

19 April 2012

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Withdean Sports Complex Masterplan		
Date of Meeting:	19 April 2012		
Report of:	Strategic Director – Communities		
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Geoffrey Bowden		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Ian Shurrock	Tel: 29-2081
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Key Decision:	Yes/No	Forward Plan No: CAB 27903	
Ward(s) affected:	Withdean		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 This report provides proposals for improving sports facilities at Withdean Sports Complex as per the recommendations identified in the council's citywide Sports Facilities Plan 2012-22.
- 1.2 The cost to the NHS in Brighton and Hove due to overweight and obese people was estimated to be £78.1 million in 2010 and is projected to rise to £83.5 million by 2015 (Tackling Obesity; Future Choices Foresight Report). The proposals contained in the report would help towards the council's aim of increasing the physical activity of residents and promoting health and wellbeing within the city. Without such investment into the city's sports facilities they will fail to match up to the increasing expectations of residents and potentially lead to a decline in participation. The proposals would improve the long-term sustainability of Withdean Sports Complex by attracting more users.
- 1.3 The proposals are recommended to be implemented in a phased approach and the report sets out these distinct phases.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree to undertake Phase 1 which is the investment proposal to increase the health and fitness facilities at Withdean Sports Complex subject to planning consent.
- 2.2 That Cabinet authorises the above investment proposal to be added to the Capital Programme at a total cost of £3.010m (£1.63m in 2012/13 and £1.38m in 2013/14) to be funded from prudential borrowing over 25 years financed from additional management fee income with effect from 2013/14.
- 2.3 That Cabinet agree that prior to letting the contract for the works and agreeing variations to the Sports Facilities Management Contract the viability of the project is confirmed with the Chief Finance Officer.

2.4 That Cabinet authorise officers to investigate the feasibility of the options listed under Future Phases.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 Withdean Sports Complex is one of the city's major sporting venues and is one of six facilities operated under contract by Freedom Leisure on behalf of the council. It has a rich history as a sports venue and forms an important part of the city's sporting heritage. It was established as a top class lawn tennis centre in the 1930s before being converted into an athletics arena in the 1950s. Since then it has continued to operate as an important regional athletics facility.

3.2 Withdean Sports Complex is set on a site of approximately 5.8 hectares and consists of the following facilities;

- Floodlit stadium with 8-lane running track and full field event facilities, spectator seating, football pitch and changing facilities
- 3-court indoor tennis centre with a fitness suite, exercise studio, sauna/steam/spa and associated changing facilities
- 8-court squash centre with bar and changing facilities, home to Brighton Squash Club
- 3 outdoor tennis courts
- 1 outdoor multi-use area
- Minor Clubhouse providing meeting/activity space
- Car park

The Sportsman public house (which was originally built as a pavilion for the lawn tennis courts) is located in the centre of the site with its own designated parking area and is on a long-term lease from the council.

3.3 Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club used the stadium at Withdean Sports Complex for home matches between 1999 and 2011 before moving to the new Community Stadium last summer. The club's departure has freed up space at the east end of the site which was previously occupied by a range of temporary buildings used by the club.

3.4 A report to the Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 September 2011 informed Members of changes to the sports provision at Withdean Sports Complex following Brighton & Hove Albion's departure. The report also highlighted an opportunity to review how the site could better meet the sporting needs of the city. It was agreed that the complex should remain an athletics venue and that any additional proposals for the site should be considered within the overall context of sports facilities across the city.

3.5 Since that meeting a 10 year Sports Facilities Plan has been prepared following extensive consultation with residents and key stakeholders. Eight key recommendations were identified and five of these relate to Withdean Sports Complex either in terms of existing facilities or possible new facility developments. They are:

- Increase the number of community swimming pools
- Facilitate the opening of a purpose built gymnastics facility
- Improve the quality and quantity of health and fitness facilities
- Improve athletics facilities including replacement of the track at Withdean
- Develop Withdean as a multi sport hub

3.6 The phased approach outlined below is designed to progress these recommendations.

Phase 1 – Improved Health and Fitness facilities

3.7 One of the recommendations of the Sports Facilities Plan shown above is to improve the quality and quantity of health and fitness facilities. Phase 1 provides a proposal to improve the health and fitness facilities at Withdean Sports Complex.

