

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 4TH FEBRUARY 2009

MANAGEMENT OF GRANGE AND ST. JOSEPH'S LEISURE CENTRES, KILMARNOCK

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for programming arrangements at Grange and St. Joseph's Leisure Centres in Kilmarnock and for prices for the new synthetic grass pitch at St. Joseph's Leisure Centre, Kilmarnock which is due to open in March 2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 3rd September 2008 Cabinet gave approval to management arrangements and interim booking proposals for the two new Leisure Centres.
- 2.2 Both centres are now open and groups transferring from the previous school facilities have been given priority for bookings until 31st March 2009, as agreed by Cabinet. Groups have been transferred into the new facilities on an interim basis and have continued to pay the same charges as they did for facilities in the old school. All clubs are aware that there will be changes to the charging regime and booking arrangements from April 2009.
- 2.3 New prices for 2009/10 will be considered by Cabinet as part of the 2009/10 budget setting process; however as the first of the synthetic grass pitches will now be available for use in March a new charging regime needs to be agreed now and put in place for all new bookings.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The new range of facilities at both schools is significantly improved when compared to those available at the former schools and these facilities are now being managed as Leisure Centres. In order to ensure that the time available for community use is used efficiently and effectively it is essential that all bookings are properly managed to minimize empty time slots, make best use of staff time and meet income targets. This will require a new approach to programming to be taken and the facilities to be made available to both clubs and the wider community. In order for the programme to be effectively balanced booking times will need to be amended and priority for bookings should be given to bona fide sports clubs while all bookings should be time limited and not automatically renewed annually.
- 3.2 The interim programmes established by the transfer of pre-existing bookings has varying start and finish times for sessions and several gaps in the programme which would be difficult to fill. In addition equipment changeovers prior to booking's starting are not planned effectively and therefore staff time cannot be used effectively, with the arrival of the synthetic grass pitches the need to manage booking times will become even more important.

3.3 The Council does not have any full sized floodlit synthetic grass pitches and the two pitches due to open in the coming months will be a welcome and much needed addition. Both pitches can be subdivided into three areas for small side games or training and both can be used for full eleven a side matches and the programme of use will need to balance demand for both types of use. While both pitches will be used for primarily football, they will also be available for other sports and activities on a regular basis.

4. PROGRAMMING AND CHARGING PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that existing booking programmes terminate at the end of March and applications for bookings for all facilities are invited to commence in April. Existing hirers will be invited to apply to book any appropriate facilities. The new activity programme will be implemented to balance club use, public use, sports development activity and school use with appropriate consideration being given to efficient use of staff time and balancing the available budget. Priority will be given to bona fide sports clubs and no individual club will be allowed to dominate the programme.

4.2 It is proposed that use of the sports halls for football is restricted to sessions for young children, this will reduce the potential for damage to the facilities and will also encourage use of the halls by other sports which are currently under provided for in the area. Football bookings will move to the synthetic grass pitches as they become available. Occasional use of the halls for football will only be permitted if space is available.

4.3 In terms of booking arrangements it is proposed that bookings are organised using a timetable that has variable start and finish times for each facility to maximise efficiency and flexibility.

4.4 Charges for use of the Synthetic Grass pitches for the period until March 2010 are proposed as follows:

	Full Pitch		1/3 Pitch
	1 hour	2 hour match	1 hour
Adult	£44.00	£80.00	£33.00
Junior	£27.50	£55.00	£22.00

Prices shown are for the pitch with or without floodlighting, there are no peak or off peak periods.

4.5 Benchmark prices from other facilities are shown as Appendix One to this report.

4.6 It should be noted that Cabinet will be asked to consider offering discounted rates for sports clubs supporting athletes preparing for the 2012 Olympic Games and 2014 Commonwealth Games as part of the Charter for 2014 which will be considered by Cabinet in spring 2009.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 By effectively managing the programme of facility usage and offering the synthetic grass pitches at similar prices to other local facilities community use of the Grange and St. Joseph's Leisure Centres should be delivered within the available budget.

6. LEGAL AUTHORITY / IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Community access to the new facilities at Grange and St. Joseph's Leisure Centres supports the Improving Opportunities, Improving Community Safety, Improving Health, Eliminating Poverty and Promoting Community Learning themes of the Community Plan.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The programming proposals will improve the efficiency of the management of both facilities which will reduce the risk of failure to meet budget targets. Similarly setting the synthetic grass pitch charges at appropriate levels will support the achievement of budget targets while promoting community access.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The proposals included in this report have been developed following a review of the interim programme of use at the two Leisure Centres and an examination of charging structures for synthetic grass pitches in other Council areas. It is essential that community use is effectively managed to maximise use of the facilities and promote and develop interest in a wide range of sport and leisure opportunities. It is also important that the new synthetic grass pitches are offered at a competitive price for both training and matches and the proposed charging regime reflects this requirement.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) approve the facility programming proposals outlined in section 4 of this report,
- (ii) approve the charging regime for the synthetic grass pitches shown in 4.4 of this report, and
- (iii) otherwise note the content of this report

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG

29th January 2009

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - Nil

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APPENDIX 1

Prices for the hire of SGP's across Scotland			
<u>Inverclyde Leisure</u>		<u>North Lanarkshire</u>	
Adult	£120.00 (2 hour) £25.20 (1/3 Pitch)	Adult	£84.00 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
Junior	£88.00 (2 Hours) £22.00 (1/3 Pitch)	Junior	£40.00 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
<u>Falkirk</u>		<u>East Lothian</u>	
Adult	£97.20 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)	Adult	N/A (2 Hours) £32.80 (1/3 Pitch)
Junior	£48.60 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)	Junior	N/A (2 Hours) £19.80 (1/3 Pitch)
<u>Mid Lothian</u>		<u>Stirling</u>	
Adult	£90.00 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)	Adult	£100.00 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
Junior	£54.00 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)	Junior	£80.00 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
<u>North Ayrshire</u>		<u>Glasgow</u>	
Adult	£62.00 (2 Hours) £17.50 (1/3 Pitch)	Adult	£87.20 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
Junior	£44.00 (2 Hours) £13.00 (1/3 Pitch)	Junior	£43.60 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
<u>Fife</u>		<u>Highland</u>	
Adult	£41.20 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)	Adult	£40.80 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)
Junior	£27.30 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)	Junior	£20.40 (2 Hours) N/A (1/3 Pitch)