



<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Decision Type:</b> Key
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<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 16 July 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Top Park Ramsbottom - 3G Football Turf Pitch	
<b>Report of</b>	Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations	

## 1.0 Summary

This report provides Cabinet with details of a proposed floodlit 3G Football Turf Pitch (FTP) at Top Park Playing Fields in Ramsbottom together with associated improvements to the pavilion and car park.

The report also outlines the details of a funding bid submitted to the Football Foundation (FF) as well as seeking approval to the overall funding package including expenditure of approved Council capital match funding.

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To approve the overall 3G scheme package including submission for the Football Foundations 3G Pitch Fund which (subject to grant approval and including match funding) will total £1,422,491.

2.2 Approval to expend the £425,000 capital match funding that is within the Council's approved capital programme.

2.3 Subject to the approval of and receipt of the external grant from the Football Foundation, to award contracts to the successful tenderers detailed in section 6.4 of this report. Any variations of costs due to unforeseen circumstances to be reported through and approved by the Cabinet Member for the Environment.

2.4 Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Operations in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to negotiate and execute the final contracts.

## 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s)

3.1 Development for 3G FTPs is identified as a priority for Council. The Top Park 3G pitch project has been developed in partnership with the County FA, Football Foundation and Ramsbottom United Junior Football Club. The project aims to maximise external funding and utilises approved capital match funding.

The community engagement has identified that there are limited recreation facilities in Ramsbottom which has contributed to high levels of physical inactivity among young people. The Top Park community offer will create new opportunities for males and females of all ages and abilities to enjoy recreation football and other physical activities.

This project will provide a much needed facility for the community of Ramsbottom, supporting the delivery of the Bury North Neighbourhood People and Communities Plan and broader *Let's Do It!* Strategy of the Borough.

#### **4.0 Alternative options considered and rejected.**

4.1 A reduced size scheme with a reduced external grant submission. As this would much reduce the outcomes of the project it would be unlikely to attract the external funding.

4.2 Consideration of an alternative site to develop the next 3G FTP within Ramsbottom or elsewhere within the borough. This could take up to 2 years to develop an alternative site proposal with the Football Foundation. Ramsbottom has been identified as a priority by the County FA and Football Foundation

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#### **5.0 Background**

Bury Council are seeking to secure external investment for various 3G Football Turf Pitch (FTP) developments across the borough. Top Park Playing Field in Ramsbottom has been identified as a priority site within the County FA - Local Football Facilities Plan for Bury. We have been working with the Football Foundation and County FA who are supporting the development of a business case for an application for funding for a new 3G FTP with associated facilities and car parking.

Existing 3G facilities are already in place at Goshen Playing Field (managed by Goshen Football Foundation), Redbank Playing Field (managed by Radcliffe Football Foundation) and at Elton High School (managed by the school).

The Council also commissioned a review and update of the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). This was completed in early 2024 in partnership with the Football Foundation, Sport England other National Governing Bodies such as tennis, athletics, cricket and rugby as well as involving local sports clubs.

The Playing Pitch Strategy reports that all midweek availability is currently at capacity, or close to capacity with only spare capacity existing at weekends. Ramsbottom United JFC struggle to access 3G pitches for training. They use the poor-quality sand AGP at Woodhey School and teams travel out of the Borough.

The new PPS also reviewed the demand and opportunity for further 3G pitches across the borough as well as improvements to grass pitch sites.

## **6.0 Proposed Facilities**

6.1 Bury Council are the current landowners of Top Park Playing Field, Bolton Road West, Ramsbottom. Ramsbottom United JFC LTD (the trading arm of Ramsbottom United JFC) is a company limited by guarantee and has been established to operate the new Top Park facilities and to reduce liability to club volunteers. RUJFC Committee members are named as Company Director and Management Committee members. The company will take on the new Top Park through a 25-year lease or self-management agreement once the development has been completed.

We are seeking to provide a 'State of the Art' full size 3G FTP with floodlighting at Top Park to address the high local demand for football and other multi-sport activities in addition to a small extension and improvements to the existing changing room and pavilion. Also included (as required by Planning) is provision of additional car parking spaces and widening of the vehicle access from Bolton Road West.

