

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 06 June 2016

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Leisure and Community
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Hook Recreation Ground Sports Changing Room – Change of Use</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Operations
<b>Strategy/Policy:</b>	Leisure Strategy
<b>Corporate Objective:</b>	Leisure for Health and for Fun

**Purpose:**

To seek approval to convert the former sports changing rooms at the Hook Recreation Ground into a satellite depot for the Council's Streetscene Operations team.

**Executive summary:**

In December 2014, the Executive resolved that the designation of the land at Hook Recreation Ground be changed from "parks and amenity open space" to "natural green space"; be no longer used for formal sports provision and that the changing rooms be demolished if a suitable alternative use for the building could not be found.

An alternative use to convert the changing rooms into a satellite depot for the grounds maintenance and street sweeping teams is proposed as a means of helping provide a more cost effective and efficient service.

The Executive is requested to approve capital funding of £25,000 to allow the conversion of the existing changing rooms together with a further £12,000 to demolish and return to open space the existing mess room facilities at the Locks Heath House Park if the Locks Heath Tennis Club opt not to take on this building as a club house.

**Recommendation:**

The Executive is asked to:

- (a) agree that the existing changing rooms at the Hook Recreation Ground be converted to provide a satellite depot for the Council's Grounds Maintenance team;
- (b) agree that the existing mess room at Locks Heath House Park be demolished if an agreement cannot be reached with the Locks Heath Tennis Club to use this facility as a club house / toilet facilities; and

(c) approve that a capital budget of £37,000 be used from the S106 Open Spaces Maintenance budget to fund the works to both buildings.

**Reason:**

To provide a more efficient and cost effective means of operating the grounds maintenance and street sweeping operations and to improve the storage capability for these operations in the western wards of the Borough.

**Cost of proposals:**

A capital budget of £37,000 sourced from the S106 Open Spaces Maintenance budget is requested to fund the proposal.

**Background papers:**

December 2014 Executive Report - Review of Community Buildings

**Reference papers:**

None

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### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	06 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Hook Recreation Ground Sports Changing Room – change of use</b>
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Operations
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Leisure and Community

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Until 2010 the four football pitches and changing rooms at the Hook Recreation Ground were leased to the Ranvilles Rangers Junior Football Club. The building comprises of 7 small team changing rooms and a garage.
2. In 2010 the football club surrendered their lease as the pitches were unplayable for the majority of the season as the drainage is poor on what used to be a landfill site. Since that time there has been interest from other sports clubs in taking over the facilities, but feasibility work indicated that a budget of £450,000 would be required to address the problem with the drainage with a further £100,000 required to bring the changing rooms back into use.
3. In December 2014, the Executive resolved that the designation of the land at Hook Recreation Ground be changed from “parks and amenity open space” to “natural green space”, be no longer used for formal sports provision and that the changing rooms be demolished within 12 months if a suitable alternative use for the building could not be found.

#### ALTERNATIVE USE

4. Currently the Streetscene service uses the “mess room” next to the tennis courts at Locks Heath House Park as a depot and store for the street sweeping and ride-on grass cutting vehicles serving the western wards.
5. The vehicles are located at this site primarily to reduce the travelling time from the main Council Depot to site in an area that requires a constant Streetscene presence.
6. The principle for this arrangement is a good one however the facility at Locks Heath House Park is too small for the operational demand. It is cramped when all vehicles are parked up and the restricted movement within the garage area gives some health and safety concerns. In addition to the vehicles, a number of materials also need to be stored here. Another limiting factor with the current arrangement is that this facility does not have any area surrounding the building that can be used to undertake other tasks

and activities associated with the grounds maintenance operation.

