
3G PITCHES AND PROPOSALS FOR ONGOING MAINTENANCE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Several years ago the Council through Leisure Services secured external funding for the installation of 3G pitches across the council area. The pitches were built and arrangements put in place for a number of community groups to take on board the management responsibility of these assets. Over time the community groups dwindled and through use and age the facilities were left in need of refurbishment.
- 1.2 At its June 2016 meeting, the Council earmarked budget for maintenance of 3G pitches across Argyll and Bute. This funding together with funding made available earlier for restoration works at the Tarbert all-weather pitch has been used to refurbish the all-weather pitches and to bring these assets up to an acceptable standard for ongoing use. These works are now substantially complete and following competitive tender returns there is surplus funding available.
- 1.3 At full Council in April 2017 Ernst and Young (EY) undertook an option appraisal to consider the most appropriate operating model for the 3G pitches currently not covered by maintenance and management arrangements. EY considered sustainability, income generation, accountability and governance, community engagement and level of risk. EY recommended that the 3G pitches be transferred to the Leisure Services Charitable Trust.
- 1.4 As part of the wider Leisure Services transfer to a Charitable Trust in 2017, the 3G pitches have now been transferred under licence to Live Argyll to facilitate letting of the facilities by them on behalf of the Council. A further pitch has been transferred under licence to Argyll College. In line with the licence arrangements for building assets utilised by the Trust the council continues to be responsible for the 3G pitch assets in terms of maintenance and improvement with Live Argyll being responsible for the operation of the assets.
- 1.5 This report proposes that the surplus funding be utilised to procure the specialist equipment required to maintain the all-weather pitches and to meet the costs of carrying out the day to day maintenance associated with the pitches for a six and a half years timescale.
- 1.6 Without this equipment there will be continued pressure on Capital budgets to carry out rejuvenations. Significant issues may arise at the 3G sites where it is highly likely that the surfaces would not be able to be maintained in an appropriate state

for playing. There would be a risk that the life expectancy of the 3g would be vastly diminished and also an increased risk of injury form those using the 3G pitches for sport and recreation.

- 1.7 It is recommended that approval be granted for the remainder of the allocation for 3G pitches to be utilised to fund the Council carrying out routine maintenance at the pitches as detailed in Table 1 in paragraph 4.3 and the maintenance frequency detailed in Appendix 1. The available funding providing for 6.5 years of maintenance for the 3G pitches, after which there will be a cost pressure to the Council for continued maintenance.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report details the 3G pitches that have been transferred under licence to the charitable trust together with a further pitch which has been transferred under licence to Argyll College. Under the terms of the transfer licence the Council will carry out routine maintenance of the pitches other than the school pitches at Oban and Lochgilphead which are managed under school contracts.
- 2.2 This report proposes that surplus funding originally allocated for 3G pitch enhancements is utilised to fund the Council carrying out routine maintenance at the pitches as detailed in Table 1 in paragraph 4.3 and the maintenance frequency detailed in Appendix 1. When the funding is expended there will be a budget pressure that will need to be met either directly by the council or, should Live Argyll be successful in growing business, through increased income from letting the 3G pitches.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that approval be granted for the remainder of the allocation for 3G pitches to be utilised to fund the Council carrying out routine maintenance at the pitches as detailed in Table 1 in paragraph 4.3 and the maintenance frequency detailed in Appendix 1. The available funding providing for 6.5 years of maintenance for the 3G pitches, after which there will be a cost pressure to the Council for continued maintenance.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 Previously the Council had made two allocations of funding for 3G pitches. The first allocation was allocated to resolve deficiencies at the Tarbert pitch in Kintyre and the second allocation having been made to deal with a number of deficiencies across several pitches within Argyll and Bute.
- 4.2 The remedial work was carried out via competitive tender. The rates received were very competitive and as such there is a surplus of funding which is proposed to be used for ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the pitches. The allocation made for 3G pitches being £170,000 for Tarbert and £750,000 for other pitches, a total of

£920,000. Of this allocation some £445,000 has been committed to the repair works at the various sites. This leaves a balance of £475,000.

