

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 JANUARY 2023

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

LLANGYNWYD PLAYING FIELDS

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to enable Cabinet to:

- (1) Consider the business case prepared in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy document to support the leasing of the pavilion and, two football pitches, other green spaces and car park at Llangynwyd Playing Fields to Llangynwyd Rangers Boys and Girls Club (Llangynwyd Rangers BGC);
- (2) Assess and, where appropriate, approve the funding package requested by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC under the Council's CAT Fund to support proposals to undertake essential pavilion repairs upon the completion of a proposed long-term 35-year lease for the whole site.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
- **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

Llangynwyd Playing Fields – Facilities & Usage

- 3.1 The facilities at Llangynwyd Playing Fields, Maesteg Road, Llangynwyd, CF34 9SN (see Site Plan at **Appendix A**) is located 7 miles (11.3 km) from the centre of Bridgend town and includes the following:
- (1) *Pavilion*: The property was built circa 1950, with the changing rooms extended and a function room added since the original construction. The property, set over one level (see Pavilion Plan at **Appendix B**), is a detached masonry construction predominately finished with render and fair faced brickwork. The main roof is of pitched construction with concrete tile coverings with flat bitumen felt roof over the function room. The roofs drain into eaves gutters discharging into below ground drainage via downpipes. Pedestrian and fire exit doorways are provided in a number of locations. Single glazed steel and timber windows are installed. Internally, the property consists of changing rooms and shower facilities, a function room and kitchen.
 - (2) *Playing Fields*: 2 x football pitches. Historically, one of the pitches was used for rugby by Maesteg Celtic RFC and this has recently been re-configured for football with the rugby club developing a new pitch at their home ground, Garth Park in Maesteg.
 - (3) The site is served by one car park which is locked when the facilities at the site are not being utilised for sporting purposes.

Llangynwyd Playing Fields - Pavilion

- 3.2 The Pavilion has been subject to two independent condition surveys in recent years. Hurley and Davies undertook a detailed condition survey in May 2017 that estimated the total cost of building works to make the Pavilion fit for purpose to be £236,675. The inclusion of preliminaries, contingency and professional fees increased the potential total project cost to £350,721.14 including VAT (see Cost Summary at **Appendix C**).
- 3.3 The latest condition survey, however, undertaken by Faithful+Gould in March 2020 concluded that the fabric of the building was in a satisfactory condition. Backlog building works having a total value of £50,258.80 were highlighted under Category C (Poor with major defects) and Category D (Bad; life has expired or risk of imminent failure) and additional maintenance estimated to cost £12,503.00 over a 5 Year period was also highlighted in the survey (see Condition Survey at **Appendix D**).
- 3.4 The Faithful+Gould condition survey identified that the flat felt roof, UPVC guttering and downpipes were in poor condition and sections of the external render required repair. During the intervening period the condition of the building has further deteriorated with the roof having to be patched by the Council and now requiring full replacement. In addition construction industry costs have increased considerably, circa. 30%, due to market conditions and inflation.

Llangynwyd Playing Fields - Green Space Maintenance

- 3.5 A 6-year interim lease was granted by the Council on 27 June 2022 that enabled Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to undertake the self-management of the two football pitches and other green spaces at Llangynwyd Playing Fields and enabled drainage repairs and pitch improvements to be commenced during the close season.

