

 Executive – 1st July 2015		Agenda Item No. 10
Title	Request for funding for Improvements to King George's Playing Fields at Barford	
For further information about this report please contact	Chris Elliott Tel 01926 456000 E-mail chris.elliott@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	Budbrooke	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?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	Not applicable	
Background Papers	Request as set out at Appendix 1	

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
Equality & Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	No
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Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Deputy Chief Executives	11.06.15	Bill Hunt, Andy Jones
Heads of Service	11.06.15	Rose Winship, Robert Hoof, Richard Hall, Tracy Darke,
CMT	11.06.15	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	11.06.15	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	11.06.15	Andy Jones
Finance	11.06.15	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	11.06.15	Cllr Whiting, Cllr Grainger, Cllr Shilton, Cllr Gallagher, Cllr Cross,
Consultation & Community Engagement		
The proposed improvements have been subject to extensive public consultation and engagement undertaken by the Parish Council. This Council only needs to consider whether it wishes to assist the early implementation of a significant improvement of a playing field area in one of its villages so there are no additional consultation stages it needs to go through.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out an exciting proposal developed by the local community within the joint parish of Barford, Wasperton and Sherbourne for a near half a million improvement to the King George Playing Fields in Barford village. The report seeks a decision from the Council to fund the remaining gap of £96,000 which would allow a contract to be entered into allowing for the completion of the works by the end of the year (2015).
- 1.2 The funding could be provided by advancing money that is to be forthcoming to the Council via a Section 106 agreement tied to a development in Barford of 60 homes, and by allocation of New Homes Bonus Scheme (NHBS) money also to be generated from the development in Barford. This approach is consistent with national policy about the purpose of NHBS and this Council's own policy of reinvesting in the communities that have accepted development.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Executive support the scheme set out in Appendix 1; noting the extent of public involvement and fund raising, and, agree to fund the necessary sum by:
 - Forward funding £85,000 from reserves against a provision of £85,000 that is due via a S106 agreement for the development of 60 homes in Barford (noting that the parish council has accounted for £40,000 of this as having been received but has not);
 - forward fund £71,000 from reserves against an expected sum of £403,000 over 6 years of this Council's share of New Homes Bonus Scheme money to be generated by the development of 60 homes in Barford.
- 2.2 That the existing commitment of £30,000 from the Council's RUCIS scheme is withdrawn and returned to be used elsewhere.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council has received a request from the Joint Parish Council of Barford, Sherbourne, and Wasperton to fund a gap of £96,000 to allow the Parish Council to engage contractors and complete the whole scheme by the end of this year. The proposal is set out in Appendix 1 attached. As can be seen the Parish Council and the local community have been very successful in raising a significant amount of funds – almost £400,000 though the Parish Council still has one or two applications for funding that remain to be determined. However, it is also at risk of losing some of the money allocated as it has to be spent within a certain amount of time which is running out. However, it is in the position whereby having tended the works and secured prices within budget it could, if the £96,000 gap can be filled now, undertake the works within the allocated time.
- 3.2 Planning Permission for 60 homes (W/14/0693) was granted recently in Barford to Taylor Wimpey Ltd and part of that permission involved a Section 106 agreement which provided for just over £85,000 to be allocated for outdoor play facilities, 50% payable on the completion of 50% of the development and the remainder upon completion of 90%. The Parish Council has already accounted for £40,000 of this sum in the monies raised which is premature so in fact they need more than £96,000; £136,000 is needed.

- 3.3 It is recognised in the Council's Playing Field Pitch Strategy that the King George's playing fields in Barford are in need of improvement and that the Section 106 money should go to that location. As the payment is dictated by the speed of construction rather than a calendar date when the payment will be made is uncertain but it is reasonable to assume that since work has started and given the construction rate in the area is expanding that it ought not to be in the very distant future. However, the Council could advance that sum from reserves to the Parish Council knowing that in a relatively short space of time it will be made up by the S106 monies owed with little impairment.
- 3.4 Similarly, if the New Homes Bonus Scheme (NHBS) continues then the 60 home scheme will over 6 years generate roughly £504,000 of which this Council will get 80% - roughly £403,000. Consequently, the Council could forward fund £40,000 from reserves against that expected receipt the first part of which would be payable to the Council in 2016/17 with little impairment.
- 3.5 The Council has already committed £30,000 toward the scheme from its RUCIS (Rural and Urban Capital Investment Scheme). Normally contributions are limited and so this suggestion would exceed the Council's existing policy. However, as it has done with its decision on funding toward the Bishop's Tachbrook Community Centre in November 2014, the Council could choose to fund the scheme wholly from reserves, by turning the agreed £30,000 to the RUCIS budget and then funding an overall £70,000 as an advance against New Homes Bonus Scheme receipts. This is recommended.

