



CABINET
Tuesday, 07 November 2023

Subject	Leiston Leisure Centre/Alde Valley Academy Third Generation (3G) and Multi-Purpose Games Area (MUGA) Sport Facility Legacy from Sizewell C
Cabinet Member(s)	<p>Cllr Sarah Whitelock Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure, and Tourism</p> <p>Cllr Paul Ashton Cabinet Member with responsibility for Corporate Services – Digital, Customer Services, HR and Assets</p>
Report Author(s)	<p>Tim Snook Leisure Development Partnership Manager Tim.snook@eastsoffolk.gov.uk 01394 444210</p>
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Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	Aldeburgh & Leiston

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

As part of the proposed Sizewell C legacy for the community, funding for a third-generation pitch (3G) and multi games use area (MUGA) has been agreed to enable the proposed facilities to be built on the Alde Valley Academy land that will be accessed and shared with the Leiston Leisure Centre for community use.

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to enter into negotiations with Alde Valley Academy to deliver the building of the 3G pitch and MUGA (fully funded through Sizewell C Holding Company) through the Leisure Partnership Agreement with Rock Merchanting, known as Pulse Design and Build.

Furthermore, to enter into a management agreement to operate the pitch with Alde Valley Academy through ESC's leisure operator, Places Leisure, subject to terms that are in the best interest of ESC.

Options:

1(a) To enter into arrangements to build and deliver the third-generation pitch on the Alde Valley Academy land at no cost to the council, as outlined in the report.

1 (b) To enter into a management agreement that sets out the proposed hours of use for Alde Valley School, the construction workforce, and the local community for the use of the 3G pitch and MUGA as outlined in the report.

2(a) To not agree to deliver the 3G and MUGA through the leisure development partnership and for the Alde Valley Academy to arrange the building works and delivery directly.

2(b) To not enter into a management agreement to manage the 3G and MUGA through ESC's leisure operators and for the Alde Valley Academy to manage the facilities directly.

Recommendation/s:

1. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism in the best interests of East Suffolk Council to enter into arrangements with Alde Valley Academy and Sizewell C Holding Company (Sizewell C Co) for ESC's Leisure Development partner, Pulse Design and Build, to build and deliver the third-generation pitch on the Alde Valley Academy land at no cost to the council.
2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism to enter a management agreement that sets out the proposed hours of use for Alde Valley School, the construction workforce, and the local community for the use of the 3G pitch and multi games use area in liaison with the Strategic Director and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

A 'Deed of Obligation' signed between Sizewell C Holding Company, East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council sets out in Schedule 10 the details and obligations of the Leisure and Amenity delivery for the building and operation of the proposed Sizewell C legacy sports facilities for Leiston.

In addition, for the building of the facilities, East Suffolk Council has a 20-year leisure development partnership agreement with Rock Merchanting, known as Pulse Design and Build, to deliver new leisure projects. For each project, a new project agreement will be entered into that formerly sets out the legal terms and conditions with Pulse Design and Build to build the facility. For this project, as the land is owned by Suffolk County Council, with a 125-year lease to the Alde Valley Academy, a temporary lease/licence for access for the building works to be completed will be required.

Furthermore, a management agreement for the use and annual funding of the facilities for Sizewell C Contractors, Alde Valley Academy students and the community will be produced setting out management arrangements, usage arrangements, responsibilities for income and costs and for any changes required when Sizewell C is complete. Legal support will be required to protect East Suffolk Council's interests on building and passing on liability to the Alde Valley Academy when complete.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

East Suffolk Council [Leisure Strategy](#)

Environmental:

Artificial grass pitches (AGPs) are recognised as a durable, safe, year-round playing surfaces, able to withstand intensive use and all kinds of weather. The pitches are used for playing multiple sports including football, hockey and rugby and they are an important community resource that mean more people can benefit from the social and health benefits of physical activity.

There are concerns that have been raised about the environmental impact of these pitches. Most commonly this relates to the fibre loss of microplastics and in the case of third generation or 3G pitches, the presence of rubber infill, which is also a microplastic. However, it is also important to note that there are currently no widely available alternative infill products on the market that are as effective, suitable for all weather conditions and deliver the required performance standards.

Sport England are committed to exploring alternative artificial pitch systems and more sustainable infill products. ESC will continue to monitor the research that Sport England is working on with partners across the UK and Europe to reduce the spread of microplastics into the environment.

There will be an opportunity when the surface is replaced at the end of the Sizewell C development to replace with a surface that has been developed to resolve the current issues and dispose of the old surface in the most environmentally way.

Equalities and Diversity:

An EQIA was completed on 23rd October 2024 and will provide a positive impact on two of the protected characteristics, providing enhanced age and disability opportunities whilst not having an impact on the remaining protected characteristics.

