

REPORT TO: - Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: - 4th March 2010

REPORTING OFFICER: - Chief Executive

SUBJECT: England 2018 World Cup Bid

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Executive Board Sub-Committee on the progress to date of the England 2018 World Cup Bid and the opportunities for Halton Borough Council

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **The report be noted and the proposal in respect of the Stobart Stadium Halton be endorsed**

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 In readiness for the England World Cup Bid 2018, each City has been invited to submit a proposal for hosting a number of group stage and knock out matches.

3.2 The Liverpool City bid requires them to identify a host ground or grounds that could hold the matches, in addition each ground would need to have a number of UEFA standard "support" grounds that could either be used as a Team Base Camp (TBC) or a Venue Specific Training Site (VSTS). The Stobart Stadium has been identified as a potential YBC or VSTS.

3.3 These support Stadia are crucial to the bid and as such the sites chosen will only be considered if they meet strict criteria laid down by FIFA.

3.4 Areas that will be scrutinised include: - dressing rooms, utilities, communication infrastructure, covered stands, security fencing, floodlights, press facilities, public catering facilities and of course the standard and dimensions of the playing surface.

3.5 FIFA will inspect all prospective Training Sites, an informal inspection has already been undertaken of the Stobart Stadium Halton and the inspector was very complimentary of the facilities.

3.6 If selected as a Team Base Camp (TBC) the Stadium would in effect be "locked down" for a period of around 5 weeks, this could present a problem to the Widnes Vikings as the World Cup falls within the

Summer rugby period, discussions have taken place with the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Widnes Vikings in relation to this issue and all parties feel a solution could be found, this issue will be similar for any other TBC such as those at Warrington, Wigan or Leigh.

- 3.7 If chosen as a Venue Specific Training Site (VSTS) the “lock down” period is not as critical, teams will be based in the area and use the facilities for pre-match training sessions.
- 3.8 Due to the speed of response required, following consultation with The Leader and the Chief Executive, Halton Borough Council has signed a commitment to support the Liverpool bid as either a Team Base Camp (TBC) or as a Venue Specific Training Site (VSTS).
- 3.9 Liverpool has been identified as one of the preferred City’s to host the 2018 World Cup; a further selection process will take place to finalise the City’s that will be put forward.
- 3.10 Team Base Camps will be selected by the competing teams nearer to the competition in 2018.
- 3.11 To have our Stadium identified as a potential venue for either a TBC or VSTS speaks volumes for how it held in high esteem not just by the Rugby League but also the Football Association.