

Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy

Cabinet – 20 January 2015

PLANNING APPLICATION IN RESPECT OF LAND AT PENTYLA PLAYING FIELDS, COCKETT, SWANSEA

Purpose:	The purpose of this report is to obtain approval to submit a planning application for residential development for land at Pentyla Playing Fields, Cockett, Swansea
Policy Framework:	Council's Constitution
Reason for Decision:	The Council Constitution requires Cabinet approval to submit a planning application.
Consultation:	Legal, Democratic Services and Procurement, Finance, Planning, Access to Services.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) Approval for the submission of a planning application for residential development of the site at Pentyla Playing Fields be given.
Report Author:	Paul Jenkins
Finance Officer:	Jayne James
Legal Officer:	Chris Allingham
Access to Services Officer:	Phil Couch

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The site is located within Pentyla Playing Fields and fronts directly onto Pentyla Road and is within a predominantly residential area (**Appendix A**). The site is located on the boundary of the Uplands and Townhill Wards and consequently, we have consulted with Members for both wards and no comments were received.

1.2 Pentyla Playing Fields have an overall area of 6.05 hectares, the subject site area is 0.33 hectares some 5.56% of the overall.

There have been extensive discussions with the then Swansea Metropolitan University who expressed an interest in acquiring the site for development as formal sports pitches. However, as the focus of the University has now moved to a site at Fabian Way the University choose not to pursue its interest.

- 1.3 The entire playing field area has been declared surplus by the Council and it currently vests in the Corporate Property and Building Services division pending possible disposal. The entire site is used for informal recreation and the Council does not provide any pitches or play or sport facilities on the site.
- 1.4 It must be noted that 94.44% of the playing field is unaffected by this proposed planning application and the great bulk of the site and its current use will be unaffected.

2. Planning Policy Issues

- 2.1 Policy HC23 states that “Development proposals that involve the loss of *land for community recreation purposes*, whether in public or private ownership, will only be considered favourably where:
- a) Facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the development of a small part of the site; or
 - b) Alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available; or
 - c) There is an excess of provision in the area; or
 - d) A wider community benefit arises; or
 - e) The existing and potential recreational or amenity or natural heritage or historic environment value of the land is maintained.”
- 2.2 It is important to note that the policy does not seek to preclude development on such sites provided that one or more of the relevant criteria can be met.
- 2.3 It is believed that the change of use of this site will need to satisfy at least one of the above criteria, for example that sale of this land will help to enhance the existing park facility.

3.0 Equality and Engagement Implications

- 3.0 There are no direct Equality and Engagement Implications at this stage as the report is only requesting Cabinet approve the submission of a planning application. If Cabinet approval is given, a full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The City & County of Swansea will obtain a capital receipt from the disposal of this land which will be higher if the land has planning permission for residential development on the site.
- 4.2 In accordance with current policy, the relevant capital receipt will contribute towards the Council’s overall capital receipts target and will not be allocated for any other specific purpose.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Constitution provides (at Part 3: Page 7 and Part 3: Page 14) that authority must be obtained from Cabinet to enable officers to make any application for development (including change of use) on Council owned land. Consideration of any application for consent is a matter for the relevant Area Development Control Committee.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix A Location Plan.