

**REPORT TO: THE MORAY COUNCIL ON 17 DECEMBER 2008**

**SUBJECT: ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL: DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval to phase the development of facilities at Elgin High School and to accelerate the provision of a regional sized sports hall and conversion of the existing games hall as Phase 1 of this project.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (11) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the provision of facilities for recreational, sporting, cultural and social activities..

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that Members agreed that:-**

**(i) the development of sports and recreational facilities at Elgin High School be phased;**

**(ii) phase 1 consist of a regional sized sports hall and conversion of the existing games hall and that this be accelerated as far as practical;**

**(iii) officers progress discussions with potential partners, particularly, Moray College and Sportscotland;**

**3. BACKGROUND**

**3.1 General**

3.1.1 Elgin High School has been identified as the preferred location for the development of major sports and recreational facilities as part of the Leisure and Healthy Living Programme. The facilities identified for inclusion within the overall project are:- a regional sized sprots hall, a six lane all-weather athletics track, a full sized synthetic turf pitch and conversion of the existing school games hall into a performing arts space.

3.1.2 The development of facilities at Elgin High School form part of a larger grouping of developments proposed for South West Elgin. The other elements of this grouping are the continuation of Edgar Road, one option to provide a further railway crossing, the servicing of a future affordable hosuing site and the provision of an access route to a future housing development site.

3.1.3 All of these three developments require aces to and use of the land adjacent to the Wards and immediately to the North West of Elgin High School. Resolving the competing requirements is complex and consequently, progress to date on all three has been limited.

- 3.1.4 There is concern that, should the delays prove lengthy, this could result in increased costs, potential loss of external funding and, consequently, a reduction in the proposed facilities for the High School and the wider community.
- 3.1.5 Consequently, consideration has been given to phasing the development of facilities at Elgin High School and to do this in such a way as to minimise impact on the other South West Elgin projects.
- 3.1.6 The elements of the Elgin High School development which can be progressed as a discreet project are the regional sports hall and the conversion of the existing games hall. The sports hall would be located adjacent to the High School building and its footprint would be substantially smaller than either the synthetic turf pitch or athletics track. The games hall conversion would be contained within the existing building. Consequently, neither of these would impact significantly on the other South West Elgin Proposals.
- 3.1.7 Preliminary discussions have been held with both Sportscotland and Moray College over their possible involvement in the development of the regional sports hall. Sportscotland have stated that the project would meet their criteria for a priority funding. Moray College have expressed both a keen interest and a commitment of financial support, should they become involved.
- 3.1.8 The Administration Group has requested that projects be accelerated where possible in order to support the local economy. On a national level, Cosla have made a similar request.

### 3.2 Financial

- 3.2.1 A sum of £3M has been allocated within the Capital Plan to support the provision of sport and recreational facilities at Elgin High School. The funding has been programmed across financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13,
- 3.2.2 An additional £1.3M is held within reserves to support the implementation of the Leisure & Health Living Programme.
- 3.2.3 Sportscotland have indicated that the regional sized sports hall development could currently attract up to £500,000 of lottery funding. However, they are advised that new guidelines are to be launched in the New Year when the maximum grant for sports halls is expected to increase to £1,000,000.
- 3.2.4 The current total potential / known funding for the Elgin High School Sports and Recreational Facilities Project are as follows:-

<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
Capital Programme	£3.0M	Confirmed
Reserves	£0.6M	Confirmed

Designated Capital receipt	£0.7M	Confirmed
Sportlottery (sports hall)	£0.5M	Unconfirmed
Sportlottery (other elements)	Unknown	
Moray College	Unknown	
<b>Current Total</b>	<b>£4.8M</b>	

3.2.5 Preliminary estimates for the cost of the full Elgin High School Sports & Recreational Facilities Project are summarised below. It should be noted that these estimates are for guidance only and will be confirmed or revised as more accurate information is obtained.

<b>Element</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Regional sized (min 6 badminton court area) sports hall	£2.5M
Conversion of existing games hall	£0.4M
All weather running track (6 lane)	£1.0M
Full sized floodlit synthetic turf pitch	£0.5M
Changing accommodation	£0.3M
Replacement grass pitches	£0.3M
Infrastructure costs	£0.7M
<b>Current Total</b>	<b>£6.5M</b>

3.2.6 The preliminary anticipated costs for the sports hall and games hall conversion (Phase 1), including an element for infrastructure and professional fees, is anticipated to be in the region of £3.5M.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

This report supports the Council's Corporate Development Plan by supporting the local economy.

This report supports the Educational Services Improvement Plan by supporting the provision of high quality learning facilities.

##### **(b) Policy and Legal**

There are no policy or legal implications arising directly from this report.

##### **(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The preliminary estimated costs for undertaking the Elgin High sports and recreational facilities project are anticipated to be in the region of £6.5M. Preliminary estimates for Phase 1 (sports hall and games hall conversion) are anticipated to be £3.5M. Funding currently available to

support the projects amounts to £4.3M. Additional funding from grants and partner agencies is expected to be sourced.

The Chief Financial Officer has advised that, based on experience of expenditure against the Capital Plan in previous years, bringing forward this planned expenditure will be balanced by slippage in other projects and is therefore affordable and within the scope of the Council's prudential borrowing limits.

There will be revenue implications in terms of additional costs and income and these will be clarified prior to members making any final commitment to the project.

The major risks associated with progressing the development of the regional sports hall and games hall conversion are that costs and levels of funding are currently uncertain.

The major risks associated with delaying the developments are that costs may increase and funding opportunities reduce.

**(d) Consultations**

Consultations have been undertaken with the Chief Executive, the Chief Financial Officer and the Head of Direct Services. All comments received have been incorporated within the report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 Members are asked to consider progressing the development of sports & recreational facilities at Elgin High School in a phased manner and accelerating Phase 1 as much as is practical.**

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Background Papers:

Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/The Moray Council / 17 Decemeber 2008 / Elgin High School – Development of Sports & Recreational Facilities