4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 The Council's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) seeks to help make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit; and it has 5 priority policy areas – Prosperity, Housing, Sustainability, Health and Well Being and Community Safety. The policy case for the scheme almost speaks for itself as it will contribute toward the health and well-being of the local community, environmental sustainability and safer communities, all key priorities within the Council's Strategy. It will also contribute toward the cross cutting theme of tackling rural isolation.
- 4.2 The location is specifically referenced in the Council's recently adopted Playing Field Strategy and in the Draft Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton Neighbourhood Plan. Rewarding communities that have accepted development has also been the broad theme of the way this Council has used the NHBS monies it receives.
- 4.3 In relation to the Council's Fit for the Future Programme (FFF), the proposals could assist in respect of 2 of the 3 strands:

Services – by improving or maintaining a range of the services to the local community – in this case a significant recreational area; **Money** – by attracting additional financial resources to help address the local sports and community facilities; the impact on the **People** strand is at this stage anticipated to be neutral.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 The details of the scheme show the total scheme cost is £486,000, against which £390,000 funding has been secure, leaving £96,000 shortfall. However,

an accounted for £40,000 from S106 has not yet been paid but is still owed so the shortfall is in fact £136,000.

- 5.2 The application for funding states that £105,000 funding is time limited and needs to be spent by the end of December 2015. This funding comprises £75,000 from Sport England, and £30,000 from the District Council's Rural Urban Capital initiatives Scheme (RUCIS).
- 5.3 The RUCIS funding was approved by the Executive in December 2014. Within the RUCIS scheme it states "If funding is being sought from other District Council sources, the total funding from the District Council, whatever source, will not normally exceed 50%". If additional funding is agreed, it will be an exception to the RUCIS scheme. In addition, it should be noted that the District Council has the discretion to extend the period for the completion of the RUCIS grant offer before the funding is approved. It is proposed therefore that the existing agreed commitment from RUCIS is withdrawn and the provision from reserves is increased to £70,000 to match that withdrawal.
- 5.4 As discussed in Section 3, it is suggested that the project can be funded from future S106 and New Homes Bonus receipts. Until this funding is received, it will be necessary to fund it initially from other sources. It is possible to initially utilise the Capital Investment Reserve. Once the S106 funding and the 2016/17 New Homes Bonus are received, these will replenish the Capital Investment Reserve.
- 5.5 There are no revenue implications as the on-going maintenance of the playing field and equipment is the responsibility of the Parish Council. Under the terms of the concurrent services scheme, the Parish Council would not be able to claim any additional funding for the enhanced facilities.
- 5.6 Members are reminded of the future funding shortfalls facing the Council. These include the shortfall in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (£980,000 reported to February Executive), Asset Review work (requiring approximately £1m per annum to maintain the Council's corporate assets in future years), and funding needed to secure the ICT and Equipment needed for the provision of services. The Council does have flexibility over how it utilises New Homes Bonus funding, which means it may be used towards these funding shortfalls.

6. **RISKS**

- 6.1 The risks to this Council are very limited as the Parish Council holds responsibility for the scheme. The Parish Council makes it clear that it will not come back again to ask for more funds for the scheme. If the remaining funding applications are rejected they can make provision to slightly reduce the scheme or to phase it until other funds are raised.
- 6.2 There are risks that the housing development within Barford does not reach the threshold for making the S106 payments to the Council but this is unlikely. Also, there is the risk that the New Homes Bonus does not continue. In either case it will be necessary to consider how the proposed contribution to the scheme is funded, and whether it will be appropriate for this to remain from the Capital Investment Reserve.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The Council has the option of putting no further funding into the scheme the consequence of which will be to delay the scheme which in turn may lose the scheme some of its existing funding. Given that the funding the Council can put forward is in effect forward funding it should be able to make good the impact on its reserves in a short period of time and allow significant community benefit to be realised this option was not recommended but could be a course of action that the Council could take.