

DCAL Letter of Intent for £350k funding for Council	8th March 2016
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To: Leisure & Development Committee
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Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
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Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy and engaged communities
Outcome	Access to Council recreational facilities
Lead Officer	Wendy McCullough – Head of Sport & Wellbeing
Cost: (If applicable)	Capital cost £50k - £150k; Net Income circa £30k

The purpose of this report is to present Members with deliverable options to avail of the DCAL Letter of Intent for £350k funding to Council.

Background

On 18th January 2016, DCAL issued a Letter of Intent to provide an additional £350k of funding to Council to help bridge the affordability gap between the DCAL £2.5m Letter of Offer and the £2.83m tender price of the Dungiven Sports Facility. The Letter of Intent is appended to this report (Annex A) and to avail of the funding, the following conditions apply;

- The £350k must be utilised in financial year 2016 / 17.
- The funding is for a sports facility and it must be multi-sport.
- The need must be identified in Council's Facility Strategy.
- Council must provide some degree of partnership funding.

Current situation

The risk of being unable to deliver a project as required within the Financial Year 2016 / 17 is very high unless the project is on Council land, as time is too short to complete purchase or lease of 3rd party land and then complete the construction within the year as required. Therefore, it is considered that a project on land already owned by Council is the most deliverable.

Indoor facilities (sports hall, gym and changing) at any location would cost in excess of £1m so are therefore considered cost prohibitive within the current budget. However, depending on location, a synthetic pitch could be delivered for £400k - £500k and this would be affordable with the DCAL grant aid while also allowing for the required partnership funding from Council. Additionally, a synthetic pitch can meet the DCAL multi-sport criteria (soccer, rugby, GAA).

Within Council's Sports Facility Strategy, the Borough has a widespread deficit of pitches other than in the Limavady, Ballykelly and Greysteel vicinity. The synthetic pitches recently provided at Rugby Avenue are already at full capacity and many of the grass pitches in the Borough are poorly drained and become unplayable in wet weather. Synthetic pitches are more expensive to construct than grass, but are a cost effective solution to pitch requirements as they provide up to 8 times more playing hours per week than natural turf, and a fully utilised synthetic pitch can generate over £30k net income per year.

Overall, it is considered that the most deliverable option is for Council to use the DCAL funding to providing a multi-sport synthetic pitch on Council land in an area of need.

3G Pitch Capital Programme

Provision of a 3G pitch at the Riada Playing Fields, Ballymoney is on Council's 2016 / 2017 Capital Programme but the Business Case for the project has not yet been completed. Provision of a synthetic pitch in Portrush and upgrade of Council's Armoy Rugby Club facilities are being considered for the 2017 / 2018 Programme but these projects could be accelerated.

Synthetic pitch provision is already being addressed in the Dungiven / Limavady area but provision in Ballycastle and the Glens needs to be addressed. Suitable sites in the Glens are not in Council ownership and provision may be better addressed through a community partnership model. Initial investigation shows that Council's Quay Road site in Ballycastle is susceptible to flooding, and pitch provision in Ballycastle may be able to be addressed through partnership working with the education sector. CCMS will be presenting to Council on the ongoing work in this regard at Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College.

Therefore, further information is presented below in relation to Riada, Portrush and Armoy but Members may wish to instruct officers to work up other specific options. Detailed cost estimates have not been completed but the following orders of cost can be given;

- **Riada Playing Fields**

A synthetic pitch at Riada Playing Fields would cost circa £450k. Although synthetic pitches require less changing facilities, there is already a shortage of changing facilities at Riada. This would require additional changing at circa £250k but could be considered as a possible second phase development.

- **Portrush**

A synthetic pitch at Portrush would cost circa £450k. Synthetic pitches require less changing facilities than natural turf pitches and it would not be proposed to provide changing facilities. There are a number of potential sites and some are in Council ownership, but none are without issues and further site selection work would be required.

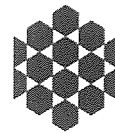
- **Armoy**

A synthetic pitch at Armoy would cost circa £400k. A further £150k may be required for car park and access upgrades. Changing upgrade would be £250k - £350k depending on specification but that could be considered as a possible second phase development.

Recommendation

Members are asked to;

- Note the recommendation that the most deliverable option to avail of the DCAL Letter of Intent for £350k funding to Council is for officers to develop a project providing a multi-sport synthetic pitch on Council land in an area of need.
- Consider the options presented and any other specific option Members wish to put forward, and to direct officers as to which project to progress urgently in respect of the DCAL funding offer.



Department of
**Culture, Arts
and Leisure**
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18 January 2016

Dear David

LETTER OF INTENT

I am writing to confirm that the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure will commit to secure funding to provide up to £350,000 to the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council in 2016/17 for the development of a multi-sport facility in the Borough, the need for which will be identified through the Council's sports facility plan.

The funding is part of the Department's continued investment in facilities in the North West under the City of Culture legacy programme which includes the Rugby Avenue Pitch Facility in Coleraine and the provision of a community sports facility in Dungiven.

The commitment to invest a further £350,000 in sports facility provision will address the concerns of Council relating to the additional funding for the Dungiven sports facility.

The Department is committed to continuing to work with the Council to deliver the Dungiven project and a further sports facility project to meet the sporting needs in the Council area. The funding for the additional sports facility will be subject to budget availability and the approval of a business case, which should include confirmation of partnership funding for the project.

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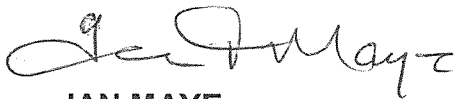
David Jackson

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18 January 2016

I trust you will find this helpful and I look forward to working with yourself and your officials to deliver the projects.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Maye', with a stylized flourish at the end.

IAN MAYE
Deputy Secretary