

REFURBISHMENT OF THE HAMMER CAGE AT THE HARRIER CENTRE ATHLETICS TRACK

Head of Service: Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
Wards affected: (All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Appendices (attached): Annex 1 – Usage of the Harrier Athletics Facility

Summary

To seek permission to release funds from Section 106 to refurbish the Hammer Throwing Cage at the Harrier Centre Athletics Facility.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Approve the use of £16,027.50 of funds from Section 106 to complete the refurbishment of the Hammer Throwing Cage Facility, as set out in section 4 of this report.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To approve £16,027.50 of Section 106 funds necessary to carry out a complete refurbishment of the Hammer Throwing Cage at the Harrier Centre, to ensure compliance with UK Athletics new safety standards and ensure the Harrier Athletics Facility is Track Mark Accredited to hold both local and regional competitions.
- 1.2 To ensure the long-term viability of the facility to support and foster local athletic talent and promote health and well-being in the borough.

2 Background

- 2.1 Following a hammer related incident in 2018, UK Athletics announced plans in 2019 to bring all UK throwing cages to a minimum safety standard, in line with World Athletics safety standards.

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- 2.2 In 2020, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Officers commissioned a UK Athletics approved TrackMark safety inspection to determine if the two Hammer Throwing Cages located at the Harrier Centre Athletics Track met with the World Safety Standard.
- 2.3 The inspection revealed that one Hammer Throwing Cage should be decommissioned, and the other cage should be replaced or refurbished as it was unsafe and did not meet the new safety standards.
- 2.4 Without a throwing cage, the Council or any hirers of the Harrier Centre athletics facility cannot secure a competition licence for athletic events as the facility will not have TrackMark accreditation.
- 2.5 As from April 1st, 2022 all track and field venues that seek to hold competitions at any level must have achieved TrackMark accreditation.
- 2.6 TrackMark accreditation demonstrates to all users that the facility meets minimum safety and performance standards set by the governing body. More importantly, it also helps venue management defend any cases of litigation by providing documented evidence that the facility meets industry recognised standards.
- 2.7 To meet this requirement, in September 2020, a funding application was submitted to Capital Member Group to seek funding for the replacement of the Hammer Throwing Cage.
- 2.8 Capital Member Group considered the application, but decided it should not progress until the following investigations could be completed:
 - 2.8.1 To investigate a more cost-effective solution, such as repair rather than replacement;
 - 2.8.2 To seek funding from the Epsom and Ewell Harriers Athletics Club to assist with financing the project;
 - 2.8.3 To provide utilisation information to justify the cost of the scheme against the community benefit.
- 2.9 Taking on board the feedback of Capital Member Group, Officers worked closely with the Harriers Athletics Club to work through these requirements.
- 2.10 To address the matter of a financial contribution towards the project, the Epsom and Ewell Harriers Athletics Club put forward a bid to England Athletics. This bid was successful and in May 2021, the Harriers Athletic Club received £5,000 funding to assist with the refurbishment of the Hammer Throwing Cage.

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- 2.11 The cost of refurbishing was investigated and subject to three quotations. The most favourable to achieve UK Athletics TrackMark standards is £21,027.50. As the Harriers Athletics Club has secured £5,000 funding towards the cost of the works, it is requested that the Council provide funding of the remaining £16,027.50 to enable the works to be delivered. It is proposed that this is funded from S106 receipts.
- 2.12 The Epsom and Ewell Harriers Athletics Club also provided detailed usage statistics as set out in Annex 1 of this report to demonstrate how many people benefit from the use of this facility over the course of a year.
- 2.13 The investigations were not able to be completed in time to take the decision back to Capital Member Group and have not been submitted for consideration within the 2022/23 capital programme due to the deadline of completing the works by 1 April 2022.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Impact Assessment

- 3.1.1 This project will have a positive outcome for all members of the community who wish to take part in athletics. This includes provision for disabled athletes.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

- 3.2.1 This project will provide sporting opportunities in the borough which could encourage children and young people to take up athletics and deter them away from causing anti-social behaviour through a positive use of their time.

3.3 Safeguarding

- 3.3.1 All coaches who operate from the Harrier Centre are DBS checked and approved by UK Athletics.

3.4 Dependencies

- 3.4.1 Without the successful delivery of this project, the Harrier Centre Athletics Facility will not meet UK Athletics Track Mark Standards and cannot be used for any local, regional, or national competitions.
- 3.4.2 Without a fully operational Hammer Throwing Cage the Epsom and Ewell Harriers Athletics Club and indeed the whole Athletics Facility, may be unviable as a centre for competitive athletics.

3.5 Other

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3.5.1 This project dovetails with the Track Repair project which was successfully approved by Capital Members Group and for which an order has recently been placed.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The project has been subject to three quotations and the most favourable to achieve UK Athletics Track Mark standards is £21,027.50. With the provision of £5,000 funding from The Epsom and Ewell Harriers Athletics Club the total amount of Section 106 funds required is £16,027.50.
- 4.2 As at 1 April 2021, the balance of Outdoor Sport Facilities S106 funds stood at £140,000, of which £40,000 was allocated to the track repairs project and £100,000 to a Football Pitch Drainage System project. No further uncommitted balance of Outdoor Sport Facilities S106 fund remain.
- 4.3 However, the track repairs project has a forecast favourable variance of £4,300 of S106 funding and could be used to part-fund the Council contribution. It is proposed that the balance of £11,727.50 be funded from Outdoor Sports Facilities S106 funds allocated to the Football Pitch Drainage System project, which can be substituted with Environmental Improvements S106 funding due to the additional benefits the scheme will have to the surrounding environment.
- 4.4 The current balance of Environmental Improvements S106 funding is £49,000, of which £11,727.50 could be allocated to the Football Pitch Drainage System project, to enable the Outdoor Sports Facilities funding to be used for the Hammer Cage repairs.
- 4.5 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The financial implications are set out in the body of the report.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 A legal agreement must be put in place to cover the Grant Funding Award from England Athletics to the Epsom and Ewell Harriers Athletics Club to protect both parties.
- 5.2 Legally the facility will still belong to Epsom & Ewell Borough Council unless arrangements are made with the Club in the future to transfer this liability.

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- 5.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** Planning obligations, or S106 agreements, are an established mechanism for mitigating planning effects arising from development proposals. The agreements are usually negotiated within the context of planning applications, between Local Planning Authorities and persons with an interest in the piece of land (owners, leaseholders or developers). Any S106 monies generated from planning agreements must be spent on their intended purpose through the corresponding legal agreement. The release of the S106 funds will enable the project to progress and ensure that the Council's asset is repaired and maintained to a safe and suitable standard.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

6.1.1 Managing our Resources

6.1.2 Supporting our Community

- 6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

6.3.1 None for the purpose of this report.

- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

6.4.1 This project will ensure the Harrier Athletics Facility remains a sustainable venture and will continue to provide athletics opportunities in the Borough for all who wish to use them.

- 6.5 **Partnerships:**

6.5.1 This project represents an excellent example of partnership working with one of Epsom and Ewell's oldest running clubs. The Epsom and Ewell Harriers are a registered charity who aim to help the general public by providing local sporting opportunities.

7 Background papers

- 7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Capital Programme 2021/22 – Community & Wellbeing Committee 19 January 2021.

Other papers:

- Capital Member Group application.

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- Minutes from Capital Member Group 11 November 2021.