

Cabinet Committee Meeting(Virtual) - 9 September 2021 - CROOKFUR PLAYING FIELDS – LEASE BY ST CADOC’S YOUTH CLUB UPDATE

Posted by RM64 - 03 Sep 2021 15:51

This would appear to have been added to the Agenda.

Department of Corporate and Community Services

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Date: 27 August 2021

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TO: Councillors T Buchanan (Chair); C Bamforth; B Cunningham; D Devlin; A Lafferty (Vice Chair); and C Merrick.

CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on

Thursday, 9 September 2021 at 10.00am.

The agenda of business is as shown below.

Please note this is a virtual meeting.

Caroline Innes

C INNES

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Agenda

1. Report apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest.

3. Read the Director of Environment's report proposing a variation to the kitchen supply contract. [168.93KB]

4. Read the Director of Environment's update report on the proposed lease of football pitches at Crookfur Playing Fields to St Cadoc's Youth Club. [36.04KB]

Meeting papers

Read the Cabinet papers for 9 September 2021. [203.27KB]

www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/5915/C...m=637656662136970000

Read the supplementary Cabinet papers for 9 September 2021. [50.72KB]

www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/5941/C...m=637662803222930000

You can view details on Council Website here -

www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/cabinet-090921

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**Re: Cabinet Committee Meeting(Virtual) - 9 September 2021 - CROOKFUR
PLAYING FIELDS – LEASE BY ST CADOC’S YOUTH CLUB UPDATE**

Posted by RM64 - 03 Sep 2021 16:08

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET 9 September 2021

Report by Director of Environment

CROOKFUR PLAYING FIELDS – LEASE BY ST CADOC’S YOUTH CLUB UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update members on the current position regarding the proposed lease of football pitches at Crookfur Playing Fields to St Cadoc’s Youth Club.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that cabinet note:

a) that no further work is required on this matter as both the Council and St Cadoc’s Youth Club agree that this site cannot achieve many of the longer term aims of the club;

b) that although the proposal has not yet been advertised there has been a significant level of correspondence objecting to the proposed lease;

and

c) that the Council and relevant partners will work with St Cadoc’s and other sports clubs to try to

identify appropriate and acceptable sites for the betterment of sporting facilities within the area.

BACKGROUND

3. The Cabinet in March 2021 considered a report concerning a proposal from St Cadoc's Youth club to lease and take responsibility for operating and maintaining the two grass pitches at Crookfur.

Thereafter, the club would develop these pitches at its own

expense and subject to planning permission seek to build two artificial pitches and associated changing facilities over time.

However, this would be dependent on the club's ability to raise funds and develop a sustainable business model.

The exact details of the proposal were not available.

4. The Cabinet:

- Noted the proposal to grant a 25-year lease of an area of the Crookfur Playing Fields to St Cadoc's Youth Club;

and

- Requested the Director of Environment to undertake the necessary

advertisement process in respect of such a proposal and in due course to bring a further report to Cabinet advising of the terms of any objections received in response to the advertisement.

5. The intention had been to advertise the proposal in late Spring when it was hoped resources would be available to undertake the consultation.

However, due to the workload associated with Coronavirus, resources have not been available within senior management in the Environment Department who have been focusing on Coronavirus issues such as setting up and running test centres and vaccination centres as well as operating essential services such as waste disposal during a period of restrictions on working practices and staff shortages.

6. In addition the intention had also been to work with the club to confirm their proposals prior to the consultation to ensure any proposals would be acceptable to the Council in terms of the lease.

This was not progressed to any significant extent again due to the impact of Coronavirus.

REPORT

7. Although the advertisement and consultation on the lease had not begun the previous Cabinet report elicited a significant volume of correspondence from members of the public and considerable debate on social media.

8. It has been particularly difficult for Council staff to respond to the correspondence as the Council were unable to commence detailed lease discussions with St Cadoc's Youth Club

9. The main concerns which have been expressed are around the perceived extent of the development proposed by St Cadoc's Youth Club and the impact it would have on users of the park.

Issues include the potential for senior football matches, paid-for admission games, further car parking, viewing structures/stands/terracing and restrictions on park users.

10. On the other hand, there is clear support from many of the families of the young people who are members of St Cadoc's Youth Club who are keen to see better facilities made available.

11. The correspondence and social media exchanges has highlighted that the original proposal and the status quo each have benefits to East Renfrewshire residents.

12. The original proposal by St Cadoc's Youth Club would have significantly increased the

all-weather sports pitches available to children and young people for football and other sports.

St Cadoc's Youth Club is a registered charity and includes many East Renfrewshire young people in its membership.

Therefore there were no commercial issues to consider and St Cadoc's Youth Club advised they intended to use the facilities to provide additional opportunities for disadvantaged young people.

There were therefore many community benefits associated with the proposal.

13. As the Cabinet will be aware the Council is supportive of community sports clubs, recognises the major benefits they provide and has already supported a number of youth football teams.

All bring considerable benefits to the area and the work of their volunteers is exceptional.

14. The status quo of retaining the 2 grass pitches also brings benefits in that when the pitches are not being used for sports they are accessible to local residents for informal sports and exercise.

Residents have always valued green space but as a result of the

pandemic many residents have explored more green space in their local areas and have used it more frequently.

As a Council we would wish to encourage this now and in the future

since it brings considerable benefits in terms of health and well-being.

