

**FOOTBALL IMPROVEMENTS
(Report by Leisure Development Manager &
Leisure Centres Co-ordinator)**

1 SUMMARY

This report identifies the changed circumstances which affect the Medium Term Plan (MTP) project number 446 titled "Football Improvements". The project intends to improve football facilities, particularly for young people at both Priory Park, St Neots and the St Ivo Outdoor Leisure Centre. In addition, the report recommends action in the light of changed circumstances, which delivers the project as first identified at no additional cost to the Council.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The original MTP appraisal for the project was submitted in 2003/04 and approved as a 2004/05 start to create new and additional changing facilities for the football pitches at St Ivo Outdoor Centre and Priory Park, St Neots. Both have experienced considerable growth in junior weekend participation and neither offer sufficient, or in Priory Park's case, adequate, facilities for participants. The proposal came about due to the development nationwide of County¹ football partnerships and the availability of resources for grass roots football development through the Football Foundation. The Huntingdonshire Football Partnership had identified the need for the two developments at Priory Park and the St Ivo in an extensive survey of football facilities throughout Peterborough and Huntingdonshire. The Foundation's estimate of the costs of the two developments was about £300k each and it indicated that it would allocate a total grant of £390k (about 65%). The Council therefore included a gross cost of £595k and a net cost, to fund the shortfall, of £205k in the MTP. Although the schemes have been identified as priorities by the Partnership, full and detailed bids to the Foundation have to be made for the release of the grant aid.
- 2.2 At Priory Park the new building is planned to provide additional changing and showering facilities and a small refreshment/meeting area to complement the existing pavilion. At St Ivo, the new facilities will be an extension to the existing buildings which requires some remodelling of the existing site, including adjustments to car parking arrangements.

¹ This refers to County Football Associations (FAs) – the Huntingdonshire FA covers most of the District and most of Peterborough.

3 CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES

3.1 In working up the schemes in detail for the two sites, the costs of the developments have been more accurately costed at current prices to be in the region of £550k each.

3.2 The matter is complicated by the new housing development, Houghton Grange, which will be connected to local schools by way of a cycle route through the existing St Ivo Outdoor Centre car park and playing fields. This involves the loss of about a third of the Centre's existing car park spaces, loss of the existing grounds store, and the provision of lighting as security and safety. In recompense and to meet the recreational need of the new community, Section 106 contributions for St Ivo have been agreed by the developers as follows:

- £145k for the cycle path, new store and car park amendments; and
- £360k for improvements to the changing accommodation.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The total resources available for the two original schemes and the necessary external works at the St Ivo are:

	£k
Section 106 Developer Contributions	505
MTP Bid 446 (original bid adjusted for nominal inflation from MTP provision)	210
Total	715

4.2 Consequently, it is proposed that these resources be allocated to the two sites as shown below. The resulting adjustment is included in the proposed MTP being considered by the Cabinet later on its agenda.

	Total Cost	Funded by		Balance Sought from Football Foundation
		S106	HDC	
	£k	£k	£k	£k (% cost of scheme)
Priory Park				
Changing Rooms	550	0	210	340 (62%)
St Ivo				
Changing Rooms	550	270	0	280 (51%)
Cycle Path, store and lighting	145	145	0	0
Car Park	184	90	0	94 (51%)
Total	1,429	505	210	714 (56%)

5. BID PROCEDURE

Bids to the Football Foundation will be made by a professional agency on a no-win, reduced fee basis. The Football Foundation will not accept bids on a joint basis and submissions will be made separately but in close proximity. The Football Foundation inevitably have a limited financial resource but have indicated that the two schemes rank very highly in their list of regional priorities supporting as they do, junior football on a large scale.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The scheme has been allocated a nominal increase (£5k) for inflation which is taken from the provision included in the MTP for that purpose. The resulting total (£210k) is unaffected by these changes. Section 106 contributions will be used for the intended purpose. Although the Football Foundation combined bid is greater than originally expected, the schemes are high priority and the overall resources available for the two schemes (MTP plus Section 106) keeps the Football Foundation contribution to around 56% of the relevant elements. Spending will be delayed from when it was originally proposed and this will generate a small beneficial revenue impact that will be included in the MTP.
- 6.2 Bids need to be made as soon as possible and so approval is needed for the proposals outlined above before the proposed revisions to the MTP are formally considered by Council in February. If the bids to the Football Foundation are not totally successful, then a further report will then come to Cabinet.
- 6.3 Whilst this may seem to be a complicated arrangement, the longer-term benefits to both St Ives and St Neots are considerable. Over 500 boys and girls play football at each venue every week and it is expected that these developments will not only enhance their experience, but also encourage new participants with all the attendant health and community safety benefits.

7 RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to approve the revised funding for the football developments at Priory Park and the St Ivo Outdoor Centre as shown in §4.2 above.

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