In order to meet Football Foundation standards, the extended building will provide appropriate team changing rooms, officials changing rooms, a local community and wellness hub and associated storage.

## **6.2 Community Involvement and Benefit**

There is significant shortfall of 3G pitches in Bury and RUJFC teams travel out of the borough for training on 3G and use poor quality venues. This project will mean local children can train and play matches in their own park.

The project will provide significant physical and mental health benefits for the local community. The Bury North Neighbourhood Profile which covers Ramsbottom reports:

- Higher proportion of inactive young people compared to the rest of the Borough.
- Smoking is around 2% higher than Bury averages.

We want to target those who are not physically active and/or who have physical and mental health challenges. We also want to reach all young people in the community to promote enjoyment of activity as a basis for life-long participation.

The target audiences are:

- Young people with support for inactive children and LSEG families
- Women and Girls
- Older people
- People with disabilities and long-term health issues

We have talked to local voluntary groups and health and education professionals to engage with our target groups.

Ramsbottom is lacking disability football provision. Through our community engagement we have identified a range of partners to work with to ensure our project is fully inclusive.

### **6.3 Who will run the new 3G Facility.**

The facility including the 3G, grass pitches and pavilion will be managed and maintained by Ramsbottom United JFC LTD. A similar arrangement was set up for the management of the facilities at Redbank and Goshen. The company limited by guarantee has been established to operate the new Top Park facilities and to reduce liability to club volunteers. The operation of the company and facility will also be overseen on an ongoing basis by the Lancs County FA and Council through a facility steering group which will be required by any external grant awarded.

The first £27k of income from the 3G is held by the Football Foundation to be held in a sinking fund reserve for the longer-term upkeep.

RUJFC Ltd were also responsible for developing the business plan, community consultation and funding bid in partnership with the Council.

The business plan that accompanies the external funding bid will ensure that all occupancy for the new facility is already in place before submission of the bid. This also includes other aspects of football development and community participation.

### **6.4 Funding and procurement processes**

The total project value subject to securing external funding would be circa £1.422M as detailed in the table below although there are no guarantees at this stage (until a successful grant has been secured).

Tenders have been received for the 3G pitch, car park works, access improvements, and changing room extension as detailed below.

The car park, access and changing room were tendered using a single stage open tender process. Therefore, it was important to establish that only companies that had appropriate skills and experience were considered. To allow this to be ascertained prequalification questions were asked and these were assessed on a pass/fail basis to allow the further consideration of the tenders.

A quality element was included within the tender, which represents 30% of the overall assessment (10% relevant experience, 10% programme, 10% social value). The remaining 70% of the tender evaluation related to cost. Eight tenders were received, two of which were non-compliant and not considered further.

The 3G pitch element is being overseen by the Football Foundation via their Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) Framework and managed by their framework manager. This is subject to a two-stage procurement process, following their framework protocols.

The Final tenders within the approved budget to be accepted through consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment.

Contracts will be formally awarded to successful tenderers following confirmation

of award of grant.

A total of £425,000 has been approved within the Councils Capital Programme to be used as match funding towards the external funding bid and maximise the potential amount of external funding from the Football Foundation.

<b>Item</b>	<b>£ Cost</b>
Pavilion remodelling with additional changing room extension (H Bell and Sons (Rochdale) Ltd tender)	269,987
Car park, paths, and highway access improvements (H Bell and Sons (Rochdale) Ltd tender)	158,363
New Floodlit 91m x 55m FTP (Lano / CLS tender)	842,026
New electrical supply (provisional sum to be added to Lano / CLS tender)	50,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>1,320,376</b>

<b>Additional Costs</b>	<b>£ Cost</b>
Professional Fees	42,835
Statutory Charges (planning, etc)	3,000
VAT (if applicable) all 100% recoverable	0
Legal Costs	3,000
Contingency	20,000
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>68,835</b>

<b>Other Costs</b>	<b>£ Cost</b>
Consultant Bid Fees (FF and other funding applications)	13,000
Land Survey Costs (including planning condition discharge costs)	20,280
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>33,280</b>

<b>Other Sources of Funding for your Project</b>	<b>£ Cost</b>
Bury Council (approved capital programme) secured	425,000
<b>Total Partnership funding</b>	<b>425,000</b>

<b>Project Summary</b>	<b>£ Cost</b>
Estimated Project Cost	1,422,491
Total Partnership Funding	-425,000
<b>Estimated Football Foundation Grant (bid submitted)</b>	<b>997,491</b>
percentage of overall project costs sought through external funding	70.12%

**Note** – An element of expenditure has already been committed for advance design fees, land surveys, feasibility study and planning fees.

