

<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Member for Regeneration Executive Member for Finance and Governance Director of Regeneration and Culture Director of Finance
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<b>Submitted to:</b>	Executive
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<b>Date:</b>	14 June 2022
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<b>Title:</b>	Developing a New Community Centre at Southlands
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<b>Report for:</b>	Decision
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<b>Status:</b>	Public
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<b>Strategic priority:</b>	Physical environment
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<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
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<b>Why:</b>	Decision(s) will incur expenditure or savings above £150,000
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<b>Urgent:</b>	No
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<b>Why:</b>	
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### **Executive summary**

The report seeks to detail the next steps to deliver the Council's aim for an exciting and transformational new £3.7m Community and Sport Centre, which will help regenerate East Middlesbrough and greatly improve the lives of local people.

The report recommends that Executive approves a further £900,000 towards the new Southlands Centre project. The investment would see a total of £2.1m spent on phase one of a Community Centre. A further £1.5m would see new and improved outdoor sport facilities built on the site and demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to sports provision in the town.

The Sporting Hub would include the creation of new grass pitches, a new 3G all-weather pitch, the refurbishment of an existing 3G pitch and the Unity City Academy changing rooms, additional new changing rooms and extra car parking to deliver an exemplar facility.

In addition to the £1.7m Council funding already committed to the project, further sums of £600,000 and £500,000 have been secured from the Football Foundation and Towns Fund respectively to demonstrate the Council's commitment to partnership working to deliver positive outcomes for the town.

The preferred location for the centre was originally identified as land that could be used to mitigate for the loss of playing pitch provision to facilitate the development of new, high quality, family housing at Marton Avenue. To overcome the issue, the Council has engaged positively with Sport England to develop a solution that meets the needs for playing pitch provision and can allow the housing development to progress.

A planning application is expected to be submitted in August 2022 with construction of the centre due to start in November 2022.

The report's recommendations satisfy the requirements of the local community and Sport England, as well as meeting the aims and objectives of the Council. Other options have been scoped by officers and are outlined within the report.

## **Purpose**

1. To seek Executive approval:
  - a. for the allocation of additional funding for Southlands (£900,000) as set out within the report;
  - b. to continue discussions with Sport England on the sport provision at Southlands to enable the lifting of planning conditions relating to Marton Avenue; and,
  - c. delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration and the Director of Finance, to adjust any final budget allocations, subject to the final agreed specifications, to ensure the timely delivery of the facilities, insofar as the project is delivered within the approved delivery budget highlighted within this report.

## **Background and relevant information**

2. Middlesbrough Council understands the importance of delivering improvements to our residents' communities and how the physical environment can impact on quality of life. This ethos also underpins the requirement of being as effective as possible, to support sustainable growth in Middlesbrough's communities and economy.
3. This ambition accords with the Council's strategic priorities for People, set out in the Strategic Plan 2020-24, which states that the Council will work with communities to improve the lives of local people.
4. The delivery of new Community Centre in East Middlesbrough will play a vital role in achieving the strategic priority for people mentioned above.
5. Following consultation with the local community in 2018 it is clear there is a need for fit-for-purpose community facilities in East Middlesbrough. Particularly, to replace the old and dilapidated Community and Sport Centre which has been subsequently demolished to make way for a new facility.
6. It is proposed new Southlands Centre will be built in phases, subject to the available funding. Phase 1 consists of a standalone Community Centre comprising three large

multi-purpose rooms, a community café and offices. Phase 1 will have the capacity to accommodate a broad range of public, private and third sector groups, services and activities that will benefit the whole community.

