

**Re-Carpet Penicuik Astro Pitch  
Report by Director, Resources****1 Purpose of Report**

To present a petition from L. Shepherd on behalf of Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club calling upon the Council to re-carpet the astro pitch located adjacent to Penicuik High School which is used by pupils of the school and local primary schools in the town, for inter-school football festivals and hires every evening by youth and adult local football teams.

**2 Petition**

The attached petition has been received from L. Shepherd on behalf of Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club and has been signed by another 82 persons. In addition, 2 letters of support have been received from a nurse practitioner at Penicuik Medical Practice and Christine Graham, MSP, and 2 emails from a former resident of Penicuik who is now a professional footballer and a former member of 2 of the clubs which use the facility.

**3 Petitions – Rules and Procedures**

**3.1** The adopted Midlothian procedures identify 11 categories for which petitions cannot be entertained. The submitted petition is not proscribed by any of these categories and is therefore valid.

**3.2** The petition is in the following terms,viz:-

*“Penicuik Astro Pitch is used by the pupils of Penicuik High School and local primary schools across Penicuik and Midlothian for inter-school football festivals and is hired every evening by both Youth and Adult local football teams, including teams from outside Penicuik.*

*Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club (PAYFC) has 60+ Coaches and Volunteers running 14 football teams for 350 youths. It aims not only to make better football players but to improve health and fitness, keep kids off the streets and out of trouble.*

*PAYFC offers each player 2-3 hours of training during the week and a match at the weekend. The club is so big that each team needs to train one night on the Penicuik Astro and one night on the Beeslack HS Astro Pitch.*

*PAYFC and the Scottish FA arranged a “Site Inspection Report” of the Astro Pitch. The surface condition recorded was “Poor - subject to long-term wear, having reached the end of its useful life”. The cost to bring it up to standard is £255k (excluding VAT). Yet the Council has increased the costs of hiring their*

*facilities over the last 6 months, with PAYFC having to increase the player monthly standing order fee despite the poor condition of the pitch.*

*PAYFC has a duty of care to all members. We have real concerns for all the players given the poor condition of the pitch. Players have been injured playing football. On Thursday 17 January 2019 a boy fell during training, badly injuring his elbow. PAYFC have reported this injury to Midlothian Council which it believes may very well be the result of the poor surface.*

*PAYFC want Midlothian Council to fund re-carpeting and maintenance and to increase the security as this site (possibly CCTV) to help prevent any damage or vandalism”.*

## **4 Response by Property and Facilities Management**

**4.1** Torkildsen Barclay were commissioned by Midlothian Council in September 2016 to undertake a review of the 2017 Sports Pitch Needs Assessment with the aim of updating population projections, pitch usage, and demand criteria, and providing recommendations as to future levels of pitch provision, in particular those provided by the local authority. The Needs Assessment was to cover the period 2017 to 2027.

**4.1.1** Torkildson Barclay informed through their Sports Pitch Needs Assessment that the Penicuik Park 3G full size pitch carpet was in need of replacing.

**4.1.2** A site report from Pitch Maintenance Company, Replay Maintenance, conducted on 6 February 2017 assessed that the general surface was in poor condition as it was very worn and had numerous burns on its surface. It also found that carpet pile wear was very worn, especially at the goal mouth areas.

**4.1.3** A bid of £300,000 to the Capital Strategy 2018/2019 to 2027/2028 Asset Management Plan was submitted by officers to upgrade the facility at Penicuik.

**4.1.4** The sum of £300,000 corresponds with the Site Inspection Survey dated 17 January 2019 from Sportslabconsult lodged by the Petitioner which quotes a figure of £306,820.08 (approximately £255k excluding VAT).

## **5 Report Implications**

### **5.1 Resource**

The re-carpeting of Penicuik Astro would have a resource implication for the Council. The Site Inspection Survey lodged by the Petitioner quotes a figure of £306,820.08. However, Sport and Leisure Services do not have financial resources available to fund this project.

## 5.2 Risk

The Petition stated that Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club have concerns for all players given the poor condition of the pitch. It further suggests that players have been injured playing football and the Club believes this may well be as a result of the poor condition of the surface.

Sport and Leisure Services have recorded very few incidents reported to the staff within the Leisure Centre who provide first aid, as any accident caused by the playing surface at the 3G pitch

## 5.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- X Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

## 5.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Not applicable

## 5.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Not applicable.

## 5.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable.

## 5.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The availability of a Petitions Committee allows stakeholders to raise issues for consideration by the Council.

## 5.8 Ensuring Equalities

Not applicable.

## 5.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable.

## 5.10 IT Issues

Not applicable.

## **6 Recommendations**

1. The Committee is invited to consider the Petition submitted (Appendix 1) and afford the Petitioner the opportunity of addressing the Committee and speaking to the terms of the Petition and:
2. consider the information contained within this report provided by the Head of Property and Facilities Management and afford him/his representative the opportunity of addressing the Committee and speaking to the terms thereto and;
3. decide what action should be taken with regard to the Petition –
  - i. take no action and in which case give the Petitioner the reasons for the decision or;
  - ii. pass the Petition to the relevant Director or other Council Committee to look into, with or without any specific recommendation

**5 March 2019**

**Report Contact:**

**Verona MacDonald      Tel No 0131 271 3161**

**E-mail [verona.macdonald@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:verona.macdonald@midlothian.gov.uk)**

**Background Papers:**

**Appendix 1 Petition from Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club**

**Appendix 2 Replay Maintenance report sheet dated 6 February 2017**