

Nottingham City Council

Executive Board

**Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 19 March 2024
from 2.00 pm - 2.32 pm**

Membership

Present

Absent

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Audra Wynter (Vice Chair)
Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Steve Battlemuch
Councillor Jay Hayes
Councillor Corall Jenkins
Councillor Angela Kandola
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis
Councillor Sajid Mohammed
Councillor Linda Woodings
Councillor Kevin Clarke

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Ailsa Barr	- Director of Children's Integrated Services
Mel Barrett	- Chief Executive
Ross Brown	- Corporate Director for Finance & Resources
Colin Parr	- Corporate Director for Community, Environment and Residents Services
Sajeeda Rose	- Corporate Director for Growth and City Development
Malcolm Townroe	- Director of Legal and Governance
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is 27 March 2024. Decisions cannot be implemented until the working day after this date.

101 Apologies for Absence

Catherine Underwood

102 Declarations of Interests

None.

103 Minutes

The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2024 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

104 Forest Recreation Ground Sports Zone Improvement Project

Councillor Corall Jenkins, Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and waste Services and Parks, presented the report providing details of the Forest Recreation Ground Sports Zone Improvement Project, highlighting the following:

- (a) the project seeks to transform the existing sand-based football pitch into a new 3rd Generation (3G) rubber crumb football pitch and construct a 90m² extension to the existing building, improve the fencing around the site and improve the access arrangements for both pitches;
- (b) since its construction in 2015, in partnership with Nottingham Forest Community Trust, (NFCT), the Forest Recreation Ground Sports Zone has become a premier community facility and provides a range of Football Development and other sports activities, for both the local community and teams from around the city. The facilities are highly utilised and are always busy delivering a range of sports activities. The lower pitch, contained within the Forest Recreation Ground Sports Zone is sand-based and was originally funded by Sport England. As a condition of the Sport England grant the council agreed to set up a Forest Multi Use Activity Pitch sinking fund to help pay for the replacement of the sand-based pitch. The sand-based pitch is now past its operational best and requires replacement in line with the Sport England conditions;
- (c) to enable NCC to further improve the facilities at the site, funding has been secured from Nottingham Trent University (NTU), who are keen to be involved at this site to help provide use for both the University and the local community. Additional funding is to be secured from the Football Foundation. Partnership funding from the Football Foundation, NFCT and NTU, will provide further match funding against the existing sinking fund contributions, which will fully fund the project. This equates to 93% partnership funding and 7% sinking funding contributions;
- (d) assurances have been sought from the Head of Green Space and Natural Environment that 3G pitches have been recognised by Sport England as durable, safe, year-round playing surfaces, which are able to withstand intensive use and all kinds of weather.

Resolved to

(1) approve the project as detailed in the Forest Sports Zone Improvement proposals (Appendix 1) subject to:

- a) Capital Board endorsement and agreement to treat the project as an in-year fully funded addition to the capital programme;**
- b) Director of Residential Services, Finance, Procurement, Spend Control Panel and Section 151 Officer approval;**
- c) confirmation of funding and conditions to be imposed being the same as those attached as appendices 2, 3 and 4;**

- d) acceptance of partnership funding from Nottingham Trent University, subject to a Management Agreement and Investment Agreement being in place before entering into a contract to deliver the project;**
- (2) approve the submission of the match funding application to the Football Foundation and approve the acceptance of the grant if the application is successful. The project will not progress into the delivery phase until all the external funding is secured;**
- (3) delegate the authority to the Director of Residential Services, to carry out the procurement process and enter into contracts (in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's constitution) relating to the project, subject to review by Legal Services or external lawyers;**
- (4) delegate the authority to the Director of Residential Services to agree the refreshed Deed of Dedication, subject to review by Legal Services or external lawyers, this will be finalised once the Grant has been awarded and before entering into contract;**
- (5) delegate the authority to the Director of Residential Services to approve the refreshed Management Agreement with Nottingham Forest Community Trust and Nottingham Trent University, subject to review by Legal Services or external lawyers and to reflect the Concession Contract Regulations 2016;**
- (6) delegate the authority to the Director of Residential Services to enter into an Investment Agreement with Nottingham Trent University.**

Reasons for decisions:

- The initial Forest Recreation Ground Sports Zone (FSZ) project was completed in 2015 utilising Sport England funding. A condition and contractual obligation of the Sport England grant was that the Council should set aside monies in a Forest Multi Use Activity Pitch (FMAP) sinking fund to replace and upgrade the existing sand-based pitch when it came to its end of life.
- The FSZ provides a sporting hub for local people and encourages them to be active and improve their physical and mental wellbeing. Embracing the diversity, positivity and enthusiasm of its community, and offers a safe and professional environment for local people to engage in physical activity, skills training, organised sport and helps divert young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The existing community building is no longer adequate to address the needs of those using the facility. Additional meeting rooms are required along with improved access facilities. These improvements can be delivered within the funding available.
- Partnership funding from the Football Foundation and Nottingham Trent University (NTU) will provide 93% of the total funding requirement to deliver this

project, with the remaining funds taken from the Council's FMAP Sinking Fund.

- The delivery of the programmes will continue to be delivered under the existing management agreement with Nottingham Forest Community Trust (NFCT). This agreement will be amended to reflect any new or amended conditions, the Concession Contract Regulations 2016 and the investment from NTU.

