.4 At its meeting of 10 November 2021 the Sub-Committee agreed to commission the necessary revised costings and receive a report on whether the schemes remain financially viable. The work was commissioned from Raise Partnership and the report is provided at **Annex 1**. This is confidential on the basis that it includes information of a commercially sensitive nature.
- 2.5 In summary the report concludes that both the All-Weather Pitch and Futsal schemes remain financially viable although the former is dependent upon receipt of a grant from the Football Foundation. This requires that surplus income derived from the facility would need to be ring-fenced to it for future maintenance and re-provision. A report will be prepared for the Communities Committee to consider proposals for taking this scheme forward.

- 2.6 The costing work in respect of the Futsal proposal was designed to assess in the first instance whether the original proposals could still be undertaken. As this scheme would not be dependent upon grant but would utilise borrowing, the income derived from it would not be subject to the same restrictions. The conclusion of the report set out in the annex is that the scheme would still be viable, although the capital costs have risen from an estimated £2.9m to £3.4m. In the event that these were met in full from borrowing, this would give rise to an annual cost of approximately £133,000 at current PWLB rates. This is lower than stated in the annex due to changes in interest rates.
- 2.7 However, since the 2018 report, the existing five-a-side pitches adjacent to the Leisure Centre have been brought back into use. There is a further consideration, therefore, whether the conversion of the facilities to a Futsal stadium is the most cost-effective use of the site or whether the addition of further five-a-side pitches would be represent a better alternative in terms of value-for-money.
- 2.8 At the date of this report information about the use of the refurbished pitches is limited as leisure activities have not returned to pre-Covid activity levels. However there would clearly be additional capital costs over and above those identified in the annex due to the five-a-side pitches having been refurbished. The latter work was undertaken and funded by Freedom Leisure on the grounds that it receives the income from the pitches. A sliding scale of compensation was agreed in the event that the pitches were replaced in future.

### **3. Preferred option**

To undertake an assessment of the alternative use of the land available for a Futsal facility as additional five-a-side pitches.

### **4. Alternative Options Considered**

Not to undertake further assessment.

- 4.1 The Council has the opportunity to develop the Futsal facility, as proposed in previous reports. However, the previous report pre-dates the refurbishment of the existing five-a-side pitches which has resulted in increased income. The Committee may consider that the development of a Futsal facility is appropriate in itself but the option of alternative use of the site needs to be considered.

### **5. Implications**

#### **5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications**

The financial implications of progressing with the schemes are set out in the annex. The costs of assessing the viability of additional five-a-side pitches has not been assessed at the date of this report. However, there is a projected balance of £46,839 on the Income Generation Fund as at 31 March 2022 which is uncommitted.

#### **5.2 Legal and Governance Implications**

The responsibility for leisure services lies within the remit of the Communities Committee. However, these facilities have the capacity to generate income for the Council and therefore fall to the Income Generation Committee for consideration.

- 5.3 Risk Implications  
None directly arising from this report.
- 5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications  
Provision of leisure facilities supports the Healthy and Active City Plan theme.
- 5.5 Equality Implications  
None directly arising from this report.
- 5.6 Human Resources Implications  
None directly arising from this report.
- 5.7 Health and Safety Implications  
None directly arising from this report.
- 5.8 Social, Economic and Environmental Implications  
The potential value of additional football facilities is set out in detail in the Annex to this report.

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**Background Papers:** Report to Communities Committee, 17 January 2020