WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Council: 27 May 2009

Subject: Braidfield Football Pitch

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of options and costs associated with the continued use of the Braidfield football pitch.

2. Background

2.1 At the Special Council Meeting of 12 February 2009 Members instructed that Braidfield buildings be vacated from 31 March 2009.

2.2 Running costs to keep the building open was around £19,600 per month in 2008/2009.

2.3 At the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee of 22 April 2009 Members approved the demolition of the buildings and instructed officers to report on options for the future of the Braidfield pitches to the May Council meeting.

3. Main Issues

3.1 Following the closure of Braidfield as an Educational Services/community facility on 1 May 2009, the all weather football pitch has continued to be made available for lease to Council and community groups. The pitch has been extensively used by the community over recent years (9 clubs, using the pitch every evening Monday to Thursday, Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons during August to May). Usage has greatly reduced since 1 April, an element of which could possibly be attributable to the non-availability of changing facilities. The pitch has also been used regularly by Sports Development, Clydebank High School and St Columba's High School. The all weather hockey pitch is unusable due to constant flooding and drainage problems.

3.2 There is no provision in the current budget for janitorial, cleaning or grounds maintenance of the facilities. In recent months vandalism levels have increased within the campus, probably as a result of reduced building occupancy levels. Costs are not available relating to vandalism repairs at this moment in time. The car park is not being maintained and is falling into a state of disrepair.

3.3 Lets have continued since 1 April 2009 on the explicit understanding that there is no Council presence before, during or after the period of the let and lessees are further reminded of their responsibilities to the health and safety of users, provision of appropriate insurance and their duty to clear up the area on completion of the let. No changing, toilet, CCTV or lighting facilities are available.

3.4 Officers continue to closely monitor the situation. In the event of any apparent compromise in health and safety or vandalism of the pitches, availability of the pitch may have to be withdrawn.

3.5 Whilst the financial model of the current PPP project includes the sale of the entire Braidfield School and its associated campus for residential purposes, there is no intention to market the site for sale until 2010/2011, and so the football pitch can potentially remain open for Council/ community use in the meantime.

3.6 The buildings have now been mothballed and they will be demolished during June-August. Should Council instruct the provision of changing facilities, temporary accommodation will be required.

3.7 The cost to provide changing facilities has not been allowed within the current year's budget.

3.8 The following options are available.

Option 1

Provide temporary changing/toilet/shower facilities to allow full use of facilities: also provide floodlighting to allow use in evenings (for training purposes only)

Two year lease provision of 2 x 24 feet long units, each comprising a changing area, 1 x toilet and 3 x shower cubicles

a) Capital Cost:

Ground works/ service connections	£ 36,000
Upgrade car park	£ 10,000
Delivery of 2 x units	£ 1,000
Floodlighting	£ 16,000
Total estimated capital cost	**£ 63,000**

b) Annual Recurring Costs

Lease	£ 19,000
Utilities costs	£ 3,000
Rates	£ 1,000
Maintenance costs (janitorial cover during lets, grounds maintenance, cleaning)	£ 18,000

Floodlighting costs	£ 3,000
Total recurring annual costs	**£ 44,000**

Income for 2008/2009 was approximately **£ 5,500**. It would be reasonable to expect similar usage of the pitch if temporary accommodation and lighting were to be provided.

Option 2

Provide temporary changing/toilet/shower facilities to allow full use of facilities during daylight hours (i.e. exclude floodlighting)

a) Capital Cost:

Ground works/ service connections	£ 36,000
Upgrade car park	£ 10,000
Delivery of 2 x units	£ 1,000
Total estimated capital cost	**£ 47,000**

b) Annual Recurring Costs

Lease	£ 19,000
Utilities costs	£ 3,000
Rates	£ 1,000
Maintenance costs (janitorial cover during lets, grounds maintenance, cleaning)	£ 12,000
Total recurring annual costs	**£ 35,000**

Income would be lower due to the fact that the pitch could not be used during winter evenings. Assumed estimated annual income would be approximately **£ 2,000**.

Option 3

Provide use of pitches with no changing/toilet/shower facilities:

a) Capital Cost:

Upgrade car park	£ 10,000

b) Annual Recurring Costs

Maintenance costs (janitorial and grounds maintenance only)	£ 9,500
Total recurring annual costs	**£ 9,500**

There has been no real interest in the pitch since closure of the building, probably due to lack of changing accommodation. Choosing this option could result in a similarly negligible level of usage, with little or no income realised.

Option 4
Close the facility as from 30 June 2009 **NIL**

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 Personnel implications are dependant upon which option is chosen by Members. For Options 1 or 2 the allowance for janitorial and cleaning services is 2 hours each per let. If Option 3 were to be chosen the allowance would be 4 hours per 2 hour let for janitorial service only.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Provision of temporary changing/shower/toilet facilities will incur additional unbudgeted costs to the department and these are detailed in options 1 and 2 above.

5.2 The continued use of the pitch without changing facilities will also incur additional unbudgeted costs and these are detailed in Option 3 above.

5.3 Option 4 would have no financial implications.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 The premises would be unsupervised outwith letting times and so there is an element of risk that continued vandalism could make the area unsafe to the public.

6.2 The premises would be unsupervised during the lets and so there is an unknown risk to the Council, dependent upon lessees' level of health and safety awareness.

7. Conclusions and Officer's Recommendations

7.1 If the pitch remains available for letting then unbudgeted costs will be incurred and these are detailed in 3.8 above.

7.2 If Members instruct the continued use of the pitch, the favourable option would be to provide changing/shower/toilet facilities. However, there are unidentifiable health and safety risks to users due to the potential recurrence of vandalism and the absence of Council supervision outwith letting periods.

7.3 If option 1 or 2 is chosen Council would incur substantial unbudgeted costs.

7.4 If option 3 is chosen it is possible that there could be little or no interest in letting, although Council would still incur unbudgeted costs, resulting in poor value for money to the Authority.

7.5 It is recommended that the facility be closed to the public (option 4) due to the high risks and/or costs associated with options 1, 2 and 3.

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Appendices	None
Background Papers:	Children's Services Committee Minute of 22 April 2009: "Braidfield Campus". Minute: Special Council Meeting of 12 February 2009. Appendix (i) page 7 "Infrastructure Assets – Office Accommodation"
Wards Affected:	4