7. Through discussions with the local community, the preferred location of the proposed Community Centre is linked to the area earmarked for the mitigation for loss of playing fields from the development of the Marton Avenue site. Sport England have raised a statutory objection to the outline planning application for housing development at Marton Avenue site, as the proposals resulted in a net the loss of playing field area.
8. All partners involved in the potential redevelopment of the Southlands site are aware of the need to identify an appropriate delivery timeline which binds all parties to delivery of all aspects of the Southlands project and that of residential development at Marton Avenue – Marton Avenue being a critical aspect for housing policies and the income requirements of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
9. Initially, Sport England were minded to only withdraw their objection subject to the following condition being imposed on the planning approval:
  - a. ***The development hereby approved shall not be commenced until a replacement playing field to a standard which is equal to or better than the playing field at Marton Avenue, has been constructed and is available for use. An area for a replacement field has been identified at the former Southlands centre site as shown on plan Southlands Centre, drawing no. VAL 4273 M dated 23rd April 2019. If this site is no longer available details of an alternative location must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England.***
10. This form of condition provides certainty that the replacement playing field will be delivered and as the site identified for the proposed Community Centre is in the same location, Sport England, initially raised an objection to the deferred planning application for the new Community Centre, unless appropriate mitigations could be agreed.
11. To overcome both issues mentioned above, Middlesbrough Council appointed a specialist to work with Sport England and to achieve a solution that would meet the needs for both playing pitch provision and those to allow development to progress at Marton Avenue.
12. Middlesbrough Council has previously identified the strategic need for additional sporting facilities in the local area following extensive consultation with both the sporting and local community which is outlined within the Council's approved Playing Pitch Strategy. The specialists have therefore produced a new Vision Document (Appendix 1) that is designed to bind all separate aspects of Council responsibility for existing grants, to replace lost playing pitches, and potentially secure additional funding, via the Football Foundation, together to provide clarity and confirmation to Sport England that the existing objection for residential development of Marton Avenue can be removed accordingly.
13. It is proposed that the Southlands site will now both deliver a Community Centre in the location preferred by the local community, meet the aspirations within the Playing Pitch Strategy and satisfy Sport England on the re-provision of playing field from Marton Avenue. The scheme will consist of the following:

- a. phase 1 of a new Community Centre, as outlined above, designed to allow construction of additional phases in the future;
- b. resurfacing of the existing Third Generation Football Turf Pitch (3G FTP);
- c. a new 3G FTP pitch;
- d. refurbishment of existing changing facilities at the Unity City Academy School;
- e. construction of new changing facilities either as part of the new Community Centre, or a stand-alone modular building to the south of the site;
- f. x2 new Natural Turf Pitches (9v9); and,
- g. additional parking facilities.

14. It is estimated that the cost of delivering all of the above mentioned elements at the Southlands, creating not only a new Community Centre, but also a sporting hub for East Middlesbrough would cost £3,700,000. This exceeds the current approved budget of £1,600,000. Further information can be found within the Finance section of this report.

15. Funding from the Football Foundation, Towns Fund and Middlesbrough Council has been identified to ensure the entire project is funded to the appropriate specification.

### **What decision(s) are being recommended?**

That the Executive approves:

- a. the allocation of additional funding for Southlands (£900,000) as set out within the report;
- b. continued discussions with Sport England on the sport provision at Southlands to enable the lifting of planning conditions relating to Marton Avenue; and,
- c. the delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and the Director of Finance, to adjust any final budget allocations, subject to the final agreed specifications, to ensure the timely delivery of the facilities, insofar as the project is delivered within the approved delivery budget highlighted within this report.

### **Rationale for the recommended decision(s)**

16. As identified within the Middlesbrough Council Playing Pitch Strategy, there is a under supply of sporting provision in East Middlesbrough. The Project Delivery Plan identifies the recommendation which will assist the Council and its key strategic partners define a way forward for potential development of the Southlands site. In summary the scheme will seek to deliver:

- a. phase 1 of a new Community Centre, as outlined above, designed to allow construction of additional phases in the future;
- b. resurfacing of the existing Third Generation Football Turf Pitch (3G FTP);
- c. a new 3G FTP pitch;
- d. refurbishment of existing changing facilities at the Unity City Academy School;
- e. construction of new changing facilities either as part of the new Community Centre, or a stand-alone modular building to the south of the site;
- f. x2 new Natural Turf Pitches (9v9); and,
- g. additional parking facilities.

17. The development of a new community building is paramount to all local residents and community groups, and the proposed creation of a sporting hub is referenced in

Middlesbrough Councils adopted Playing Pitch Strategy, and Local Football Foundation Plans.

18. The recommendation will allow amendments of an existing objection to residential development (which would result in a loss of playing pitches) by the provision of new natural turf pitches as part of overall redevelopment of the Southlands site.

### **Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended**

19. The site preferred for the new Community Centre at the Southlands was initially identified as the location for the re-provision of lost playing fields due to the housing development at Marton Avenue.
20. An alternative recommendation could look to re-provide the playing pitches in this location, allowing the planning condition to be achieved without the need to provide any additional sporting facilities as identified within the Southland Vision Document (Appendix 1).
21. This solution though would require a new site location to be sourced for a new Community Centre, which would not likely meet the local community's preferences.
22. Any alternative location for the centre would also potentially require Middlesbrough Council to re-provide lost playing fields or pitches should a new location fall within Sport England classifications. If this was the case, new facilities will be needed and potentially cause further re-provision issues at a later date.
23. Another alternative would be not to deliver a new Community Centre in East Middlesbrough, but this would be a reputation risk to the Council and not meet the identified local needs.

