

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub Committee
DATE: 10th February 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Adults & Community
SUBJECT: Halton Baseball Club
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider a request from Halton Baseball Club for a long term lease on their current playing venue at Halton Sports.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Directors of Adults and Community and Resources in consultation with the Portfolio holders of Neighbourhood, Leisure and Sport and Resources to determine leasing arrangements and operational issues in respect of the Halton Sports site.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Halton Baseball Club have been established since 1997. They operate at a high level, producing several international players, have been National Finalists and regularly host regional and national baseball competitions.

3.2 The Club currently play out of Halton Sports where they have 2 diamonds. They do all their own pitch maintenance, and 'set up' the venue for every fixture. They pay an annual pitch hire of £1,260 for the adult diamond, and £630 for the junior diamond. These amounts were agreed in consultation with Property Services.

3.3 The Club now have an opportunity to further develop. Baseball Softball UK (BSUK) have indicated their plans to create a centre of excellence in the North and have identified Halton as a possible location. If this were to happen BSUK would grant fund development of the site up to £100k, with extra funding also being available from the Football Foundation Dual Sports Grants.

3.4 For this to happen, however, BSUK would require a lease period of 25 years. The Club have therefore asked if consideration be given to such a lease period. They would continue to pay the annual agreed pitch hire fee, converted into a lease payment.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are none. Previous long leases have been granted to other sporting organisations. The issue is whether there are any planning

implications.

5.0 **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None. The Club would continue to pay a rental fee, and grant funding would provide the capital investment. The site will remain in council ownership and will not involve any commercial or other development other than the proposed sports facility improvements

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The Club have established partnership arrangements with local junior teams, and have programmes to coach into local schools.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Physical activity contributes to healthy life-styles and the preventative agenda. The Club has and will further develop plans for community participation in sport.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The proposal to develop at Halton Sports will enhance the site and could bring economic benefits to the local community, particularly following on from the successful relocation of Runcorn Linnets FC on to the site. The opportunity exists to establish a centre of sporting excellence.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The opportunity to establish a regional/national centre of excellence would be lost if the grant opportunity were spurned.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Club has an equality and diversity policy.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 None under the meaning of the act.