Other options considered:

- Do Nothing: This is not an option and has been rejected. It is a condition of the existing Management Agreement and capital funding, that the existing FMAP must support the delivery of the site's Football Development Plan, and that the facility is maintained "Fit for Purpose". The existing FMAP carpet, fencing and floodlights are close to the end of life, and the pitch is no longer sustainable in its current state. There is also a risk of losing the capital investors if no action is taken.
- Deliver the original plan to realign the pitch and additional changing/ training and office building. This option was rejected as cost estimate were too high and it was not favoured at recent public consultation events.
- Reinstate the sand-based pitch. This option has been rejected as the sand-based pitch is considered outdated, and not a suitable playing surface needed to support the site's continued delivery and improvements to the football development programme.
- Deliver a new 3G and site improvement. This option has been approved, as it will deliver the required investment to the pitch, as per the original Sport England grant condition. The new facility will enhance the quality of the site and improve the delivery of the football development programme.

105 Period 9 2023/24 Budget Monitoring

Councillor Audra Wynter, Portfolio Holder for Finance and HR, introduced the report providing an assessment of the Council's 2023-24 forecast outturn position for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme based on activity to the end of the Period 9 (31 December 2023) and including material changes known at Period 10.

Ross Brown, Section 151 Officer and Corporate Director for Finance and Resources, delivered the report and highlighted the following:

- (a) the 2023-24 net General Fund budget approved by Council was £261.832m. At the end of Period 9, the General Fund is forecasting a net gross budget overspend of c£48m (c£57m at Period 6) which is partly being off-set by in-year management and corrective actions, reducing the net forecasted overspend to £19.316m (7.38%). This is a net reduction of £3.766m since the last reported period (£23.351m net overspend at Period 6);
- (b) the People department is forecasting a net overspend of £20.789m (£18.752m net overspend at Period 6) largely driven by external care placement costs, demand

overspends relating to Children in Care placements, and Special Education Need and Disabilities transport costs;

- (c) the Communities Environment and Resident Services department is forecasting a net underspend of (£1.744m) (£1.936m net overspend at Period 6) mainly due to a combination of expenditure no longer qualifying for capitalisation and budget overspend in Community Safety and Logistics and Markets, offset by savings in utilities, staff vacancies and improved income levels across Sport & Leisure and Enviroenergy;
- (d) at Period 9 45.80% of Transformation Programme savings have been delivered (39.20% at Period 6) with £6.181m of non-delivered savings included within the 2023-24 net General Fund pressure of c£19.6m including some of £2.314m at risk;
- (e) due to the Council's systems and processes it is difficult to disaggregate from the financial forecast the financial impact of the spend control measures but through the forecasted reduction in gross expenditure between Period 6 and Period 9 a correlation can be made that the spend measures have impacted spend.

Members of the Board made the following points:

- (f) the Sports and Culture Service is predicting a net underspend due to better than expected income recovery following the pandemic and customer retention at leisure centres, higher than expected visitor numbers at museums, high ticket sales at the Theatre Royal Concert Hall, and underspend at libraries;
- (g) Adult Social Care is forecasting an overspend in line with other Councils around the country, with a £15.929m gross pressure relating to External Care Purchasing. This is due to high inflation and shortages of staff in the care sector. Some of this has been offset by freezing recruitment and through funding such as the Better Care Fund;
- (h) recruitment of foster carers internally has made positive progress, with an increase in recruitment compared to last year and further recruitment upcoming. This has been supported by regional working with other East Midlands Councils.

The Board thanked both Sara Storey, who left the Council recently as Head of Adult Social Care, and Malcolm Townroe, Head of Legal Services, who will be leaving the Council soon, for their work.

Resolved to

- (1) note the net forecast outturn of £281.416m. on the General Fund Revenue budget of £261.832m as set out in section 3 Table 1 which is a forecasted net overspend of £19.316m (7.38%);**
- (2) note progress on the Transformation Programme savings of £15.671m as set out in section 4, Table 3 with £7.176m (45.8%) delivered or on track and £8.495m (54.2%) at risk or non-delivery;**

- (3) note the forecast outturn underspend of £6.091m (5.1%), on the HRA against a gross budget of £119.924m as set out in section 5 Table 4 of the report;**
- (4) note the Capital Programme for the period 2023-24 to 2026-27 of £782.085m as approved at Full Council March 2024, alongside the forecasted 2023-24 outturn of 261.160m and capital spend at Period 9 of £131.784m;**
- (5) note that any capital slippage within the Capital Programme will be an addition to the 2024-25 approved Capital Budget and reported as part of the 2023-24 Capital Outturn report;**
- (6) approve net departmental General Fund budget changes of £21.518m as summarised in Appendix 1 and HRA budget change of £2.012m (paragraph 5.4) and to delegate authority to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Section 151 Officer to approve and process any further budget changes in 2023-24.**

Reason for decisions:

- These decisions form a key part of formal General Fund Revenue, Capital and HRA monitoring against the 2023/24 budget.

Other options considered:

- Not to provide Executive Board with an update on the Council's forecast outturn position: not considered as this forms a key part of formal General Fund Revenue, Capital and HRA monitoring against the 2023-24 budget.
- Not to approve the budget changes: not considered as Councils are required to deliver a balanced budget each year ensuring that the projected expenditure and commitments can be matched by the available resources in year.

106 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item due to the information having been provided to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid the disclosure of the information to the public.

107 Supporting Families Grant Funding 2024/2025

Councillor Cheryl Barnard, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young people and Education presented the restricted report.

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

Reasons for decision:

- As set out in the exempt minutes.

Other Options Considered:

- As set out in the exempt minutes.