

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Individual Executive Decision for comment by 29 September 2022 (please send all comments to democratic.services@highpeak.gov.uk)

30 September 2022

TITLE:	Request for funding to support Furness COGS Pavilion Project
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Damien Greenhalgh - Deputy Leader & Executive Councillor for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
CONTACT OFFICER:	Sally Curley – Service Development Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	Furness Vale

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to allocate a further £20,000 to Furness COGS (Community Organising Green Space) from the Council's outdoor sports small capital fund to enable access improvements to be made at the newly built Community Pavilion at Furness Vale Community Field.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Deputy Leader & Executive Councillor for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure approves the allocation of £20,000 from the Council's outdoor sports small capital fund to enable access improvements to be made at the newly built Community Pavilion at the Community Field in Furness Vale, to ensure it is accessible by all.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 Furness COGS are a not for profit community group whose remit is to enhance and improve access to local greenspaces in Furness Vale for the local community and surrounding towns and villages.
- 3.2 Furness Vale Community Field, which is owned by HPBC, was leased to COGS in 2015 who now have responsibility for its maintenance and development. Since this time COGS have secured various external funding grants to make significant improvements to the field for the community, in effect transforming it into a neighbourhood park.

- 3.3 Whilst the use of the community field has increased greatly, some activities were limited due to the lack of any indoor provision for shelter, toilets, storage and power. COGS, therefore, decided to fund raise for and build a community pavilion to allow a variety of uses including changing facilities with showers and toilets for the football club, a community meeting and function space, kitchen, storage area as well as disabled and male and female toilets.
- 3.4 COGS secured the £210,000 required for the building from a variety of sources including a contribution of £20,000 from the Council (IED 8th July 2020) and building work commenced in Aug 2021 by a local contractor. The building was completed in May 2022 and, with volunteer support and help, the interior fixtures and fittings are all in place for use now by the football club, primary school and local community.
- 3.5 The community pavilion project has now delivered a much needed high quality facility for the local community, enabling the use of the community field to be increased and enhanced. It provides much needed changing facilities for Furness Vale Football Club as well as Whaley Bridge AFC Juniors who now use the pitch at Furness as a result of the dam incident at Toddbrook Reservoir. It has a community meeting space, kitchen and toilets which can be used by a variety of groups who need meeting space in Furness Vale.
- 3.6 It will also be utilised by Furness Vale Primary School who have no onsite playing field but use the community field for outdoor activities. A formal agreement for their regular weekly usage of the field and building has been put in place with COGS and this will now enable the school to spend longer periods of time outside of the school classroom engaged in physical activity.
- 3.7 There is a small car park adjacent to the community pavilion and this can be easily accessed off Park Road. However, the surface from the car park and around the building, including the ramped entrance, is mainly hardcore which has been laid as a base material. This makes the building inaccessible to those who are less able or infirm and those using wheelchairs or pushchairs.
- 3.8 The costs initially secured by COGS have been utilised on the construction of the building itself and the internal fixtures and fittings and there are currently no more funds available to improve the access around and into the building.
- 3.9 COGS are therefore seeking further funds to provide a fully asphalted surface from the car park to the ramped entrance of the community building providing access for all users including groups that support the elderly and those with long term health conditions, as well as parents and tots groups.
- 3.10 Costs obtained already by a local contractor are estimated at £20,000 for a full asphalt surface of the required area.
- 3.11 COGS are also looking to install a sustainable heating system which will ensure the pavilion is economical to run and its impact on the environment is minimal. Costs provided for this type of heating system are in the region of £20,000 and the group is looking to raise these funds through external grant

applications.

- 3.12 The community pavilion project is integral to the delivery of the Council's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, supporting communities and clubs to be more active. It demonstrates a clear link to place based working with strategic partners, a number of whom are already fully involved. It also focuses on maximising physical activity and sporting opportunities using the outdoor and natural environment as the facility is located at Furness community field, allowing increased use of the open space for physical activity.
- 3.13 The Council has already committed investment into the new building which in itself will serve the needs of a large section of the community in Furness Vale. Without it being able to be fully accessed, its use will be restricted and certain groups and members of the community will be excluded from using it.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report relates to Aim 1: Supporting our communities to create a healthier, safer, cleaner High Peak through the provision of a community facility on an open space which will increase physical activity and participation leading to healthier lifestyles. It clearly integrates communities and sports clubs into the delivery of the existing Physical Activity and Sport Strategy objectives, and will continue to do so as the strategy is reviewed.
- 4.2 It also links to Aim 4: Protect and improve the environment including responding to the climate emergency. The community field at Furness Vale is an extremely important green space and through the existing work of COGS is protected as a QE11 Field in perpetuity. The site also benefits from the creation of a wildflower meadow and other planted areas, for biodiversity. The creation of a community pavilion will enhance this important green resource, increase usage and allow for further developments.

5. **Alternative Options**

- 5.1 The Council has two options available to it:
1. To provide funding of £20,000 from the Council's outdoor sports small capital fund in support of ensuring that this excellent community facility can be used by all members of the community **(Recommended)**.
 2. To do nothing – This will mean that a high quality newly built community facility will exclude certain members of the community. It will require COGS to seek further external funding which is limited, along with the costs associated with the sustainable heating system (not recommended).

6. Implications

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

The improvements to access of this new building will greatly increase the use of this key community asset within Furness Vale, thus helping to create a safe and welcoming environment. The project is being driven and led by the community leading to a firm sense of ownership and respect for the open space and its associated facilities. Increased usage of the site will also help deter any anti-social behaviour.

6.2 Workforce

None.