- 3.6 Green Spaces & Bereavement Services have previously calculated the unit cost for the Council of ground maintenance per football playing surface (excluding other green spaces, e.g. grass verges) to be £3,667 and when applied to Llangynwyd Playing Fields annual ground maintenance costs are estimated to be £7,334 based on the two football pitches.
- 3.7 Oolong Sports Pitch Consultancy was commissioned to undertake a feasibility study for Llangynwyd Rangers BGC, funded under the Council's CAT Business Support contract, in February 2020 to assess the quality of the existing grass pitches and to propose improvement works. The feasibility study recommended the re-profiling to reduce the pitch gradients and the evenness of the surface, and installation of new drainage systems comprising of primary underdrainage pipework with secondary drainage sand grooving that was estimated to cost:

Playing Surface	Total Cost	Cost Excluding Annual Maintenance
Football Pitch	£51,000	£45,000
Former Rugby Pitch	£49,000	£43,000

(see Copy of Llangynwyd Playing Fields Pitch Feasibility Study at **Appendix E**)

- 3.8 The Council has already allocated funding of £10,000 under the CAT Fund to assist Llangynwyd Rangers BGC with the cost of purchasing pitch maintenance equipment costing £10,654.80 with the balance of funding being provided by the Club. The CAT Steering Group also assessed and approved a funding application in principle submitted by the Club on 12 May 2022 and allocated funding up to £50,000 for pitch and drainage improvements estimated to cost £63,833.06 with the balance of funding being provided by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC £9,615.06, and Llangynwyd Middle Community Council £4,218.00. The first phase of essential pitch and drainage improvements were commenced in June 2022 following completion of the 6-year lease so that works could be completed during the close season. Funding of £18,294 was released under the CAT Fund in September 2022 with the balance of funding £31,706 anticipated to be drawn down for the second phase of improvements in the close season (April – August 2023). It should be further noted that additional pitch improvements are likely to be required going forward, subject to funding being secured from other sources such as the Cymru Football Foundation and Sports Wales.

CAT Funding

- 3.9 The Council originally set aside capital funding of £1 million in February 2014 in the capital programme for works to refurbish pavilions, to encourage CATs and assist in ensuring that assets become sustainable. The scope for this funding was subsequently widened to also include building works undertaken on other Council facilities such as community centres and public toilets, to support the CAT process and ensure that as many buildings as possible could be kept open and provide long-term community benefits.
- 3.10 Under the revised CAT protocol approved by Cabinet on 25 July 2017, funding applications up to £50k from the £1 million CAT Fund can be approved by the CAT

Steering Group with sums in excess of this threshold being required to be referred to Cabinet for approval.

3.11 Cabinet agreed a range of measures designed to stimulate the CAT Programme on 25 February 2020 when approving the Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks Pavilions and Community Asset Transfer report which included:

- (1) A commitment to replenishing the £1M CAT Fund as and when necessary, subject to the availability of finite capital resources, to encourage transfers and meet demand particularly where value for money can be clearly demonstrated post CAT;
- (2) Extending the CAT Fund to include the maintenance of playing fields so that pitch and drainage surveys can be undertaken along with capital grants to enable pitch improvements and self-management and thereby increasing the chances of long-term sustainable CATs by:
 - Developing a programme of sports pitch improvement and drainage capital grants valued at £5,000 to £25,000 per playing surface to ensure that prioritised sites are fit for purpose based upon independent condition assessments.
 - Establishing pitch maintenance equipment grants to provide capital funding valued from £5,000 up to £10,000 for Town and Community Councils (T&CCs) and sports clubs who complete transfers to assist with the purchase of equipment to enable the self-management of associated green spaces.

3.12 Cabinet / Corporate Management Board (CCMB) recommended on 5 October 2021 that the CAT Fund should be topped up by £500K and this was approved by Council and included in the Capital Programme in January 2022.