## 6.5 Programme Timetable

- Scheme feasibility and outline design – Complete
- Detailed designs – Complete
- Community consultation - Complete
- Submit for planning permission Complete
- Planning approval - Complete
- Initial scheme and business case submission to the FF – Complete April 2024

- Presentation to the FF Board May/June 2024
  - Outcome of the grant submission – July 2024
  - Subject to a successful grant award start on site – September 2024
  - Completion of works – June 2025
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## **7.0 Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

### **The 2023 Bury Playing Pitch Strategy states,**

*" There is insufficient supply of full size 3G pitches to meet football training demand based on the FA training model of one 11v11 pitch for 38 teams. There is currently a shortfall of 9 pitches identified and an anticipated future shortfall of 10 pitches.*

The PPS recommendations include,

*"Develop the planned 11v11 3G pitches at Redbank Playing Fields and Top Park Ramsbottom to address the overplayed grass pitches."*

Other Council Strategies which provide evidence of need for the project:

- **Bury Strategy for Health, Care, and Well Being** "Let's Do It"
- **Bury Wellness Strategy** (builds on "Bury Moving" Physical Activity Strategy)
- **Bury JSNA**
- **Bury North Neighbourhood People & Communities Plan**

The Council's 10 year 'Let's Do It Strategy', focusses on the importance of building back a better Borough between now and 2030. The Bury Moving Physical Activity Strategy has strategic objectives to support people to move more by 2025.

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## **8.0 Equality Impact and Considerations:**

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA.*

A full EIA has been completed identifying neutral and positive impact as a result of this project which should provide a positive health and wellness benefit to all users of the new facility as detailed in the report.

## **9.0 Environmental Impact and Considerations:**

Supporting carbon neutrality by providing locally accessible high-quality outdoor facilities that also encourage physical activity.

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## 10.0 Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That the external funding bid is not successful with the FF</li><li>• The inflation costs of the building works, car park and 3G are very high</li><li>• Ensuring that the new 3G facility is sustainable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure close partnership working with the FF and keep the project cost within targets agreed with the FF</li><li>• Monitor any rising costs. Ensure all works are procured competitively and re-engineer design where appropriate. Provide contingency and maximise external funding.</li><li>• Ensure a robust business model is in place and establish a £27k p/a sinking fund to be paid into by the club annually from 3G income</li></ul>

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## 11.0 Legal Implications:

The procurement of these contractors has been undertaken in accordance with the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) Framework for the 3G pitch and a single stage open tender process for the pavilion and related works, both of which are fully compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. As regards the AGP Framework, then contractors accepted onto the framework have already been subject to quality and price competition. The framework's form of call-off contract will be used by the Council when concluding the contract with the successful contractor.

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It is noted that these works are subject to the approval of an external grant from the Football Foundation. Proceeding with these works in advance of this funding being granted will put the Council at risk of responsibility for the cost of the works in the event that funding is not granted. However, assuming that the CRSTS funding is granted, Legal Services should be approached to review and execute any legal agreements associated with the grant.

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## 12.0 Financial Implications:

The projected cost of the project is £1.425m and funding for the project is by way of £0.425m (match funding) which has been approved within the Councils Capital Programme and £1.0m of external grant funding from the Football Foundation.

An element of expenditure has already been incurred for advance design fees, land surveys, feasibility study and planning fees £48k 2023-4 and £13k as at M2 (May) 2024-5, £61k in total which has been funded by way of the Council's Capital Programme pending funding being granted from the Football Foundation.

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### **13.0 Background papers:**

*Please list any background documents to this report.*

Site Plan

Playing Pitch Strategy