3.8 Withdean Sports Complex is currently at capacity for gym and exercise classes and is failing to meet demand. The development proposal outlined below is estimated to increase membership by 66% with a further 1194 members as well as increasing the much-needed capacity for 'pay and play' users. This projected increase was based on specialist market research which indicated considerable latent demand. Furthermore, the consultation undertaken to inform the Sports Facilities Plan also showed strong demand for bigger facilities, particularly at Withdean Sports Complex. Higher quality ancillary facilities such as changing rooms and toilets were also consistently requested during the consultation.

3.9 As part of the tender process for the Sports Facilities Contract, Freedom Leisure (who were awarded the contract which started April 2011) submitted capital investment proposals for two of the sports facilities, Prince Regent Swimming Complex and Withdean Sports Complex.

3.10 On 17 March 2011, Cabinet granted approval for the proposals to be developed and fully costed and council officers have since been working on this with Freedom Leisure. This has been a complex process due to the intricacies of balancing the design, capital costs and income/expenditure projections to form a robust business case for the development.

3.11 The proposal for Prince Regent was not financially viable. Further work on the scheme for Withdean Sports Complex has shown that it is financially viable.

3.12 The investment proposal for Withdean Sports Complex involves the construction of a glazed extension to the front of the existing indoor tennis centre to include:

- A new entrance and reception space including café/bar facility and associated seating;

- A new, larger fitness suite with space for 125 equipment stations (approximately 2 ½ times the size of the existing fitness suite);
- A new glazed link between the tennis centre and squash centre to provide a more coherent customer journey and to improve security and control of access;
- Increased studio space for exercise and dance classes;
- Extended and completely refurbished male and female changing facilities and toilets.

(Proposed plan and images shown in Appendix 1)

- 3.13 The project would be delivered through the council's existing Strategic Partnership Agreement (utilising the nationally agreed PPC2000 ACA Standard Form of Contract for Project Partnering) concluded with Westridge Construction Ltd and various nominated sub-contractors. This agreement was entered into in 2008 with a five year term (subject to an option for extension by a further three years) following an approved procurement process. This partnering arrangement is led by the council's Property and Design team whose architects have designed the proposal. The partnership has proved to be successful on a number of Council construction projects with benefits including a reduction of site and financial risks, greater assurance of final account figure (i.e once the contract is completed), zero disputes or claims on site and a high quality of construction.
- 3.14 The Strategic Partnership has a strong track record of delivering complex construction projects under budget and on time, recent examples of which are the Whitehawk Co-Location Project and the new Customer Service Centre at Bartholomew House. The Partnership is training more than 26 local apprentices in various trades as a direct result of contracts with Brighton & Hove City Council and is committed to maximising use of local labour and sub contractors on every contract undertaken.
- 3.15 The capital cost of the project is £3.01M. This would be funded through Council borrowing and repaid by the additional income generated by the improved facilities. Based on a 25 year life span, the additional revenue generated would be enough to meet the capital, interest and additional running costs and provide a surplus to the council of approximately £400K.
- 3.16 A transport statement will be submitted as part of the planning application and a travel plan will subsequently be developed in consultation with Freedom Leisure. The proposal will not require any additional car parking space.

Phase 2 – Future Options

- 3.16 There are further options to explore for Withdean Sports Complex which will help meet the recommendations of The Sports Facilities Plan 2012-22 shown in 3.5. Each of the options provided below will require further work to assess the capital and revenue costs and to identify appropriate funding. This will involve looking at

available options for grant funding through Sport England and sports National Governing Bodies or through appropriate partnership arrangements.

1. Replacement of Athletics Track

- 3.17 Improved athletics facilities including the replacement of the track at Withdean is a recommendation of the Sports Facilities Plan. The all-weather athletics track was originally laid in 1980 and is now in need of replacement. The three athletics clubs that use the track have requested for it to be replaced due to its condition and the consultation undertaken as part of the Sports Facilities Plan showed it to be a high priority for users.
- 3.18 The cost of replacement is dependent upon the extent of the required ground works but is likely to be approximately £500K. Funding for these works was identified in 2011 through revenue savings generated by the re-tender of the sports facilities contract.

