



CABINET REPORT

Report Title

Camp Hill Multi-Use Games Area

AGENDA STATUS:

PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	14 th October 2009
Key Decision:	NO
Listed on Forward Plan:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Directorate:	Environment and Culture
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Paul Varnsvery
Ward(s)	West Hunsbury

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for NBC to manage and maintain a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in Camp Hill, and act as the Accountable Body for a Big Lottery grant to fund it's installation.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to approve that:

- 2.1 NBC acts as Accountable Body for the anticipated capital funding from the Big Lottery 'Changing Spaces' programme of £50,000.
- 2.2 NBC manages the facility as a council asset, on land leased from Northamptonshire County Council.
- 2.3 NBC provides the ongoing, weekly maintenance and inspection of the facility, with any damage and repairs covered through additional external funding.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 Camp Hill has a lack of sports and recreational space, with any current provision unsuitable for young adults ages 11+
- 3.1.2 The Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment of Needs and Audit (2006) identified deficiencies town-wide in the provision of outdoor sports facilities for young people.
- 3.1.3 The Playing Pitch Strategy (2005) identified a town-wide pitch deficit for junior football and mini-soccer. It recommended securing community use of new sites to address this.
- 3.1.4 There is demonstrable support from local residents, young people, resident groups, Neighbourhood Management Board, and Safer Communities Team for a Multi-use games area. A needs analysis has been carried out, which supports building the facility (see Background Papers).
- 3.1.5 The Hills Community, a local residents association, has reached the second stage of a £50,000 'Changing Spaces' Big Lottery application for a MUGA with the support of the Doing Better For Communities Neighbourhood Coordinator. The Big Lottery has given a deadline for submission of the completed Stage 2 application, demonstrating ability to proceed with the scheme, by October 26th 2009.
- 3.1.6 Northamptonshire County Council owns the land in question, and on 12th August 2009 their Cabinet agreed to lease a portion of this land for a MUGA to the Council.
- 3.1.7 A planning application has been submitted on the recommendation of NBC Planning, though based on the nature of the development work can proceed without formal planning permission. Planning has indicated there are no reasonable grounds for rejecting the application. To date no objections have been received from residents in the adjacent streets.
- 3.1.8 A dedicated Project Management Group composed of Council officers, professionals and councillors as appropriate has been convened, and is following established project management protocol.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 NBC would act as Accountable body for the Big Lottery capital grant in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined by the Big Lottery. NBC would agree to the Big Lottery asset-monitoring period of five years, in

essence ensuring that the MUGA remains suitable for sporting activities and accessible to all residents during this time.

- 3.2.2 NBC would become the leaseholder of land sufficient to contain the MUGA with a two metre buffer surrounding. Council would take on the ownership and management of the proposed MUGA as a council asset. The desired lease term is twenty years, with a peppercorn rent, agreed in principle through a County Council drafted Heads of Terms of Agreement.
- 3.2.3 The County Council has proposed a fifteen-year break clause in the lease. The MUGA would be in place for a minimum of fifteen years. After this time the County could terminate the lease and have indicated they would require that NBC reinstate the land to its previous condition. This would cost c. £4000 at current market prices. This cost can be met through top slicing the maintenance budget for the MUGA over the fifteen-year period. It should be noted that in any event the MUGA playing surface would need replacing at 15 – 18 years. If the MUGA remained in place beyond this time the accrued reserve fund could then cover the costs of a new playing surface if required.
- 3.2.4 Under the proposed scheme NBC would take on the weekly maintenance and inspection of the MUGA. Parks and Open Space have confirmed their capacity to carry out the superficial cleansing, maintenance and inspections of the MUGA. NBC is not being asked to fund any additional maintenance required in the event of damage or vandalism to the facility. A funding reserve to the value of £10,000 will cover this for a period of five years. This will comprise of a mix of cash and equipment. This mirrors similar agreements for the maintenance of other multi-use games areas in the town (such as Victoria Park). The scheme will not proceed before this additional funding is confirmed.
- 3.2.5 Crime Prevention Design Advisor, Sharon Henley, of Northamptonshire Police, has conducted a thorough environmental audit of the site. Her assessment approves the chosen location subject to provision of regular landscaping works to increase the visibility of the site. The County Council have agreed to carry out this work as part of the lease agreement. The site is well protected from the most likely source of damage; cars driving into fencing and/or being burnt out on the tarmac surface.
- 3.2.6 Noise has been the main source of concern for local residents near existing MUGAs in Northampton. It should be noted that the chosen site is more than thirty metres from the nearest housing (in line with the Fields In Trust 'Six Acre Standard' : 2001). There are large trees shielding housing from the site. The tender specifications demand low noise rebound fencing. Construction will be put out to tender using the ESPO procurement framework. Key elements of this tender include long guarantee periods for materials, anti-bullying and vandal-resistant design.
- 3.2.7 Fees accrued in the preparation of the bid cannot be recouped through the Big Lottery Funding. This includes internal recharges between NBC departments.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 Council agrees to the administration of the Big Lottery grant, the maintenance and management of the proposed Camp Hill Multi-Use Games Area under the terms outlined in this report.
- 3.3.2 Council agrees to the action described in paragraph 3.3.1 and in addition agrees to waive internal recharges (cost of officer time) resulting from work preparing the Stage 2 lottery application.
- 3.3.3 Council rejects one or more elements of the project, either to act as Accountable Body for the Big Lottery grant, and/or to the maintenance and management of the facility. This will result in failure to secure capital funding from the Big Lottery.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17) states that local authorities should avoid erosion of recreational function and maintain or enhance the character of open spaces. Based on the supportive outcome of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey (see Background Papers) a MUGA could be considered an enhancement to the recreational function of the area.
- 4.1.2 Planning Policy Recommendation 13: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPR13) states that we should look to secure formal community use of sites currently inaccessible to the community to help address an overall deficit. The Equalities Impact Assessment (see Background Papers) notes the facility would promote a more diverse community use of the site
- 4.1.3 Taking into account survey evidence this scheme would be consistent with local planning policy, including the designation of the site as an area of acknowledged conservation (Policy E18) and of part of the site as an area of skyline conservation (Policy E7).
- 4.1.4 The report has no direct implications for other policies, though may act as an exemplar for the delivery of recreational facilities through partnership working and direct community involvement.
- 4.1.5 As such the report may prove useful to strategy development around recreation and open space, including the upcoming Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Capital

