

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet 10 November 2011.

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director Operational Services / Corporate Manager Planning and New Communities

GAMLINGAY DUAL USE SPORTS FACILITY GRANT

Purpose

1. To provide an update on the project and consider a request to vary the terms of grant allocation, in relation to the final payment of grant funding for the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) to Gamlingay Village College.
2. This is not a key decision since it is in line with the budget available for dual use facility grants, and the objectives of the Council's Dual Use Strategy. This item was not on the forward plan. It has been brought forward at short notice following a recent request by the Chair of Governors of Gamlingay Village College (GVC) for a variation to the terms of the award of grant, and given the tight schedule in place to open the MUGA for both school and community use. The Chairman of Scrutiny has been advised in accordance with Paragraph 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

Recommendation

3. That Cabinet does not approve release of further monies to Gamlingay Village College (GVC) until all terms and conditions of the grant have been met, including completion of sports development plan and signing of the Dual Use Agreement.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The recommendation is in accordance with Cabinet's previous decisions to award a grant to improving sports facilities in Gamlingay, made initially in 2007 and confirmed in September 2010 and July 2011. It would accord with the Council's Dual Use Strategy and the approach taken at other sites.

Background

5. Cabinet initially approved a grant of £200,000 to improving sports facilities in Gamlingay in 2007. The grant was then held in abeyance pending a review of secondary education in South West Cambridgeshire but was confirmed in September 2010 once the future of GVC was more certain. The first phase of the works (£50K grant), to improve the fitness suite, went ahead earlier this year and was officially opened by the Chairman of Council on 2 July 2011.
6. Following a critical Ofsted inspection of GVC, Cambridgeshire County Council announced a further review of GVC in April 2011, and as a consequence the remaining balance of the grant (£150,000) intended for the MUGA was held in abeyance. This decision was published on 11 April 2011.
7. On 14 June 2011, the County Council confirmed that GVC would remain open, and would be federated with Stratton Upper School in Biggleswade. Following this

decision, at its 7 July 2011 meeting Cabinet agreed to re-confirm the grant which was subject to standard grant terms, and additionally that:

- (a) Gamlingay Village College (GVC) sign a revised Dual Use Agreement and comply with conditions, including that the MUGA remains available for community use into the future.
 - (b) The works are carried out as soon as possible and facility is open by 31 December 2011 at the latest.
8. The College progressed with the construction of the MUGA over the summer holidays and the MUGA is now complete, with final inspections taking place in the first week of November, with a view to opening the facility as soon as possible thereafter.
 9. A dual use agreement has been drafted by SCDC and GVC has drafted its sports development plan; both are under discussion. The aim had been to ensure both were finalised prior to final payment of the grant and opening of the MUGA.
 10. Given the good progress being made, stage payments of the grant have been made to GVC which followed the build programme of the MUGA. Of the £150,000 grant £97,000 has been paid to date, with £53,000 to be claimed.
 11. A progress meeting was arranged for the end of September at which Officers met the Chair of GVC Governors and Head of Stratton Upper School and were advised that there may be difficulties completing the dual use agreement within the agreed timescale. The focus of both schools is currently on the federation arrangements, conversion to Academy Status (by February 2012) and improving the standard of education provision following the Ofsted report. They have since confirmed that changes to the structure of GVC leisure, which runs the sports centre, are also underway to ensure that it complies with its Memorandum and Articles of Association and is properly accountable to governors.
 12. A request has been made from GVC to release the final tranche of grant (bar a retainer of £15,000 which could be held back until completion of the agreements) to allow for payment to the contractor upon receipt of the final invoice, expected in mid November (see **Appendix A** - email from Mr Michael Jones, Chairman of GVC Governors).

Considerations and Options

13. It has taken a considerable amount of time to bring forward this facility at Gamlingay, but the MUGA is now complete in accordance with the agreed timetable (before December 2011); GVC are aiming to to open the facility shortly. Final inspections are underway.
14. Outstanding matters include the Dual Use Agreement and sports development plan. The latter is under active discussion and revisions have been recently been made. It is hoped that this will be complete within a matter of weeks, though we are awaiting confirmation from GVC of their approval process. The sports development plan is crucial to the opening of the MUGA as it covers access, charges and ensures appropriate policies are in place.
15. However, there is no agreed timetable for completing the Dual Use Agreement, which is crucial to ensuring a commitment to community access, particularly in the longer term, as well as responsibilities for maintenance of the facilities. The Dual Use Agreement is a standard agreement and should be straightforward to secure; such

agreements are in place in all other South Cambridgeshire village colleges. However in this instance the federation of GVC with Stratton Upper School, academy status and change in personnel particularly at GVC has caused some delay and uncertainty.