7. Users of Locks Heath House Park have expressed concern to Officers regarding the conflict caused from the necessary and regular vehicle movements at this busy ornamental park and the children and dog walkers using the site.
8. At Hook Recreation Ground the area immediately surrounding the changing rooms provides an ideal location for improving the efficiency of the grounds and street cleansing operations. The site is isolated from the main area of open space, is located in a remote area away from almost all residential properties and is of sufficient size to allow additional storage and a shredding operation to take place.
9. For several weeks of the year a significant amount of green waste is generated from the maintenance of the shrub borders located throughout the western wards. When the shrub waste is collected from around the Borough it is transported un-shredded by transit van to a waste transfer facility located in the north east of the Borough. If the waste was to be stored and shredded locally prior to transporting for disposal at a site such as Hook then the number of disposal trips would be reduced as would the actual cost of waste disposal.
10. The reason disposal costs would be reduced is that a transit of un-shredded material weighs much less than a tonne and the minimum charge to dispose of green waste is priced at one tonne. It is estimated that a reduction in operating costs exceeding £2,500 per annum could be made by the reduction in vehicle journeys and reduced cost of the green waste disposal by utilising the Hook site. Further efficiencies could also be realised from the storage and disposal of the autumn leaf fall collected by the street sweepers operating in the western wards that could save a further £1,500 - £2,000 per annum.
11. However, the main reason for relocating to Hook is to convert the changing rooms to provide secure storage for the associated vehicles and a mess room in a building that would be more 'fit for purpose' compared to the current facility at Locks Heath House Park.
12. The key works to be undertaken to convert the changing rooms to the alternative use include:
  - (d) Remove internal partition walls from four changing rooms to provide two new store areas.
  - (e) Convert one changing room to provide a rest room with toilet and hand washing facilities.
  - (f) To replace the existing electrical installation.
  - (g) Improvements to the water services.
13. The above works are estimated to cost £21,000 and it is suggested that a contingency of 10% be added for unforeseen works with an additional 10% allowed for any professional fees that may be incurred, e.g. the services of a structural engineer if required. The total capital cost of the works is therefore £25,000
14. External works to the surrounding grounds and internal decoration will be carried out by the grounds maintenance team and be funded from existing revenue budgets.

## **LOCKS HEATH HOUSE PARK MESS ROOM**

15. The Locks Heath Tennis Club currently lease the two tennis courts at Locks Heath House Park adjacent to the mess room, but have expressed concerns about the lack of toilet facilities at the site, particularly on competition days.
16. Should the building at Hook Recreation Ground be converted to a satellite depot, then there could be an opportunity to offer the existing Mess Room at Locks Heath House Park to the tennis club as clubhouse and / or toilet facility.
17. It is suggested that the Locks Heath Tennis Club be contacted to discuss the opportunity for them to take a tenancy of the Mess Room to use as a club house facility, subject to:
  - The whole of the building being leased not a partial occupation.
  - That the tennis club accept a full repairing and insuring arrangement.
  - That the agreement be outside of the Landlord and Tenant Act with a short termination clause.
  - On the understanding that the Council would not provide any funding towards any costs that the tennis club may need to incur.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

18. The budget cost for the alternative of converting the Hook Recreation Ground building to a satellite depot is £25,000.
19. Should the Mess Room at Locks Heath House Park be demolished the budget estimate is £12,000 for this work.
20. The potential total capital cost of creating a satellite depot and demolishing the Locks Heath House Park mess room is therefore £37,000.
21. However, if the Locks Heath House Park building was to be utilised by the Locks Heath Tennis Club then there would be no demolition costs and therefore the total capital cost for this project is estimated to be £25,000.
22. Utilising the Hook site would save at least £4,000 per annum in operational costs for the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing teams and help to provide operational efficiency through the reduction in travel downtime that would help to absorb the growing demand on the service from the on-going development of the western wards, including the expansion of the open space on the Coldeast site.

## **CONCLUSION**

23. An opportunity has been identified to improve the efficiency of the Streetscene service by converting the former sports changing rooms at the Hook Recreation Ground into a satellite depot.
24. A capital budget of £37,000 funded from the S106 Open Spaces Maintenance budget is requested for the proposal.

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Gareth Satherley on ext. 4476.