15. As an example the new nursery which has replaced the old Crookfur Pavilion has increased the attractiveness of the area and may well be encouraging more families to use Crookfur Playing fields.

16. The Club have recently advised the Council that they understand the concerns expressed over further sports development near to residential properties and the need to protect open green space.

The Club have made clear that they wish to work with and not in any way alienate local communities and/or neighbours.

17. Taking into account all of the current circumstances both parties agree that on balance a more positive alternative option would be for the Club and the Council to work together to try to identify a more appropriate and acceptable site better suited to allow the Club to realise its vision, ambitions and future expansion plans.

18. No further work is required on this matter in relation to Crookfur Park as both the Council and St Cadoc's Youth Club agree that this site cannot achieve many of the longer term aims of the Club.

19. The pitches would as a result be retained and operated by the Council as grass football pitches.

There would be no impact on existing uses of the park.

Discussions have been underway for some time with East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCLT) about operating all pitches on behalf of the Council.

If these discussions progress positively then this will remove the opportunity for further approaches from other organisations.

ERCLT is a wholly owned subsidiary of East Renfrewshire Council and the ownership of the pitches would stay with the Council.

20. This matter has drawn attention to the importance of community-based-sports clubs with ambitions for expansion and the lack of availability of affordable and suitable land to allow them to do so.

However, it has also highlighted the importance of protecting Protected

Urban Greenspace for public use, particularly given Covid.

The Council's Local Development Plan 3 will therefore need to consider the potential for supporting this type of demand/development for community based sports clubs outwith Protected Urban Greenspace areas and if possible away from existing residential development.

This will require the development of a sporting facilities strategy to be inclusive to all clubs in the area and the ever growing demand for football pitches and other training facilities.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

21. There are no financial implications for the Council.

CONSULTATION/ PARTNERSHIP WORKING

22. There are no consultation/partnership working issues.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

23. There are no implications in terms of staffing, legal, IT or equalities issues at this point in time other than excessive demands upon officer time in dealing with the matter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

24. It is recommended that cabinet note:

a) that no further work is required on this matter as both the Council and St Cadoc's Youth Club agree that this site cannot achieve many of the longer term aims of the club;

b) that although the proposal has not yet been advertised there has been a significant level of correspondence objecting to the proposed lease;

and

c) that the Council and relevant partners will work with St Cadoc's and other sports clubs to try to identify appropriate and acceptable sites for the betterment of sporting facilities within the area

Andrew Cahill

Director of Environment

For further information contact

Andrew Cahill,

Director of Environment

This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it

Convener contact details

Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader of the Council)

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Mobile: 07976 360398

August 2021

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**Re: Cabinet Committee Meeting(Virtual) - 9 September 2021 - CROOKFUR
PLAYING FIELDS – LEASE BY ST CADOC'S YOUTH CLUB UPDATE**

Posted by RM64 - 07 Sep 2021 13:15

7/9/2021

Published Barrhead News On Line -

News

47 mins ago

Crookfur Park: Residents hail victory over St Cadoc's plans

By Norman Silvester

Reporter

LOCAL residents have won a six month battle to stop an East Renfrewshire public park being turned into a football ground.

St Cadoc's Youth Club, based in Newton Mearns, wanted to convert playing fields at Crookfur into two all-weather pitches, with floodlighting, for their 750 players.

The proposals also included a car park, pavilion and changing rooms.

A campaign by concerned householders to block the development was launched in March.

Now East Renfrewshire Council have revealed that the development will not be going ahead.

St Cadoc's had applied to lease Crookfur Park for the next 25 years but local residents said that they would lose a popular and well-loved green space.

One of the campaigners, Tom Taylor, who lives nearby, said neighbours were delighted with the council's decision.

He added: "It's fantastic news. We objected very strongly and vocally to the development and it has paid off.

"Since Covid the park has been very well used and the local authority have recognised that and St Cadocs will now have to find somewhere else.

"The council have been swamped with objections and I think they got the message that people were saying no.

"Crookfur Park is an important amenity to the local community and we didn't want to lose it."

Tom said that 2,500 people also signed a petition objecting to the football ground development.

Papers made public by East Renfrewshire Council this week confirmed the decision.

The documents said: "Both the council and St Cadoc's agree that the site cannot achieve many of the longer aims of the club.

"The main concerns which have been expressed are around the extent of the development proposed by St Cadoc's Youth Club and the impact it would have on users of the park."

Councillors were due to be told of the Crookfur Park decision at a cabinet meeting on September 9.

Eastwood MSP Jackson Carlaw, who backed the campaigners, welcomed East Renfrewshire Council's decision.

He added: "My recent local survey of residents demonstrated significant opposition and it's right that the

council have listened to locals.

“This proposed development has also raised the fact that East Renfrewshire does not currently have sufficient facilities for youth sports and I will work with interested parties to rectify this.”

St Cadoc’s adult side joined the West of Scotland Football League last year, which is in the sixth tier of Scottish football.

The division includes well-supported teams such as Irvine Meadow and some locals feared major disruption on matchdays.

St Cadoc’s had said its plans for Crookfur Park would “create a facility that greatly benefits the entire community.”

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**Re: Cabinet Committee Meeting(Virtual) - 9 September 2021 - CROOKFUR
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Posted by RM64 - 13 Sep 2021 08:35

You can view recording of meeting from Council Website here -

www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/cabinet-090921

Meeting Recording

The recording of this meeting can be viewed on the Council's YouTube Channel

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