2. Stadium Pavilion

- 3.16 During their time at Withdean Sports Complex, Brighton and Hove Albion added a number of additional facilities to the stadium including a temporary changing room unit. Temporary planning consent was granted to Brighton and Hove Albion for the installation of this building on the condition that it was removed when they moved to the new stadium. However, the building is in reasonable condition so the council decided to retain it and was granted further temporary (3 years) planning consent in July 2011. It now provides changing facilities for users of the stadium, including the athletics clubs and football teams.
- 3.17.1 As a temporary unit, the changing room complex is unlikely to receive any further temporary planning consent when the existing permission expires in 2014 unless there is a clear strategy in place for it to be replaced. The council therefore needs to consider options to provide a permanent replacement for the changing room unit.

3. Swimming Pool

- 3.18 Another recommendation of the Sports Facilities Plan is to increase the number of community swimming pools.
- 3.19 As noted in 3.3, there is newly available space at the east end of the site which could be considered for a new swimming pool to serve residents in the north of the city. The public consultation also provided strong evidence of demand.
- 3.20 In terms of improving general accessibility to pool space, Withdean is close to the optimum location and the complex has an existing management infrastructure in place.

4. Indoor Athletics training centre

- 3.20 In line with the recommendation of the Sports Facilities Plan to improve athletics facilities, consideration could be given to the construction of a new indoor training centre to serve the three athletics clubs.

- 3.21 The club's ability to provide a full training programme during the winter months is restricted by the weather and an indoor centre would provide them with a purpose built facility to help develop athletes.

5. Gymnastics Centre

- 3.23 Another recommendation of the Sports Facilities Plan is to facilitate the opening of a purpose built gymnastics facility.
- 3.24 The city's primary gymnastics club, Brighton and Hove Gymnastics Club operate in a converted church, St Agnes in Hove. The layout of the gymnastics equipment is restricted by the size and configuration of the building. The facility is in poor condition and does not meet the needs of the club. Evidence of demand and potential for expansion of the existing operation is clear and recognition of the need for a new purpose built facility or a converted space to rival facilities in Crawley and Horsham has been in existence for a number of years. The consultation undertaken to inform the Sports Facilities Plan also highlighted that there is wide recognition across the city that better provision should be made for gymnastics.
- 3.25 Again, the vacant space at the east end of the Withdean Sports Complex site could be considered for the construction of a purpose built facility to meet the needs of gymnasts in the city.
- 3.26 There is potential to provide an indoor facility that is shared by both gymnastics and athletics. Such a facility would establish Withdean Sports Complex as a multi-sport centre of excellence.

6. Improved flexibility of Indoor Tennis Centre

- 3.26 The construction of the Indoor Tennis Centre in 1988 was partly funded by the Lawn Tennis Association as part of the Indoor Tennis Initiative (ITI). One of the conditions of funding was that the space had to be used exclusively for tennis.
- 3.27 The Indoor Tennis Initiative agreement expires in November 2012 and there is an opportunity to review whether the space could be used more flexibly to help meet some of the priorities identified in the Sports Facilities Plan.
- 3.28 One option would be to convert some of the space into a gymnastics facility which would help address the issues highlighted in 3.24 above.
- 3.29 A further option might be to use some of the space to install a climbing wall. A lack of climbing facilities in the city was highlighted in the consultation with climbing coming top of the list of sports that were poorly provided for in terms of facilities.

7. Skate Park

- 3.29 At the Culture, Recreation and Tourism Cabinet Member Meeting on 22nd March 2011, a deputation was considered concerning the provision of a skate park at

Withdean Sports Complex. The Cabinet Member responded by advising that the proposal would be considered as part of a masterplan for the site.

- 3.30 Officers have since met with local residents to understand more about the requirements for the skate park. They were advised that this request would be considered but must be placed within the context of priorities identified in the Sports Facilities Plan and should not compromise other potential facility developments at the site.
- 3.31 Consideration must also be given to the level of alternative skate park provision in the city. These include the existing skate parks at Hove Lagoon, The Level and Saltdean Oval and two new skate parks currently being built in Woodingdean and Hollingdean.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation has so far been undertaken with the following key users:

- Brighton Squash Club
- Brighton & Hove Athletics Club
- Phoenix Athletics Club
- Arena 80 Athletics Club

4.3 The proposal to increase the health and fitness facilities involves converting two of the courts into two much-needed studios to cater for the growing demand for exercise classes. Brighton Squash Club have noted concern regarding the proposal which would result in the loss of two squash courts and a bar that is used exclusively by the club. The complex currently has eight squash courts in total which is more than is required.

