

DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL
SUBJECT:	DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER CIVIL SERVICE SPORTS GROUND
DATE OF DECISION:	14 MARCH 2012
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEARNING
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	

BRIEF SUMMARY

The purchase of the former Civil Service Sports Ground has now been completed and options for the future use of the land are being considered. It is proposed in the immediate future (Phase1) to bring the land back into playing field use in accordance with the terms of the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) and that longer term school and community use solutions will be considered in consultation with all interested parties, who will seek appropriate funding to achieve this.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Council:

- (i) Transfer, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules, a sum of £550,000 from the Leader's Capital Programme to the Children's Services and Learning Capital programme to carry out works at the former Civil Service sports ground.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is a significant shortage of playing fields at the local schools where pupil numbers are projected to continue to rise in future years. The acquisition of this site will provide much needed facilities for school sports, after school and school holiday activities for children and young people and for managed community sports use.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. Non acquisition of the site for educational use would have forfeited the opportunity to provide accessible sports facilities for local schools in a built up area of the City where such facilities are currently very restricted and where opportunities to improve provision are very rare. By failing to provide playing fields, the Council would be contrary to Government guidance provided in Building Bulletin 99 – Area Guidelines for Schools.
3. To permit this site to be used for other purposes would mean that the potential educational, health and social benefits accruing from playing field use would not be realised.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. The project will be carried out in two phases. Phase 1 will focus on playing field provision, securing the site with appropriate fencing and some community use which may include a play park. The current proposal takes into account the details of the CPO and the need to make additional playing field provision on this site. Further consultation with the relevant parties will take place if Council approve this report.

5. Phase 2 will expand and enhance upon the above uses and explore external funding opportunities.
6. A meeting with Community Neighbours took place at St. Marks School on 27 September 2011. Representatives from the school, school governors and the local community relayed their aspirations for the use of the land. These views were used to inform an Option Appraisal produced by Capita.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital

7. The table below details the estimated costs of the proposed works:

Estimated costs	2012/13	2013/14	Total
Provision of secure fencing to site, changing room facilities, football pitches for 7-12 year olds and community fitness trail and possibly a play park.	250,000		250,000
Further development to improve sports provision and increased use by the local community.		300,000	300,000
Total			£550,000

8. In July 2009, Cabinet agreed to purchase the former Civil Service Sports Ground. The purchase has now been completed under budget and it is proposed to transfer £550,000 of the unspent budget to the Children's Services and Learning Capital Programme in order to develop the sports ground.
9. Approval to spend will be sought for £250,000 of the £550,000 for phase 1 works from the Executive Director for Children's Services and Learning. Approval for the remainder will be requested later, once a sufficient level of detail is available following further consultation.

Revenue

10. The cost of annual maintenance of the site will depend on what pitches and athletic facilities were provided. An estimate of £12,000 per annum has been quoted for maintenance based on Option 1 proposals. These costs will be funded from the Children's Services and Learning Portfolio.

Property/Other

11. The revenue costs in respect of repairs and maintenance of any structures on site will need to be subject to a transfer of funds into the Central R and M budget from the Children's Services and Learning Portfolio.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

12. The proposed works to re-instate a playing field on compulsory acquired land can be undertaken pursuant to the Council's power of general competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the exercise of which is subject to any pre-commencement prohibitions or restrictions that may exist.

Other Legal Implications:

- 13. Land acquired under a local authority's powers of compulsory acquisition for planning or public purposes must only be so acquired if the acquisition and subsequent development or improvement will be likely to contribute to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area. The local authority should ensure that appropriate steps are taken to achieve this end once the acquisition has been finalised.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 14. None.

AUTHOR:	Name:	Karl Limbert	Tel:	023 80837596
	E-mail:	Karl.limbert@southampton.gov.uk		

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	Freemantle and Bargate
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line

Appendices

1.	None
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Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Integrated Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	No
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Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None	
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