

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	22 JULY 2025
Report Title:	BRYNTIRION COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL 3G PITCH REPLACEMENT
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
Responsible Officer:	MARTIN MORGANS, HEAD OF OPERATIONS - COMMUNITY SERVICES
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	This report has no effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.
Executive Summary:	<p>The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet on a proposed project to redevelop the existing 2G football pitch at Bryntirion Comprehensive School, leveraging external funding. The project aims to benefit both the school and the wider community.</p> <p>The report also seeks approval for Bridgend County Borough Council to enter into a suitable management agreement with the school for the ongoing management and maintenance of the facility, ensuring it supports our communities and the wellbeing of future generations.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet approval to accept funding from the Cymru Football Foundation and Sport Wales, for the redevelopment of the existing 2G football pitch at Bryntirion Comprehensive School (“the School”) and to request approval for Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to enter into a management agreement with the school for the management and maintenance of the redeveloped facilities.

2. Background

- 2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has seen a substantial increase in the demand for artificial pitches across the borough, which has been determined through community engagement via the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Officer and the Green Spaces Department.

- 2.2 This feedback received has outlined issues around a lack of artificial and hybrid surfaces in the borough and noted competition for existing pitches between community clubs and commercial entities. As a result, clubs have had to resort to travelling out of area to access suitable facilities, thus impacting those who do not have access to transport, which has potentially contributed to a reduction in the number of people provided with opportunities for sport in the Borough.
- 2.3 The existing 2G pitch at Bryntirion Comprehensive School is currently only utilised by a small number of groups during after-school hours, due to its poor condition. The current environment and experiences of the existing pitch are poor, from both school and local community perspectives.
- 2.4 Through collaboration and partnership working with the Cymru Football Foundation, an opportunity arose for a technical assessment and surveys to be undertaken by pitch improvement specialists and this exercise was completed in April 2025. This assessment confirmed that the existing 2G pitch is at end-of -life, the existing slabbed goal areas and surrounding fences are also in poor condition and all elements require replacement. A full schedule of works was prepared and costed as part of this technical assessment.
- 2.5 Initial consultation with the School Modernisation Board indicated that the project could be considered and confirmed that a bid could be made for external funding via the Cymru Football Foundation and Sport Wales, but any subsequent acceptance of funding would need to be subject to a robust management agreement being agreed with the school.
- 2.6 Following consultation with Planning, the Coastal & Flood Management team and Corporate Landlord it was confirmed that the land in question is held by BCBC under the Education portfolio and the proposed refurbishment would be considered as “permitted development” in this instance.
- 2.7 Following further consultation and discussion with the Education, Early Years and Young People directorate, funding applications were made to the Cymru Football Foundation (Fit for Future Facilities Programme) and Sport Wales (Welsh Government Pitch Collaboration Fund) in the sum of £400,000 and £159,768 respectively.

3. Current situation/ proposal

3.1 Bryntirion Comprehensive School Background

- 3.1.1 Bryntirion Comprehensive School is an English-medium 11-19 mixed comprehensive school maintained by Bridgend County Borough Council. There are 1,223 pupils on roll, including 178 in the sixth form. The school utilise the existing 2G pitch during school hours for PE sessions across all year groups. Outside of these hours, the school offers usage of the existing 2G surface for Rugby and football, but there is low take-up (as outlined at **Appendix A**) due to the poor condition of the pitch.
- 3.1.2 The school manages community usage of the swimming pool and adjoining changing facilities, the main hall for sports (football) usage and the grass fields for

both rugby and football usage during after-school hours and are looking to increase their recreational offer to the school and wider community as a result of this project.

3.2 Proposed Project & Impact

3.2.1 The development of the proposed pitch at Bryntirion Comprehensive School will assist with the increased demand for artificial pitches for both football and rugby across the borough, through the winter season in particular.

3.2.2 The proposed facility will encompass:

- a new full-sized 3G pitch, including a shock pad
- Crossfield goals
- New fencing to goal lines and touchlines
- spectator zone for the protection of the pitch and to elongate the lifespan of the surface
- Upgraded LED floodlights
- There is also the potential for the inclusion of a container for equipment storage and dugouts to bring the pitch to the required Tier 2 level (as defined by the FAW).
- There is also the potential for a dedicated walkway to be developed from the car park to the pitch, utilising additional funding applied for via the Community Focussed Schools grant.

3.2.3 The relationship between the school and the local community will be built upon and schemes developed wherever possible to benefit those who live in deprived areas surrounding the school and throughout the borough. There is also an opportunity for women/girls only teams to access booking slots through partnership with local clubs.

3.2.4 Multiple groups have expressed an interest in utilising the site, should this project be progressed and other local clubs with significant experience in managing and maintaining an artificial pitch and associated facilities has offered support to the governing body of the school to ensure this project is a success.

3.3 Project Funding Applications

3.3.1 Following an application to the Cymru Football Foundation's Fit for Future Facilities Programme, an offer letter has been received approving the initial sum of £400,000. The application to Sport Wales in the sum of £159,768 is due for consideration shortly and an application submitted for a Community Focused Schools is also being considered at present.

3.3.2 The draft proposed usage plan (as shown at **Appendix B**) has been considered by the Cymru Football Foundation (CFF) and will be finalised in consultation with the school, BCBC and the Cymru Football Foundation.

