

CABINET

Salt Ayre – Cycling Centre Urgent Business Decision

Report of the Head of Cultural Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To consider an offer from the British Cycling Federation (BCF) of a project capital grant to develop the cycling facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre.				
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision	Referral from Officers	
This report is public				

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the offer from the British Cycling Federation (BCF) of a project capital grant to develop the cycling facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre be accepted.
- (2) That the Head of Financial Services be given authority to update the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2007/08, subject to there being nil impact on the Council's resources.
- (3) That consideration be given to the waiving of call-in in accordance with Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rule 17 to allow immediate implementation of the decision.

2. Introduction

The facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre include a 1,500 meter "road-race" cycle track. The circuit was built in 1979 on reclaimed land, at a cost of approximately £20,000 with the support of four local cycling clubs. When Salt Ayre Sports Centre was built, the cycle track became part of Lancaster City Council's portfolio of leisure facilities.

Following Lancaster City Council's award of Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) status, consideration was given to refurbishing and further developing the cycling facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre.

Following consultation a number of desirable improvements were identified, including;

- Surfacing of the existing car park area to create a skills training area.
- Re-surfacing the circuit.
- Lighting to enable more use during the winter months.

- Changing/Office/Training Rooms.
- Improved Landscaping.
- BMX race circuit.
- Improved Signing and Security.

The current facility suffers as a result of;-

- Lack of maintenance of the surface of the circuit and need to landscape some areas.
- Increasing mis-use by scooters and motorbikes.
- Wet and muddy car park.
- Conflict with other people e.g. gangs of unauthorised youth, dog walkers, and the athletics club training alongside the track.
- Occasional conflict with other City Council events.

3. Proposals

As one of only six designated Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) in the Country, Lancaster City Council, together with the Salt Ayre Cycling Association (made up of Lakes Road Club, Lune Road Cycling Club, the Kent Valley Road Club, and the Lancaster Cycling Club), were invited by the British Cycling Federation (BCF) to put forward cycling development schemes for external funding consideration.

A composite scheme to include the “desirable” improvement listed above was well-received by the BCF, but because of limited national funding, the Salt Ayre Cycling Project was not taken forward for final approval to the BCF Funding Board.

However, on the 17th July 2007, Cultural Services were advised by the BCF that following a “failure” to proceed of an approved project in Middlesbrough, a capital allocation of £140,000 is being offered to Lancaster City Council, specifically to carry out the following improvements;-

- Surfacing of the existing car park area to create a skills training area.
- Re-surfacing and widening of the whole of the existing circuit.
- Installation of lighting ducts.
- Improved Landscaping for site lines and security.

The proposals above were reported to the Asset Management Working Group on the 18th July 2007, who on the assumptions set out below, are supportive of the proposals.

- Planning permission is not required.
- Costs will not exceed estimates. Costs are based on professional submissions drawn up by Engineering Services and approved by BCF.
- Internal (Cultural Services, Engineering Services) and external (BCF and the Salt Ayre Cycling Association) resources will be available when required.
- Construction Company available when required.
- Materials & equipment available when required.
- Funding will be made available for this project

Such a “windfall” opportunity presents number of opportunities, including;-

- Developing the Salt Ayre Cycle Centre towards becoming a centre of excellence for cycling.
- Providing racing, training, education, cycle maintenance skills etc., to include disabled/mobility handicapped, schools for training and education, the local Primary

Care Trust for health related issues and any other outside parties with an interest in using the facility.

The project presents an opportunity to take forward the “desirable” improvement listed, via a partnership comprising Lancaster City Council, the Salt Ayre Cycling Association, and the British Cycling Association.

However, because of the “failure” of the Middlesbrough scheme to progress, the BCF has set a strict time limit on the “offer” to Lancaster City Council. Failure to take up the offer by latest the 24th July 2007 will result in the offer being withdrawn and the funding will also be lost to the BCF.

There are no additional revenue (or capital) consequences to Lancaster City Council arising from this project. Maintenance (Grounds Maintenance) is already carried out by CC(D)S. General day-to-day upkeep of the cycle track is undertaken jointly by Salt Ayre Sports Centre and the Salt Ayre Cycling Association.

The works would take approximately 3 to 4 months, with a projected completion date in February 2008.

4. Options

- 4.1 Option 1 - To accept the offer from the British Cycling Federation (BCF) of a project capital grant to develop the cycling facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre.
- 4.2 Option 2 - To refuse the offer from the British Cycling Federation (BCF) of a project capital grant to develop the cycling facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre.

5. Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

- 5.1 Officers’ preferred option is Option 1, to assist in developing the Salt Ayre Cycle Centre towards become a centre of excellence. Refusing the offer, without identifying other capital funds, will see the facility decline and eventually become unsafe to use.

6 Conclusion

The view of the Head of Cultural Services is that the offer presents Lancaster City Council with an opportunity to meet the aspirations of the cycling “community” to develop the facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre.

In the event that the offer from the British Cycling Federation (BCF) of a project capital grant to develop the cycling facilities at Salt Ayre Sports Centre is accepted, the Head of Cultural Services will liaise with Legal Services to agree on any Terms and Conditions that accompany the Grant offer, before committing to the project.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The proposal supports the following Corporate Priorities:-

- C.P.1. To deliver value for money, customer focused services.
- C.P.2. To make the district a cleaner, healthier place.
- C.P.4. To lead the regeneration of our district.
- C.P.5. To continue to improve our council.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability etc)**

There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Capital works for the project will be 100% externally funded from grant from the British Cycling Federation, therefore there will be a nil impact on the Council's General Fund Capital Programme. It is also envisaged that any ongoing revenue costs, such as maintenance can be met from within existing budgets.

Subject to Member approval, the General Fund Capital Programme will need to be updated in 2007/08 to reflect the additional expenditure and related financing of the scheme.

It is not envisaged that there will be any onerous conditions attached to the grant offer or any additional costs associated with the final audit of the scheme.

DEPUTY SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

Initial proposals have already been drawn up and reported to the Asset Management Working Group for establishing and managing this project, in accordance with the Council's project management methodology (L.A.M.P).

In view of the time and budget constraints involved with the proposed scheme, it is imperative that the project is adequately resourced and managed. If the scheme is approved, it is important that the project fully evaluates any potential future development opportunities, particularly considering the scope for working in partnership with the clubs identified, and that these are factored into a robust "whole life costing" appraisal for the scheme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

As indicated above, Legal Services will advise on the acceptability of any terms and conditions to which the grant is subject, before the Council commits itself to the project.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cultural Services File - SASC

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