### **Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)**

#### ***Legal***

24. The Council owe a contractual obligation to Miller Homes to discharge a planning condition at Marton Avenue. If the Council do not comply with their obligation then Miller Homes could revoke the contract and attempt to recover the capital receipt paid to the Council by them on completion of the purchase.
25. Additionally, the land would have an unappealing planning condition attached to it making it unattractive to developers, if not unsaleable.
26. It is advisable to comply with the contract provided that it makes commercial and financial sense.

### ***Strategic priorities and risks***

#### **Strategic Priorities**

27. As a Council we understand the importance of delivering improvements to our residents' lives and how the physical environment can impact on quality of life. This also links with

being as effective as we can be to support sustainable growth in Middlesbrough's communities and economy.

28. This ambition accords with the Council's strategic priorities for People, set out in the Strategic Plan 2020-24, which states that the Council will work with communities to improve the lives of local people.

29. The delivery of new Community Centres in East Middlesbrough will play a vital role in achieving the strategic priorities mentioned above.

### Risks

30. The following high level risks identified in the Strategic and Directorate Risk Registers, will be reduced as a consequence of the interventions enabled by the recommended decisions:

- a. O1-005 - If poor economic growth occurs, then this will reduce public and private sector investment in the town, including town centre retail, housing development and business.
- b. O1-045 - If delivery of the new housing programme does not meet the projected targets then this can have a negative impact on the assumptions within the MTFP.

31. Linked to the Marton Avenue housing development site, the buoyancy of the overall housing market will always present an effect on the receipts achieved, and the timing of future Council Tax income coming on stream. The balance between the need to maximise value, and secure receipts while market conditions remain good, forms a key part of the decision around the nature and timing of these disposals, and are a key factor in reducing the overall risk to the Council's financial management.

### ***Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection***

32. The attached Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 2, has concluded that the decisions would not have any disproportionately negative impacts.

### ***Financial***

33. The table below identifies the costs of delivering the sporting hub and community centre at the Southlands.

	Estimated cost of Delivery	Internal Secured Funding	Towns Fund	Other External Funding	Required Additional Funds / Shortfall
Southlands Community Centre	£2,200,000	£1,200,000	£500,000	£0	£500,000
Southlands Sporting Hub	£1,500,000	£500,000	£0	£600,000 (Football Foundation)	£400,000

34. Working closely with the community representatives and Design Services team, and taking into account the current construction material increases, the costs of delivering an overall vision for the Southlands exceed the current approved budgets.
35. The Council currently have £1,700,000 allocated from existing capital resources, £500,000 from the Towns Fund, and is expected to secured £600,000 from the Football Foundation.
36. This report therefore seeks to secure an additional £900,000 of Council resources for delivery of the Community Centre and to deliver the sporting hub in line with the Playing Pitch Strategy, ensuring the Council satisfy all Sport England requirements linked to Marton Avenue.
37. As well as the capital receipt for Marton Avenue, the Council will receive Council Tax payments of £130,000 per annum (based on an average build of band D properties, prior to fire and police precepts) for the proposed 72 unit development, which is included within the Medium Term Financial Plan.

### **Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Complete design and required works to submit a Planning Application	Nigel Carr / Peter Brewer	July 2022
Submit Planning Application	Nigel Carr / Peter Brewer	August 2022
Tender for Operation Management of new Sporting Hub	Peter Brewer	August 2022
Commence construction of Sporting Facilities	Peter Brewer	November 2022
Commence construction of Community Centre and 2x9v9 Turf Pitches	Peter Brewer	November 2022

### **Appendices**

<b>1</b>	Southlands Project Delivery Plan Final 2022
<b>2</b>	Impact Assessment

### **Background papers**

<b>Body</b>	<b>Report title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Executive	Withdrawal of Sport and Leisure Service Provision from Southlands Centre	26 <sup>th</sup> January 2016
Executive Sub Committee for Property	Expressions of Interest for Southlands Centre	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2016
Executive Sub Committee for Property	Future of Southlands Centre	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017

Executive	Update on Future of Southlands Centre	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2017
Executive Sub Committee for Property	Update on Southlands Centre	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017
Executive Sub Committee for Property	Southlands Centre – Future Options	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2018
Executive Sub Committee for Property	Southlands Next Steps	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2018
Executive Sub Committee for Property	Southlands Future Development	19 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Executive Sub Committee for Property	East Middlesbrough – Future Community Facility	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2019

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