

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-028-2013/14
Date of meeting: 99 Month Year



Portfolio: Leisure and Wellbeing

Subject: Section 106 contribution from Redevelopment of St John's C of E VC School, Epping

Responsible Officer: James Warwick (01992 564350).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That Cabinet gives approval for the Section 106 contribution (£225,000) from the redevelopment of St John's School in Epping to be used to improve and redevelop sports and leisure facilities at Stonards Recreation Ground, Epping.**
- (2) That Cabinet receive further reports on the detail of the final improvement projects to be implemented along with the outcome of any further funding applications.**

Executive Summary:

As part of the overall planning process, a Section 106 contribution of £225,000 from the redevelopment of St John's C of E VC School was secured for implementing off-site playing field projects, to compensate for the loss of part of the school's playing fields.

Epping Forest District Council has consulted with Epping Town Council, the Essex FA, Sport England and St John's C of E VC School and it is recommended that the best use of the Section 106 money would be to improve and redevelop sports and leisure facilities at Stonards Recreation Ground, Epping. A procurement exercise was undertaken and Surfacing Standards Ltd were appointed to undertake a feasibility study exploring the potential options for improving sports and leisure facilities at the Recreation Ground.

This report highlights the proposals made in the feasibility study report and identifies the next steps in terms of maximising community benefit.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The contribution has arisen as a result of the development of the new Secondary School in Epping to compensate for the loss of playing fields. Therefore, the conditions of the agreement stipulate that the contribution should be used locally to improve and redevelop sports and leisure facilities for the wider community.

Other Options for Action:

To use the contribution elsewhere in the District to improve sports and leisure facilities. This would need to be justified and demonstrated that there was a real priority need elsewhere in the District, as well as obtaining specific approval from Sport England.

Report:

1. The section 106 contribution from the redevelopment of St John's C of E VC School totals £225,000. This contribution was secured for implementing off-site playing field improvement projects to compensate for the loss of part of the school's playing fields. Epping Forest District Council are required to prioritise the use of the section 106 contribution based on local needs when determining how to use the funds.
2. Sport England have advised the section 106 contribution should be used to develop new or improve existing facilities within Epping.
3. The District Council was initially approached by St John's C of E VC School with regard to utilising some of the section 106 contribution on the school site for the purchase and installation of floodlights. However Sport England did not approve and have advised the school that they should seek alternative funding options. The school have now secured an alternative source of funding for the floodlights, which will need planning approval.
4. Subsequently, Epping Forest District Council's Sports and Health Development Manager, has attended site meetings with Epping Town Council and Essex FA at Stonards Hill Recreation Ground to explore options for using the section 106 contribution to improve and develop sports and leisure facilities at this site. Surfacing Standards Ltd were appointed following a procurement exercise to carry out a feasibility study at Stonards Recreation Ground. The full feasibility Study is attached at Appendix 1.
5. The potential proposed improvements identified are:
 - (i) re-surfacing of the Tennis Courts into a 2G Artificial surface that would enable the facility to be used for tennis and football, therefore reducing wear and tear on the grass pitches;
 - (ii) outdoor gym equipment;
 - (iii) increase and improve the existing skate park facilities; and
 - (iv) upgrades to the changing rooms and toilets.
6. The total estimated cost of these upgrades, detailed at P18 of the feasibility study, is £428,940 (including £33,340 project fees) clearly in excess of the £225,000 available through the S106 Agreement. However, Sport England have indicated that they would be receptive to a grant-aid application to help meet the shortfall. The project could also be the subject of applications to other grant making bodies and, depending on the success of applications, may allow upgrades to other facilities on the site, such as the Petanque Terrain.
7. It is recommended that the Council makes a formal decision to allocate the S106, £225,000 towards the project at Stonards Hill Recreation Ground, to, enable some improvements to be made and to guarantee core funding, in support of other grant applications, to ultimately deliver all the improvements.
8. Epping Town Council, as the freeholder of the site, will be responsible for the project management of the improvements, but advice and guidance on this and the development of grant applications will be provided by the District Council.

Resource Implications:

The contribution available to improve sports and leisure facilities is £225,000. There is the opportunity to develop external funding applications and use this contribution as match funding for larger scale projects. It is recommended that officer time be used to develop a match funding bid to Sport England to enable the recommendations to be fully implemented and add value to the project. Epping Town Council will be responsible for all future revenue costs.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Sport England have provided advice on how the section 106 contribution can be used. Planning advice and permission will be sought where required.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The use of the section 106 contribution in Epping will result in a wide range of benefits to the immediate local community. It is anticipated that the improvements and developments will increase sports participation and help to improve people's health and well-being, as well as offering opportunities for young people to take part in positive activity.

Consultation Undertaken:

Consultation has taken place with Epping Town Council, St John's C of E VC School, Essex FA and Sport England. Epping Forest Youth Council – Skatepark Consultation. The Town Council are in agreement with the proposals (TBC in writing).

Background Papers:

Stonards Recreation Ground Feasibility Study by Surfacing Standards Ltd.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The key risk is not using the section 106 contribution to provide or improve sports and leisure facilities within Epping, as this would be a breach of the conditions of the section 106 contribution.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?

This recommendation has a positive Equality Impact, in that the provision of a new community sports and leisure provision in Epping. These will be achieved through providing greater opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity through this new provision. In addition, young people at risk of social exclusion would specifically be supported in terms of their integration within the community and wider society and people with disabilities would have much improved access to the building through design adjustments to meet with DDA.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.