



CABINET - 6TH MARCH 2024

**SUBJECT: ALLOCATION CRITERIA FOR ARTIFICIAL SPORTS PITCHES
AND THE YSTRAD MYNACH CENTRE FOR SPORTING
EXCELLENCE**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIROMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to Cabinet's approval for amendments to the criteria used in the allocation of bookings for artificial pitches, Second Generation and Third Generation, e.g. Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) / 3G facilities in Caerphilly CBC that are managed and delivered by Sport & Leisure services.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 On 5th March 2014 Cabinet approved the allocation criteria and naming for the Centre for Sporting Excellence (CSE). The criteria used since 2014 is still in place but requires updating to reflect the progression in the sports of Rugby and Football and changes made by the respective governing bodies. Additionally, as a result of the Council's investment in additional 3G pitches it is proposed that the criteria are extended to the allocation of these facilities in order to meet the community sport needs for our other managed sites.
- 2.2 Our vision for sport and active recreation is to encourage healthy lifestyles and support our residents to be more active, more often. This report outlines the breadth of ATP/3G facilities we have developed in Caerphilly assisting us to inspiring future generations of children and young people, supporting local community sports clubs, and assisting achievement of sporting success.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet approve the allocation criteria detailed in this report for artificial pitches, Second Generation and Third Generation, e.g. Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) / 3G facilities in Caerphilly CBC that are managed and delivered by Sport & Leisure services.
- 3.2 That Cabinet approve the delegation of future changes to the allocation criteria as a result of changes by Governing Bodies or changes to ATP/3G provision to the relevant Director or Head of Service in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. To provide clarity and consistency to clubs and organisation in relation to the criteria to be used when allocating the use of the facilities outlined below.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council's Sport and Leisure services work with the sport's National Governing Bodies, the Welsh Rugby Union and the Football Association of Wales, to ensure that priorities are aligned, and that a consistent and co-ordinated approach is adopted for the allocation of facility usage at the CSE. Since approval of the existing allocation criteria by Cabinet in March 2014 the governing bodies have made changes to their schemes. For example, the FAW changed from the Club Accreditation Scheme comprising of four defined levels being STANDARD, BRONZE, SILVER and GOLD, to the tiered licensing competition structure.
- 5.2 Additionally, as a result of the Council's investment in additional 3G pitches it is proposed that the criteria are extended to the allocation of these facilities in order to meet the community sport needs for our other managed sites. Those clubs not accommodated at the CSE are supported through use of other facilities within the County Borough as outlined in the report. To ensure we maximise the opportunities these facilities provide it is essential that the ATPs/3Gs are not allocated in isolation and that the whole portfolio of facility provision across the County Borough is considered.
- 5.3 Proposed Criteria for usage at the **Centre for Sporting Excellence** (outside of partnership agreements, EG: Dragons Rugby, Coleg Y Cymoedd):

Rugby Criteria

We have been working in consultation with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) to ensure that the criteria used for our community clubs mirror those of the sport's governing body. The criteria will be based on the priorities outlined below: -

- **1st Priority** – Community Adult Tier 1 Competition – currently WRU Premiership
- **2nd Priority** - Community Adult Tier 2 Competition – currently WRU Championship Division East and West
- Initial priority will be allocated based on league tier status, however if teams are in the same league, priority will be given to teams with sustainable age-grade, mini and junior pathways.
- **3rd Priority** – Community Adult Tier 3 and below competitions
- **4th Priority** - Age Grade and Pathway Competitions; in order of age descending from Youth to mini and juniors.
- In all circumstances clubs from within the County Borough would have priority.

Football Criteria – Junior Football

There has been extensive consultation with the Football Association of Wales

(FAW) to ensure that the criteria used for our community clubs is in alignment with the sport's national governing body. The criteria that we will be following will be based on the FAW's competition tiered licensing system supported by club compliance with the governance criteria outlined within the FAW COMET system.

- The tiered licensing system reflects the quality of provision within the club and assists clubs improve this provision. If clubs have the same standard, preference will be given to clubs who have a sustainable age grade pathway e.g. number of teams and girl's teams. The criteria for these levels are set by the FAW.
- The minimum criteria for junior clubs details that FAW Club Accreditation must be processed and attained in accordance with applicable regulations that set out the minimum standards as set out by the governing body prior to the start of every playing season.
- Evening and weekend use of the facilities will be available to community clubs for training and/or playing and will be allocated based on the criteria agreed with the Football Association of Wales. This criteria supports those clubs who have the willingness and ability to grow the game, increase standards and improve levels of participation and performance.

Football Criteria – Senior Football

- Senior Clubs priority usage will be based on the Clubs within Football Association of Wales' tiered licensing competition structure: Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 etc and the highest ranked club. Clubs in the same league will have priority if they have a sustainable pathway e.g. number of teams and women and girls teams.
- In all circumstances clubs from within the County Borough would have priority.

