

 Executive 3 September 2008		Agenda Item No.
Title	Racing Club Warwick, St Mary's Lands Scheme, Warwick	
For further information about this report please contact	Chris Elliott or Rose Winship	
Service Area	Chief Executive's Office/Cultural Services	
Wards of the District directly affected	Warwick West	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number		
Background Papers		

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports <u>must</u> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director		Mary Hawkins
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mary Hawkins
Legal		Simon Best
Finance		Mike Snow, Andy Crump
Portfolio Holder(s)		Chris White
Consultation Undertaken		
Final Decision?	Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks authority to grant aid Racing Club Warwick £83,500 to commence the first stage of the proposed improvements to the ground and to the community facilities at St Mary's Lands Warwick. The improvements to the ground represent the final element in the overall scheme to improve the St Mary's Lands area of Warwick.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To grant aid Racing Club Warwick £83,500 to commence the first stage of the proposed improvements to the ground and to the community facilities at St Mary's Lands Warwick from the agreed remaining allocation for the St Mary's Lands Scheme of £207,000 in the capital programme.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The St Mary's Lands scheme in Warwick has been a £4 million scheme that has involved:
- Sale of Bread and Meat Close and the former stables for housing including affordable housing;
 - Relocation of the former Warwick Rugby Club;
 - Construction of new stables for the racecourse;
 - Construction of Flood Alleviation schemes on the Saltisford and Gog Brooks;
 - Construction of new car parks;
 - Improvements to the open space based on a new management plan;
 - Improvements to the ground facilities and pitch of Racing Club Warwick and the community facilities based there.
- 3.2 All but the final point have been implemented. The proposed overall improvements to the football club's facilities and grounds involve:
- Re-aligning the main pitch
 - New stand, bar and changing facilities
 - Refurbish and re use existing bar and function room for community purposes

The freehold of the land involved is owned by the Council Racing Club Warwick, which holds a long lease.

- 3.3 The Council had agreed a contribution to the project as part of its capital programme some of which has been drawn down to undertake small improvements, with £203,500 remaining available for the Racing Club Warwick ground improvements. Planning permission for the overall scheme has been obtained but the main obstacle has been the other funding required and to get the agreement of the other partners involved.
- 3.4 However, the club is now at the point at which some substantial works can commence. These works are explained at Appendix 1. The works involve the Army Cadets and the Air Training Corps to come on site and provision for the Queen Square Scouts to be relocated. Those works will be paid for by those bodies.

3.5 Section 1 and 2 of Appendix 1 set out the works that this Council is being asked to pay for – amounting to £81,500 with another £2,000 requested to help accommodate the Queen Square Scouts. This is well within the amount remaining in the Council's capital programme allocation. Sections 3 and 4 of Appendix 1 set out other works the clubs is proposing to seek funding for from the Football Stadia Improvement Fund.

3.6 The funds remaining in the capital allocation will be used as match funding to address the remaining elements of the improvements.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED

4.1 The Council could decide not to allow the funds to be drawn down which would prevent the works from being undertaken. However, the facilities at the club are in need of improvement and the club supports a range of community activity including a youth club, boxing club, and these would not be aided by a decision not to use the funding allocated for the scheme.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

5.1 £207,000 is available in the current capital programme for the St Mary's Lands Scheme. This request would leave £123,500 remaining, £120,000 would be earmarked for further Racing Club Warwick ground improvements with the remaining £3,500 needed for minor works.

5.2 The risk attaching to this project relates to the ability of otherwise of Racing Club Warwick not being able to attract match funding. However, in this case the other funding is not required for the works listed in Sections 1 and 2 of Appendix 1. Any failure or delay in match funding will affect subsequent planned works set out in Sections 3 and 4 of Appendix 1.

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

6.1 The improvements will support the club in contributing to the Council's Corporate Strategy of increasing participation and attendance in its cultural offering to meet the needs of the whole community. It will particularly assist in increasing participation of young people in sporting activities. Implementation of the scheme is part of the Cultural Services Portfolio Holder Statement targets for 2008/09.