3.4 Management Agreement

3.4.1 If approved by Cabinet, the intention is to finalise and enter into a management agreement with the School, to incorporate the following aspects:

- Maintenance of the pitch in line with CFF recommendations, as defined in the “**Artificial Grass Pitch (3G) Guidance (2025)**” documentation (**Appendix C**)
- The establishment of an appropriate sinking fund ringfenced by BCBC from revenue generated for future resurfacing works at year 10.
- Estimated plausible annual income from the hire of the pitch and the expected annual maintenance costs have been included as a guide at **Appendix D**. These estimates are based on the lowest proposed hire fees as identified by the CFF, for the maximum usage during term time only. The annual maintenance figures used in this calculation are also average figures provided by the CFF.
- School usage/community usage hours - the pitches will be utilised by the school during operational hours for PE sessions and by the community during after-school hours, weekends and school holidays.
- Monitoring, reporting and financial management controls to ensure the effective operation of the sinking fund which will be maintained by the Council to ensure oversight, with regular payments to be made as per a pre-agreed schedule.

3.4.2 The CAT Officer has developed an initial draft of this agreement with Legal and Finance departments, which has been considered by the Governing Body at Bryntirion Comprehensive School and the draft proposed terms have been accepted.

3.5 Procurement procedure

3.5.1 Once all funding has been secured, the intention is for the CAT Officer and the Education, Early Years and Young People Manager to work with colleagues in the Procurement Department to prepare the necessary documentation in line with BCBC’s Contract Procedure Rules for a tender exercise via Sell2Wales.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

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

- **Long Term** – Entering into a management agreement with the School will enable the maintenance and upkeep of newly-installed facilities in the short term, as well as providing provision for the resurfacing of the courts after 10 years, ensuring a high-quality facility is available for future generations.
- **Prevention** – The School provides employment to local people and will work with established groups to provide a service appropriate for the local community. The agreement in relation to maintenance and resurfacing of the courts would enable an experienced community-based school to ensure the safeguarding of the facilities for future generations and reduce the need for reliance on BCBC for the provision of this service in other locations across the borough.
- **Integration** – Any income received by the School will be utilised for the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities, as well as resurfacing the pitch after 10 years, ensuring a high-quality facility is available for future generations. The inclusion of Welsh language has been considered and a requirement of the agreement will include the need for communications to be provided bilingually where possible.
- **Collaboration** – The School will work with local community groups and wider sports groups to ensure that a fit-for-purpose service is being provided with consideration to the needs of the local communities. An opportunity for the School to work in conjunction with an established football club with similar facilities in Bridgend has already been identified and will be further explored.
- **Involvement** – The school will provide a number of booking slots specifically to encourage a diverse range of individuals in our community to participate in sports sessions, ensuring an inclusive opportunity for these communities. The service will actively encourage its users to engage with the activities that take place within their community and support contact with friends, family and other members of the public. Through greater engagement individuals should be able to contribute to their communities for longer.

5.2 The proposed project aligns with the following **BCBC Wellbeing Objectives** as defined in the Corporate Plan 2023-2028:

- A County Borough with thriving valleys communities: *Improving community facilities and making them more accessible*
- A County Borough where we help people meet their potential: *Modernising our school facilities.*
- A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community: *Helping community groups to take control of and improve their facilities to protect them for the future.*

- A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives:
Offering attractive leisure and cultural activities and improving children's play facilities and opportunities

5.3 This project also aligns with the following policies and strategies:

- **Cymru Football Foundation Impact Categories**, specifically:
 - Tackling Inequalities: Improving Quality of and Access to Facilities in Deprived Communities
 - Improved Experiences and Environments: Enabling Participation Growth and/or Retention
 - Stronger and More Sustainable Community-Focused Clubs
 - Improving Facilities and Environments for Women and Girls
- **The Play Sufficiency Duty Wales**, particularly in relation to:
 - Matter C: Space available for Children to play
 - Matter D: Supervised Provision

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications arising from this report and the recommendation to enter into a management agreement, however, the redevelopment of the facility itself will reduce the need for members of the community to travel to other authority areas, thus assisting in achieving the Council's Net Zero Carbon Strategy.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The project will increase the availability of 3G facilities in the borough and enable the school to generate an income for the maintenance/management of the pitch, the establishment of a sinking fund and other school-related projects in connection with the purposes outlined above.

8.2 Based on the specification provided by the pitch specialist commissioned by the Cymru Football Foundation and the expected external funding to be leveraged, there is not estimated to be any capital financial implications to the authority for the development of this facility. . If all funding referenced in 3.3.1 is not secured, then the project will not be able to proceed. All funding will need to be secured to enable a procurement exercise to commence.

8.3 In line with the Council's Financial Procedure rules, schemes for which external funding has been approved will be added to the capital programme once the funding has been accepted and included in the next capital programme report to Council.

- 8.3 Based on the projected calculations in relation to the income, projected maintenance costs and sinking fund requirements (shown at **Appendix D**), it is not anticipated that there will be any financial implication to the authority or the school, as the income from the hire of the facility would be retained and utilised by the School for the maintenance of the facility and an agreed amount transferred to BCBC for retention in a ringfenced sinking fund for the purpose of resurfacing the pitch in the future. The Cymru Football Foundation have provided expected costs for maintenance of the proposed facility based on the prepared usage plan which indicates that the risk of the sinking fund being insufficient is low.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Cabinet is requested to:

1. Consider the contents of this report and confirm approval to accept grant funding in connection with this proposal.
2. Consider the contents of this report and confirm approval of the project and the entering into of an appropriate management agreement.
3. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director – Communities to negotiate the final terms of the management agreement in consultation with the Chief Officer Finance and the Director Education, Early Years and Young People to enter into the management agreement and any supplementary agreements and to grant any necessary consents required on behalf of the Council.

Background documents

None