

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CUSTOMER SERVICES, SPORT & LEISURE
CABINET MEMBER**

CO-OP SPORTS GROUND

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a request from Appleby Frodingham Works Athletic Club (AFWAC) to take over the management of the Co-op Sports Ground.
- 1.2 The key points of the report are as follows.
- We have received a request from AFWAC to take over the management of the Co-op Sports Ground.
 - We have a commitment to consider requests from community groups to manage council owned facilities
 - We are erecting a fence around the Co-op Sports Ground
 - We have an excellent working relationship with AFWAC and this will help to improve the sports hub at the Pods/Brumby Hall
 - We will develop a management agreement to ensure community access to the Co-op Sports Ground is maintained in line with current arrangements
 - We are working with the Co-op Bowls Club and AFWAC to improve the offer for bowlers
 - The change in management arrangements will result in efficiency savings.
 - The property related matters need to be referred to the Asset Management, Culture and Housing Cabinet Member for a decision.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Co-op Sports Ground is owned and managed by North Lincolnshire Council. The ground has three football pitches, cricket square, bowling green and changing facilities. The changing facilities also serve two football pitches in Central Park. It is used by local sports clubs and is the home of the Co-op Bowls Club. In 2013/14 the site played host to 187 football and cricket matches.
- 2.2 The Playing Pitches Strategy for North Lincolnshire identifies the Co-op Sports Ground as a key site.

- 2.3 We have held discussions with AFWAC about siting an artificial grass sports pitch (AGSP) at Brumby Hall, Scunthorpe. The provision of a pitch is identified in the Playing Pitches Strategy. The case for a new AGSP is not clear because of the increase in supply of pitches in the Scunthorpe area. The development is on hold for the present. We will recommence discussions to site it at Brumby Hall if the need for an AGSP changes.
- 2.4 We received a request from AFWAC, during discussions on the AGSP, to take over the management of the Co-op Sports Ground, including the football pitches in Central Park. The council has an excellent working relationship with AFWAC. The development of a sports hub at the Pods/Brumby Hall has been possible with the help of AFWAC.
- 2.5 The Asset Management, Culture and Housing and Customer Services, Sport & Leisure Cabinet members agreed a policy direction for Sport, Leisure and Culture in July 2013. This included a commitment to consider requests from community groups to manage council owned facilities.
- 2.6 We will draw up a management agreement to ensure that community access to the Co-op Ground is maintained in line with the current arrangements.
- 2.7 AFWAC have asked us to erect a fence around the site to improve security. This is in line with an existing covenant. The council is required to maintain a fence around the site as part of the covenant. There is money in this year's capital budget for the erection of a fence at the Co-op Sports Ground and we have issued an order for this work. The football pitches in Central Park will not be fenced.
- 2.8 There are three bowling greens and two practice rinks serving Brumby Hall and Co-op Sports Ground. There are two bowling clubs who use the facilities. Neither has enough club members to make full use of all the facilities. We have talked to the Co-op Bowling Club and AFWAC about rationalising bowls provision across the two sites. The clubs are receptive to the idea of bowling taking place at Brumby Hall and discussions are on-going.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member has the following options to consider:
 - 3.1.1 Option 1 - Reject AFWAC's request to manage the Co-op Sports Ground
 - 3.1.2 Option 2 - Accept AFWAC's request to manage the Co-op Sports Ground.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Adopting option 1 would fail to deliver the objective of gaining greater community involvement in the provision of sports facilities towards delivering more cost effective services.
- 4.2 The second option is best. AFWAC's management of the Co-op Sports Ground has the following benefits:
- AFWAC have the appetite to expand their role as a sports provider
 - The offer of improved bowling facilities for the users of the Co-op Ground bowlers
 - Provides a more cost effective service
 - Improves customer service by consolidating the management and booking of sports pitches at Brumby Hall, Co-op Sports Ground and Central Park
 - Improves customer service by offering users access to Brumby Hall social facilities
 - Access for existing and new users will be guaranteed
 - Complements the successful "Sports Hub" developed on the Pods/AFWAC site
 - It follows the key principles of the council's Community Asset Transfer policy
 - It is in keeping with the strategic direction for sport approved by the relevant Cabinet members

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 The transfer of the management of the Co-op Sports Ground will result in annual savings of £3,000.

5.2 Staffing

- 5.2.1 There are no Sports Facilities staff employed exclusively at Co-op Sports Ground. We arrange cover as required from a pool of seasonal workers who cover all outdoor sites.

5.3 Property

- 5.3.1 The Council's Estate Section will deal with the terms the transfer. The Asset Management, Culture and Housing Cabinet Member is responsible for Property Transactions. The property element of this matter will be referred to the Asset Management, Culture and Housing Cabinet Member for a decision.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1 We have given careful consideration to the findings from a public consultation regarding securing the future of sport leisure and culture. The views of the public have been listened to and helped to shape the policy direction for sports, leisure and Culture, including community management of some sports facilities.
- 7.2 We have consulted with the Co-op Bowling Club about the opportunity to move to AFWAC's bowling greens. They are receptive to the changes proposed.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the request by AFWAC to take over the management of the Co-op Sports Ground.
- 8.2 The property related elements of this matter are referred to the Asset Management, Culture and Housing Cabinet Member for a decision.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report
Securing the future of Sport Leisure and Culture July 2013