4.3 The table below details the status of the various 3G pitches across the council area:

Table 1:

Location	Status	Proposed Maintenance
Bendarroch Park Garelochhead	Transferred to Leisure Trust under Licence	ABC Operations team
Dunoon Cages	Transferred to Leisure Trust under Licence	ABC Operations team
Innellan	Managed by Education	Education
Lochnell	Managed by Education	Education
Park Primary	Managed by Education	Education
Tobermory High School	Transferred to Leisure Trust under Licence	ABC Operations team
Croft Park Tarbert	Transferred to Leisure Trust under Licence	ABC Operations team
Aqualibrium Kintyre	Transferred to Leisure Trust under Licence	Maintained by ABC Operations team with re- charge to Live Argyll
Oban High School	Letting Managed by the Leisure Trust	Maintained by Others by schools contract
Lochgilphead Joint Campus	Managed by the Leisure Trust	Maintained by Others via schools contract
Kirkmichael Helensburgh	Transferred to Argyll College Under Licence	ABC Operations team
Dunoon Grammar 1 3G pitch 1 2G pitch	Letting Managed by the Leisure Trust	Maintained by Others by schools contract
Hermitage Academy 1 3G pitch 1 2G pitch	Letting Managed by the Leisure Trust	Maintained by Others by schools contract
Rothesay Joint Campus	Letting Managed by Leisure Trust	Maintained by Others by schools contract
Campbeltown Grammar School 3G pitch to be provided in 2019	Letting to be Managed by Leisure Trust	Maintained by Others by schools contract

4.4 In addition to the above Education are in the process of finalising a procurement process for a new all-weather pitch on Islay. Whilst the details of the maintenance responsibility has yet to be finalised it is envisaged that Live Argyll will carry out the day to day maintenance with ABC's Operations team carrying out more major maintenance works including deep cleaning, topping up crumb/sand levels, mechanical brushing and weed killing. This is included within the quoted costs. There is the potential through discussion with Live Argyll to use the income from this pitch to offset maintenance costs.

- 4.5 The council's Roads and Amenity Operations team will carry out maintenance of the pitches as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report. This will enable resource to be put in place to carry out the various maintenance works and provide an opportunity to develop and train colleagues in maintenance of 3G pitches including training and developing apprentices.
- 4.6 Maintenance frequency is directly related to the amount of usage a 3G surface receives. From the various playing associations and from industry experts typical maintenance frequency is summarised in the Table 2 below. However, due to the low play frequency on the Argyll and Bute pitches being considered in this report, a reduced frequency is recommended in Appendix 1. Whilst this is not ideal it is not considered that this reduced frequency will have any detrimental impact on the overall life of the pitches (Appendix 1 proposes a significantly increased maintenance regime from that previously in place). However, through monitoring of pitch usage and condition it may be necessary for a report to be brought to Members seeking approval of amended maintenance frequencies. Ideally, should pitch use increase then fee income will be available to offset increased maintenance costs. With local control and booking taking place through partner group's accurate usage figures will be available and can be used to monitor use.

Table 2 Maintenance frequency suggested by industry experts.

Playing Hours per week:					
Suggested Maintenance Work	10 Hrs	10-20 Hrs	20-30Hrs	30-40Hrs	Reason:
Litter removal	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Avoid damage by paper, bottles, chewing gum, athletic tap and such
Refilling heavily used areas	Weekly	Weekly	Daily	Daily	Keep rubber infill even and at the right level
Brushing heavily used areas	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Daily	Keep fibres in the optimum upright position
Total surface brushing	Biweekly	Biweekly	Weekly	Weekly	Keep surface in perfect condition
Leaves, twigs, moss, weed removal	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Avoid pollution and beginning compaction
Seams Inspection	Quarterly	Quarterly	Bimonthly	Bimonthly	Avoid field damage by faulty seams
Specialist maintenance	Yearly	Yearly	½ yearly	½ yearly	Maintain playing properties and performance

- 4.7 It is proposed that operatives be trained up to carry out all-weather pitch maintenance and that specialist equipment be procured. Appendix 1 below details the activities and frequencies. The total annual cost for these teams being £66,500 per year. In addition 2 tractors, oscillating brushes and all weather pitch equipment will be required at a cost of £19,100. From the available funding a 6 ½ year maintenance package can be provided for those pitches to be managed by the leisure trust. Where possible area based staff will carry out the maintenance work to reduce travel time and unproductive time. The specialist team will be utilised across only when required to do so.