This scheme would bring £50,000 of Big Lottery capital funding into the town, specifically to the area of Camp Hill. A capital appraisal has been submitted and is part of the capital monitoring report also presented to this cabinet.

4.2.2 Revenue

- The main revenue liabilities generated by the project relate to the ongoing maintenance of the facility (excepting costs for replacing parts in incidents of damage and vandalism) and officer time expended in the general course of cleaning and inspecting the facility. These are estimated at £500 per annum, and will be covered through existing budgets.
- A reserve will be set up to replace parts in incidents of damage and vandalism and will total £10,000 for a five-year period (£2000 per year). This will comprise of a mix of revenue and equipment. Any funding or materials remaining after this time will continue to benefit the project. Thereafter Parks and Open Space will bid for this funding as part of the budget build process at the appropriate time.

Funding Source	Amount (£)
Sustainability Grant (Big Lottery)	3,500
Lottery Fund replacement parts element (included within Stage 2 application)	3,000
Grant Funding	2,000
Tournament revenue	1,500 (£300 per annum)
Total (5 years)	10,000

Breakdown of reserve fund for Camp Hill MUGA

- It is anticipated there will be minimal officer time incurred in the management of the facility and the land's lease by the Councils Asset management department. The workload is within their capacity to deliver effectively and with value for money.
- To maximise any revenue funds available to the project on completion the Council is asked to waive any internal recharges associated with its development.

4.2.3 Risk Management

Risk	Action
Difficulty fulfilling responsibilities as Accountable Body	The legal and financial implications related to acting as an Accountable body for the capital grant have been reviewed by the Councils legal representative and the Finance team. The project will not proceed without approval from the Finance team of the conditions for acting as Accountable Body. The submission of a grant application does not bind the Council to any grant they may be offered as the Accountable Body.
Unable to secure revenue from community	Work with residents to establish steering group (through the Hills Community Residents Association), which is capable of generating revenue for the facility. Hills Community also provides community

organised events	group capable of applying for grant funding to support the project.
Poor standard of construction	To avoid risks associated with the commissioning of works and adoption of a new facility there will be close monitoring and oversight of the tendering, construction and sign off of works by a dedicated, external Lead Professional. This is in accordance with Big Lottery guidelines and will be funded through the capital grant. The Lead Professional will liaise closely with the Project Management Group.
Vandalism of facility	Ongoing engagement work with local residents, particularly young people, to encourage ownership of the facility. Design and location aims to reduce potential for criminality through maximum visibility and blocking access to vehicles. Reserve fund set aside to cover any such maintenance requirements.

4.2.4 NBC's Insurance Officer confirms the facility can be covered under the existing Public Liability insurance held by the council, without incurring an additional charge.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The Council would effectively be acting as a guarantor in acting as the Accountable Body for this project. The risks associated with this and taking on a lease of land are referred to within this report.

4.3.2 The Council's ultimate commitment to this project will be strictly subject to negotiating satisfactory lease terms with the County Council and officer satisfaction with the terms of the Big Lottery Grant Agreement when received.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out for the consultation process and community use of the facility (see background papers).

4.4.2 The Equalities Impact Assessment noted a specific need to ensure young female residents and young disabled residents feel engagement with the project and able to make use of the facility on completion. These have built into the consultation process and the design and ongoing management of the facility.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 There has been continuous consultation with internal departments including Finance, Legal, Housing, Procurement, Asset management, Planning, Policy and Community engagement and Neighbourhood Environmental Services. This has involved one to one meetings and participation in the Project Management Group. Ward Councillors and Portfolio Holders for Communities and for Environment, The Heads of Finance, Policy and Community Engagement, Leisure and Culture and Neighbourhood Environmental Services have all been consulted directly.

- 4.5.2 External consultation has encompassed residents adjacent to the site, all local residents, resident/local interest groups and young people. Methods employed include open meetings, door-to-door work, questionnaires, information stalls at local amenities, residents meetings, workshops with young people and street-based/school based outreach with young people. This work has been instrumental in identifying a suitable location, producing a specification for the MUGA and securing the support of other agencies. The agencies and their representatives consulted include Northamptonshire County Council Property Asset management, County Councillors (Portfolio and Ward), Northants Police (Safer Community Team, Sector Inspector, Crime Prevention Design Advisor) and The Wildlife Trust.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 Partnership and Community Engagement : Effective working with voluntary and community sectors. This Project is an exemplar for partnership working and community involvement in the delivery of recreational facilities.
- 4.6.2 Safer, Greener and Cleaner communities : Provide good quality open spaces and parks, Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 4.6.3 Housing, Health and Wellbeing : Healthier living for young people

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 Feasibility Study
- 5.2 Needs Analysis
- 5.3 Site Plan
- 5.4 Equalities Impact Assessment
- 5.5 Crime Prevention Assessment
- 5.6 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

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