4.4 Further consultation is planned with the following groups but has been put on hold pending the decision from Cabinet:

- Customers and residents
- Withdean and Westdene Local Action Team
- The Sportsman Public House
- Brighton & Hove Federation Of Disabled People

4.6 As with any such proposal, pre-application advice has been sought from the Local Planning Authority.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1.1 The financial implications of the proposed development at Withdean Sports Complex are based on a capital investment of £3.010m funded by prudential borrowing over 25 years to be financed by an additional management fee under the Sports Facilities contract.

5.1.2 The additional management fee income estimated to be £0.2m would be subject to annual inflationary increases in accordance with the existing contract conditions. Annuity repayments on £3.010m would require fixed repayments of £0.2m pa. Over the term of the project there would be a surplus of income over

repayments of £1.13m in cash terms. This equates to a positive net present value of £0.4m.

- 5.1.3 Due to the timing of the development, there is a short term cash flow deficit in 2012/13 of approximately £20-£40k which will be met from existing service budgets on a one-off basis.
- 5.1.4 It should be noted that the existing Sports Facilities Contract is due for re-tender in 2021/22.
- 5.1.5 Costs and funding for future proposals would need to be identified in due course. However, there is provision within existing resources to fund the financing costs of replacing the athletics track at Withdean identified from savings on the existing contract as reported to Cabinet.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michelle Herrington

Date: 22.03.12

5.2 Legal Implications:

- 5.2.1 The value of the proposed works requires that they be procured in accordance with the EU Procurement Directives and associated UK regulations. The proposal to utilise an existing and industry recognised contractual arrangement which has already been the subject of a compliant procurement process would satisfy these legal requirements. It follows that the Strategic Partnership Agreement may be utilised for this purpose.
- 5.2.2 The contract with Freedom Leisure will require amendment in accordance with existing change control provisions to reflect any change in the management fee and any other consequential amendments.
- 5.2.3 There are no Human Rights Act or other legal implications directly arising from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Bob Bruce

Date: 14.03.12

5.3 Equalities Implications:

- 5.3.1 The provision of sports facilities that are accessible to all sections of the community are important to increase participation and subsequently improve health and well-being.
- 5.3.2 The prices charged at the improved facilities will remain controlled through the contract by an annual uplift in line with inflation. There are no plans to increase prices any more than this contractual uplift even though the quality of provision will be much higher.

5.4 Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4.1 The investment proposal to increase the health and fitness provision involves an extension to existing (large volume) air conditioned spaces and following discussions with the Local Planning Authority it was agreed that a full BREEAM assessment is not practical. The scheme will however be made as sustainable as

possible and will comply with key elements of BREEAM such as water and energy use, waste management (in construction and in use), building materials and construction procedures.

5.4.2 The operation of sports facilities that minimise energy consumption are important to help reduce the carbon footprint of the facilities. The contract specification requires the operator, Freedom Leisure, to establish best practice in environmental management through the development of an annually updated Environmental Management Plan which is approved and monitored by council officers.

5.4.3 Sustainability implications arising from the proposals will be assessed as part of any required planning consents.

5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5.1 Increasing participation in sport and physical activity is recognised as having a positive effect on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6.1 Phase 1 of the masterplan has been fully evaluated to determine financial risk and pre-planning advice has been received. A full Risk Analysis of the Phase 1 project's construction has also been undertaken.

5.6.2 The Strategic Construction Partnership meet regularly to discuss risks at an early stage and to take advantage of opportunities to make improvements/savings.

5.7 Public Health Implications:

5.7.1 Increasing participation in sport and physical activity is key to improving the health and well-being of the city's residents and reducing the cost of obesity-related health care (See 1.2).

5.8 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.8.1 The improved facilities will help increase participation in sport and physical activity and widen access to help meet the outcomes of the council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 Withdean was considered to be the most appropriate site for the proposal outlined in Phase 1. This is due to the strong latent demand for health and fitness facilities in the area and the fact that the complex has available space to cater for such a development.

6.2 Phase 1 has been developed by a project team to deliver the most cost-effective schemes to meet this latent demand.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The proposals outlined above provide an opportunity to improve the quality of the sports facilities at WSC and increase participation and healthy living amongst residents of Brighton and Hove.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Plan and images of Withdean Phase 1 proposal

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. CTEOSC report – 29th September 2011
2. Cabinet report – 17th March 2011
2. Cabinet report – 9th December 2010