

CABINET MEETING – 7 DECEMBER 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART 1

Title of Report:

Award of grant funding to Washington AFC.

Author(s):

Report of the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods.

Purpose of Report:

To approve the award of £90,000 in grant funding to Washington AFC for the upgrade of local sports facilities.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods to award £90,000 in grant funding to Washington AFC on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Secretary.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The proposed award of £90,000 of grant funding to Washington AFC will facilitate the significant and timely improvement of sports facilities within the Washington area, secure additional external funding from the Football Foundation into the City, meet the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement and support the retention of Washington AFC's Northern League status.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The alternative option is not to award grant to funding to Washington AFC.

However, it is not considered that there is a suitable alternative, scheme which is of a comparable scale to Washington AFC's proposals and/or is sufficiently deliverable within the relative tight timescale to satisfy the terms of the Section 106 Agreement.

Further, this would lead to the loss of significant external funding from the Football Foundation to the Club and the City.

In addition, a decision not to proceed could also jeopardise the Club's future Northern League status.

As a consequence, this alternative option is not recommended.

Impacts analysed;

Equality

N/A

Privacy

N/A

Sustainability

N/A

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? Yes

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?

No

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions?

No

CABINET – 7 DECEMBER 2021

AWARD OF GRANT FUNDING TO WASHINGTON AFC.

Report of the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To approve the award of £90,000 in grant funding to Washington AFC for the upgrade of local sports facilities.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods to award £90,000 in grant funding to Washington AFC on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Secretary.

3. Background

- 3.1 Karbon Homes Ltd (“the Developer”) in partnership with Gaften Construction Ltd (“the Owner”) were granted planning permission for the construction of 76 Dwellings in respect of Land at Albany Park, Spout Lane, Washington. The proposed scheme was approved under planning application 19/01252/FUL in November 2020.
- 3.2 As part of the planning process, the Owner and Developer entered into an agreement under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (“the Section 106 Agreement”), whereby the Developer agreed, amongst other things, to make a financial contribution towards the provision of new sports pitches or the improvement of existing sports pitches and facilities within the Washington area (“the Sports Pitch Contribution”) in the sum of £100,000.
- 3.3 Under the terms of the Section106 Agreement, the Sports Pitch Contribution is to be applied by the Council for the above purposes within 12 months of its receipt. The funding was received on 18th October 2021.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The Council own the freehold title to land at Northern Area Playing Fields (‘the Property’) as shown verged on the plan in Appendix 1. The Property is held subject to a lease to Washington AFC (“the Club”) who currently use it as their home pitch to compete in the Northern League Division 2.
- 4.2 The Club, in partnership with the Council and the Football Foundation have obtained planning approval under planning application reference 20/00839/FU4 for the upgrade of its playing pitch and associated facilities. This will enable compliance with Northern League standards moving forward.
- 4.3 The total cost of the proposed scheme, which includes improvements to the football pitch and installation of associated infrastructure including floodlighting, dugouts, covered spectator stands, turnstile and fencing is £276,181.

- 4.4 The Club have been awarded £99,981 in funding from the Football Foundation to contribute to delivery of the scheme. The club are required to procure match funding to this contribution.
- 4.5 The Council have agreed in principle to provide a contribution of £90,000 from the Sports Pitch Contribution to fund a proportion of these works and to enable the Club to access the Football Foundation Funding. Any balance will be funded by the Club itself.
- 4.6 The proposed Council grant will be used to fund the installation of floodlighting (£41,459.58), pitch side barrier fencing (£21,840) and 2 x covered stands (£21,250). The balance of £5,450.42 will be used as a contribution towards the installation of a turnstile.
- 4.7 The proposal to award £90,000 from the Sports Pitch Contribution to the Club has been reached on the basis the Club have a major improvement scheme which has the benefit of committed match funding from the Football Foundation, their scheme has planning permission and is immediately deliverable so it accords with the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement. It is not considered that there any other suitable alternative schemes in the local area which are of a comparable scale and immediately deliverable.
- 4.8 The proposal therefore is to authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods to award £90,000 to Washington AFC on terms to be agreed.

5. Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 to the proposed award of £90,000 of grant funding to Washington AFC will facilitate the significant and timely improvement of sports facilities within the Washington area, secure additional external funding from the Football Foundation into the City, meet the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement and support the retention of Washington AFC's Northern League status.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 The alternative option is not to award grant funding to Washington AFC.
- 6.2 However, it is not considered that there is a suitable alternative, scheme which is of a comparable scale to Washington AFC's proposals and/or is sufficiently deliverable within the relative tight timescale to satisfy the terms of the Section 106 Agreement.
- 6.3 Further, this would lead to the loss of significant external funding from the Football Foundation to the Club and the City.
- 6.4 In addition, a decision not to proceed could also jeopardise the Club's future Northern League status
- 6.5 As a consequence, this alternative option is not recommended.

7. Impact Analysis

(a) Equalities

N/A

(b) Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)

N/A

(c) Sustainability

N/A

(d) Reduction of Crime and Disorder – Community Cohesion / Social Inclusion –N/A

8. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

(i) Co-operative Values

The Council is a co-operative council and actively promotes its co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. It is considered that the proposals contained in this report align with these co-operative values.

(ii) Financial Implications

The grant to Washington AFC will be funded from S106 contributions received in respect of improvements to sports pitches.

(iii) Legal Implications

As explained above, the proposed grant monies from the Council are to be funded by the Sports Pitch Contribution received through the Section 106 Agreement. The proposed grant must therefore be applied in full accordance with the terms of the existing Section 106 Agreement and this will be reflected in the terms of the proposed grant funding agreement with the Club.

(iv) Property Implications

The award of the grant to Washington AFC will lead to the improvement of a Council owned asset that will continue to be maintained by the Club under the terms of their lease agreement.

9. Background Papers

N/A