3.13 Cabinet and the CAT Steering Group has, to date, allocated funding totalling £960,523.15 from the £1.5 million CAT Fund which is summarised in the table below and detailed at **Appendix F**:

Purpose of Funding	Total Allocations	Spend to Date	Commitments
Building Refurbishment / Development	£569,981.90	£454,403.18	£115,578.72
Maintenance Equipment	£184,175.22	£150,025.22	£34,150.00
Pitch & Drainage Improvements	£174,952.99	£107,319.07	£67,633.92
Miscellaneous*	£31,413.04	£17,433.04	£13,980.00
Total	£960,523.15	£729,180.51	£231,342.64

* Additional funding awarded to sports clubs and town and community councils via CAT Fund submitting funding applications under the Bridgend Sports Support Fund 2021-22 and Town & Community Council Capital Grant scheme that were over subscribed (see Appendix F for details)

4. Current situation/proposal

The Club

- 4.1 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC were founded in 1947, and currently has 15 sections, over 300 registered players from under 6, mini, junior, girls, youth and seniors. The Club has been awarded 'Platinum' club accreditation by the Football Association of Wales (FAW). The Club seeks to widen participation particularly women and girls and has a number of initiatives to broaden the appeal of football. The FAW 'Huddle' has been in operation since April 2021, and has attracted over 180 girls to play football.
- 4.2 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC has been a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) under the Foundation Model (Charity Number 1191676) since 6 October 2020 and previously operated under another charity, Llangynwyd Rangers Boys' And Girls' Club of Wales Football Club (Charity Number: 1118531). The change in status was required to conform to the Council's CAT Policy document that ensures that community groups finalising CATs must have a legal status demonstrating limited liability.
- 4.3 The object of the CIO is: "to promote community participation in healthy recreation by provision of facilities for the learning, teaching and playing of football and such other sports capable of promoting healthy recreation as the trustees deem appropriate for the benefit of the residents of Llynfi Valley and the surrounding area".

The Project

- 4.4 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC submitted an expression of interest for the Llangynwyd Playing Fields site on 8 February 2016 which was approved by the Council's Strong Communities Connecting Services Board on 24 March 2016.
- 4.5 The Club's vision is football development in Llangynwyd and the Llynfi Valley and to provide facilities of the highest standard. The key priorities of the Club are to:
 - Renovate and refurbish the changing rooms / pavilion bringing them to an acceptable standard;
 - Provide new 'mini' pitches to cater for the club's extensive junior section;
 - Ensure grass pitches are well maintained, level, well drained with improved access and partitioning;
 - Develop pitches to adequate standard to allow school use during daytime hours, along with development of an indoor hall / space, with access to projectors, to allow classroom learning to take place;
 - Establish girls only teams across various age groups;
 - Overcome obstacles that inhibit growth such as not being able to provide welcoming fit for purpose facilities for all;
 - Give all teams every chance of securing high level football across both genders with the aim of getting the ladies/girls to the highest tier possible within the FAW pyramid system and men's team achieving a minimum of Tier 2 football within the next 10 years;
 - Put the health and well-being of the community at the forefront of plans and provide a recreational space and environment that everyone can enjoy.

- 4.6 The Club will seek to develop the Llangynwyd Playing Fields site in stages with further enhancements planned subject to additional external funding being secured with the Club presently developing funding applications for the Cymru Football Foundation and Sports Wales to enable the next stages of the project to be progressed. This includes reconfiguring the changing rooms to cater for the needs of women and girls' football and the creation of a new indoor educational / social space for community activities. Medium term aspirations also include developing the surrounding areas for pathways, that allow more access for the public and dog walkers, with an aim of using this pathway as a safe cycle to school route and working alongside Llangynwyd Middle Community Council and environmental agencies to further develop the nature reserve, and wetlands.
- 4.7 The Stage 1 proposal that Llangynwyd Rangers BGC are seeking funding under the CAT Fund are for:
- (1) Pitch maintenance equipment to enable the self-management of 2 pitches and other green spaces and associated essential improvements already approved in principle by the CAT Steering Group, and
 - (2) Essential pavilion repairs in line with the building condition survey works included at **Appendix C** and **Appendix D** which Cabinet are being requested to consider as part of the CAT approval process set out in 3.10 as they fall over the £50,000 threshold.