EQI reference EQIA556386572

Financial:

This project is a legacy from Sizewell C and the 3G pitch, and the MUGA will be paid for by Sizewell C Holding Company, at no cost to East Suffolk Council. There will also be maintenance funding of £5,000 per annum and a sinking fund provided of £50,000 per annum paid for by the Sizewell C Holding Company for the replacement of the pitch surface at the time of Sizewell C finishing and the contractors leaving the site. The expected cost of the 3G pitch and MUGA is £1.3m and the funding is index linked. An initial £75,000 fund is now available for the design and planning application work being undertaken by ESC. This will cover ESC's design costs that will consist of Pulse Design and Build facility designs and planning application. The agreement for when Sizewell C leave and the annual funding stops would identify annual maintenance costs and annual sinking fund for required major resurface. This should be covered from income taken from community use and the agreement will then identify any additional income share and/or management fee for Places Leisure operating the facility that should reduce the annual cost to ESC for the overall management fee.

The Capital Budget will be adjusted for 2024/25 to include the funding for the proposed 3G pitch and MUGA, showing that it will be paid for through the Sizewell C Holdings Company grant funding.

Human Resources:

N/A

ICT:

N/A

Legal:

There are several key legal agreements that will govern the building and operation of the sports facilities that are subject of this report.

These are the 'Deed of Obligation' between East Suffolk Council/Suffolk County Council and the Sizewell C Holdings Company, the Project Agreement ESC will enter into with its Leisure Development Partner Rock Merchanting for the building of the 3G pitch and MUGA, and various licences and agreements that will be required to protect all parties as a result of the Council and its contractors building the new facility on land owned by Suffolk County Council but leased to the Alde Valley Academy.

There will also need to be a management agreement between the various parties that covers the use of the facility by the Academy, Sizewell C contractors, and the local community. The facility will be managed by the Council's leisure centre operator, Places Leisure through a contract amendment.

Risk:

The main risks include completing the building/delivery of the 3G pitch ready for 2025 as per the 'Deed of Obligation' and the completion of the necessary agreements with the

other partners to ensure liabilities sit with the correct parties. The financial risk to ESC for the building is minimal although with building costs increasing, prior to any commencement of building, the costs of the facilities and the budgets available for both the 3G and the MUGA will need to be reconfirmed with Sizewell C Holdings Company to ensure that the funding available is sufficient and in place without ESC contribution.

External Consultees:	Alde Valley Academy Headteacher, Chief Operating Officer of Waveney Valley Academies Trust, Schools Planning Manager Suffolk County Council. Sizewell Head of Regional External Affairs & Development.
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</p> <p>Additional sport and leisure facilities support improving the health and wellbeing of the community. Providing quality safe facilities for the community to participate in. With these new sport and leisure facilities, it increases capacity for more people to participate and in different activities. This can also support key activities for different age groups such as walking football, support for loneliness and weight management. In addition to the health and well-being aspects, with shared facilities this will support the financial sustainability of the leisure provision in Leiston.</p>			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts and proposal	
1.1	<p>Leiston Leisure Centre was refurbished with a circa £4m scheme in 2019/2020. The leisure centre and the Alde Valley Academy are situated next to each other and share one of the car park areas between the two facilities. The leisure centre includes swimming provision, gym, studios, sports hall, squash courts but no outdoor facilities.</p> <p>As part of the Sizewell C legacy for Leiston, ESC and the Alde Valley Academy submitted a request for funding to enhance sport and leisure facilities that would benefit the academy pupils and the community.</p> <p>The proposal was for a third-generation floodlit pitch (known as 3G) to be based on the academy land but shared between the academy and East Suffolk Council for community use. A Multiple Use Games Area (MUGA) was also included as part of the additional facilities. The 3G pitch is required to be ready for use for the beginning of 2025 under the 'deed of obligation'.</p>
1.2	<p>The area of land that the proposed 3G pitch will be built on is part of the academy's grass pitch area, close to the leisure centre. A 3G pitch would add to the amount of time that sport can be played, as the grass surface is limited to weather and condition of wear.</p> <p>The leisure centre does not have use of the grass pitches but as the new 3G pitch will be floodlit and fenced, it will enable community use outside of academy hours. There will be a fenced and gated pathway that can be adjusted for access between the academy and the leisure centre for different group use and security. The pitch can be divided by netting into three areas that allow an increase of use and three groups at any one time.</p> <p>It is proposed that the academy will have use of the pitch during school term time and an agreed time will be split outside of this in the evenings and weekends to accommodate community use and for contractors/workers during the expected ten-to-fifteen-year period of construction of Sizewell C.</p>
1.3	<p>Sizewell C Holdings Company will provide the funding of the 3G pitch and the MUGA area in Leiston at the Alde Valley Academy. Under the 'deed of obligation',</p>