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

The new community pavilion will be fully accessible internally to all users. It will include disabled toilet and changing facilities. The building will be inclusive and open to all providing a valuable meeting space, to be used by a variety of local clubs, organisations and individuals. Access into the building from the adjacent car park is essential to ensure use by the whole community.

6.4 Financial Considerations

As detailed within the report. If approved the contribution will be met from the Council's outdoor sports small capital fund.

6.5 Legal

COGS lease the community field from the Council, and as such any new building becomes their responsibility under the terms of the lease.

6.6 Climate Change

This community pavilion project will benefit and enhance an important and protected greenspace. COGS are fully committed to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and have already created new habitats on site. The provision of this building will mean that clubs, groups and organisations from the village who travel to neighbouring towns to partake in physical activity or other

sessions, can now stay local thus reducing car use and encouraging walking and cycling to the facility. COGS are currently looking to secure funding for a sustainable heating system in the building.

6.7 Consultation

Extensive consultation has been conducted by COGS with the local community and there is a clear need identified for such a facility to support the local football club, the local primary school and various groups and organisations who currently use the community field for activities. Access to this building is critical for community use.

6.8 Risk Assessment

COGS have responsibility for the new building under the lease agreement, so insurance for this facility will be provided by COGS. There is still a shortfall for this project which COGS need to secure to allow delivery of a fully functional and usable building and without this contribution there is a risk it will be unusable by the local community.

Mark Trillo

Executive Director (Governance & Commissioning)

Web Links and Background Papers

Contact details

Sally Curley

Sally.Curley@highpeak.gov.uk

7. Detail

- 7.1 Furness COGS (Community Organising Green Space) are a not for profit community group whose remit is to enhance and improve access to local greenspaces in Furness Vale for the local community and surrounding towns and villages.
- 7.2 The group were formed in 2007 around the identified need to make significant improvements to the field and football pitch off Park Road in Furness Vale. A site which is owned by High Peak Borough Council.
- 7.3 It became clear that the group would have increased opportunities to enhance and improve the field through external funding if they were to lease it from the Council, and therefore negotiations took place with officers and COGS to agree the lease for a term of 40 years and which was signed in 2015.

- 7.4 During the last 5 years COGS have raised over £180,000 towards improvements at the community field from external grants, donations, local fundraising and in-kind support. This has enabled the group to provide the following facilities which are all maintained by COGS under the lease :
- A level and well drained football pitch for league matches
 - Installation of accessible circular pathway
 - Installation of outdoor fitness equipment located along the pathway
 - Picnic tables
 - Welcome boards at entrances
 - Creation of a wildflower meadow and other planted areas
 - Mosaic trail working with High Peak Community Arts
 - A table tennis table
- 7.5 Whilst the use of the community field has increased greatly as a result of these new facilities, some activities were limited due to the lack of any indoor provision for shelter, toilets, storage and power. COGS therefore decided to fund raise for and build a community pavilion to allow a variety of uses including changing facilities with showers and toilets for the Football Club, a community meeting and function space, kitchen, storage area as well disabled and male and female toilets.
- 7.6 COGS secured the £210,000 required for the building from a variety of sources including a contribution of £20,000 from the Council (Executive 8th August 2020) and building work commenced in Aug 2021 by a local contractor. The building was completed in May 2022 and, with volunteer support and help, the interior fixtures and fittings are all in place for use now by the local community school, primary school and football club.
- 7.7 The community pavilion project has now delivered a much needed high quality facility for the local community, enabling the use of the community field to be increased and enhanced. It provides much needed changing facilities for Furness Vale Football Club as well as Whaley Bridge AFC Juniors who now use the pitch at Furness as a result of the dam incident at Toddbrook Reservoir. It has a community meeting space, kitchen and toilets which can be used by a variety of groups who need meeting space in Furness Vale.
- 7.8 It will also be utilised by Furness Vale Primary School who have no onsite playing field but use the community field for outdoor activities. A formal agreement for their regular weekly usage of the field and building has been put in place with COGS and this will now enable the school to spend longer periods of time outside of the school classroom engaged in physical activity.
- 7.9 There is a small car park adjacent to the community pavilion and this can be easily accessed off Park Road. However, the surface from the car park and around the building, including the ramp up to the entrance, is mainly hardcore which has been laid as a base material. This therefore makes the building inaccessible to those who are less able or infirm and those using wheelchairs or pushchairs.
- 7.10 The costs initially secured by COGS have been utilised on the construction of

the building itself and the internal fixtures and fittings and there are currently no funds available to improve the access around and into the building.

- 7.11 COGS are therefore seeking further funds to provide a fully asphalted surface from the car park to the ramped entrance of the building. This would then allow full access for all including groups that support the elderly and those with long term health conditions as well as parent and baby and tots groups.
- 7.12 Costs obtained already by a local contractor are estimated at £20,000 for a full asphalt surface of the required area.
- 7.13 COGS are also looking to install a sustainable heating system which will ensure the pavilion is economical to run and its impact on the environment is minimal. Costs provided for this type of heating system are in the region of £20,000 and the group is looking to raise further external funds through grant applications.
- 7.14 The community pavilion project is integral to the delivery of the Council's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, supporting communities and clubs to be more active. It demonstrates a clear link to place based working with strategic partners, a number of whom are already fully involved. It also focuses on maximising physical activity and sporting opportunities using the outdoor and natural environment as the facility is located at Furness community field, allowing increased use of the open space for physical activity.
- 7.15 The Council has already committed investment into the new building which in itself will serve the needs of a large section of the community in Furness Vale. Without it being able to be fully accessed, its use will be restricted and certain groups and members of the community will be excluded from using it.