- 4.8 The maintenance of the 3G pitches will include the activities detailed in the schedule attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.9 Any more significant works, over and above those detailed in Appendix 1 below, would need to be dealt with up as part of property maintenance with bids being made against the capital programme. This being consistent with the asset sustainability and asset improvement arrangements of other assets transferred under licence to the Leisure Trust.
- 4.10 Under the terms of the Leisure Trust, Live Argyll, the recently formed charitable trust is responsible for bookings and day to day operational management of the various pitches. Through this report it is proposed that the Council's Roads and Amenity Operations Team will carry out routine maintenance to include the works and frequencies as identified in Appendix 1.
- 4.11 Under the terms of the licence for the Leisure Trust the Trust facilitate the letting of the pitches at the rates set by council and retain the income. In situations where the Leisure Trust performs well and is able to increase business at the 3G pitches the Council can, from financial year 2021/22 onwards, consider how this increased income to the Leisure Trust, together with other sums, could be taken into account against the annual sum paid to the Trust for provision of its services.
- 4.12 A review of 3G pitches covering the period from 2000 to 2016 by Internal Audit identified a number of weaknesses that should be addressed in any future management arrangements. These included the need to put in place a clear, costed maintenance regime for each site and a need to clearly define responsibilities. The arrangements proposed in this report will address those requirements

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report details proposals for carrying out ongoing maintenance work at the 3G pitches listed in Table 1 above utilising council work teams, funded from the remainder of the funding allocated for 3G pitches.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | None |
| 6.2 | Financial | Funded from the remainder of the funding allocated for 3G pitches. Available funding allows for 6&1/2 years maintenance after which there will be a cost pressure to the council. |
| 6.3 | Legal | None known |
| 6.4 | HR | Training opportunities for 4 apprentices. 6 new posts are created in total these being on 2 year contracts initially. |
| 6.5 | Equalities / Fairer Scotland Duty | Access to leisure facilities |

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|--|
| 6.6 | Risk | Available funding provides 6&1/2 year maintenance cover following which there is a risk of a cost pressure to the council. |
| 6.7 | Customer Services | None |

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APPENDICES
Appendix 1 – Maintenance Activities and Frequencies

Appendix 1 – MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES AND FREQUENCIES

ACTIVITY	Works carried out by	Frequency
Litter/debris Pick	Leisure Trust/Others*	26
Brush	ABC Operations	13
Extreme Clean	ABC Operations	3
Deep Clean (Verti Top 1200)	ABC Operations	4
Moss/algae treatment	ABC Operations	2
Check infill levels	ABC Operations	4
Check High Traffic Areas	ABC Operations	26
Top Up Sand/Rubber	ABC Operations	4
Repair Seam Failures (minor). Allow 3 per year	ABC Operations	Up to 3
Check Fencing & Lighting	Leisure Trust/Others*	6
Ensure Pathways area clear	Leisure Trust/Others*	12
Check Goals/Nets/Dug outs	Leisure Trust/Others*	26
Weedkill Surrounds	ABC Operations	2
Clean Hard Standing	ABC Operations	26
Changing Rooms	Leisure Trust/Others*	Per Occ.

The schedule of activities listed above is an expanded list of that summarised in Table 2 in the main report. The maintenance frequency detailed above is below that recommended by industry specialists. However, given the low level of play this frequency is considered adequate. Should play frequency increase maintenance levels may need to be increased to ensure the longevity of the surface. Typical life expectancy is 10 years. Should changes be required to maintenance frequency a report will be brought to the appropriate Council Committee.