Business Case

- 4.8 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC have prepared detailed business and financial plans outlining their proposals to repair the pavilion and improvements to both football pitches and to provide assurance on the viability and sustainability of the project. The plans have been prepared with assistance from a Business Adviser from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust under the Council's CAT Business Support contract and may also be used to engage with third parties, i.e. external funders (see Copy of the Business Plan at **Appendix G** and the Financial Plan at **Appendix H**).
- 4.9 Both the business and financial plans submitted by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC have been reviewed by the Finance Department and are considered to demonstrate the financial viability of the project being proposed in the short and medium term in accordance with the CAT Policy document.
- 4.10 The self-management of the facilities under a proposed 35-year lease is seen by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC as safeguarding the longevity and financial sustainability of the Llangynwyd Playing Fields site for future generations.

Project Funding

- 4.11 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC have submitted the undermentioned three funding applications to the CAT Fund.

Purpose of Funding	Total Cost*	CAT Fund Request*	Other Funding*
Essential Pavilion Repairs	£157,240.85	£157,240.85	Nil

Drainage & Pitch Improvements (2 x Football Pitches)	£63,833.06	£50,000.00	£13,833.06
Pitch Maintenance Equipment	£10,654.80	£10,000.00	£654.80
Total	£231,728.71	£217,240.85	£14,487.86

* Amounts shown are inclusive of VAT as Llangynwyd Rangers BGC are not VAT registered

- 4.12 As previously confirmed at paragraph 3.8, the funding applications for pitch maintenance equipment and drainage and pitch improvements were approved in principle by the CAT Steering Group so that self-management of green spaces could be commenced at the earliest opportunity with £10,000 and £18,294 respectively already having been reimbursed to the Club by the Council. These applications were also reviewed by the Parks Department as regards the appropriateness of technical specification and also agreed by the Finance Department.
- 4.13 The latest funding application for essential pavilion repairs has been reviewed alongside the business and financial plans by the Finance Department in the first instance and by members of the CAT Steering Group.

Essential Pavilion Repairs

- 4.14 The condition surveys undertaken by Hurley and Davies (May 2017) and Faithful +Gould (March 2020) have estimated the cost of the building works to be £236,675 and £62,761.80 (£50,258.80 + £12,503.00) preliminaries, contingency and professional fees are excluded (see paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 and Condition Surveys at **Appendix C** and **Appendix D**). The Council's Quantity Surveyor (Major Projects) was requested to check the reasonableness of the funding application submitted by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to support the building works to the Pavilion based upon the previous building condition surveys undertaken and the submission of tenders from three local contractors:

Contractor	Cost Excluding VAT	VAT	Total Cost
Company A	£195,057.50	£39,011.50	£234,069.00
Company B	£131,034.04	£26,206.81	£157,240.85
Company C	£232,608.00	£46,521.60	£279,129.60

- 4.15 The Quantity Surveyor (Major Projects) has recommended that the lowest tender submitted by Company B in the sum of £131,034.04 (excluding VAT) which contains £5,000 contingency should be accepted. As previously highlighted Llangynwyd Rangers BGC are not VAT registered and would be seeking total funding of £157,240.85.

Present Position

- 4.16 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC have undertaken the self-management of the two football pitches and other green spaces at Llangynwyd Playing Fields following completion of the interim 6-year lease on 27 June 2022 and have already carried out major pitch and drainage improvements which were approved by the CAT Steering Group and

funded under the Council's CAT Fund. The Club wish to complete the proposed 35-year lease for the whole site which will enable them to undertake essential pavilion repairs subject to Cabinet approving their funding application in the sum of £157,240.85.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There will be no direct effect on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The Council is committed to promoting sustainable development and to discharge our duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The required Assessment Template has been completed and a summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is outlined below in respect of the proposed CAT of the Llangynwyd Playing Fields:

Long-term	Supports the priorities identified by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC in response to current and future needs of the Llynfi Valley and the wider local community, and in particular the participation of women and girls.
Prevention	Ensures the facilities to be leased can continue to be used by the football club and the wider community and promote healthier lifestyles and general well-being.
Integration	Enables Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to work in partnership with the Llangynwyd Middle Community Council, the FAW, other sports clubs / users and the wider community to meet local needs in a more holistic way.
Collaboration	The proposals have been developed and will be delivered through a strong partnership between the Council, the Community Council, FAW and Llangynwyd Rangers BGC.
Involvement	The proposals will be delivered in close partnership with Llangynwyd Rangers BGC and range of local stakeholders including the Community Council. Discussions and development with Llangynwyd Rangers BGC and the Community Council has taken place and are ongoing.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 Unallocated funding of £539,476.85 is presently available under the CAT Fund based upon the original allocation of £1 million and top-up of £500,000 approved by Council in January 2022 and total funding of £960,523.15 already earmarked or expended (see paragraph 3.13 and CAT Fund Allocations at **Appendix F**).
- 8.2 The proposed lease of the Pavilion, two football pitches, other green spaces and car park at the Llangynwyd Playing Fields to Llangynwyd Rangers BGC will achieve savings in support of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with only the estimated annual revenue savings of £7,334 in respect of football pitch maintenance being readily quantifiable (see paragraph 3.7). Further savings to the capital and revenue budgets are also anticipated in future years as regards the costs associated with the Pavilion which was estimated by Hurley and Davies to cost £236,675 (excluding preliminaries, contingency and professional fees – see paragraph 3.2) to repair in May 2017, and day to day running costs of utilities which cost £1,808 for electricity and £354 for water pre covid pandemic.
- 8.3 Llangynwyd Rangers BGC have already obtained tenders for the proposed essential repairs to the pavilion which are estimated to cost £157,240.85 based upon the Schedule of Work and Returned Tender Analysis which has been independently assessed to assess value for money by the Council's Quantity Surveyor (Major Projects). The Council can also be assured that any reimbursement for building works are independently verified by Quantity Surveyor (Major Projects) based upon a review of the valuation and work before any funding is released. If approved by Cabinet, the allocation of £157,240.85 for the cost of essential pavilion repairs at Llangynwyd Playing Fields will reduce the balance of unallocated funding in the CAT Fund to £382,236.
- 8.4 Cabinet has previously indicated that the CAT Fund should be replenished to encourage CATs, subject to the availability of finite capital resources, so that assets can be developed and safeguarded for future generations, particularly where value for money can be clearly demonstrated. It is intended that a report highlighting the outcomes and benefits already achieved under the CAT programme will be submitted for consideration to the Cabinet / Corporate Management Board along with a business case under the Change Management Fund and Capital Programme to request additional funding where deemed appropriate. Any additional requests for Capital funding would have to seek approval from Council.

9. Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

- 9.1 Note the funding already allocated from the CAT Fund to Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to support the self-management of the two football pitches and other green spaces at Llangynwyd Playing Fields which was agreed in principle by the CAT Steering Group:

Purpose of Funding	Funding under CAT Fund
Drainage & Pitch Improvements (2 x Football Pitches)	£50,000.00

Pitch Maintenance Equipment	£10,000.00
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- 9.2 Approve the business case (business and financial plans) submitted by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to support the leasing of the Pavilion, two football pitches, other green spaces and car park at the Llangynwyd Playing Fields, under the Council's CAT programme, by demonstrating the financial viability and sustainability of the project.
- 9.3 Approve the funding request under the CAT Fund submitted by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to undertake essential pavilion repairs in the sum of £157,240.85 which would take the full funding package for the transfer under the CAT Fund to £217,240.85.

Janine Nightingale
CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
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Contact Officer: Guy Smith, Community Asset Transfer Officer
Telephone: (01656) 815323

E-mail: Guy.Smith@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Bridgend County Borough Council,
Communities Directorate,
Civic Building, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Background Papers:
Revised CAT Policy Document (July 2019)