16. It is the lack of a signed agreement, and uncertainty as to when it might be completed which particularly needs to be taken into account, when considering whether to amend the terms of the original grant award and release any further monies. The focus at GVC on educational standards and federated status is clearly understood and supported. However it is also critical that momentum is maintained to ensure that the dual use agreement is in place as soon as possible, given that the level of grant monies paid to date to secure a facility for the wider community benefit, and given that facility, to which the agreement relates, will have been completed and probably opened in November 2011.
17. There are two options available to Cabinet:
- (a) Maintain the terms of the original grant which would mean that no more monies would be paid until all the terms of grant award have been met, which include finalising the sports development plan and completing the dual use agreement.
 - (b) Agree to release a further tranche of grant (£38,000) leaving a final sum of £15,000 which would be paid on completion when all the terms of grant award have been met, which includes finalising the sports development plan and completing the dual use agreement.

If option (b) is agreed it is suggested that it be time-bound to ensure a timely completion of the agreement given the length of time this project has already taken and given that the facility to which the agreement relates will probably be opened. A period of no more than 3 months is suggested.

Implications

18. Financial	The funding is in the Dual Use Capital Budget.
Legal	A new Dual Use agreement is drafted and needs to be signed to ensure community and school use of the facilities. GVC and Stratton Upper School accept this in principle but wish to discuss certain aspects of detail.
Staffing	No significant implications for Council staff as facilities will be staffed and managed by GVC Leisure Ltd
Risk Management	Risk of delays to completion of Dual Use Agreement as a result of the Federation and Academy process underway between GVC and Stratton Upper School. Reputational risk to all parties if MUGA, having been built, is not open as soon as practically possible.
Equality and Diversity	This facility will be used to help deliver the Council's Sports Development programme and encourage participation by specific target groups, including girls and women, people with a disability and Travellers.
Equality Impact Assessment completed	No – Dual Use Strategy predates need for EQIA, however see above for equality & diversity considerations.
Climate Change	By providing access to facilities locally, the need to travel is reduced, thus reducing carbon emissions.

Consultations

19. Considerable consultation was undertaken prior to the decision to award the grant, including with GVC, Gamlingay Parish Council, Forward Gamlingay, local clubs and the District Councillors which are summarised in the September 2010 Cabinet report.
20. The current situation has been and is subject to ongoing discussions with:
 - (a) Gamlingay Village College
 - (b) Gamlingay Leisure Limited
 - (c) Stratton Upper School.
 - (d) Leader of Council
 - (e) Portfolio holder for Northstowe & New Communities
 - (f) Local Members

Consultation with Children and Young People

21. No specific consultation with young people has been undertaken by the Council in respect of this report.

Effect on Strategic Aims

22. The Dual Use Facility Grants help to meet two of the Councils Aims; ensuring South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for families, and making South Cambridgeshire a place where residents can feel proud to live.

Conclusions / Summary

23. The MUGA is a welcome and much needed local facility. It is good to see that it will soon be open and will benefit young people in Gamlingay and surrounding villages, marking the completion of a network of local sports centres across the district.
24. The uncertainties around the future of GVC have, however, meant that this project has taken a considerable time to bring forward. The future of GVC does now appear secure however, it is important to ensure that the wider community benefits of this facility are maintained and not put at risk in the future. The terms of the original grant sought to secure this. To this end it is recommended that the Dual Use Agreement be put in place before any more monies are released.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- SCDC Cabinet report - 9th September 2010
- New Communities Portfolio Holder report –19th May 2011
- SCDC Record of Chief Officer decision dates 11th April 2011.
- Cambridgeshire County Council Cabinet Report dates 14th June 2011.
- Cambridgeshire County Council letter dated 17th June 2011.
- SCDC Cabinet report - July 2011.

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APPENDIX A

From: Michael Jones [mailto:Michael@dodson-jones.co.uk]
Sent: 01 November 2011 16:10
To: Green Jane
Cc: Human Kirsty; Archie and Madeline Russell; Rob Watson; Cllr Kindersley Sebastian
Subject: FW: Gamlingay MUGA

Jane

Further to my email below and having had the opportunity to check various points with people following the half term break I am pleased to respond in more detail to the issues raised in your email of 21 October as follows:

Whilst the focus for us must be our conversion to Academy with Stratton and improving the standard of educational provision, within these constraints we are certainly willing to work with you to progress the dual use agreement; we are of course currently trying to finalise a time for us to meet and do this at the moment.

We are also progressing the necessary changes to the structure of GVC leisure to ensure that it complies with its Memorandum and Articles of Association and is properly accountable to governors. To this end, as well as updating the shareholders, three governors (one of whom will become a Director) will become more actively involved with the running and monitoring of GVCL to provide a link with governors. This will include signing off the Sports Development Plan. I believe the latest version has been provided to you and we look forward to any further comments you might have on this. For my part, I think things like opening hours, charging rates etc have been finalised and, as per my recent email to Kirsty, I would not want to see the opening of the MUGA delayed whilst the last details of the plan are finalised and I trust that this will be acceptable to you.

I confirm our request that, in order for the contractor to be paid and for the facility to be handed over, the final tranche of the grant money be paid over to us upon receipt of the final invoice. This would be less a retention sum of £15k which would be held pending completion of the agreement.

I trust that this is sufficient for your present purposes and look forward to hearing from you or Kirsty with confirmation of a time for us to meet.

Regards

Michael Jones MRICS