5.4 Criteria for usage at **other ATP/3Gs managed by Sport & Leisure (Excluding the Centre for Sporting Excellence):**

- Sport & Leisure are currently managing the following ATP/3G facilities that will come under the allocation criteria below from June 2024 in preparation for winter booking slots for 2024-2025 season onwards:
 - Bedwas Leisure Centre
 - Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni (Y Gwyndy Campus)
 - Sue Noakes Leisure Centre (Hockey Hub, Hockey clubs to receive priority bookings).
 - Blackwood Comprehensive School
 - Islwyn High School
 - Lewis School Pengam
 - Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni (Gelli Haf)
 - Idris Davies School
 - Risca Leisure Centre (Proposed new 3G)
 - Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre *
 - Heolddu Leisure Centre *
 - Newbridge Leisure Centre **

- St Cenydd Leisure Centre (Mini 3G) **

- The above-mentioned facilities will follow the pathway criteria as set out each season from WRU and FAW on number of teams in pathway for access to the ATP/3G facilities and in all circumstances clubs from within the County Borough would have priority first when the booking process goes live as outlined in 5.3.
- To ensure that access to 3G pitches across the county borough remain accessible to all groups of users, the service has identified two facilities*, namely, Pontllanfraith and Heolddu Leisure Centre, both of which are football only pitches, where the principles of the recommendation contained within this report will be used to provide allocations at identified peak times i.e. 6-8pm Monday – Thursday and weekends for competitive matches, however each facility will provide access on a first come basis for the remainder of the available times.
- The service also has two 3G pitches** at Newbridge and St Cenydd Leisure Centres that are neither full size or dual use. As such the proposal in the paragraph above will also be adopted for allocation at these facilities.

5.5 In supporting the community usage of these fantastic facilities, decision making in relation to the allocation of slots will be completed by Sport and Leisure.

Conclusion

5.6 The existing criteria, established in 2014 to support the opening of the Centre for Sporting Excellence requires updating to reflect the changes in the National Governing Bodies' sports criteria, and the additional ATP/3G provision that CCBC has developed to support the growth and development of community sport across the county borough.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this project and report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The consultees listed below have been consulted on this report and their views have

been incorporated accordingly.

- 10.2 The Allocation Criteria for Artificial Sports Pitches and the Ystrad Mynach Centre for Sporting Excellence report was considered by the Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 13th February 2024.

One Member asked about community use of facilities if the emphasis was on higher tier usage. The Sport and Leisure Development Manager gave details on the provision of facilities for sports clubs not in a National Governing Body Pathway System and for those booking a facility for purely leisure purposes. In response to a further point raised around access Members heard how the system had been developed in order to ensure transparency and had included input from the Welsh Rugby Union and Welsh Football Trust. Committee also heard about the challenges around providing facilities as the majority of requests from clubs was for prime slots between 6pm and 8pm on weekdays. The Corporate Director for Economy and the Environment reiterated that the report supported national governing body criteria that informed the allocation of 3G pitches, and that it was fair, robust and transparent.

A Member highlighted that the location of some facilities was an issue and raised the case of Risca Hockey club who now had to travel across the County Borough. The Member observed that its facility was more than an acceptable 20 minutes travelling time. Committee Members also heard his concerns that current users of the Centre for Sporting Excellence might be forced out. The Sport and Leisure Development Manager advised that there should be no issues of displacement and that in terms of hockey the Sue Noake Leisure Centre had been designated a hub for that particular sport. The Sport & Leisure Facilities Manger also provided clarity in relation to the members concerns regarding 20 minute drive time. Confirmation was provided that the 20 min drive time was a leisure industry guide that supported consumer behaviours but was not a standard.

Regarding football criteria one Member enquired if a football club from within the County Borough would have priority over a club from outside the county who were a higher tier side. The Sport and Leisure Development Manager assured Members that facilities for local clubs was the priority and that bookings from teams from outside the County Borough would only be considered for vacant slots where there was no local interest, as the service would rather fill such a slot with an out of county borough team and receive the income than leave it empty.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Author: Jared Lougher, Sport and Leisure Development Manager

Consultees: Councillor Chris Morgan, Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces
Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Shane Williams, Vice Chair Housing and Environment Scrutiny

Committee

Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive

Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment

Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services

Gareth Jenkins Interim Director for Social Services

Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer

Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services

Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services

Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer

Jeff Reynolds, Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager

Background Papers:

Cabinet - 5th March 2014 'Ystrad Mynach Sports Complex - Allocation Criteria & Naming'
Housing & Environment Scrutiny Committee report 13th February 2024 'The Allocation
Criteria for Artificial Sports Pitches and the Ystrad Mynach Centre for Sporting Excellence'