	to facilitate the design of the facilities, Sizewell C Holdings Company has agreed to pay a 'Sports Facilities Design Payment' of £75,000 to East Suffolk Council on or before the commencement of the Sizewell C Project. The Sports Facilities Design Payment comprises East Suffolk Council's reasonable and proper costs associated with the design of the Leiston Sports Facilities Works. This payment is now being processed.
1.4	Under the terms of the Deed of Obligation, and in order to meet the delivery deadlines signed up to the Council through its leisure development partner, Pulse Design and Build, in consultation with the Alde Valley Academy and SCC has already prepared the designs of the proposed facilities and engaged with Planning. What is now required is the concluding of the various legal agreements to actually build and operate the facilities and authority to enter into these is now sort.
1.5	The required detailed drawings and specifications for the new Leiston sports facilities are attached in Appendix A. As stated earlier, the design ensures that there is physical separation between academy and community/worker access through a fencing and lockable gate system.
1.6	Several meetings have taken place between the Headteacher of Alde Valley Academy, the Chief Operating Officer of the Waveney Valley Academies Trust, and officers from East Suffolk Council from leisure, legal and asset management services in the preparation of scheme to this point. Suffolk County Council Education has also been consulted as the land proposed to build the 3G pitch as this is designated education land. Alde Valley Academy and Waveney Valley Academies are supportive of ESC delivering the 3G pitch due to the experience and agreements for new leisure projects in place with ESC.
1.7	If all requisite consents for the proposed new Leiston Sports Facilities cannot be obtained, East Suffolk Council enter discussions in good faith about the appropriate provision of alternative facilities.
2	Operation of Facilities
2.1	It is planned that East Suffolk Council shall be responsible for the management of the proposed new Leiston Sports Facilities, including bookings through its leisure operators at Leiston Leisure Centre, Places Leisure.
2.2	A management/community use agreement will be required between ESC, Alde Valley Academy, incorporating the use required by Sizewell C Holdings Company. This will need to be completed prior to the occupation of the Sports Facilities. The management agreement will set out the proposed hours of use for Alde Valley Academy, the construction workforce, and the local community. The management agreement shall include a confirmation that Alde Valley School has been fully involved in the preparation of the management agreement. This management agreement shall be agreed with Sizewell C Holdings Company prior to occupation.
2.2	The management agreement will also set out the responsibilities for maintenance of the new Leiston Sports Facilities. Sizewell C Holdings Company will provide funding towards the annual maintenance of the Leiston Sports Facilities (£5,000 per annum) as well as an annual contribution for the sinking fund (£50,000 per annum) to be used towards any repairs to the Leiston Sports Facilities required at the end of the construction period, such as the replacement of the surface when the construction workforce leave the site on completion of Sizewell C.
2.3	The 'deed of obligation' can be accessed through the link in Appendix B.

3 Impact	
3.1	The East Suffolk Leisure Strategy supports increasing health and leisure opportunities within the district. Sport and leisure facilities can make a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and families. With East Suffolk being such a large rural area, facilities in towns and villages that reduce the need to travel large distances will improve opportunity for the community. In addition, 3G pitch facilities are supported in the Suffolk FA/Football Foundation Local Football Facility Plan form 2019 that identifies the districts facility needs. Overall, there were over ten new facilities of differing sizes identified as being required across the district, including Leiston, if funding could be found.
3.2	A floodlit 3G pitch will allow football to be played in the evenings throughout the year and add to the leisure and sports facility offer already in Leiston. The proposed MUGA area has the potential to provide both sporting opportunities, but also specifically to be a key youth provision.
3.3	Following the refurbishment of the Leiston Leisure Centre in 2019, the addition of the external facilities will enhance the leisure centre and support its financial sustainability.
3.4	It should be noted that Leiston Town Football Club has recently received CIL funding to support a 3G pitch on their site. The two facilities will complement each other with the Leiston Town facility hosting the club's development needs and providing for other local football clubs. The Leisure Centre site facility will provide for the Academy and Community football. The leisure operator will also provide football opportunities for children as part of their programme at weekends and during holiday periods.

4 Design	
4.1	The design of the 3G pitch is of a standard format, meeting the Football Association design standards. The key aspect of this design for the Academy and Council is that the fencing and gating system will allow for flexible access for each of the user groups from the Academy and Leisure Centre at different times with security for the education site.
4.2	The MUGA design allows for multiple sports that include netball, basketball, kick about area that can be used for additional hiring opportunities to support the sustainability, but also for the community to access at set times for free use.
4.3	The areas will be floodlit and where each facility is situated will be done so to minimize the effect of lighting to any nearby housing.
4.4	The design layout plans for both facilities can be seen in Appendix A.

5 Reason/s for recommendation	
5.1	This project will significantly improve the leisure provision in Leiston for the academy students and the community.
5.2	The capital cost for the project and maintenance for the duration of the Sizewell C delivery will be fully funded by Sizewell C Holdings Company. This sporting provision will be a lasting legacy for the academy and the community.

Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	Proposed Layout of the 3G and MUGA pitches
Appendix B	The Sizewell C Project – Completed Deed of Obligation (part 1 of 6)

Background reference papers:	
None.	