
FAIRVIEW TENNIS COURTS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 At a Meeting of this Committee in March 1999, Members agreed to put on hold the resurfacing of two of the tennis courts in Fairview Playing Field, pending a report on alternative uses of the site. This report suggests options for alternative uses of the tennis courts and requests direction from Members on the way forward.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 There are four tennis courts in Fairview Playing Field and they are the only public courts in the District. They are managed by ServiceTeam as part of the Grounds Maintenance contract. The playing surface is tarmac and the court area is completely fenced. The proposals only affect two of the courts, which have been taken out of use due to the poor quality of the surface.

3 ALTERNATIVE USES

- 3.1 In order to maximise use of the area, two alternative uses are proposed. The provision of a skatepark was considered for the site, however, the available budget would only be sufficient to resurface the area. There would be no budget provision for the purchase of equipment. The alternative uses considered within this report can be achieved within the allocated budget.

3.2 Basketball

- 3.3 The Council has already benefited greatly from the free basketball goals supplied by the English Basketball Association, Outdoor Basketball Initiative (EBBA, OBI). It has always been understood that those Districts benefiting from the initiative would nominate a site capable of housing four goals, which would then become a venue for district competitions. One of the tennis courts would be ideal for basketball.

- 3.4 There is sufficient car parking at the playing field and there would be use of the pavilion, if required, when competitions are held.

- 3.5 The basketball site would be included in the District's Basketball Development Plan, which was approved by Members of the Community Services Committee on 3rd March 1998. This will ensure the site will have programmed use including organised coaching sessions as part of the holiday activity programme. There may also be the opportunity to apply for funding from the OBI towards the cost of holding competitions and coached sessions on the site.

- 3.6** National Lottery funding to the OBI for this initiative is coming to an end, therefore all goals need to be allocated before 20th September 2000 and installed before 30th December 2000.
- 3.7 5-a-Side Football**
- 3.8** Provision of 5-a-side football goals elsewhere in the District has proved popular. Fairview Playing Field is already a popular venue for football. Provision of goals on this site will provide the only hard surface 5-a-side facility other than those provided by the sports centres, providing the opportunity for play in all weather conditions. This provision may also help to reduce deterioration of the grass pitches, as young people would be more likely to use this facility for casual play.
- 3.9** Over the next year, football has been chosen by the Sports Development Officer as one of his target sports. This will assist with the promotion and development of the site. It will also be included in the programme of holiday activities.
- 3.10** Members may also recall that mini football has been introduced by the Football Association and has been mandatory in Essex since September 1999. It is expected this will also increase demand for smaller scale playing areas such as 5-a-side. The site would assist the Council in meeting the additional needs that mini football will generate

4 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** Provision of these facilities and their inclusion in future sports development programmes will assist in reducing instances of youth nuisance and vandalism.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** A budget figure of £10,800 has already been identified for resurfacing the tennis courts. Installation of four basketball goals and provision and installation of a set of 5-a-side goals would cost £4,120. If the use of the area was changed to basketball and 5-a-side football, it would be possible to reduce the specification for resurfacing the area. It is estimated that the current budget provision would cover all of the costs.

6 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Fairview Playing Field is in the Rayleigh Town Council area. The Town Council and local residents would be consulted prior to any work taking place.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS**

- (1) That Members determine whether to change the use of the two tennis courts to basketball and 5-a-side football.
- (2) That the allocation of £10,800 is released to allow work to proceed. (HLCS)

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